

## Welcoming back in-person Educator Forums

*RCVS to host three educator meetings in 2024*



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# Welcoming back in-person Educator Forums

## RCVS to hold three educator meetings in 2024

**This year, we are pleased to announce the reintroduction of our RCVS Educator Forums.**

Historically, we have held meetings with educators from all accredited education institutions (AEIs) and delivery sites, allowing for an opportunity to discuss recent changes to processes, to provide updates for educators to be aware of, and to allow for networking across institutions and programmes.

Unfortunately, during the pandemic, it was not possible to undertake these meetings. However, in recognition of the value of face-to-face discourse with other professionals and subject matter experts, these meetings are now being reinstated.

We have three meetings planned for 2024, covering important updates such as the

implementation of the new standards framework, the rollout of the awarding organisation (AO) audit strategy, and the use of OneDrive for evidence submissions. Time will also be committed to broader educational updates which, this year, will focus on academic integrity and the appropriate use of generative artificial intelligence.

The aim of these meetings is to consider relevant challenges in the educational sector, which can then be discussed amongst your peers, with successes shared and potential future issues identified. Where possible, these sessions will be delivered by external experts, further promoting the continuing professional development (CPD) value of these meetings.

Do look out for emails from [vnqa@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:vnqa@rcvs.org.uk) inviting you to attend the sessions and asking for suggestions for future meeting focuses.

# Getting the most out of your CPD

## Exploring the benefits of CPD and the 1CPD platform



**C**ontinuing professional development (CPD) is a professional obligation for all RVNs to ensure they stay up to date with their knowledge and are able provide the best service and patient care possible. However, continuing to learn will also help you to have an interesting and fulfilling career.

Our CPD requirements are mandatory, and RVNs must:

- complete 15 hours per year,
- record their CPD using the 1CPD platform, and
- follow the outcome-based cycle of plan, do, record and reflect.

This article gives a brief overview of each step.



## Getting the most out of your CPD (continued)

### Plan

There is more than one way to plan your CPD. It may be that you create a formal plan whereby you identify your objectives and consider future activities from the start. This might include, for example, deciding to attend certain lectures at a congress that will be the most beneficial to you, or reviewing an area of knowledge as part of case-based research and learning.

**“CPD that did not originally feature within your plan can result in very useful learning outcomes and inspire you to add different subject areas to your formal learning plan that you may not have previously considered.”**

Alternatively, planning further CPD activities may happen more organically. For example, there may be a significant event, or a particularly interesting case that motivates you to read more about a certain subject or to search for the latest clinical evidence.

When developing a ‘formal’ development plan, you may want to ask yourself the following questions:

- Do I need to update my current knowledge or skills in a certain area?
- What are my career objectives and what CPD would help me to meet them?
- What knowledge, skills and experience would I like to develop?
- Do I need any formal training?

CPD does not have to involve external activities; workplace learning, such as discussions with colleagues, clinical audits, case research or shadowing/seeing practice can all be excellent forms of CPD. However, unplanned CPD can be just as beneficial as CPD that you planned in advance – CPD that did not originally feature within your plan can result in very useful learning

outcomes and inspire you to add different subject areas to your formal learning plan that you may not have previously considered. At its best, the process of CPD is iterative and dynamic.

It is also worth noting that you do not need to focus solely on clinical CPD – any learning or development that is relevant to your role as a professional can be counted, for example, communication skills, leadership, or business planning. It may be that you find feedback from clients and colleagues helpful in deciding on your focus. A critical significant event analysis may also offer an important opportunity for reflection and learning as it might highlight a negative experience for clients, patients and colleagues – you can learn as much from when things don’t quite go right as from when everything goes according to plan.

### Record

RVNs need to record their activities and reflections using the 1CPD platform. 1CPD is available as an app or web version, either of which you can use for recording.

If you are organising a CPD activity, you can also create a QR code via our CPD QR code generator found here: <https://qr.1cpd.me>.

You can then send your QR code to colleagues who are participating in your CPD activity to scan, and it will then automatically pre-populate their record. To do this, simply open the record section in the 1CPD app, click on the plus sign, and then scan QR code.

Please note that recorded activities will not count towards your annual CPD requirement until they have been reflected on.

### Reflect

Reflection is an important part of the CPD process, as it allows you to evaluate the



## Getting the most out of your CPD (continued)

impact that your CPD activity has had on meeting your professional development goals and the maintenance of your current skills and knowledge. Taking some time to review and reflect on your activities allows you to consolidate your knowledge and to consider how you might implement your newly acquired learning in future.

The aim of reflection is for you to think about the outcomes of your CPD activity, focusing on what you have learned from the activity and how this influences your daily practice and duties. Throughout your cycle, you should also consider how your reflections on CPD impact your development plan and whether this might need adjusting.

**“Reflection is an individual process – it means different things to different people. You should reflect in a way that works best for you.”**

Reflection is an essential element of learning, but the benefits of it can go far beyond this. Reflection can also validate your existing knowledge and skills, as well as challenge your current practice and beliefs. Having time to reflect on both positive and negative experiences, and being supported to reflect, is important for both individual wellbeing and development.

The purpose of CPD is to add value to the service or care that you provide. It is valuable to reflect on changes resulting from your learning to see if they have made a difference. The key to this is to make the sharing of your reflections, and the learning from them, an integral part of your practice.

It is best to record reflections on a regular basis, as it can be easy to forget details over time. It is also more beneficial to your practice to reflect regularly because the more you reflect, the easier the process becomes. Your

reflections do not have to be detailed; you can just record the most important points at the time. However, you can always return to them and make any changes at a later date.

Using the 1CPD app, you can record your reflections in different ways:

- Use the prompts to guide you through the process – you don't have to answer all questions.
- Move to free format tab and use the open text box (if you are using your phone, you can use the microphone button to talk into and it transforms it into text).
- In the free format tab, you can add an attachment – a photo of your notes, for example, or you can record a voice note which means that you don't have to do any additional paperwork – you just talk into the phone and save it.

A reflective note does not need to capture full details of an experience. It should capture learning outcomes, the impact that the activity has had on you and/or your future practice, and any plans for further learning or to share CPD outcomes with colleagues.

Remember, reflection is an individual process – it means different things to different people. You should reflect in a way that works best for you. You might like to reflect on your own, or with a mentor, peer or employer. Group reflection often leads to ideas or actions that can improve patient care.

We spoke to some of the RVNs working at the RCVS to see how they use 1CPD to reflect on their learning...



*“I always use the voice function to reflect straight after the CPD, whilst it is still fresh in my mind.”*

Jasmine Curtis RVN,  
Qualifications Assessor



## Getting the most out of your CPD (continued)



*“I use a mixture of guided and free. I always ask myself what changes I will make to my day-to-day work or any additional reading I want to do. Sometimes I include the name of the article or reference so that I can come back to it.”*

Victoria Hedges RVN, Examinations  
Quality Lead



*“My advice is to do it straight away – if you leave it then it's not fresh in your mind and not easy to recollect your ‘gut’ reflections from the learning. I haven't yet used audio recording, but I'm definitely going to do this – it's such an easy way of quickly recording your thoughts.”*

*“Something I often do is to reflect on perceptions that may have changed – sort of ‘I thought this, but I've now realised that such-and-such is true’ or ‘it's changed my thoughts on...’”*

*“It's always good to use it to consider what further or supplementary learning is going to be useful.”*

Jill Macdonald RVN, VN Futures Project Lead



*“I use the simple guided prompts to help me record a voice/audio recording of my reflections of the CPD I have completed.”*

Claire Hobson RVN, Examinations Manager



*“I prefer to use the written method (haven't got used to recording yet, but I might use that if I reflected DIRECTLY after the CPD as it wouldn't take too much of a ‘thought process’). But realistically*

*I often record my CPD in bouts, so I prefer a bit of time to think about what I will write as reflection.*

*My general thought process is as follows:*

- Was the CPD useful?
  - If so, why – will I share info with others? Will I change my own practice? Will I try something new?
  - If not, why did I not learn anything? Did I lose interest?
- Would I be interested to learn more on the topic?
- If I was reflecting on a presentation, would I do anything different next time?

*I keep it short and to the point, I don't overthink it. I presume that no-one reads it, apart from me so I don't get bogged down with perfect grammar etc.”*

Hayley Stinchon RVN,  
Senior Education Officer

## Support

In order to support you with your CPD, we have developed an RCVS Academy course. This bite-sized course explains the CPD requirement, reflection and how to use 1CPD.



In certain circumstances – such as going on parental leave or being on long term sick leave – you can pause your CPD. You can request a pause on the web version of 1CPD.



# College consults on new standards framework for veterinary nurse training

## Standards Review Working Group review now underway

**E**arlier this year we launched a consultation on the RCVS Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training. These standards set out the professional values, knowledge, skills, and behaviours required of accredited education institutions (AEIs), delivery sites, and training practices (TPs). The current version was ratified by Veterinary Nurses Council in November 2019, and implemented fully from June 2020.

In the previous review, the standards underwent a radical overhaul, with inclusion of elements relating to student empowerment, a better consideration of equality and diversity, and clear governance requirements. The standards follow the structure of those written by the Nursing and Midwifery Council, for nurse training and education. While the new process has helped to develop veterinary nursing programmes at all

levels, we follow a standard five-year cycle of reviews and so work has been undertaken to update the existing standards.

Our Veterinary Nursing Team undertook an initial review and proposed minor changes, following feedback from AEIs, and having applied the standards during accreditation and quality monitoring activities. These proposals were reviewed by the Standards Review Working Group, who either accepted or further amended the suggestions.

The public consultation was then launched on 22 February and drew to a close on 3 April 2024. The working group is now in the process of reviewing the responses. The final proposal will be presented to Veterinary Nurses Council at its May meeting, with an aim for the updated standards to be implemented from September 2024.



### A review of the Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training

As a responsible regulator with quality assurance at the heart of everything we do, we have a commitment to regularly review our educational standards for veterinary nursing in order to ensure that they remain up-to-date, fit for purpose and reflect the latest developments in the educational landscape.

This consultation on our Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training is part of a five-year review cycle for this document, which sets out the professional values, skills and behaviours required of approved educational institutions (AEIs), delivery sites and training practices (TPs) responsible for providing training and support to our student veterinary nurses.

The aim of the standards framework is to provide AEIs, delivery sites and TPs with the flexibility to develop innovative approaches to education for student veterinary nurses, while being accountable for the local delivery and management of accredited programmes.

We are looking for veterinary nurses in all walks of life – as well as student nurses and veterinary surgeons – to provide constructive and specific feedback on our proposals. Your insights will help us ensure that the standards continue to enable veterinary nurse educators to deliver the best training and support possible for our students, prepare them



for life in clinical practice, and ensure that consideration, in fact, Animal health and standards. Students will be in contact with education and it is important that they be

**Key changes**  
Some of the key changes we are proposing sustainability, including the potential for the environment, and academic integrity processes. We would particularly appreciate

We are grateful to the members of the changes and all other stakeholders of the proposed framework.

Please do take the time to read the survey, and to provide feedback on our proposals. Your insights will help us ensure that the standards continue to enable veterinary nurse educators to deliver the best training and support possible for our students, prepare them

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RCVS Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training  
For consultation  
February 2024

RCVS  
SETTING  
VETERINARY  
STANDARDS

# Support packages in review

## Pre-accreditation support packages shown to improve standards compliance

**I**n December 2021 the Veterinary Nurse Education Committee (VNEC) approved the delivery of a pre-accreditation support package for accredited education institutions (AEIs), as detailed in the **March 2022 issue of this publication.**

The process implemented was an in-person, institution specific training day to promote understanding of the standards and to assist with programme development and enhancement in the fast-changing world

of veterinary nursing. Towards the end of 2023 a review was conducted on the impact of the support meetings and whether or not the work undertaken had improved standards compliance.

The review compared the outcomes from accreditations conducted in 2020 and 2021 against those conducted in 2022 and 2023, following the implementation of the support package. The results are detailed below:

Full accreditation for five years	Full accreditation for a shorter period	Provisional accreditation	Postponed or cancelled event
<b>2020 / 2021</b>			
1 programme	3 programmes	1 programme	4 programmes
<b>2022 / 2023</b>			
3 programmes	3 programmes	2 programmes	1 programme

The outcomes demonstrate an increase in compliance, as reflected in the accreditation statuses awarded by the Veterinary Nurse Education Committee (VNEC). The biggest improvement is the reduction in programmes needing to cancel or postpone accreditation due to significant non-compliance.

**“The feedback from AEIs has been exceptional, and this process was commended by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) when it audited the College in 2023.”**

Whilst the work undertaken has improved outcomes, there is still ongoing support required to continue to improve compliance and support programme development in a continuous way. The feedback from AEIs has been exceptional,

and this process was commended by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) when it audited the College in 2023. The support package will therefore continue to be available to all existing AEIs and will be mandatory for new provision, to ensure the AEI is offered the opportunity to understand everything that is expected, as well as setting them up to succeed.

This initial round of support meetings was conducted by our Qualifications Lead and our Director of Veterinary Nursing. However, in order to continue to improve the support offered, our Qualifications Lead will now be accompanied by our Examinations Quality Lead. This change will enable us at the RCVS to provide more detailed guidance on assessment specific challenges, as well as clarifying the evidence requirements. Additionally, the updates to the standards will also be incorporated into future support meetings, and online meetings will be held over the summer months to advise all AEIs of specific changes that may impact their provision.

# VN Council vote on model for governance reform at first meeting of the year

## In principle recommendations now approved

**On Wednesday 28 February 2024, our Veterinary Nurses (VN) Council voted on a proposed new model for governance reform at its first meeting of the year.**

At the meeting, members voted to approve in principle recommendations that: the composition of VN Council be reformed to have a parity of lay and professional members (that is to say, lay and professional members in equal measure); to include fewer veterinary surgeon members; and to reduce the number of Council members from 14 to 12.

The decision made by VN Council will now be consulted on in tandem with the proposed governance changes for RCVS Council. The overall proposed changes to RCVS governance are being made in anticipation of changes to the regulatory framework of the veterinary professions in new primary legislation to replace the Veterinary Surgeons Act.

**“Our proposed new governance model is one that seeks to build on the best aspects of the current arrangements, while reflecting modern best practice.”**

Chair of VN Council, Belinda Andrews-Jones RVN, said: “As a profession, we believe that it is of vital importance that veterinary nurses continue to have a strong presence both in VN Council and in RCVS governance as a whole.

“However, it is important to take best practice for regulatory bodies into account. The current composition of the RCVS is markedly different from other regulators of professions, including

those in the healthcare sector. It is the norm for all members of a healthcare regulator’s governing body to be appointed via a rigorous process with transparent criteria.

“Bringing in an appointed system for both RCVS Council and VN Council would help us to achieve representation from all four nations of the UK, along with ensuring that members bring expertise from across the sector – something that is not possible with the current electoral model.

“Additionally, regulatory boards usually consist of 10 to 12 members, with a parity of lay members in order to give the public assurance that the regulator acts in their interests as opposed to working to serve professional interests.

“Taking all this into consideration, VN Council decided to put forward the proposed model in order to adhere to regulatory best practice while ensuring that the maximum number of nurses possible remain on the Council.

“Our proposed new governance model is one that seeks to build on the best aspects of the current arrangements, while reflecting modern best practice.”

At present, VN Council comprises 14 people: six elected veterinary nurses, two appointed veterinary nurses, two appointed veterinary surgeons, and four appointed lay people, as well as an additional observer from the RCVS Officer Team. The decisions put to VN Council on new Council structure were as follows:

- Whether to introduce lay parity.
- Whether to recommend reducing the number of veterinary surgeons on VN Council from two to one (plus one RCVS Council observer).

- Whether to retain a 14-member Council.
- If no, then to choose between a 10 or 12 member Council.

VN Council consequently voted to introduce lay parity, reduce the number of veterinary surgeons from two to one (plus one RCVS Council observer), and to reduce the size of VN Council from 14 to 12 members. Therefore, the new model recommendation being put forward for approval from RCVS Council means the new structure of VN Council will consist of five veterinary nurses, one RCVS Council appointed veterinary surgeon, and six lay members, along with the additional observer from the RCVS Officer team.

The decision comes after **RCVS Council approved similar proposals for future College governance** reform in January 2024, having agreed to consult on reform models including:

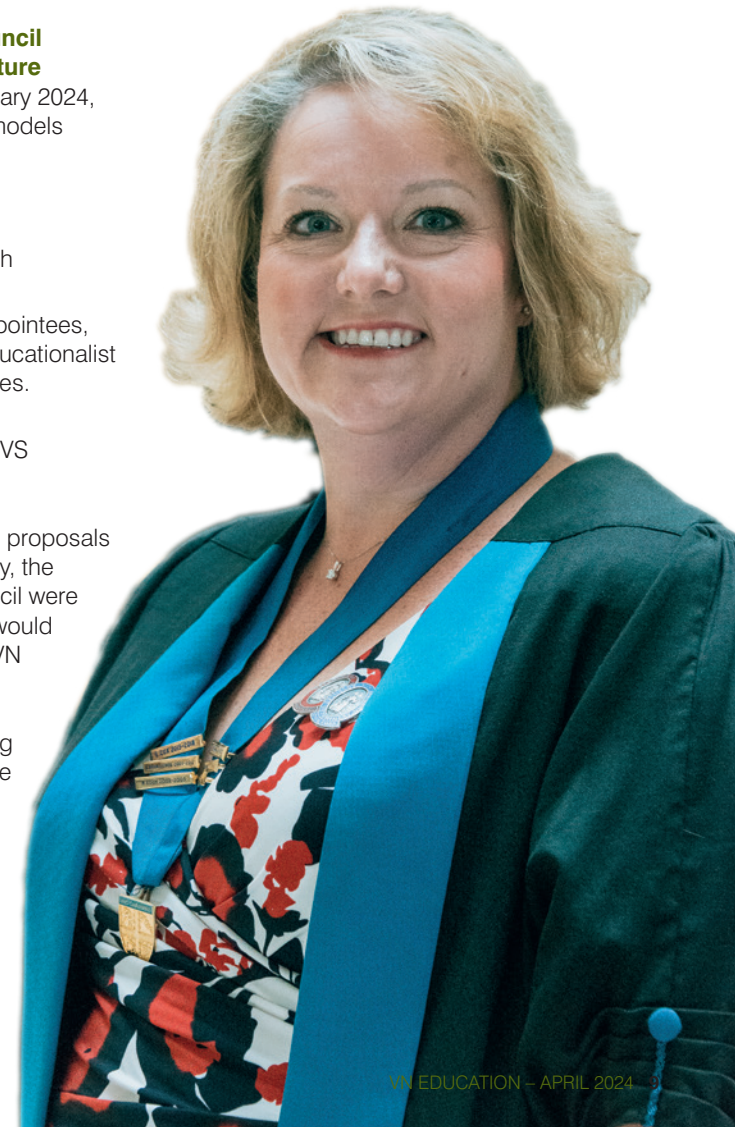
- Parity, or near parity of veterinary professionals and lay members.
- Replacing all elected members with appointed members.
- Removing Vet Schools Council appointees, while ensuring there is a strong educationalist voice on the appropriate committees.
- Increasing the proportion of allied professionals as and when the RCVS comes to regulate them.

As RCVS Council has already agreed proposals to become an entirely appointed body, the reform models proposed to VN Council were based on the assumption that it too would be all-appointed. This is because, if VN Council failed to also switch to an appointed model, there would still be elected members of VN Council sitting on the RCVS Council, thus making the model incompatible.

As with the governance reform options put forward to RCVS Council earlier in the year, the proposals put forward for VN Council members to discuss and vote on were in line with recommendations on regulatory

best practice identified in a 2014 Law Commission report (*‘Regulation of Health and Social Care Professionals’*), which were subsequently adopted by the UK Government.

For further detail, the governance reform paper considered by VN Council can be found in the **VN Council papers for February 2024**. Following a discussion about the governance consultation process at the March meeting of RCVS Council on Thursday 14 March 2024, the consultation is expected to be published in the spring.





# An update from the RCVS Academy

## Discover our newest VN-specific courses



to the wider professionalism of veterinary nurses, such as mentoring, leadership and management.

New courses, which are due to be launched this year, include the Nurse Mentor course, the External Examiner course and a course developed specifically for student veterinary nurses.

### Nurse Mentor course

Over the past 12 months, the RCVS Academy has developed two courses to assist newly registered veterinary nurses and those veterinary nurses returning to the profession. The final course in this suite of three is the Nurse Mentor course. This course will provide the mentorship knowledge and skills required to support, guide, and inspire veterinary nurses in their professional development, whether they be new to mentorship or an established and experienced mentor. This course will be applicable to nurses at different stages of their professional career, for example:

- Nurses who qualified overseas;
- Nurses returning to the workplace following a period away;
- Recently registered nurses;

- Nurses who have recently been promoted, for example, to a senior role.

This course is due for launch in July 2024 and will be accessible to both veterinary nurses and veterinary surgeons.

### External Examiner course

The external examiner role is undertaken by subject matter experts at UK educational establishments offering degree-level provision. However, the training for external examiners (EEs) often varies, and there is often limited opportunity to review or discuss the specific requirements that a licence to practise qualification mandates.

The aim of this new Academy course will be to support EEs in their role and to offer them support and guidance as to how they critically review provision with an emphasis on programme development. It will include specific references to the standards, enabling EEs to consider the questions posed by the university with reference to the RCVS requirements. It will also include suggestions on reporting processes, considering the limitations often

identified with the templates utilised by most institutions.

This course is due for launch in June 2024, and will be available to those identified by RCVS accredited education institutions (AEIs) as current EEs.

### Student veterinary nurse course

This course will support student veterinary nurses (SVNs) with their professional obligations and relationship with the RCVS. It has been designed to complement the content delivered by the educational programme teams. It will focus on how regulation applies to SVNs, exploring examples of breaches to the *RCVS Code of Professional Conduct*. Through a series of three interactive modules, students will gain valuable insights into the RCVS as a regulator, the history of veterinary nurse regulation and the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 and Schedule 3, the *Code of Professional Conduct*, and the concerns process.

This course is due to be launched in September 2024 and will be accessible to student veterinary nurses and veterinary nurse educators.

**The RCVS Academy, launched in June 2022, now offers 24 CPD courses across a wide variety of focus areas. While most courses can be accessed by both veterinary nurses and veterinary surgeons, there are now five courses specifically aimed at veterinary nurses and the role they undertake in our professions. These courses are free and easy to access, and link directly to the 1CPD platform.**

Our Veterinary Nursing Team continues to work hard to develop new and relevant content for veterinary nurses, and work with other teams at the College to create content that is relevant

# Survey of the Professions results to be published soon

## Thanks to all who completed the survey

**At the beginning of 2024, we launched our 2024 Survey of the Professions – the largest most comprehensive study of the UK veterinary sector. The surveys are conducted every four to five years in order to provide us with vital information that we then use to inform and formulate policy. Survey results are also used by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, its agencies and other veterinary bodies and stakeholders.**

This year some 2700 veterinary nurses completed the VN survey which, along with the veterinary survey, was sent to all RVNs and MsRCVS and asked the professions a variety of questions on a wide range of topics.

Information from the last survey was used to inform our current strategic plan, including our aim to be a compassionate regulator, as well as other projects such as VN Futures, the Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice,

ongoing support for the Mind Matters Initiative, and a focus on the workforce. Crucially, this year's veterinary nurse and veterinary surveys will be informing our forthcoming Strategic Plan for 2025 – 2029.

The window to complete the survey has now come to a close but do keep an eye out for key findings from the surveys which will be published later in the year.



# Introducing the new pre-registration theory examination

## Nurses to complete two new multiple-choice question (MCQ) exam papers in addition to the OSCE

**In March the first overseas veterinary nursing registration candidates sat the new pre-registration theory examination. These are two examination papers which overseas candidates must pass in addition to the pre-registration objective structured clinical examination (OSCE).**

The pre-registration examination must be passed by veterinary nurses educated outside of the UK who do not hold a qualification approved by the Accreditation Committee for Veterinary Nurse Education (ACOVENE), as well as those who hold UK qualifications where their educational institution is not fully accredited by the RCVS.

The knowledge-based examinations take the form of two multiple choice question exam papers with 100 questions in each, ensuring candidates meet their Day One Competences, which integrate a mixture of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that all RVNs must possess on their first day in practice. The examinations are available for online or in-person delivery, enabling candidates to complete them from a suitable location or country of their choice. During the examinations, invigilators will carry out security checks and candidates will be observed throughout to ensure that the academic integrity of the examination is maintained.

The pre-registration examination dates for 2024 are as follows.

OSCE Dates	Closing date for registration
2-4 February 2024	Friday 29 December 2023
21-23 June 2024	Friday 17 May 2024
9-10 November 2024	Friday 4 October 2024
MCQ Examination dates	Closing Date
25 and 27 March 2024	26 January 2024
23 and 26 July 2024	31 May 2024
15 and 20 November 2024	20 September 2024

Those with any questions about working as a veterinary nurse in the UK or sitting this examination should contact the RCVS Veterinary Nursing Team on [vnoverseas@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:vnoverseas@rcvs.org.uk) or 020 7202 0788.

# Quality monitoring of awarding organisations

## New auditing strategy now in place

**As part of our regulatory remit, we routinely audit all accredited providers of veterinary nurse education and training in accordance with our published risk strategy. However, until recently, the approaches used for awarding organisations (AOs) tended to focus more on the delivery sites than the AOs themselves.**

As the AOs are the accredited education institutions, they are the bodies that need to be monitored as it is important the veterinary qualifications offered by the AOs are quality assured effectively.

Having recognised that the previous approach needed to be adjusted, an in-person meeting was held in June 2023 between members of our Veterinary Nursing Team and the AOs. This was

a productive and positive meeting which allowed us to develop a new auditing strategy as detailed in the **October 2023 issue of this publication.**

***“It is important that all stakeholders involved with the strategy have an opportunity to provide feedback.”***

We commenced this new auditing strategy in September 2023 and, while the audits themselves were useful and allowed us to gain valuable insight into the compliance of the AOs, it became apparent that the allocation of the planned audits would not be sustainable in the long term. This led to an internal review of the processes, utilising a continuous quality improvement approach,

and will now allow us to utilise members of our team in a more strategic way. The qualifications assessors now have allocated delivery sites across all three AOs based on their geographical locations.

The strategy will be reviewed towards the end of this academic year to evaluate the changes made and to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

It is important that all stakeholders involved with the strategy have an opportunity to provide feedback.

If you have recently had an audit, we would really appreciate any constructive feedback so please do get in touch with your comments via email at [vnqa@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:vnqa@rcvs.org.uk).



# A deep dive into mental health for SVNs

## Nurses needed to support mental health research project

**M**ind Matters Initiative Sarah Brown Mental Health Research Grant recipients, Dr Faye Didymus and Dr Jackie Hargreaves, are looking for SVNs, RVNs, and those who deliver diploma-route and degree-route veterinary nursing curricula, to help support them in their research project into SVN mental health education.

The project, which aims to address a potential lack of understanding surrounding the importance of mental health education in the learning paths of SVNs, will culminate in a set of evidence-based recommendations for how mental health education for veterinary nursing students could be enhanced.

Dr Didymus and Dr Hargreaves, from Leeds Beckett University, are running a webinar to discuss their research findings to date and to offer an opportunity for attendees to contribute to the

design and development of the second phase of their research, which will be essential for achieving the main outcome of their research project.

The webinar will be taking place online via Zoom on Tuesday 23 April 2024, from 10.30am to 11.30am.

Anybody interested in finding out more and contributing to the research can sign up to the webinar via [our dedicated Eventbrite page](#).

For more information about the grant recipients and the project, [visit our website](#).



# RCVS neurodiversity stakeholder event

## Improving support for the neurodivergent veterinary community

**T**he Veterinary Nursing Team is currently involved in the planning and preparation of a neurodiversity event due to be hosted by us in June 2024. This event is for educators, students, training practice staff and other key stakeholders, and aims to improve support for the neurodivergent community within the veterinary professions.

We believe that the event is timely and necessary, as evidence suggests that there is a high prevalence of neurodivergence within the veterinary professions, and disclosure of neurodivergence can enhance student clinical practice experience. Fostering a culture of awareness, acceptance, and support for neurodivergent individuals will help create a positive working environment.

The purpose of the event is to bring key stakeholders together to discuss pertinent challenges within the veterinary and veterinary nursing professions, review current materials, and present solutions with regard to how appropriate support can be provided moving forward.

A key output from the event will be for us to create resources, information, and guidance to help foster a collaborative approach to identifying and developing reasonable adjustments to support neurodivergent individuals. We will also obtain input from stakeholders, to enable them to further develop resources that can be utilised within all workplaces.

If you would like to receive further details about the event, please contact the VN Team at [vetnursing@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:vetnursing@rcvs.org.uk).

# Quality Improvement in a Day event

## RCVS Knowledge to host second Quality Improvement event in Bedford

**A**fter a sell-out event in December, RCVS Knowledge is hosting its second Quality Improvement (QI) event on Thursday 18th April at The Forest Centre in Bedford.

Delivering eight hours of continuing professional development (CPD), this highly interactive event will give a broad overview of everything veterinary team members need to truly embed QI into daily practice.

Most practitioners recognise the importance of QI, with 96% of veterinary professionals agreeing that QI methods can support the provision of high-quality, safe, and effective care. However, many struggle to implement it due to a number of factors, such as lack of time, not knowing where to start, or how to bring colleagues on board. QI in a Day is designed to help veterinary professionals overcome these barriers.

Featuring sessions by expert Clinical Leads, Pam Mosedale, Lou Northway (Lou the Vet Nurse) and Kathrine Blackie, this event includes practical 'how-to' steps on measuring and improving outcomes and care, embedding evidence-based veterinary medicine and new systems to improve patient safety, and learning from everything that happens in your practice.

Interactive sessions will include root cause analysis and demonstrate how to learn from

successes, as well as when things go wrong, helping to foster a learning culture, improve communication and develop a united team. Participants will be able to take their learning to the next level, with a follow up virtual workshop, to assist with individual projects and steer them in the right direction.

Katie Mantell, Chief Executive Officer of RCVS Knowledge, said: "We can't wait to welcome you and your team to our next QI in a Day event. The demand for the first event in December was phenomenal and underlined the fact that there's great enthusiasm for QI in the veterinary professions.

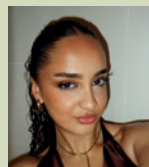
"Whether you're a total novice with QI, or already have some experience, you'll come away from this event having learned about practical steps you can take to improve."

The event is open to every member of your veterinary team – including practice managers, vets, nurses, students, client care teams and clinical directors.

Tickets for the one-day event cost £260 and are on sale now. There are only 60 tickets available for this course and tickets for last year's event sold out fast, so don't delay.

To book your place, visit the [RCVS Knowledge website](#).

## Introducing new starter, Jasmine Winter



**I** joined the RCVS in September 2023 as the Examinations Administrator after completing my A-Levels. I work alongside the Examinations Quality Lead,

to assist in the registration process for veterinary nurses educated outside the UK who intend to enter the RCVS Register. I also provide administrative support for the pre-registration examinations.

Despite not coming from a veterinary nursing background, I am pleased to be a part of the VN Team who have created an amazing atmosphere. They are incredibly passionate about the profession and have given me a warm and friendly welcome.

Since starting in my role at the RCVS, I have enjoyed learning new skills and about the huge impact that the RCVS has on the veterinary professions.



# Visions for Veterinary Nursing

## Veterinary professionals invited to look to 2035 at upcoming engagement events

**Veterinary Nurse Futures (VNF), a joint project between us and the British Veterinary Nursing Association (BVNA), is sponsoring and supporting a series of engagement events during 2024 to gain views from the profession on their aspirations and visions for veterinary nursing.**

It is now almost eight years since the initial VNF project launched, and the challenges and opportunities faced by the professions have evolved considerably within that time.

With this in mind, we would like to understand where the professions feel that the delivery of team-based veterinary healthcare is, or should be, heading; and what this might look like in 2035.

We have a mixture of in-person and virtual events in the pipeline and are inviting veterinary

nurses and veterinary nursing students from all backgrounds, work environments and experience levels to attend to allow us to gain a broad view across a range of perspectives.

Through a range of activities including, inspirational speakers, scenarios and discussion groups, we aim to encourage open minded, unrestricted thinking to explore how veterinary care might be delivered in 2035 and how veterinary nurses will fit into that delivery.

To receive updates on the events, please ensure your email updates from VN Futures are accepted in your RCVS 'My Account'.

The VNF website, [www.vnfutures.org.uk](http://www.vnfutures.org.uk), will also provide further information in due course.

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