

Veterinary Nurses Council

Meeting to be held on Wednesday 8 February 2023 at 10.00am at the Royal College of Nursing, 20 Cavendish Square, London, W1G 0RN

Agenda	Classification ¹	Rationale ²
1. Apologies for absence	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
2. Declarations of interest	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
3. Obituaries	Unclassified	n/a
4. Minutes of meeting held on 16 November 2022		
i. Unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
ii. Classified appendix	Confidential	1,2,3,4
5. Matters arising	Oral report	n/a
6. CEO update	Unclassified	n/a
Matters for decision by VN Council and reports from Committees (unclassified items)		
7. VN Education Committee		
Minutes of meeting held on 13 December 2022		
i. Unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
ii. Classified appendix	Confidential	2,3,4
8. Continuing Professional Development (CPD)		
Report from 2022 Audit of CPD for Veterinary Nurses	Unclassified	n/a
Matters for note		
9. Reports from RCVS Committees		
9.01 VN Preliminary Investigation Committee	Unclassified	n/a

- | | | | |
|--|---|--------------|-----|
| 9.02 | Standards Committee | Oral report | n/a |
| | | | |
| 9.03 Advancement of the Professions Committee | | Oral report | n/a |
| | | | |
| 10. | Policy and Public Affairs update | Oral report | n/a |
| | | | |
| 11. | Communications report | Oral report | n/a |
| | | | |
| 12. | VN Register report
Registrations, student enrolments, and PSP numbers | Unclassified | n/a |
| | | | |
| 13. | Any other business (unclassified) | | |
| | | | |
| 14. | Date of next meeting
Wednesday 10 May 2023 at 10.00am. | | |

Confidential and private items (closed session)

- | | | | |
|-----|---|---------------------|--------------|
| 15. | VN Education Committee confidential items

Confidential items from meeting of 13 December 2022 | Confidential | 2,3,4 |
| | | | |
| 16. | Risk Register
16.01 Risk Register annual review
16.02 Items to be added to Risk Register | Confidential | |
| | | | |
| 17. | RCVS Honours and Awards | Oral report | |
| | | | |
| 18. | VN Council election 2023 | Oral report | |
| | | | |
| 19. | Items for RCVS Committees | Oral report | |
| | | | |
| 20. | Any other business (confidential items) | | |

Annette Amato
Secretary, VN Council
0207 202 0713 / a.amato@rcvs.org.uk /

¹Classifications explained

Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.
Confidential	Temporarily available only to Council Members, non-Council members of the relevant committee, sub-committee, working party or Board and not for dissemination outside that group unless and until the relevant committee or Council has given approval for public discussion, consultation or publication.
Private	The paper includes personal data which should not be disclosed at any time or for any reason, unless the data subject has agreed otherwise. The Chair may, however, indicate after discussion that there are general issues which can be disclosed, for example in reports to committees and Council.

²Classification rationales

Confidential	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation3. To protect commercially sensitive information4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none">5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	8 February 2023
Title	Minutes of meeting of Veterinary Nurses Council (VNC) held on 16 November 2022
Summary	Minutes of meeting of Veterinary Nurses Council (VNC) held on 16 November 2022
Decisions required	None
Attachments	Classified appendix (confidential)
Author	Annette Amato Secretary a.amato@rcvs.org.uk 020 7222 0713

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	Confidential	1,2,3,4

¹Classifications explained

Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.
Confidential	Temporarily available only to Council Members, non-Council members of the relevant committee, sub-committee, working party or Board and not for dissemination outside that group unless and until the relevant committee or Council has given approval for public discussion, consultation or publication.
Private	The paper includes personal data which should not be disclosed at any time or for any reason, unless the data subject has agreed otherwise. The Chair may, however, indicate after discussion that there are general issues which can be disclosed, for example in reports to committees and Council.

²Classification rationales

Confidential	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others 2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation 3. To protect commercially sensitive information 4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation



Veterinary Nurses Council

Minutes of the meeting held online via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday 16 November 2022

Members:	Mrs Belinda Andrews-Jones	-	Vice-Chair
	Miss Alison Carr		
	Dr Niall Connell	-	Officer Team observer (non-voting)
	* Mr Dominic Dyer		
	Ms Sarah Fox		
	Mrs Susan Howarth		
	* Mrs Katherine Kissick		
	Mrs Donna Lewis		
	Dr Susan Paterson		
	Mr Matthew Rendle	-	Chair
	Dr Katherine Richards		
	* Ms Stephanie Richardson		
	Mrs Claire Roberts		

*Denotes absent

In attendance:	Mrs Annette Amato	-	Committee Secretary
	Mr Luke Bishop	-	Media and Publications Manager
	Mrs Julie Dugmore	-	Director of Veterinary Nursing
	Ms Eleanor Ferguson	-	Registrar
	Miss Shirley Gibbins	-	Qualifications Manager
	Ms Lizzie Lockett	-	Chief Executive
	Miss Jill Macdonald	-	VN Futures Project Lead
	Mr Ben Myring	-	Policy and Public Affairs Manager
	Mrs Jenny Soreskog-Turp	-	Lead for Postgraduate Education

Guests:	<i>Ms Rachael Buzzel</i>	-	<i>VN Times</i>
----------------	--------------------------	---	-----------------

Apologies for absence

1. Apologies for absence were received from Dominic Dyer, Katherine Kissick and Stephanie Richardson.

Declarations of interest

2. There were no new declarations of interest.

Obituaries

3. No written obituaries had been received. Council observed a minute's silence for all members of the professions who had passed away since the last meeting.

Minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2022

4. The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2022 were approved as a correct record.

Matters arising

5. There were no matters arising on the previous Minutes.

CEO update

6. The CEO presented a brief oral update on a number of operational matters and recent activities and said that matters relating to Policy and Public Affairs, and Communications would be covered later in the meeting by the relevant Managers.
7. The RCVS Awards nomination period had recently opened, including the VN Golden Jubilee award. Although VN Council members are not permitted to nominate, they may encourage others to do so, and raise awareness. A number of other RCVS awards, such as the compassion and inspiration awards, are also open to veterinary nurses, and details are on the website.
8. Activities since the last meeting had included celebration of Black History Month with a series of new leadership stories published on the website, and a Mind Matters Initiative (MMI) campfire around this theme, to promote allyship and stressing the importance of supporting colleagues from ethnic minorities.
9. At the September meeting of RCVS Council, it had been agreed to launch a Public Advisory Group, comprising animal owners and keepers, to provide support to the RCVS in its messaging to animal owners and to advise on important issues in the public interest to be considered by the RCVS as regulator. The group would be chaired by Council member Dr Louise Alum, and a call for applications would be put out in the New Year.
10. Phase 2 of the Council Culture work would commence in November, with VN Council being represented in the meetings by the Chair.
11. A firm of consultants had been appointed to assist with the commercial strategy for the new RCVS office premises, to provide the best understanding of how the space could be used to best serve the needs of staff, Councils and the profession. The consultants were holding a series of meetings with staff, external stakeholders and Council members, to be followed by a questionnaire

to all potential staff users of the building. The work of the consultants would be concluded in January 2023. It was likely that the move to the new premises would not take place until late 2022.

12. Following the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth in September, a condolence book had been set up online. Nearly 900 messages had been received, which would be bound into a hard copy and placed in the archive.

Veterinary Nurse Education Committee (VNEC)

13. Susan Howarth, Chair of the VNEC, presented the minutes of the meeting of the VNEC held on 12 October 2022. This had been a very full agenda due to the deferral of a number of items from the August meeting of the Committee.
15. The Committee had approved two new educator members of the accreditation panel, one for the panel for Further Education (FE) visitations, and one for the Higher Education (HE) panel. These were a welcome addition to the pool of visitors.
16. The Committee had been pleased to accredit the following further post-registration Certificates in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (CertAVN) awards from the Royal Veterinary College:
 - Graduate Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing – Medical Nursing
 - Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing – Medical Nursing

There are currently five accredited providers of Certificates in Advanced Veterinary Nursing, with a diverse range of pathways being offered.

17. The Committee had received an update report on the pre-accreditation support package for all Accredited Education Institutions (AEIs). The support continued to be very worthwhile and well received, enabling AEIs to be better prepared for their accreditation visits, with the outcome being provision of better education as a result.
18. The Committee had been provided with many reports from the quality assurance team on action plan monitoring and quality assurance activities for Accredited Education Institutions. The Committee had been reassured from the reports and the auditing activity carried out, that the team was keeping a close eye on all aspects of the accredited programmes to ensure that standards are being met.
19. The Committee had been provided with statistics on student enrolments for each academic year (1 July to 30 June) over the last five years via the FE and HE routes and had been reassured to note that despite the pandemic, the numbers of enrolments and registrations were increasing overall.
20. It was commented by a member that it was good to see that the pre-accreditation visits were being well received and effective, and in keeping with the RCVS philosophy of being a supportive regulator.

21. It was noted that the VNEC Terms of Reference (ToR) had been updated, and it was confirmed by the Director of Veterinary Nursing that this had been in response to an ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) requirement that the terms of office for members of the Committee should be included in the ToR. As this had been a simple amendment, it had been agreed via Chair's action and the revised ToR were now on the website. However, there were a few other changes which the Director of Veterinary Nursing was proposing, and these would be brought to Council for full approval at a future meeting.
22. The Chair thanked the VNEC and the team for the work they were doing, and also remarked on the very positive comments from members of the profession that he had heard at many conferences on the CertAVN framework and the qualifications that were being offered, and it was hoped that further and more diverse options would be offered in the future. It was also pleasing to note that there were now over 22,000 RVNs on the Register.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

23. The Lead for Postgraduate Education presented the Minutes of the CPD Policy and Compliance Subcommittee held on 27 October 2022 and highlighted a few items.
24. The Committee had welcomed some new members and was now a slightly larger group. There were currently about 93% of RVNs now using 1CPD, but a number of users, both vets and veterinary nurses, were not reflecting on their CPD and work was being carried out with the Comms team to provide further guidance and assistance on this aspect. The RCVS Academy had developed an online course on reflection, and there would also be a CPD promotion at the forthcoming London Vet Show, with a drop-in session. To promote recording of CPD, the RCVS had created a facility on the website to create QR codes for CPD events. Members organising events were also encouraged to provide time at the end of the event for reflection.
25. The Committee had discussed whether there should be a cut-off point at the end of the year for recording CPD, and it had been agreed this should be two months after the year end. Liaison would be carried out with the Comms team to ensure that regular reminders were in place.
26. The annual audit of veterinary nurses' CPD had been a little delayed and the report would be presented to the February meeting of Council.
27. It was commented that the option to include QR codes for courses was a very positive move.

Reports from RCVS Committees

Registered Veterinary Nurse Preliminary Investigation Committee (RVN PIC)

28. Council noted the report of the work of the RVN PIC since September 2021.

Standards Committee

29. Claire Roberts provided a brief update on items from the Standards Committee meeting held on 15

November.

RVN Disciplinary Committee

- 30. The reports from the Disciplinary hearings in September and November 2022 were noted.
- 31. It was commented that although VN Council receives reports from a number of RCVS standing committees, it does not currently receive a report from the Advancement of the Professions Committee. It was suggested that a regular update from this committee would be useful and it was agreed that this would be included as an item for the next meeting, and going forward.

Policy and Public Affairs update

- 32. The Policy and Public Affairs Manager provided a brief update.
- 33. An event hosted by Lord Trees had taken place in the House of Lords a few weeks previously, as part of the programme for raising awareness of the legislative reform recommendations. There had been various speakers from RCVS, BVA and also the allied professions which the RCVS intended to regulate in the future, who were able to provide information on their profession and how regulation would benefit them. This had been a very positive and well attended event.
- 34. RCVS Knowledge had provided an exhibition at the event to give a sense of how things had changed since 1966, and some of the campaign materials from the day had been put together as a microsite: <https://lifehaschanged.vet/> This included a number of case studies, including videos, aiming to illustrate the changes which the RCVS hoped to make.
- 35. On the policy side, legal advice had been sought in terms of how the Bill might work, in terms of primary and secondary legislation, and important areas to be considered including governance, and the definition of “animal”.
- 36. The Chair commented that the House of Lords event had been very useful and informative, and had highlighted the need to raise awareness of the veterinary nursing profession and what it does, including the range of animals that RVNs treat. It was suggested that the Public Advisory Group referred to by the CEO earlier in the meeting might include topics focused on veterinary nursing in the future.

Communications report

- 37. The Media and Publications Manager provided an overview of recent VN-related activities in the Comms Department.
- 38. The Workforce Action Plan had been published the previous week, based around seven key ambitions, one of which was focused on developing greater responsibility for veterinary nurses, including demonstrating the capabilities of the veterinary nursing role; ensuring clear career pathways for veterinary nurses; and continuing to progress the need for legislative change which would see veterinary nurses gain more autonomy and responsibility. Council members were

encouraged to access this via the RCVS publications page on the website. Further media and press announcements would take place around the Action Plan.

39. During the previous month, a new round of leadership stories had been launched to coincide with Black History month and had included an interview of a veterinary nurse with former President Mandisa Greene.
40. The election nomination period for VN and RCVS Councils would open in the next few days, and the web pages were in the process of being finalised.
41. Forthcoming events included the London Vet Show with messaging focused on CPD, the SPVS (Society of Practising Veterinary Surgeons) Congress in January and a RCVS Regional Question Time in Nottingham in January, to coincide with the RCVS Council meeting, which would also take place in Nottingham.
42. The revised version of the VN Standards handbook had been published the previous week and could be accessed from the publications page.
43. A content review project of the RCVS website was taking place to revise and update the content.
44. Following the accreditation of the additional CertAVN provision covered earlier in the meeting, there would be coverage in the press, media and *RCVS News* to highlight the increase in provision and the diverse range of post-registration qualification options available to veterinary nurses. The Chair added that a further Veterinary Nurses Day was being planned to take place in Oxford, in early February, and urged that those achieving the CertAVN should be encouraged to attend to promote awareness and provide inspiration. The VN days held in 2022 had been very successful.

Any other business (unclassified)

45. There was no other business.

Date of next meeting

46. Wednesday 8 February 2023, to be held in person.

Summary	
Meeting	RCVS Council Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	8 February 2023
Title	CEO update, including progress against Strategic Plan
Summary	This paper offers a summary of activity against the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan
Decisions required	To note
Attachments	Annex one – Council Culture Working Group Action Plan
Author	Lizzie Lockett CEO l.lockett@rcvs.org.uk

Classifications		
Document	Classification	Rationales
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

Background

1. The RCVS Strategic Plan 2020-2024 was approved at the RCVS Council meeting in January 2020 and came into immediate effect. The full report, including all of the narrative, together with case studies from the previous plan's successes, can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/news-and-views/publications/rcvs-strategic-plan-2020-2024/>
2. At its meeting in July 2020, the Officer Team felt it appropriate that an update be given to Council three times a year – in September, January and June – and information about a specific action can be made available to any Council member on request in between times.
3. For each action, responsibilities, recent activities and next steps have been identified in the following table. The format of this table has been updated following feedback at the September 2022 meeting of Council and now includes a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) rating against each item to show progress compared to what was anticipated at this point in the Strategic Plan's implementation. Some of the historical detail has also been removed from the table to simplify what is shown.
4. Outside of those changes noted in the Strategic Plan table to follow, since the September 2022 Council meeting we have also:
 - a. Welcomed Chris Tufnell as the new Chair of the Fellowship Board
 - b. Brought in our new simplified concerns process
 - c. Welcomed 14 overseas-qualified vets and nurses to their respective Registers in a virtual ceremony
 - d. Promoted the College and our activities at the BVNA Congress
 - e. Celebrated Black History Month with new leadership stories
 - f. Opened our 2023 Awards Nominations period
 - g. Opened our 2023 Council and VN Council elections period
 - h. Launched a new training programme via Mind Matters
 - i. Written to the Prime Minister to urge support for Afghan vets wishing to enter the UK
 - j. Attended the London Vet Show and held sessions on sustainability, CPD and current College projects
 - k. Hosted an event at the House of Lords to discuss the need for new veterinary legislation
 - l. Published our Workforce Action Plan
 - m. Hosted our first in-person Fellowship Day since 2019, including a 'Fellows of the Future' student research competition and workshops on behaviourism and quality of care
 - n. Published our new Extra-mural Studies (EMS) plans
 - o. Celebrated that a fifth institution has been accredited to provide the CertAVN
 - p. Provided new animated resources to help support those on the VetGDP
 - q. Held an information session for prospective election candidates
 - r. Held an event to explore clinical career pathways

A: Clarity

Ambition: to ensure that we have clarity of purpose and that our internal and external stakeholders and service-users understand our role in the world. We will endeavour to become a proactive regulator that remains a step ahead, even in the face of constant change and uncertainty. We will listen widely, consult meaningfully, make confident decisions, then communicate with clarity, appreciating that the final outcome may not suit everyone.

Action	Who?	Status	Recent activity/next steps
1. Continue, via the work of the Veterinary Legislation Working Party (LWP) and other groups, to review the regulatory landscape to ensure we develop world-leading, robust standards and approaches that are grounded in evidence and risk-based, in order to safeguard animal health and welfare, and public health, and maintain trust in the veterinary professions.	Exec Office/ Ed/VN		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful event took place to promote the need for new legislation at the House of Lords in October. New microsites built to support the argument. Defra supportive, progress now depends on final approval and time being available. • First accreditation with new educational standards due for March 2023 (Liverpool), and we have launched a comprehensive new online training programme for accreditation panel members via RCVS Academy. • Pre-accreditation support meetings with VN providers have been positively received.
2. Ensure that we are addressing what matters to our stakeholders and that we horizon-scan for issues that are beyond the scope of our immediate view. For example, regulation of new technologies, regulation of practices, review of our concerns and disciplinary process, and regulation of the wider veterinary team and the environment in which they work.	APC/ LWP/ PICDCL /EC		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have published our Workforce Action Plan and are planning a series of webinars to gain engagement and support for its actions. • Regulation of the wider veterinary team is linked to new veterinary legislation – see above. We continue to investigate and debate the most appropriate groups to bring under any future regulatory umbrella, for example, discussion at recently Fellowship Day on behaviourists. • The new concerns process is now launched and the website has been updated accordingly. The new Charter Case Committee will commence work in 2023. • Our new plans for EMS have been published. • UCOOH review is ongoing and will be discussed at the January 2023 meeting of Council.
3. Review whether we can take a more proactive role around breaches of the Veterinary Surgeons Act involving unqualified individuals, or courses that purport to lead to registration but do not, both through education to end-users of veterinary services, and working more actively to support those wishing to raise concerns with the relevant authorities.	Registrar		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A paper on breaches of the VSA was submitted for consideration by Council in September 2022 along with consideration of courses that purport to lead to registration but do not; a policy will be brought to Council in March 2023.

Action	Who?	Status	Recent activity/next steps
4. Work with our partners overseas to ensure that the UK remains relevant in the veterinary world post-EU exit, including sharing knowledge, marketing our standards and services, and building an engaged diaspora of members of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (MsRCVS) and registered veterinary nurses (RVNs). Ensure there is a global element to all that we do, and that our international members feel engaged and included.	APC/ FVE/ EC		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue improving engagement with overseas members. Work ongoing to develop more permanent solution to loss of mutual recognition of professional qualifications – paper to January 2023 Council. Pick up work with OIE regarding regulatory twinning project with countries that do not have well embedded structures - to be restarted. Continuing strong relations with International Accreditors Working Group, Federation of Veterinarians of Europe, Mind Matters International and International Veterinary Regulators Network. Academy course developed for overseas vets and VNs applying to register.
5. Build a closer relationship between the College, the professions and the public by continuing our outreach programme. Review how we gain input from stakeholders at all levels, including the development of an improved process for seeking input from members of the public.	APC/ Comms/ Exec		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting up of Public Advisory Group underway – delays due to resourcing. Programme of attendance at events and congresses for 2023 being finalised, including public outreach. Survey planned to evaluate effectiveness of RCVS coms and engagement activities, and review vet/VN preferences, to inform new comms strategy. RCVS Academy gaining good engagement. New iteration of Council Culture Working Group continues to recommend how relationship between Council and professions can be improved – see Annex One for its Action Plan.
6. Establish clarity around a data-sharing commitment, and ensure that our views, our data & our insights are shared regularly in an easy-to-search way, for example, easy-to-find FAQ on key issues, insights gained from concerns & complaints data, and self-service facts and figures about the professions. Make available accessible & anonymised versions of the data we hold to all stakeholders to enable them to generate value and insights for the sector.	FRC/ Digital/ Policy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop dashboard on key metrics – identifying key areas underway. Data management system review under consideration by Finance and Resources Committee. Additional data being gathered about reasons for leaving the RCVS Registers – reported to Registration Committee. More work needs to be done on the self-service data aspect.
7. Plan and implement a cycle of review and improvement for our educational standards and processes, to ensure we continue to take a leadership role with our international partners.	Ed Ctee/ VN Ed Ctee		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course now on RCVS Academy for accreditation panellists. First visit under new standards will take place in March 2023 (Liverpool). Review of AP / Specialist status ongoing – clinical careers event 7 December, and report going to Education Committee in February 2023. Support for programmes going through the VN Accreditation process launched March 2022. ENQA re-accreditation w/c 3 April, Self-Evaluation Report submitted.
8. Ensure clarity of appeal across all the areas where we make decisions, modernising where appropriate; where appeal is unavailable, clearly justify.	Legal services		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration appeals process to be considered now MRPQ no longer exists. Appeal process for Statutory Membership Examination to be considered.

B: Compassion

Ambition: to be a compassionate upstream regulator and a supportive Royal College by ensuring that high standards continue to be met while working in an empathetic way that respects all of our stakeholders and service-users as individuals. We will recognise that a compassionate approach involves helping members of the veterinary team build the skills and knowledge they need to meet our standards, which is ultimately in the interests of animal health and welfare.

Action	Who?	Status	Recent activity/next steps
1. Endeavour to ensure that the College is seen as approachable, helpful, fair and accessible to all.	All		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full web content review is underway, with consideration being given to information accuracy, content design, language style, accessibility, diversity and inclusion and search engine optimisation (SEO). See also A5 above ref engagement. Review of appeals processes ongoing, see A8 above. Improving the way we communicate Council and committee activities as part of the Council Culture project.
2. Enable our teams to deliver compassionate regulation by providing structures, training and support to ensure they can help vets and nurses meet the standards required in a compassionate way, and take ownership and communicate clearly when things don't go to plan. Recognising that, in order to achieve this, our team members must also feel well supported and that they are compassionately treated.	People		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peakon data regularly reviewed. New staff feedback group being set up (to bring together previous LGBTQ+, wellbeing and EDI groups). New staff training priorities will fall out of 'My Progress' annual review process; this process now has greater focus on values. New online learning hub for staff under consideration, and new intranet. Thematic review of data from exit interviews now going to Senior Team. Review of EAP and other support will take place shortly.
3. Review our concerns process through the eyes of each of our stakeholder and service-user groups to ensure that it is fair, forward-thinking and compassionate, and set out a programme of quality improvement.	ProfCon MMI		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing comms and marketing around our ProfCon Investigation Support Service Public Advisory Group will support us developing more compassionate approach for animal owners.

Action	Who?	Status	Recent activity/next steps
4. Help our regulated professionals to meet the standards expected of them by their peers, the public and society at large by launching the RCVS Academy, which will house a range of online educational tools to help veterinary surgeons, veterinary nurses and other potential associates of the College understand what is expected of them in terms of meeting standards, and to support them acquiring relevant knowledge and staying up to date in a creative, accessible and inspiring way.	Exec ALL		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New courses being launched regularly. • Early feedback and engagement good, and process of quality improvement underway. • Regular contact with advisory panel of vets and nurses.
5. Continue to support the mental health and wellbeing of members of the veterinary team, and our College staff, through the Mind Matters Initiative under its workstreams of 'prevent, protect and support' (see www.vetmindmatters.org), and also help veterinary professionals to take account of the mental health of those with whom they come into contact.	APC		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New training programme just launched. • New strategy being finalised. • MM International research event under discussion as possibility.
6. Continue to foster a reflective learning culture amongst members of the veterinary team, so that they can continue to grow and develop in a supportive, no-blame environment.	APC Ed Cttee		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective CPD and use of 1CPD app now mandatory – communications and promotion have taken place during 2022 and will continue. • Evaluation of VetGDP Adviser e-learning highly positive. • Discussions ongoing with NHS regarding relaunch of Edward Jenner Leadership MOOC.

C: Courage

Ambition: we will have the courage to take a leadership role within the professions, to ensure that the pervading culture is healthy, sustainable, inclusive, innovative and respectful; through this, will develop confident veterinary professionals.

Action	Who?	Status	Recent activity/next steps
1. Continue to seek culture change within the wider professions around help-seeking behaviour to support both mental and physical health, learning culture, leadership, innovation, sustainability and diversity.	DIG MMI APC Education		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See B5 for MMI and B6 for learning culture. • VN version of religious clothing document under development. • Fellowship Science Advisory Panel project on Net Zero Surgery ongoing. • Series of leadership stories for Black History Month in October 2022. • Sustainability is a key aspect of Hardwick Street Refurbishment project. • ViVet Student Innovation Competition for vet and VN students ongoing, and Innovation Assessment, an online self-assessment form aimed at practices looking to learn how they can be more innovative. • Academic paper on learning culture development in VetGDP published in the Journal of Veterinary Medical Education, and session accepted at the forthcoming Advance HE conference on work to support BAME students. • VetGDP for returners now launched to help people to return to veterinary work following a career break. • Chronic illness survey in final preparations for launch, aim to complete by summer; have supported the FVE campaign with videos; inclusive recruitment toolkit next to be tackled by Diversity and Inclusion Group. • Course under development to support newly-registered veterinary nurses and those returning following a career break.
2. Celebrate the art as well as the science of veterinary medicine and ensure that wider professional skills are properly and credibly supported.	APC RCVSK Education		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominations round for RCVS Awards to celebrate all aspects of the profession now open. • New building development project will focus on history and development of modern veterinary practice. • The introduction of the new Fellowship categories have brought in a wider diversity of Fellows, whose expertise on the art and science of veterinary medicine needs to be harnessed. Wider skills continue to be championed through the CertAVP and the new vet school standards.

Action	Who?	Status	Recent activity/next steps
3. Work with other stakeholders to retain skills and talent within the professions, by developing return-to-work options that build confidence in those who have had a career break, for whatever reason.	<i>Education MMI ViVet Academy Exec</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of Workforce Action Plan outlines range of actions to be taken under this heading. A series of webinars with the wider profession will aim to gain buy-in for actions to meet each ambition, dates TBC. • VetGDP is available for those returning to the profession. Compulsory for those away from the profession for more than five years, optional for those away for a shorter period. Now covered in VetGDP coms. • Course under development for nurses returning following a five-year absence from the Register • Work underway to understand recruitment, retention and return activities within the government / public health veterinary sector and develop an action plan based on recent gap analysis event.
4. Ensure a pathway for career progression for vets and nurses via postgraduate/post-qualification accreditations and qualifications – to meet the needs of vets and nurses at all stages of their careers.	<i>Education VN</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fifth provider of CertAVN approved. • Clinical career pathways event took place – report under development. • VN career progression linked to LWP proposals (see A1). • Proposals under development for the Advanced Practitioner role for veterinary nurses. • Actions within Workforce Action Plan also consider fulfilling careers.
5. Develop extra-mural studies (EMS) and work experience opportunities at the College, together with more opportunities for veterinary professionals and members of the public to become engaged with the work of the regulator at first hand and gain an understanding of its complexities.	<i>Comms APC</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop modules for Academy to better explain our key functions. • Recruitment for next round of EMS placements, jointly with Veterinary Policy Research Foundation, will go live shortly. • Officers attended a range of freshers' weeks and careers fairs at the vet schools in autumn 2022. • CEO undertaking talks with practices - including new grads – to demystify the work of the College.
6. Create an innovation funding pot to enable the professions to help solve regulation and professional standards issues that matter to them.	<i>Exec FRC</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch bursary scheme – title? • Consideration of challenge prize on hold due to pandemic and other priorities. It will also be important to ensure the professions have the right skills and approach to innovation in order to maximise the opportunity.

Action	Who?	Status	Recent activity/next steps
7. Continue to develop the Fellowship into a learned society that reflects the varied achievements of the veterinary profession; encourages the advancement of standards; and, develops public awareness of veterinary medicine and science, for example, via the development of a Fellow on the Public Understanding of Veterinary Science.	<i>Fellows APC</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31 new Fellows admitted at Fellowship Day in November 2022, positive event. • New Chair of Fellowship Board, Chair of Science Advisory Panel and Project Officer elected. • New Board members are creating the plan for Fellow outreach and interactions over the next few months, for example, Fellows on Tour and wider speaking opportunities. • Positive feedback from the panel sessions held at Fellowship Day - look to continue that type of interaction to increase awareness of key issues and to help drive activities. • Applications now welcomed for 2023 intake, encouraging GPs and those from non-traditional veterinary roles to apply. • FSAP looking at behaviourism and net zero.
8. Review new ways of reaching consensus and driving change within our leadership and governance structure.	Exec Officers		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second iteration of Council Culture Working Group set up – see annex 1 for its action plan. Next meeting on 23 January. • Review of induction process with new Council members to understand positive impact of induction and any challenges. • Reflection sessions being trialled after Council meetings to discuss how effectively business was conducted. • Review impact of 2018 LRO on Governance (see also D1). • Meeting held with prospective Council and VN Council nominees to better set expectations of the role. • Workshop sessions to be planned with external speakers on board effectiveness.
9. Work with the BVA and the BVNA to evaluate the success of the first action plans for Vet Futures and VN Futures respectively, assess whether the ambitions remain relevant, and develop new action plans accordingly. Work with the FVE to support the delivery of Vet Futures Europe.	Exec		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case studies on VF successes need to be refreshed, to form part of VF evaluation document (joint with BVA). Some delays due to resourcing. • VF part two under consideration. • VN Futures evaluation report published in September 2022; work now ongoing to develop an animation to outline achievements and future activities.

D: Confidence

Ambition: in order to deliver our Strategic Plan we must not only have the mandate that is secured by the Veterinary Surgeons Act and our Royal Charter, but also the confidence to succeed that will be brought by the right underpinning – the governance, people, finance, communications and IT structures that are crucial to our success.

Action	Who?	Status	Recent activity/next steps
1. Review the bedding-in of the 2018 Legislative Reform Order to ensure that our Council and committee structure is efficient, effective, and transparent, and provides the right level of strategic oversight coupled with skills-based input to allow the College to function to the best of its abilities.	Officers Exec		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scoping for informal review in 2023. Some of these issues under consideration by Council Culture Working Group. Governance Manual in progress. Action plan to resolve gaps vs Charity Code being worked through by Senior Team.
2. Review the structure of all of our groups operating below committee level, to ensure the right mix of skills are available to tackle the tasks at hand and that each group has clear membership, purpose, principles, time-frame and sense of what success will look like.	FRC Ops		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills being considered as part of Council Culture project. New software for the management of Council and committee papers has been well received. Annual review of delegation scheme now routine and all groups now have ToR and greater clarity. New templates for papers under development, along with training for secretariats. Thought to be given to the number of Council and Committee meetings we have.
3. Develop and embed a meaningful dashboard to help ensure that appetite for risk is clear, risk is managed and any early warning signs are addressed.	ARC FRC Ops		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk process well embedded and regularly praised by Audit and Risk Committee for its effectiveness. Business Continuity Planning meeting took place recently and changes being made to the plan in response. Work ongoing on risk dashboard and assurance map. Greater visibility of Corporate Risk Register now available to Council.
4. Collate and review our member and service-user feedback on an ongoing basis, against key performance indicators, and work with RCVS Knowledge to employ a quality improvement and innovation methodology to ensure we are providing services that meet the needs of our audiences and society at large.	Ops Head of I&E		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Insight and Engagement has left – role under review. Improvement of KPIs under way. Process for reviewing / analysing all complaints about RCVS, regardless of area of work still ongoing. New Customer Services team set up on a trial basis. VN 'leaver survey' under development. Zero tolerance for abuse of our staff statement now on the website.

Action	Who?	Status	Recent activity/next steps
5. Put in place a People Strategy that develops our talent, diversity, leadership and culture, across the staff team, Council and committee members, examiners, assessors and all others who work on behalf of the College.	Exec People		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide data ref current position on gender and other diversity strands by end Q3 2023. • Learning management system platform to be up and running with initial material by Q2. • Change of pension provider has been implemented for staff who were members of the current scheme. The change process was smooth, error-free and meets a number of important criteria for members such as ESG credentials and accessibility. A review of the remaining scheme is to take place in Q1. • Data dashboard under construction to highlight people data to include diversity and gender information. Due to changes in the People team this work will be delayed until Q2 although specific data regarding recruitment will be available sooner. • First cohort has completed new Guide Your Progress Course for middle managers and been very well received. • New employee network to be launched during Q1. • Update of induction and probation processes in progress, majority of the policies are complete with some minor adjustments based on feedback being updated. • Trans and menopause policies finalised. • Eighteen people clinics for managers have been delivered, providing advice and knowledge around key subject areas including employment law, and bullying and harassment in the workplace. Further clinics will be developed in early 2023. • Review of payroll and people systems underway, to reduce repetition and administration, provide a better service to managers and improve the experience for new recruits.
6. Ensure our financial systems are customer-focused, fraud-resistant and efficient, and improve communication and clarity over where money is spent and its impact.	FRC Ops		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure database upgrade includes a flexible customer interface.
7. Develop and implement a technology strategy that puts digital first, is collaborative, and focuses on simplification and convergence.	Exec Digital FRC		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultants contracted to support tender for new CRM system. Project Board in place to give oversight.

Action	Who?	Status	Recent activity/next steps
8. Purchase a new property that aims to serve the needs of the College for the next twenty years, while not putting an undue future financial commitment on our members.	Estates Ops		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peldon Rose hired to support commercial strategy and refurbishment approach. Meetings taken place with staff and Council. Staff survey currently out for completion. Work reports to HS Refurbishment Group. First set of tenants now exited HS.
9. Put in place a communications strategy that will focus on clarifying what we are, and what we are not, and be stronger about calling out those who seek to undermine the College; own our shortcomings and be clear about where and how we will change; and be bolder about celebrating our successes and our unique contribution to animal health and welfare, and public health. Empower our wider team to become communications ambassadors for the College.	Comms		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RCVS comms survey of key stakeholders (including professions, public etc) to establish preferences and gain feedback. Use feedback to devise coms strategy to support strategic ambitions, departmental activities and stakeholder requirements. Produce social media guidance. Social media strategy under development as part of broader planning work. Development of Language/Content Style Guide underway as part of web content review.
10. Develop and implement a corporate social responsibility strategy that befits an organisation that works in the public interest.	FRC Ops		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental impact of any new building under consideration, plus how it can help us integrate into, and support, local community. Work ongoing with UKHACC. Regular reviews of investment portfolio to ensure it aligns with our values. Push to encourage staff to make more use of volunteering days to support social responsibility of the organisation. Working towards iiE Silver once in new building (likely to remain at Bronze for 2023). Consideration of carbon off-setting line in 2024 budget.

Annex One – Council Culture Working Group Action Plan

Theme		Actions agreed to date	Next steps/timing	Action owner	Final approval
Code of conduct	Update of complaints process	New process agreed at November 2022 Council meeting.	Complete	Eleanor Ferguson	Council
	Review of Code of Conduct	Current version needs to be updated including changes to the Nolan Principles and consistency with Council's 'How We Work' statement.	Update to be reviewed at January 2023 WG meeting and passed to Council for approval.	Eleanor Ferguson	Council
Skills	Skills development	Council members to be surveyed on personal development needs in their role as Council members to inform potential development programme.	Survey topics to be reviewed at January 2023 WG meeting.	Lisa Hall	
	Committee Chair training	Training approach/provider to be identified.	Commissioning and delivery asap	Lisa Hall	
	Reflection sessions for Chairs and President	Agreed that requirement was for an annual performance/development review for all Council and Committee members. Group members agreed to identify any suitable models.	Models identified from other organisations to be reviewed at January 2023 WG meeting.	Lisa Hall	Council
	Reflection model for all Council members				
	OPQ questionnaire	Use of OPQ questionnaire (or similar) to be incorporated as part of reflection process for Council and Committee member annual performance/development reviews.	On hold until further work undertaken on annual review process.	Lisa Hall	
	Whole council evaluation	Agreed that periodic review of whole Council effectiveness should take place. Group members agreed to identify any suitable models, for example Charity Governance Code evaluation tool.	Models/questionnaires to be reviewed at January 2023 WG meeting.	Lisa Hall	Council

Theme		Actions agreed to date	Next steps/timing	Action owner	Final approval
Elections	Updating of Statutory Instrument	Liaison with Defra ongoing.	Discussions to be reported back to WG and/or Council.	Eleanor Ferguson	Council
	Develop updated nominations form	Agreed that changes should be recommended to Council for 2024 elections.	WG to review at future WG meeting (date tbc).	Eleanor Ferguson	Council
	Update 'job spec'	Group members agreed to feedback on current materials for changes in 2023 and 2024.	Immediate changes to be incorporated in current materials. WG to review additional changes at future WG meeting (date tbc).	Eleanor Ferguson	
	Communication in nomination period	Ongoing	WG to review activity at future WG meeting (date tbc).	Ian Holloway	
Induction	Learning activities for Council members	Agreed that requirement would be developed further after survey of Council members (see skills development above).			
	Review induction	Agreed that as well as new member induction, specific induction required for members joining committees.	WG to review current programme at January 2023 meeting.	Lisa Hall	
Council visibility	Implementation of agreed activities	Ongoing	WG to be updated on progress at January 2023 meeting.	Ian Holloway	
	Review and update activities				

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	8 February 2023
Title	Minutes of meeting of VN Education Committee held on 13 December 2022
Summary	Minutes of the meeting of Veterinary Nurse Education Committee held on 13 December 2022
Decisions required	To approve
Attachments	Classified appendix (confidential)
Author	Annette Amato Committee Secretary a.amato@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0713

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	Confidential	2,3,4

¹Classifications explained

Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.
Confidential	Temporarily available only to Council Members, non-Council members of the relevant committee, sub-committee, working party or Board and not for dissemination outside that group unless and until the relevant committee or Council has given approval for public discussion, consultation or publication.
Private	The paper includes personal data which should not be disclosed at any time or for any reason, unless the data subject has agreed otherwise. The Chair may, however, indicate after discussion that there are general issues which can be disclosed, for example in reports to committees and Council.

²Classification rationales

Confidential	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others 2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation 3. To protect commercially sensitive information 4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation



Veterinary Nurse Education Committee Minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2022

Members:	Mrs Donna Cotton	-	Employer representative
	Miss Julia Cox	-	Employer representative
	Ms Sarah Fox	-	VN Council lay member
	Mrs Sarah Holman	-	FE veterinary nursing provider
	Mrs Susan Howarth	-	VN Council veterinary nurse (Chair)
	Miss Sophia Hoyland	-	HE student representative
	Miss Betsy Malamah-Thomas	-	Employer representative
	Professor Elizabeth Mossop	-	Independent educationalist
	* Mrs Sarah Parkhouse	-	FE veterinary nursing provider
	* Mrs Sarah Reynolds-Golding	-	HE veterinary nursing provider
	Mrs Perdi Welsh	-	Post-registration veterinary nurse provider
	* Miss Leigh Willson	-	FE student representative
	*absent		

In attendance:	Mrs Annette Amato	-	Committee Secretary
	Mrs Jasmine Curtis	-	Qualifications Assessor
	Mrs Julie Dugmore	-	Director of Veterinary Nursing
	Miss Shirley Gibbins	-	Qualifications Manager
	Mrs Victoria Hedges	-	Examinations Manager
	Mrs Kirsty Williams	-	Education Quality Improvement Manager

Apologies for absence

1. The Chair welcomed Betsy Malamah-Thomas to her first meeting of the Committee. Apologies for absence were received from Sarah Parkhouse, Sarah Reynolds-Golding and Leigh Willson.

Declarations of interest

2. Two members declared an interest in relation to specific items on the agenda. These were noted at the relevant item and where considered necessary, the member left the meeting for the discussion of the item.

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee (VNEC) held on 12 October 2022

3. The Committee accepted the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2022 as a correct record. These had been previously circulated to the Committee, and had been presented to VN Council for approval at its meeting in November 2022.

Matters arising

4. There was one matter arising from the previous minutes. This item is included in the confidential appendix.

Veterinary Nursing update

5. The Director of Veterinary Nursing updated the Committee on recent developments and activities.
 6. **Enrolments.** All student enrolments were now being processed through the online portal, which was working well. In the period between 1 August and 13 December 2022, 1,659 individual enrolment applications had been received, of which 1,254 had been processed. 405 applications were awaiting receipt of payment. Enrolments were being processed in a timely manner and it had not been necessary to recruit any temporary assistance.
 7. **Registrations.** No applications had been received from students requiring special consideration in respect of the completion of the required practice training hours due to the effect of the Covid pandemic, but the provision would remain in place for the time being to ensure that any students potentially affected could apply for consideration.
 8. **Veterinary Nurses' Days.** The next Veterinary Nurses' Day would be held in Oxford, on 4 February 2023. This would enable those newly registered nurses who had been unable to attend the events in 2022 to have an opportunity to attend, as well as recent registrations and those achieving the Diploma and the Certificates in Advanced Veterinary Nursing.
 9. **Termination of Accreditation.** A meeting had been held with Anglia Ruskin University the previous day, at which the university had informed the RCVS that it did not intend to validate any future provision leading to VN licence to practise qualifications. The University is currently on Terminal Accreditation and current students are required to sit the pre-registration examination. It was likely that the remaining students would complete by 2025 at the latest, and in the meantime monitoring and auditing activity would continue.
 10. **Veterinary nursing team.** Recruitment was currently taking place for an Examinations Administrator in a part-time role, as well as a separate assessor to work alongside the examinations manager, to assist with the assessment and running of the examinations. Recruitment was also being carried out for a replacement Qualifications Coordinator, the previous staff member having left in September. In the meantime the role had been covered by a temporary staff member.
 11. **ENQA (European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) review.** The Education Quality Improvement Manager reported that the ENQA review, covering both
-

veterinary and veterinary nursing education, was due to take place during the first week in April, and some committee members may be requested to meet with the ENQA panel. Further details would be known in the New Year.

Matters for decision

Licence to practise qualifications

12. **Accreditation visitor approval.** The Committee considered the person specification and Curriculum Vitae for an applicant to the accreditation visitor panel. It was agreed that the applicant should be added to the visitor panel for Further Education accreditations.

Matters for note

Licence to practise qualifications

Pre-accreditation support

13. The Qualifications Manager provided a report on the current status of the roll out of the pre-accreditation support package for all Accredited Education Institutions (AEIs). This was still ongoing and feedback continued to be very positive. A very useful meeting had recently been held with Aberystwyth University which hoped to come on board as a new veterinary nursing provider.
14. Forthcoming meetings were being planned for AEIs due for re-accreditation in 2023/2024.
15. It was noted that full accreditation activities had been resumed, with two accreditations having been undertaken in 2022. The first reports would be presented to the February committee meeting. These had been the first visits utilising the new process, with an external chair and external panel. Helpful feedback and guidance had been provided by Education Quality Improvement Manager, with regard to maintaining and ensuring compliance with ENQA.

Action plan monitoring accreditation/re-accreditation

16. **Lantra Awards.** It was reported that all actions relating to the accreditation had now been met.

Quality Monitoring activities

17. The Committee was provided with papers setting out full updates on quality monitoring activities and the actions which had been taken, and the risk levels, for the following universities and centres:
 - Anglia Ruskin University
 - Edinburgh Napier University
 - North Highland College

18. A query was raised arising from one of the reports, on the RCVS requirements for the overall number of hours of a programme. The Director of Veterinary Nursing clarified that under the RCVS Registration Rules, the overall number of hours required for an accredited programme must be at least 2,990 hours, which must include a minimum 1,800 hours on clinical placement.
19. It was further clarified that the 2,990 hours includes the learning hours and contact time for the programme as a whole. RCVS guidance is that institutions that have concerns regarding the 1,800 hours clinical placement, and the compliance with national minimum wage regulations, should obtain advice from their own institution's legal team.

Action plan quality monitoring - quality assurance

20. Oral updates were provided on the monitoring of action plans and future planned actions for the following AElS and centres:
- Coleg Sir Gar
 - College of West Anglia
 - Coventry University
 - Duchy College
 - Goddard Veterinary Nursing College
 - Hartpury University
 - Lantra Awards
 - Middlesex University
 - Nottingham Trent University
 - Oxford Brookes University
 - Reaseheath College
 - Royal Agricultural University (Askham Bryan)
 - South Staffordshire College
 - University of Central Lancashire
 - University of Chester
 - University of Glasgow (SRUC Barony)
 - University of Glasgow (SRUC Aberdeen)
 - University of Plymouth
 - University of South Wales
 - Wrexham Glyndwr

Post registration qualifications

Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing Action plan monitoring – Accreditation/Reaccreditation

21. **Hartpury University.** It was reported that actions were progressing and on target.
22. **Royal Veterinary College.** All actions had now been met.

VN Pre-registration Examination Board (PREB)

23. The Examinations Manager provided an overview of the pre-registration examinations delivered in 2022. Four separate Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) had been delivered, over a total of eight days. A total of 113 candidates had sat the examination, with an overall pass rate of 78% over the year.
24. The Committee was provided with the minutes of the PREB meeting for the November examination. A record number of candidates had entered the examination, which had been extended by an additional day to accommodate all the applicants. There had been forty eight candidates, of whom thirty three passed and fifteen failed.
25. The RCVS had recruited a multiple choice examinations developer, on a fixed term six month contract, and a report on their work would be provided at the February meeting.
26. It was noted from the minutes that measures had been taken to reduce waste in the examinations. A report on this would be provided to the RCVS green team, which it was hoped would be used as evidence toward the Investors in the Environment accreditation scheme.
27. It was commented that it would be useful to share hints and tips on waste reduction in examinations with the VN educators, and it was noted that the RCVS green team was also intending to liaise with those running the veterinary surgeons' statutory membership examination.
28. The Chair wondered whether there was any further guidance that could be provided to support examination candidates. It was noted that some applicants choose to undergo a period of supervised adaptation in a UK practice, to prepare for the examination. There is also a module run by the RCVS Academy to assist with preparation for the OSCE.

Items for publication

29. As mentioned in para 27 , it might be possible to publish some hints and tips on reducing waste in examinations.

Any other business

30. The Chair requested that consideration be given to digitising or automating the enrolment process for post-registration qualification candidates, to streamline the process which is currently paper based. The Qualifications Manager confirmed that this is currently in the pipeline.

Meeting dates 2023

31. The dates for 2023 were confirmed as follows:
-

- Tuesday 21 February
- Tuesday 18 April
- Wednesday 14 June (in person)
- Thursday 10 August
- Thursday 12 October
- Monday 11 December

Remote meetings would start at 9.30am. The venue and start time for the in-person meeting would be confirmed.

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	8 February 2023
Title	RVN CPD Audit 2022
Summary	This paper provides the analysis of the 2022 audit of CPD records of veterinary nurses.
Decisions required	None
Attachments	Annex A – CPD Audit Data
Author	Jenny Soreskog-Turp Lead for Postgraduate Education j.soreskog-turp@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0701

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

¹Classifications explained

Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.
Confidential	Temporarily available only to Council Members, non-Council members of the relevant committee, sub-committee, working party or Board and not for dissemination outside that group unless and until the relevant committee or Council has given approval for public discussion, consultation or publication.
Private	The paper includes personal data which should not be disclosed at any time or for any reason, unless the data subject has agreed otherwise. The Chair may, however, indicate after discussion that there are general issues which can be disclosed, for example in reports to committees and Council.

²Classification rationales

Confidential	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others 2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation 3. To protect commercially sensitive information 4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation

Background

1. The CPD requirement for registered veterinary nurses (RVNs) is 15 hours per calendar year.
2. The aim of the audit is to enable the College to evaluate compliance with the requirement, raising awareness of the obligations set out in the Code of Professional Conduct and providing a picture of the average uptake across the profession.

Procedure

3. The audit included the following four groups of RVNs:
 - a) **Group 1.** A sample of 10% of RVNs who are not using 1CPD
 - b) **Group 2.** A sample of 10% of RVNs who were non-compliant 1CPD users.
 - c) **Group 3.** RVNs who responded to last year's audit but had not met the requirement.
 - d) **Group 4.** RVNs who, despite reminders, failed to respond to the request to submit their CPD records in the previous audit.
 - e) **Group 4.** RVNs who confirmed that they were not compliant with the CPD requirement at last year's annual renewal.
4. Nurses were asked for their CPD records for 2021 either by confirming that were using 1CPD or send a scanned copy of their CPD records.

Outcomes of the audit

5. Please see Annex A for a full report of the results.
6. Responses were received from 403 veterinary nurses (67%):
 - a. 225 RVNs whose records show that they are compliant with the CPD requirement (56 % of respondents).
 - b. 178 RVNs whose records show that they are not currently compliant with the CPD requirement (44%).
7. 196 RVNs have not responded to either the initial request for their records or to the subsequent reminders.
8. 87% of respondents are using 1CPD, 5% other formats of CPD Records and 7% provided no records at all. 57 RVNs that were part of the audit group 1 started using 1CPD.
9. The breakdown of CPD hours by age groups shows that non-compliance is higher for the youngest and oldest age groups, but the samples groups are much smaller. Compliance was highest at 50-59 age group, 65% were compliant.

10. The breakdown of CPD hours by the number of years on the register show that compliance is highest in the group that have been longest on the register, 31-45 years (67%) but the group was smaller than the other groups.

Non-compliance

11. 178 RVNs were not compliant with CPD requirement, 9% did not give any reason for being non-compliant. The main reasons for non-compliance were (the numbers in brackets are the percentage from the 2019 audit)
- a. Family commitments 19% (24%)
 - b. Illness 19% (15%)
 - c. Parental leave 13% (7%)
 - d. No Records 13% (2%)
 - e. Time/opportunity 12% (10%)
 - f. Leaving the profession 7% (3%)
 - g. Will send records 6% (6%)
 - h. Not working 1% (1%)
12. A majority of RVNs who were non-compliant were not aware that they could pause their CPD but many of them had not recorded enough hours to be compliant even with a 6 months CPD pause.
13. RVNs that were non-compliant, recorded an average of 5 hours in 2021 compared to 41 hours for compliant RVNs.
14. 25% of non-compliant RVNs had been included in a previous audit but only 6 had been included in three or more audits.

Non-Respondents

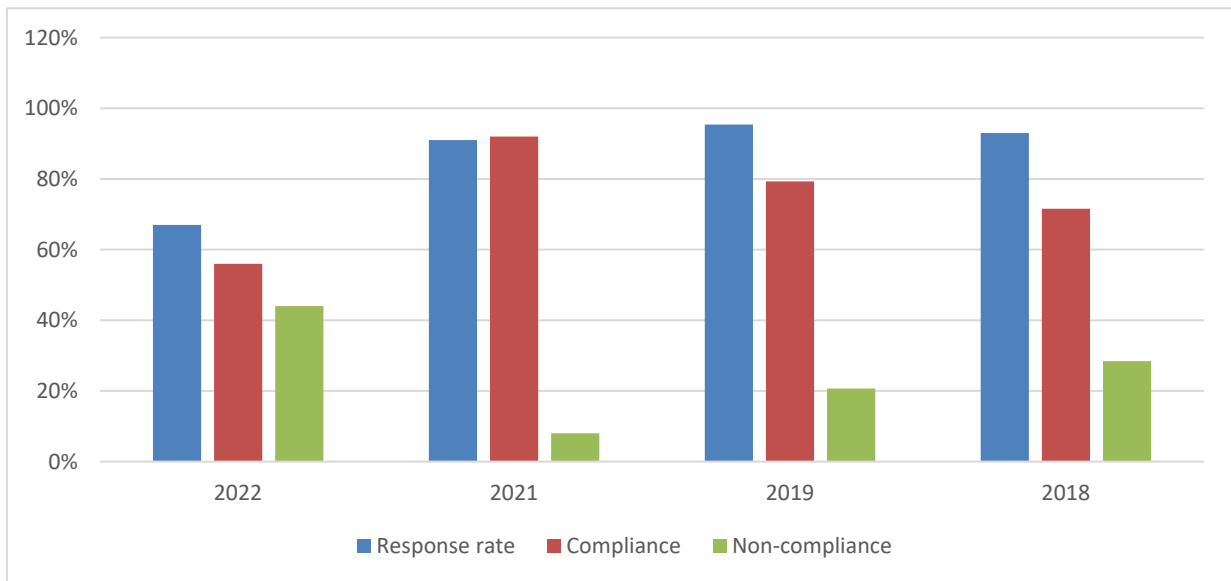
15. 196 (33%) RVNs did not respond to any communication from the RCVS regarding their CPD, which is significantly higher than previous years (9%,5%).
16. 25% of non-responders had been included in a previous audit and 12% had been included in at least two other audits without being compliant or responded to the request.

Next Step

17. As 1CPD is now mandatory and part of the RCVS CPD requirement, all members who have not met the requirement will be contacted at the beginning of each year in line with the CPD non-compliance policy that was agreed by VN Council in 2021 and therefore there will no longer be a necessary to do audit samples to check compliance.
18. The CPD Policy and Compliance subcommittee will review options for introducing a quality framework for CPD which may include audits to check quality of CPD and reflections. The discussions of the committee will be reported back to VN Council in due time.

Annex A

	Included in sample	Responded		Compliant		Non-compliant (NC)	
Total 2022	599	403	67%	225	56%	178	44%
Total 2021	1376	1247	91%	1145	92%	100	8%
Total 2019	1129	1077	95%	854	79%	223	21%
Total 2018	1016	939	93%	672	72%	267	28%
Total 2017	857	792	92%	575	73%	217	27%
Total 2016	627	591	94%	420	71%	171	29%
Total 2015	798	739	93%	574	78%	165	22%
Total 2014	814	718	88%	556	77%	162	23%



	Included in sample	Responded		Compliant		Non-compliant (NC)	
Group 1	113	76	67%	58	76%	18	24%
Group 2	300	219	73%	134	61%	79	36%
Group 3	37	28	76%	8	29%	20	71%
Group 4	56	23	41%	6	26%	17	74%
Group 5							
Total	506	346	68%	206	60%	134	39%

Records received		
1CPD	352	87%
Email	21	5%
No records	30	7%

Average number of CPD Hours	All	Compliant	Non Compliant	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
	19	30	5	41	16	9	9	8

CPD Breakdown by years on the register

		NC	NC	C	C
03-06	58	35	60%	23	40%
07-12	118	52	44%	66	56%
13-19	115	46	40%	69	60%
20-30	58	34	59%	24	41%
31-45	33	11	33%	22	67%

CPD Breakdown by age

	Total	NC	NC	C	C
24-29	39	26	67%	13	33%
30-39	139	62	45%	77	55%
40-49	137	55	40%	82	60%
50-59	54	19	35%	35	65%
60-70	18	9	50%	9	50%

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	8 February 2023
Title	RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee Report to VN Council
Summary	This report sets out the work of the Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN) Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC)
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Authors	<p>Sandra Neary Secretary to the RVN PIC s.neary@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0730</p> <p>Gemma Crossley Head of Professional Conduct g.crossley@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0740</p>

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	N/A

¹Classifications explained

Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.
Confidential	Temporarily available only to Council Members, non-Council members of the relevant committee, sub-committee, working party or Board and not for dissemination outside that group unless and until the relevant committee or Council has given approval for public discussion, consultation or publication.
Private	The paper includes personal data which should not be disclosed at any time or for any reason, unless the data subject has agreed otherwise. The Chair may, however, indicate after discussion that there are general issues which can be disclosed, for example in reports to committees and Council.

²Classification rationales

Confidential	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others 2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation 3. To protect commercially sensitive information 4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation

Registered Veterinary Nurses Preliminary Investigation Committee

Report to VN Council

Introduction

1. Since the last Report to Veterinary Nurses Council, there has been one meeting of the RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee, which took place on 13 December 2022. The meeting scheduled to take place on 10 January 2023 was cancelled as there were no new or ongoing cases for discussion.

RVN Concerns received / registered

2. Between 2 November 2022 and 23 January 2023, there were eight new concerns relating to RVNs. Of these eight new concerns:
 - All are currently under investigation by a Case Manager, Veterinary Nurse, Veterinary surgeon, and a lay member (Stage 1 Preliminary Investigation Committee).

RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee

3. There have been 2 new cases considered by the RVN PIC between 2 November 2022 and 23 January 2023. The first case was referred to external solicitors for formal statements to be taken and a decision on the second case was adjourned pending further investigation.

Ongoing Investigations

4. Three concerns are currently under investigation, and these will be returned to the RVN PIC for a decision in due course.

Health Concerns

5. One RVN is currently being managed in the context of the RCVS Health Protocol.

Performance Concerns

6. There are currently no RVNs being managed in the context of the RCVS Performance Protocol.

Referral to Disciplinary Committee

7. Since the last report, no cases have been referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee.

Disciplinary Hearings

8. A disciplinary hearing took place between 25 and 26 October 2022. The Disciplinary Committee directed that the RVN's name should be removed from the Register.

Operational matters

9. The new concerns process commenced on 1 October 2022 and is now bedding in. Both Case Managers and PIC members have worked hard to ensure that the new process is running smoothly and to address any initial issues that have arisen.

Stage two PIC meetings continue to be held remotely. A few meetings have been scheduled to take place in person in 2023. A further training session to address the impending Charter Case Committee and to reflect on the new process will be arranged in the next couple of months.

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	8 February 2023
Title	VN Register Report
Summary	<p>This paper provides the following statistics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The number of registered veterinary nurses as at 31 January 2023. Figures for the previous five years are also included. Number of removals from the register due to non-payment of annual fee. New registrations for the calendar years 2018- 2022 including the qualification route of the new registrants. New student enrolments per academic year. Number of veterinary nurses undertaking a Period of Supervised Practice (PSP).
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Author	<p>Annette Amato</p> <p>Secretary to Veterinary Nurses Council</p> <p>020 7202 0713</p> <p>a.amato@rcvs.org.uk</p>

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

¹Classifications explained

Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.
Confidential	Temporarily available only to Council Members, non-Council members of the relevant committee, sub-committee, working party or Board and not for dissemination outside that group unless and until the relevant committee or Council has given approval for public discussion, consultation or publication.
Private	The paper includes personal data which should not be disclosed at any time or for any reason, unless the data subject has agreed otherwise. The Chair may, however, indicate after discussion that there are general issues which can be disclosed, for example in reports to committees and Council.

²Classification rationales

Confidential	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others 2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation 3. To protect commercially sensitive information 4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation

Veterinary Nurses Register

Number of registered VNs

	18/01/2018	24/01/2019	04/02/2020	03/02/2021	01/02/2022	31/01/2023
Number of Registered Veterinary Nurses	15449	16864	18246	18882	20916	22010
Number of Nurses removed for non-payment of annual fee (annually –carried out in early January)	296 <i>(59 restored to register by 18/01/2018)</i>	450 <i>(124 restored to register by 24/01/2019)</i>	409 <i>(84 restored to register by 04/02/2020)</i>	314 <i>(24 restored to register by 04/02/2021)</i>	316 <i>(Removals carried out in February 2022)</i> <i>54 nurses restored within one month of being removed</i>	307 <i>(62 of those removed for non-payment restored to register by 31/01/2023)</i>

Number of admissions to the register (new registrants for the calendar year)

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
UK Further Education qualification	945	1197	1081	483	1727	1058
UK Higher Education qualification	401	406	503	445	478	568
Overseas qualification	89	78	62	41	39	68
Total new registrations	1435	1681	1646	969	2244	1694

Student enrolments for each academic year (from 1 July to 30 June)

Student Enrolments	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022
	1935	1990	2109	1860	1910	2339

Period of Supervised Practice (PSP)

Number of nurses commencing a Period of Supervised Practice

Period of Supervised Practice	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
commenced	44	40	34	21	33	43