

## Anything to declare?

*RVNs take opportunity  
to make moving public  
declaration*



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**In this issue:** new Vice-Chair, enrolment changes, new face for Council, forgery warning, ACOVENE update, our regulatory role summarised, TP placements – your responsibilities, international qualifications, meetings and events, exam feedback and appeals, exam dates.

# A public commitment

## VNs make their declarations at TP Congress

**M**ore than 75 veterinary nurses were given the opportunity to make their declarations of professional registration at this year's TP Congress for Clinical Coaches, which took place in March.

Although all new veterinary nurses are now required to make the declaration upon registration with the RCVS, this practice was only instituted in April 2012 – meaning that the majority of VNs have not had the opportunity to do so.

However, during a talk about VN regulation and the new Royal Charter at the Congress, Kathy Kissick, the Chair of VN Council, made an impromptu decision to ask the audience to make their declarations there and then.

She said: "I've wanted to roll the declarations out to more seasoned nurses for a while and this seemed like a good opportunity to see what the response was. There was a moment during my talk where it just felt right. It was excellent to hear so

many make the declaration, and reflect on what it means to be a VN.

"I want to do this on as many occasions as I can where there are a number of RVNs who have not yet taken the declaration and other members of VN Council are also interested in taking part."

***"It was excellent to hear so many make the declaration, and reflect on what it means to be a VN."***

The declaration has also been made by with first-year advanced nurses studying at Myerscough College while Kathy was teaching them their Law, Ethics and Professional Practice module.

An opportunity will also be made at BVNA Congress in October – keep an eye on the RCVS website for more information.



# Efficiency drive

## Enrolment changes ahead

**The VN Department has recently carried out a review of enrolment procedures, with a view to improving the process and allowing for enrolments to be handled in a more efficient manner.**

The most significant changes are as follows:

- The introduction of a new, more detailed enrolment spreadsheet – this, coupled with a new way of running uploads, will allow for accurate automated uploading of information, rather than manual data entry
- Re-introduction of Training Practice (TP) information at the point of enrolment – we have noted several issues that have arisen as a result of not knowing where students are employed and therefore we will now be requesting that TP details be supplied for all employed students. In addition we will request that all enrolment forms for these students are signed by the TP Principal. A new 'student change' form has already been introduced to record changes of TP.

***“Once the new documentation is introduced, we will be unable to accept any old enrolment forms or spreadsheets.”***

Detailed guidance will be provided to all centres regarding the new forms and spreadsheets before summer, so that they are ready to use before the autumn enrolment period.

Centres should be aware that once the new documentation is introduced, we will be unable to accept any old enrolment forms or spreadsheets.

Once the documentation is ready, it will be emailed with guidance notes to all Heads of Centre. We would be grateful if Heads of Centre could therefore ensure that this information is disseminated to all those who deal with enrolments at their respective institutions.

Please note that the current enrolment form is always available for download from the RCVS website.

If you have any doubts about the version of the spreadsheet that you have, please contact the VN team on [vnenrol@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:vnenrol@rcvs.org.uk).

# New Vice-Chair for Council

## Liz Cox takes up post in July

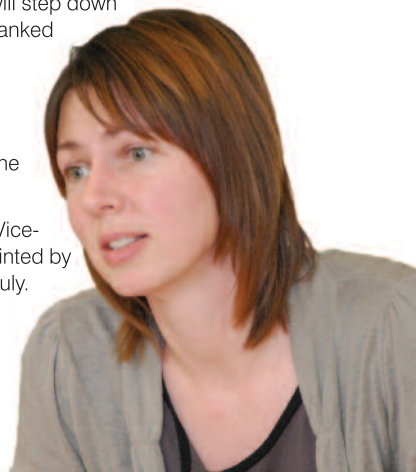
**VN Council has elected Liz Cox as one of its two new Vice-Chairs, effective from RCVS Day on 11 July.**

Liz Cox, who was voted onto Council in 2011, will take over from Liz Branscombe, who was Chair of VN Council from 2009 to 2011, prior to becoming Vice-Chair.

Traditionally, the second Vice-Chair is one of the veterinary surgeons appointed to VN Council by RCVS Council. Current Vice-Chair in this capacity, Christine Shield, will step down in July and was thanked by VN Council members for her contribution to governance of the VN profession at the May meeting.

The replacement Vice-Chair will be appointed by RCVS Council in July.

Meanwhile, Kathy Kissick will remain as Chair for the twelve months from July.



# Vectar in videos

## Online record of project outcomes

**The Vectar project – which developed an online skills training log for VN students across Europe – has now completed.**

If you are interested in finding out more about what the project achieved, videos made at the closing conference are now available online at [www.vectar.org/news/september-2013/conference-presentations](http://www.vectar.org/news/september-2013/conference-presentations).

## Would you like to work with us?

**We are currently restructuring our Veterinary Nursing and Education Teams to allow us to benefit from synergy across the two areas – this means we will have some vacancies arising. Please keep an eye on our website for more information: [www.rcvs.org.uk/about-us/work-for-us](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/about-us/work-for-us).**

# Council places

## One existing member returned and one new face elected

**T**he results of the VN Council elections were announced in early May and the two places have been taken by existing Council member Hilary Orpet (611 votes, pictured on the left) and new member Amber Richards (371 votes, pictured on the right).

Sadly, the turnout in the election was down, with only 1,157 (10%) VNs voting, compared with last year's 1,329 veterinary nurses (12.5%).

Commenting on the results, Chair of VN Council, Kathy Kissick, said: "Many congratulations to Hilary, who has been returned to the VN Council for the third time running, and to Amber, who I'm looking forward to welcoming to VN Council at RCVS Day in July. Hilary's experience and Amber's fresh input will, I'm sure, combine to provide an excellent contribution to our ongoing work."



VNs could cast their votes by post or online, with the former remaining the more popular method. Online voting increased in 2014, however, with 25% of VN voters visiting the new election microsite, compared with 17% in 2013.

Our thanks to all five candidates who stood for election, and also to Suzanne May, who will stand down from VN Council in July, and who has made an excellent contribution over her four years as a member.

# Forging an unsure future

## Students caught cheating can be barred from registration

**S**tudent veterinary nurses who are caught submitting fraudulently-completed student records – including the forging of signatures of Training Practice Principals or Heads of Centres – could ultimately be barred from entering the Register of Veterinary Nurses.

Since the beginning of 2012 we have verified nine separate cases of forgery in documents that have been submitted in support of applications for entry to the Register.

***“Student veterinary nurses who submit fraudulent documentation are carrying out potentially irreparable damage to their careers.”***

In each case, the student VN has been called in for an interview with a panel comprising a member of VN Council and a senior member of RCVS staff and asked to explain their actions. Although, so far, no students have been prevented from registering, this is the ultimate sanction that can be taken, at the discretion of the Registrar.

The relevant members of staff at the Training Practice and the Further or Higher Education institutions will also be informed of the forgery once it has been confirmed.

Priya Mehta is RCVS VN Admissions Officer and is responsible for checking all of the documentation submitted with applications. She says: "Student veterinary nurses who submit fraudulent documentation are carrying out potentially irreparable damage to their careers, especially if they are barred from entering the Register."

"We check all submitted documentation very thoroughly for signs of fraud or discrepancies and can also easily verify whether or not a signature has been forged."

"Rather than resort to fraud, if any student veterinary nurses are having difficulties getting the relevant documents they need to apply to enter the Register signed off, then they should contact us in the first instance and we can advise on how best to complete the documentation, depending on the individual's circumstances."

To contact Priya, please email [p.mehta@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:p.mehta@rcvs.org.uk) or call 020 7202 0711.



# Groehnorst given thumbs up

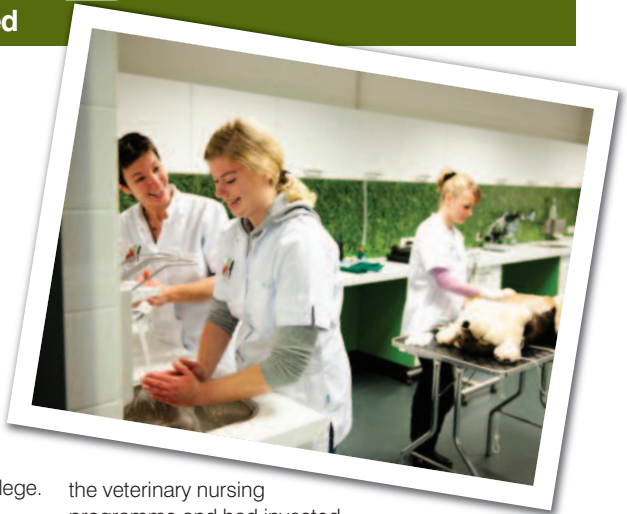
## ACOVENE accreditation visit passed

**T**he Accreditation Committee for Veterinary Nurse Education (ACOVENE) accredits veterinary nurse programmes within the European Union. It was established in 2007 to allow greater movement of trained veterinary nurses within Europe by quality-assuring VN programmes and their delivery. ACOVENE accordingly sets standards for the delivery of veterinary nurse education and stipulates the minimum curriculum content for an accredited programme.

The accreditation process involves the consideration of a written self-assessment submission and the evaluation of physical evidence that demonstrates the ACOVENE accreditation criteria can be met by the applicant college.

In March, the ACOVENE visitation panel conducted a re-accreditation visit to Groenhorst College, Barneveld, in the Netherlands. Feedback from the visitation panel was very positive. They were extremely impressed with the quality of education, commitment and enthusiasm of the teaching team. It was evident that the senior management of the college fully supported

***“The senior management of the college fully supported the veterinary nursing programme and had invested considerable time and money in developing excellent practical facilities and resources for their programme.”***



the veterinary nursing programme and had invested considerable time and money in developing excellent practical facilities and resources for their programme. They felt that the recruitment of a qualified veterinary nurse to maintain, organise and manage the practical facility and equipment ensured the smooth running of all practical teaching sessions and allowed tutors to concentrate on delivering a high level of education to all students on the programme.

The RCVS became affiliated with ACOVENE in November 2010, and, under the terms of the agreement, the ACOVENE Board will visit a small number of RCVS-accredited institutions (Awarding Organisations and Higher Education Institutions) annually in order to ensure that the RCVS regulatory standards for veterinary nurse training continue to articulate with those of ACOVENE, and that quality assurance of institutions is effective. A report from these visitations will be published in the next edition of *VN Education*.



# Regulatory remit

## How the RCVS regulates all stages of VN education

**As we wind down RCVS Awards (see timeline) – the College’s awarding organisation for veterinary nurse qualifications – and hand over the baton for delivering the Level 3 Diploma in veterinary nursing to other organisations, our role as the regulator of VN education and training becomes ever more important.**

As the regulator, we ensure that those providing VN qualifications are equipping their students with the skills and knowledge they need to meet the professional standards expected of veterinary nurses upon registration. However, our role doesn’t end once they are on the Register – we also regulate postgraduate qualifications; make sure that VNs engage in continuing professional development (CPD); and, increasingly, are involved in accrediting VN education outside of the UK.

Kathy Kissick, Chair of VN Council, further explains the College’s role as the regulator of VN education: “It is our responsibility to set out the professional standards that we expect from veterinary nurses from the very outset of their careers and throughout their professional lives.

***“The development of the Subcommittee has been excellent for VN Council as it has allowed it to focus on more strategic issues affecting the profession.”***

“Through our approval process VN Council and the Education Subcommittee ensure that the qualifications offered by awarding organisations and HE institutions are meeting the criteria we expect in terms of the design and quality of the course and standards of assessment. Once these have been approved we maintain a watchful eye to make sure that these qualifications are providing students with the knowledge, skills and experience they need to continue to develop their professional lives.

“Our regulation of education doesn’t end at qualifications for registration. Through our regulation and promotion of CPD we ensure that veterinary nurses are constantly updating their clinical and non-clinical skills and knowledge throughout the course of their careers. Through the Diploma in Advanced Veterinary Nursing we also encourage veterinary nurses to move into the next stage of their careers and to lead by example by advancing standards throughout the profession and becoming skilled, reflective decision-makers.”

### **Taking responsibility**

Reflecting the increased importance of regulating VN education, we have developed the VN Education Subcommittee, which first met in 2013. The Subcommittee comprises members of VN Council from all walks of life, including veterinary nurses, veterinary surgeons and lay people – each of whom bring different expertise to the fore.

Andrea Jeffery chairs the Subcommittee and comments: “The VN Education Subcommittee’s responsibilities include making decisions on VN education policy and the development, accreditation, assessment and quality monitoring of professional qualifications for veterinary nurses. This ensures that VNs are properly equipped for life in practice and can meet the professional standards expected of the veterinary industry and the animal-owning public.

“The development of the Subcommittee has been excellent for VN Council as it has allowed it to focus on more strategic issues affecting the profession – for example, protection of the veterinary nurse title – rather than being dominated by educational matters. However, all decisions made by the Subcommittee are subject to approval from VN Council.”

### **Competence from day one**

The majority of the work of VN Education Subcommittee and our VN Department is focused on the approval of veterinary nursing qualifications and those institutions providing them – whether they are universities or awarding organisations providing further education training.

Universities and awarding organisations – and their associated centres – that wish to deliver veterinary nursing qualifications need to meet rigorous approval requirements. These requirements relate to the design and delivery of the course; standards of staff, assessment and quality assurance; provision of staff, facilities and resources; and the provision of staff and facilities at Training Practices. The Subcommittee is responsible for accrediting and reaccrrediting providers to ensure that quality standards continue to be met, subject to approval by VN Council.

Another area of responsibility for the Subcommittee is setting the Day One Competences for veterinary nurses – the skills and knowledge a VN should possess upon registration and which provide the benchmark underpinning all qualifications. As of March this year we have adopted the National Occupational

Standards (NOS) set by Lantra – the Sector Skills Council for land-based and environmental industries – as our Day One Competences and will be responsible for keeping them under review to make sure they remain fit for purpose.

### Life-long learning

Making sure that VNs meet our requirements for CPD – as set out in the *Code of Professional Conduct* – is one of the key regulatory responsibilities we have for members of the profession after they qualify. The *Code* sets out that VNs must carry out a mandatory 45 hours of CPD over a three-year period.

Upon renewing their RCVS registration every year, RVNs must make a declaration that they have met the CPD requirement. In order to monitor CPD compliance we request a random sample of records on an annual basis, as well as monitoring the records of VNs who either didn't meet the requirement or didn't respond to the request in the previous year's audit.

These audit results are shared with VN Council for consideration and, from 2015, VNs who fail to comply with requirements or respond to requests will be in breach of the *Code*. If a complaint is made about the professional conduct of a VN, the level of CPD compliance will also be taken into account as part of the disciplinary process.

### Advancing standards

As part of our mission to advance standards we also award the Diploma in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (DipAVN) – an advanced professional qualification with the purpose of allowing VNs to improve clinical skills

and knowledge and develop a deeper understanding of issues affecting the profession.

Although we award the Diploma, the course itself is delivered by three external providers who we are responsible for accrediting – and reaccrediting – in compliance with our *Award Framework*. There is a set of approved core modules for the DipAVN, however, each provider can develop its own optional modules, which they can teach subject to our accreditation. The Education Subcommittee is responsible for appointing a team of examiners for each DipAVN student's final assessment period.

### An international endeavour

Increasingly, our regulatory work has an international focus as we give recognition to qualifications and awarding organisations from outside the UK, particularly with EU member states.

For example, our affiliated membership of the Accreditation Committee for Veterinary Nursing Education (ACOVENE) means that we have a say in the accreditation of veterinary programmes in EU member states and help to set the standards expected of these approved institutions.

We are also in the process of reassessing our criteria for the registration of veterinary nurses who have qualifications from institutions outside of the UK through an International Qualifications Working Party (see page 9).

### Further information

To find out more about our role in approving VN qualifications, CPD for VNs and the DipAVN, please visit [www.rcvs.org.uk/education](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/education).

## RCVS Awards closure: timeline

In 2011, VN Council decided to wind down RCVS Awards – the awarding organisation of the RCVS for the Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing – with a view to it being fully closed by the end of 2015.

Here is a timeline showing the different stages of the RCVS Awards closure:

**October 2011:** VN Council decides to wind down RCVS Awards

**August 2012:** the last students are enrolled on to the RCVS Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing

**December 2013:** full approval is granted for Central Qualifications and City & Guilds to provide the Level 3 Diploma

**March 2014:** a formal recognition of surrender is submitted to and accepted by Ofqual, the qualifications regulator for England

**April 2014:** all remaining students and centres are informed by letter of the timeline for the closure of RCVS Awards

**June 2015:** the remaining students will have the last opportunity to sit their theory and practical OSCE examinations. Results for the theory and practical exams will be published in June and July 2015 respectively, after which there will be a three-month window for appeals

**November 2015:** date of last certification for the RCVS Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing and certificate in Animal Studies

**December 2015:** RCVS Awards will close; all remaining students will be transferred to Central Qualifications or City & Guilds to complete their qualification

# Ensuring proper placements

## Centres' responsibilities when arranging student TP placements

**Placements at Training Practices (TPs) are an essential part of a student veterinary nurse's education – giving them the opportunity to see and learn the clinical and non-clinical skills they will need to put to use when they become a fully qualified VN.**

As part of our criteria for approving veterinary nursing courses, all centres – whether they are offering higher education or vocational courses – must demonstrate that they have a network of recognised TPs to support the delivery of their qualifications. These TPs should be accessible and meet our criteria, and students should have these placements arranged for them and be given appropriate support and supervision thereafter.

However, we have been made aware of a number of instances in which centres offering veterinary nursing education and training have fallen short of their responsibilities to students.

### Non-TP placements

One of the most serious failings that we have encountered has been where centres have allowed student veterinary nurses to carry out all or the majority of their placements in practices that are not on our list of approved TPs.

Unfortunately, this has meant that when the students have submitted their applications to join the Register of Veterinary Nurses, we have had to reject them as they do not comply with the criteria.

Julie Dugmore, Head of Veterinary Nursing, explains: "It is a real shame that we have had to reject applications for registration from some students who, after two years of training, have had to then start their placement time again from scratch.

"It is ultimately the responsibility of each Centre to ensure that their students' placements are carried out at an approved practice and we would urge all centres to communicate with each other so that situations do not arise where one may have removed TP accreditation from a practice without telling another who may have students there."

To see our list of approved Training Practices – broken down by region – please visit [www.rcvs.org.uk/tps](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/tps).

### Organising placements

Another problem that we frequently encounter is when students have effectively been left to their own devices

and expected to arrange their own placements with little help from their centre.

For example, some potential students have simply been given a list of local TPs and are then expected to send off their CVs and applications, with little in the way of advice and guidance from the course provider.

Julie comments: "We have received complaints from parents of student veterinary nurses and from TPs who are very concerned about the fact that the students are being left to make their own arrangements.

"It is unacceptable to expect these young people to arrange their own placements with virtually no help from the appropriate centre. It is the role of centres to come to agreements and develop partnerships with local TPs so that these placements can easily be arranged."

***"It is ultimately the responsibility of each Centre to ensure that their students' placements are carried out at an approved practice."***

### Not going the distance

Finally, centres should ensure that there are enough places for their students and that the places are accessible.

For example, we recently received a complaint about a centre that had arranged a placement at a practice which was a considerable distance from where the student was based, due to nearer ones being oversubscribed.

The time and expense needed to get to the practice meant that the student was unable to take up the placement on offer and had to defer their course for a year.

### Re-thinking accreditation

If a centre persistently fails its students in terms of providing placements and appropriate support, then we can elect not to enrol further students with that centre, which may then affect the approval status of the affiliated awarding organisation or higher education institution – for example, from 'full' to 'probationary' – and may ultimately withdraw the accreditation altogether.

If you are a student or from a centre and have any concerns about the arrangement of placements or are in need of further advice, please contact Victoria Hedges, on [v.hedges@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:v.hedges@rcvs.org.uk) or 020 7202 0782.



## Roles and responsibilities

The 'Centre Approval Criteria', from the *RCVS Operations Guide for Centres*, sets out a number of the responsibilities that colleges are expected to meet in relation to student placements. These include:

### 4. Centre management and communication

**4.a** Centres must be able to demonstrate clear and effective lines of communication between members of centre staff and with affiliated veterinary training practices.

**4.b** Training practices must be regarded as an integral resource of the centre and must be developed and supported accordingly.

**4.c** Memoranda of agreement that clearly set out roles and responsibilities must be in place with all training practices, and other organisations, partnering the centre in the delivery of qualifications.

### 7. Practical placement arrangements

**7.a** Students must be provided with adequate access to placements (or employment) in veterinary practice for the purposes of clinical training and assessment. Practices used for the placement of students must meet the RCVS criteria for a training practice.

**7.b** Students must be adequately supported and supervised during all periods of placement.

# International (Working) Party time

## Overseas registrations increase prompts qualifications evaluation

**A Veterinary Nursing International Qualifications Working Party has been set up to revise the registration procedure for veterinary nurses who have achieved their qualifications wholly or partially outside of the UK. The Working Party, made up of members of the profession and lay people, will meet twice during 2014.**

Eligibility to enter the Register of Veterinary Nurses is based on individual evaluation of the qualification and experience of each applicant. Non-EU applicants and those not on a professional register in the EU are normally required to undertake the RCVS pre-registration OSCE as a minimum. A few applicants are also required to pass aspects of the RCVS theory examination or demonstrate competency in RCVS Day One Skills in Veterinary Nursing.

Many nurses arrive in the UK unaware of the quantity of assessment they may be required to undertake before being allowed to work. The Working Party will explore the possibility of applying a consistent approach, similar to that applied to veterinary surgeons. This will allow those considering coming to the UK to be better informed.

In recent years, there have been several enquiries from educational institutions based outside the UK asking to

be accredited by the RCVS. The Working Party will consider introducing a process to allow the accreditation and quality assurance of qualifications delivered outside of the UK.

It is expected to make recommendations to the VN Education Subcommittee and VN Council in the first half of 2015.

The number of non-UK veterinary nurses applying to join the Register increased by 45% in 2013, with a total of 99 applications received. Of these, 35 were accepted for registration and 39 required to undertake further assessment. The majority of the applications are from the Republic of Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and Portugal.

If you employ a nurse who qualified outside the UK they are not permitted to have medical treatment or minor surgery delegated to them until they have been registered. Veterinary nurses who have been informed that they are required to undertake further assessment may be given a temporary registration to allow them to prepare for these assessments. If you would like further information on the application process, please contact Annah Bhebe on [a.bhebe@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:a.bhebe@rcvs.org.uk) or 020 7202 0715.

## A double dose

### VN admissions spread over two days

**D**ue to popular demand we will now be holding our regular admissions ceremonies for veterinary nurses, in which we welcome newly qualified VNs to the Register, over two consecutive days instead of just one.

The ceremonies, which take place at our offices in Belgravia House in London, are very popular with the veterinary nurses and their families, many of whom travel a considerable distance to be there.

All students who pass their exams receive invitations to attend the ceremonies and holding the event over two days will allow more of them to do so.

Head of Veterinary Nursing, Julie Dugmore, explains: "These ceremonies are lovely occasions at which the newly-registered veterinary nurses make their declaration to act with professionalism and ensure the health and wellbeing of animals; receive their RVN badges; and, are formally welcomed into the profession in the midst of their friends and family. We are very glad that more people will now have the opportunity to enjoy this experience."

The next set of ceremonies will take place on 9 and 10 July.



## Saddle up!

### Equine focus for VETNNET in Slovenia



**I**f you are interested in VN training across Europe, then don't miss out on the VETNNET (Veterinary European Transnational Network for Nursing Education and Training) annual conference.

This year's event takes place in Lipica, Slovenia, from 24–26 September, and will be focusing on equine veterinary nurse training, under the theme 'VETNNET in the saddle'.

The programme includes talks from RVNs Bonny Miller, Rachel Lumbis, Nicki Coombes and Catherine Phillips, as well as a guided tour of the world-famous Lipica stud farm and a performance from the riding school.

For more information, and to register, visit [www.vetnnet.com](http://www.vetnnet.com).

## The evidence-based veterinary nurse

### There's lots to interest VNs at EBVM event

**R**CVS Knowledge is encouraging veterinary nurses to attend its first International Evidence-Based Veterinary Medicine (EBVM) Network Conference, at which professionals from across the world will come together to share the latest scientific knowledge and best practice.

The Conference takes place on 23 and 24 October at the Beaumont Estate near Windsor, and is open to all those who wish to find out more about the practice of evidence-based veterinary medicine – including veterinary nurses.

Nick Royle, Director of RCVS Knowledge, said: "Veterinary nurses are an integral part of the clinical team and can play a vital role in encouraging an

evidence-based approach to veterinary medicine in their practices.

"The Conference will feature many sessions relevant to VNs, including strategies for implementing EBVM into everyday practice and how to use practice databases to build up a clinical evidence base."

VNs who are interested in joining the EBVM Network can sign up by completing a short survey at [www.surveymonkey.com/s/EBVM\\_Network](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/EBVM_Network).

RCVS Knowledge is also welcoming proposals for poster presentations, oral communications or workshops at the Conference. For more details, please visit [www.ebvm-2014.org](http://www.ebvm-2014.org).

# Straight from the horse's mouth



## Feedback on equine OSCE task

### **A**round 500 students have been tested on OSCE station NC20 'Restrain Equine Patient'.

In this task, students are expected to select the grooming equipment and put on a headcollar. Once this is done, they need to demonstrate to the examiner how they would use the lead rope to hold the horse for examination. Finally, they are required to tie the horse securely.

A key to this task is to prepare beforehand. Students should ensure that all visible jewellery is removed, ideally before they attend the centre. Covering the jewellery with tape is not acceptable.

Second, consider how you style your hair. Having your hair styled in a bun is great except when you try to put on the riding hat. Vital moments are lost with students rearranging their hair and removing jewellery.

In general, students perform well when selecting the equipment for grooming. They are also able to put the headcollar on correctly. The examiners have reported that some students kneel on the ground in front of the horse to do up the headcollar. This is unsafe and therefore they are marked down on the safety criteria.

### ***"Vital moments are lost with students rearranging their hair and removing jewellery."***

Finally, students are tying a quick-release knot correctly but do not achieve the step because they put the free end through the loop. The examiners test the knot by tugging the free end, if the knot does not undo, this criterion is not achieved.

## Examination enquiries and appeals

### **Is anyone successful in their appeal?**

**A** question was recently posted on an online blog: "I have failed my examination. I was wondering if anyone has actually appealed and been successful?" So we thought some background to our appeals process might be useful.

During 2013 we undertook 56 examination enquiries. The investigations resulted in four students having their marks altered. In addition, we received nine appeals, which resulted in two examinations being nullified. Where there has been a fault in the system we are required to report this to Ofqual. Where an enquiry or appeal is successful we also check all other students who may have been affected. This can result in marks being altered.

Students wishing to submit an examination enquiry or appeal should contact Annah Bhebe [a.bhebe@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:a.bhebe@rcvs.org.uk) to request the relevant form.

## Earlier results – less stress?

### **New examination arrangements**

**S**tudents receiving the spring OSCE results benefitted from a change in our process. For the first time we were able to send out the results earlier than the published date. In fact, students and colleges were sent their results 10 days early.

Our intention is to send all future results letters once the results have been finalised. Students will be emailed to advise them of the date on which the results letters will be posted. Letters will be sent by first-class post. The pass list will be published online on the listed dates (see back page).

Meanwhile, a new record was achieved with the March OSCE, with 81% of nurses passing first time!



**RCVS Awards is on target for closure by the end of 2015. See the timeline on page 7 for further details.**

Practical examinations (OSCE)	
<b>Summer 2014</b>	
Closing date for entries	6 June
Exam weekend	4 – 6 July
Results published online	7 August
<b>Autumn 2014</b>	
Closing date for entries	15 August
Exam weekend	12 – 14 September
Results published online	16 October
<b>Winter 2014</b>	
Closing date for entries	31 October
Exam weekend	5 – 7 December
Results published online	January 2015
<b>Spring 2015</b>	
Closing date for entries	8 February
Exam weekend	6 – 8 March
Results published online	2 April
<b>Summer 2015</b>	
Closing date for entries	29 May
Exam weekend	26 – 27 June
Results published online	23 July

Theory examinations (e-assessment)	
<b>Summer 2014</b>	
Closing date for entries	2 May
Appointment booking window	27 May – 20 June
Exam weeks	23 – 28 June
Results published online	14 August
<b>Winter 2014</b>	
Closing date for entries	12 September
Appointment booking window	29 September – 24 October
Exam week	27 October – 1 November
Results published online	11 December
<b>Spring 2015</b>	
Closing date for entries	12 January
Appointment booking window	26 January – 19 February
Exam weeks	23 – 28 February
Results published online	26 March
<b>Summer 2015</b>	
Closing date for entries	17 April
Appointment booking window	18 May – 12 June
Exam week	15 – 20 June
Results published online	16 July

## Who does what...

Julie Dugmore	<i>Head of Veterinary Nursing</i>	Annah Bhebe	<i>Examinations, overseas registration applications</i>
Annette Amato	<i>Deputy Head of Department, Awarding Body Board Secretary, Secretary to VN Council</i>	Priya Mehta	<i>Student enrolments, initial RVN registrations</i>
Vicky Hedges	<i>Examinations Manager</i>	TBC	<i>Enrolment Officer</i>
Helen Bourne	<i>Centre approvals and monitoring, ACOVENE support</i>	TBC	<i>Qualifications Officer</i>

**CONTACTING US** | E [vetnursing@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:vetnursing@rcvs.org.uk) | T 020 7202 0788 | F 020 7222 2004

Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, Belgravia House, 62–64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF | [www.rcvs.org.uk](http://www.rcvs.org.uk)



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