

Aberystwyth University Accreditation Visit

18-20 October 2023

Report to the Veterinary Nurses Council of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS)

Contents

List of Panel Members	1
Summary of the Panel's findings	3
Programme details	5
Standard 1 – Learning culture.....	6
Standard 2 – Governance and quality	14
Standard 3 – Student empowerment	22
Standard 4 – Educators and assessors	32
Standard 5 – Curricula and assessment.....	36
Standard 6 – Effective clinical learning	44

List of Panel Members

Joy Burgess-Carabini RVN – Student Representative
Victoria Hedges RVN - RCVS Examinations Quality Lead
Gemma Irwin-Porter RVN – Education Representative
Aislin O’Raw RVN – Employer Representative
Tori Thornton RVN – Qualifications Assessor (HE) (Observer)
Kirsty Williams – RCVS Quality Improvement Manager (Observer)
Kirsty Young RVN – Panel Chair

Key Staff met

Professor Darrell Abernethy – Head and Chair, Aberystwyth School of Veterinary Science
Emma Anscombe-Skirrow RVN – Programme Lead
Marco Arkesteijn – Senior Tutor, Department of Life Sciences
Adrian Harvey – Faculty Manager
Professor Iain Barber – Head of Department of Life Sciences
Kim Bradick – Deputy Registrar, Assurance and Enhancement
Sue Clarke – Business Development Officer
Tim Davies – Director of Information Services
Rebecca Edwards – Faculty Registrar, Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences
Kylie Evans – Head of Admissions Operations
Professor Jo Hamilton – Associate Dean, Learning, Teaching and Student Experience, Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences
Professor Neil Glasser – Pro-Vice Chancellor, Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences
Darren Hathaway – Head of Sport and Grounds
John Harrington – Deputy Head of Student Support and Careers Services
Bev Herring – Head of Careers and Employability

Joe Ironside – Director of Teaching and Learning, Department of Life Sciences

George Jones – Head of Student Support and Development

Non Jones – Subject Librarian

Ian Munton - Director of Student Services

Sophie Regnault – Senior lecturer in Veterinary Science

Rose Shaw – Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Manager

Professor Elizabeth Treasure - Vice-Chancellor

Ruth Wonfor – Exam board chair

Professor Tim Woods – Pro Vice Chancellor for Learning, Teaching and Student Experience

Jim Woolley – E-learning Enhancement and Engagement Theme Leader

Summary of the Panel's findings

- Aberystwyth University (AU) was visited between 18-20 October 2023. The following programme was under accreditation review:

FdSc Veterinary Nursing

- It should be noted that the programme will be delivered in English, but students may request assessments to be available in Welsh.
- The Visitors received a warm welcome from the staff and are grateful to all those who were responsible for preparing the visit, arranging the schedule, and providing supplementary information when requested. The enthusiasm, commitment, and pride of staff in what they do made it an interesting and enjoyable visit.

The panel found the following:

- The programme team is to be **commended** for the robustness of the proposal and the planning to this point. Partnership working with charities to provide a range of specialist health & wellbeing services to students is a strength of this institution. The panel commends the proposed Clinical Supervisor (CS) training and the proposal to offer Mental Health First Aider (MHFA) training to Clinical Supervisors. The planning and support from the institution for this programme development is a key factor in the robustness of the proposal, including the recruitment of a highly competent Programme Lead, the development of a considered business case and the contingency planning. The cross reference to the RCVS Day One Skills (DOS) on equipment lists was considered an example of good practice by the panel. The support for Welsh language speaking students and the aim to support the veterinary professions in Wales was considered a positive ambition. The panel found that the proposed approach to monitoring student progress through the Nursing Progress Log (NPL) and the gathering of placement feedback was likely to be effective.
- Areas for further review included the checking of documents and information for currency, consistency and accuracy; further consideration of widening participation and support for students on placement; the development of the Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) and the support for students in preparing for these; along with the development of module handbooks, including learning and teaching approaches, assessment alignment and the overview of the proposed assessment schedule. The panel requested a list of Training Practices (TPs) be provided, once approved by the university.

The findings in this report are based on the RCVS panel's review. The panel are not the decision makers, and their commendations, suggestions and actions may be subject to amendment during the committee process.

Programme details

Requirements	Details
Name of organisation awarding the licence to practise qualification	Aberystwyth University
Main address and contact details for the above organisation	Penglais Campus Aberystwyth Ceredigion SY23 3DA
Name of Principal or Chief Executive Officer	Professor Neil Glasser
Name of Programme Lead	Emma Anscombe-Skirrow RVN
Proposed programme(s) title:	FdSc Veterinary Nursing
Address and contact details of proposed site/s for delivery of licence to practise qualification	Penglais Campus Aberystwyth Ceredigion SY23 3DA
Pattern of delivery	Three-year full time with a 52-week placement
Intakes and student numbers	One September intake per year. First intake 15, increasing to 25 by the third intake.

Standard 1 – Learning culture

The learning culture prioritises the safety of people, including clients, students and educators, and animals enabling the values of the Code of Professional Conduct to be upheld.

Education and training is valued and promoted in all learning environments, with diversity and inclusion at the forefront.

Standard met				
Accredited Education Institutions, together with Centres and Training Practices, must:				
	Requirements	Met	Part Met	Not Met
1.1	<p>Demonstrate that the safety of people and animals is a primary consideration in all learning environments.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i></p> <p><i>Health and safety policy</i></p> <p><i>Clinical and delivery site audits</i></p> <p><i>Staff induction policy</i></p> <p><i>Standard Operating Procedures</i></p> <p><i>Risk assessments</i></p> <p><i>Information Security</i></p> <p><i>Safeguarding policies and procedures</i></p> <p><i>Student inductions - Welcome Week</i></p> <p><i>Fire safety protocol</i></p> <p><i>IQA handbook</i></p> <p><i>Training Practice Approval paperwork</i></p> <p>AU has demonstrated considerations for the safety of people through appropriate documentation and policies. Relevant safety policies are sufficient; however, the review procedure has not been clearly followed. All documentation is required to be reviewed and recorded as dated accurately to ensure the safety of all is paramount.</p> <p>Training Practice approval and monitoring paperwork includes all necessary safety audits which reassured the panel that the clinical learning environments will be adequately monitored. Fire safety is well evidenced across the campus.</p> <p>Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) include QR codes with links to demonstration videos. Risk assessments are held centrally and reviewed appropriately. It is suggested that relevant risk assessments are linked via QR code to the SOPs.</p>		✓	

	<p>There are no animals on site, however, the university has provided sufficient documentation to evidence the safety of animals within other AU facilities.</p>			
1.2	<p>Prioritise the wellbeing of people.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i></p> <p><i>Continued Professional Development (CPD) documents/policies</i></p> <p><i>Staff inductions</i></p> <p><i>Effective Contribution Scheme (ECS) - annual appraisal</i></p> <p><i>Supporting Staff</i></p> <p><i>Staff Training and Development</i></p> <p><i>Dignity and Respect at Work Policy</i></p> <p><i>Health and Wellbeing</i></p> <p><i>Mental Health First Aider Training</i></p> <p><i>Care First - Employee Assistance Programme</i></p> <p>There is a strong culture of wellbeing throughout all departments at the university and the partnerships with varied charities create valuable links with the community.</p> <p>Faculty and students are encouraged to utilise various wellbeing resources such as the arts centre, sports centre, and foodbank.</p> <p>There is wellbeing support for faculty members through university initiatives such as the Employee Assistance Programme and Effective Contribution Scheme.</p> <p>AU also plans to incorporate its mental health first aid training into Clinical Supervisor (CS) training.</p>	✓		
1.3	<p>Ensure that facilities and physical resources, including those used for clinical learning, comply with all relevant legislation including UK animal care and welfare standards.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i></p> <p><i>Training practice (TP)/Auxiliary Training Practices (aTP) lists with risk assessments</i></p> <p><i>VMD Registration</i></p> <p><i>Policy for storage and disposal of POM-Vs</i></p> <p><i>Standard Operating Procedures</i></p> <p><i>Policy for onsite animals</i></p> <p><i>Facility audits</i></p> <p><i>Schedule of quality monitoring activity</i></p> <p><i>Inventory of clinical equipment and consumables</i></p>	✓		

	<p><i>Student feedback - Your Voice Matters</i></p> <p>There are currently sufficient facilities and physical resources at the university. There is a robust purchasing plan in place for further equipment, which has been mapped to the Day One Skills (DOS), to facilitate clinical learning for the Veterinary nursing students. This equipment list includes a digital radiography machine and medical models and mannikins.</p> <p>There are currently no POM-Vs stored on site; if, or when, the use of POM-Vs occurs, AU will need to ensure it meets regulatory requirements.</p> <p>Waste facilities are present; however, the bins are not clearly labelled to ensure correct waste segregation.</p> <p>Currently there are no animals on site, however AU proposes finding a suitable clinical learning environment to enable students to gain experience with animals,; a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will be required.</p>			
1.4	<p>Ensure clients have the opportunity to give, and if required withdraw, their informed consent to students being involved in the care of their animals.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Poster regarding consent</i> <i>TP monitoring documentation</i> <i>Consent forms</i> <i>TP/aTP approval forms</i></p> <p>AU has made steps to ensure that clients will be given the opportunity to give or withdraw consent to students being involved in the care of their animals.</p> <p>AU is currently developing a standardised poster to provide to all Training Practices (TP) to display. Once this poster is finalised it should be disseminated to the affiliated TPs. The TP monitoring paperwork will ensure this will be audited and monitored. The MOU for all TP/aTP supports the consent for clients.</p>	✓		
1.5	<p>Promote client, public and animal safety and welfare and maintaining confidentiality.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Job descriptions</i> <i>Staff reviews</i></p>	✓		

	<p><i>Student feedback</i> <i>Peer Support of Teaching</i> <i>General Data Protection Regulation policy</i> <i>TP/aTP approval forms</i> <i>TP/aTP risk assessments</i> <i>Social media policy</i></p> <p>AU ensures confidentiality is maintained through <i>GDPR</i> and <i>Social media policies</i>. Policies are in place to promote client, public and animal safety and welfare. The TP/aTP approval forms and risk assessments include all relevant safety and welfare considerations as well as confidentiality for clinical placement. Post placement feedback forms will provide an opportunity for student feedback with safety and welfare considered throughout.</p>			
1.6	<p>Ensure students and educators understand how to raise concerns or complaints and are encouraged and supported to do so in line with local and national policies without fear of adverse consequences.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Minutes of student meetings</i> <i>Staff handbook</i> <i>Student handbook</i> <i>Induction policy and timetables for students and staff</i> <i>Student Complaints</i> <i>Whistle Blowing Policy</i> <i>Social Media Policy</i> <i>Safeguarding Policy</i> <i>Wellbeing Policy</i></p> <p>Relevant policies are in place to ensure students and faculty members are aware of the avenues for raising concerns and complaints. Appropriate induction processes and handbooks incorporate concerns and complaints guidance. Staff Student Consultative committee meetings provide an opportunity for feedback on concerns and complaints, which is then disseminated.</p>	✓		
1.7	<p>Ensure any concerns or complaints are investigated and dealt with effectively, ensuring the wellbeing of people and animals is prioritised.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Complaints</i> <i>Fitness to Practise Policy</i> <i>Safeguarding Policy</i></p>	✓		

	<p><i>Wellbeing Policy</i></p> <p>AU has relevant policies in place to ensure effective processes for concerns or complaints to be dealt with ensuring the wellbeing of people and animals. Evidence provided demonstrated examples of how the process was followed.</p> <p>Through discussion with the delivery team and faculty all concerns are investigated thoroughly and effectively.</p>			
1.8	<p>Ensure mistakes and incidents are fully investigated and learning reflections and actions are recorded and disseminated.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Complaints procedure</i> <i>Staff Discipline Procedure</i> <i>Risk Assessments</i> <i>Accident and Incident Reporting</i> <i>Evidence of outcomes/actions and dissemination</i></p> <p>Health and Safety reports are disseminated across the various departments of AU. Policies are in place to ensure mistakes and incidents will be investigated and reflected upon. However, without examples of previous mistakes or incidents the panel was unable to confirm whether this process had been followed appropriately. It is suggested that examples are provided to evidence that this criterion is fully met.</p>		✓	
1.9	<p>Ensure students are supported and supervised in being open and honest in accordance with the RCVS Codes of Professional Conduct.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Fitness to practise</i> <i>Student feedback</i> <i>Module/unit handbook</i> <i>Lesson plans referencing RCVS CoPC</i> <i>Lesson observation feedback</i> <i>Day One Skills Recording Tool</i> <i>FdSc Veterinary Nursing Induction</i> <i>Reflective diaries</i> <i>Student record summary (PDF)</i> <i>Fitness to practise and conviction questionnaire</i> <i>Student handbook</i> <i>Placement handbook</i></p>	✓		

	<p>Encouragement for students to be open and honest is evident throughout the culture at AU. This is well embedded through the fitness to practise policy, handbooks, and modules. There are various feedback avenues such as 'Tell us now' and the post placement feedback forms. The student record summary motivates students to be open and honest throughout their experience at AU. The panel is assured that students will be supported and supervised according to the RCVS Codes of Professional Conduct.</p>			
1.10	<p>Ensure the learning culture is fair, impartial, transparent, fosters good relations between individuals and diverse groups, and is compliant with equalities and human rights legislation.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Lesson observations records</i> <i>Staff training records</i> <i>CPD records</i> <i>Student feedback</i> <i>External examiner reports</i> <i>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy</i> <i>Reasonable Adjustment Policy</i> <i>Conflict of interest forms for OSCEs</i> <i>Complaints procedure</i></p> <p>All appropriate policies are in place to promote Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI). The university's Strategic Equality Plan fosters an inclusive community free from discriminations, harassment, and victimisation. AU works with the AdvanceHE Race and Gender equality charters. Equality reports can be found on the AU website. All mandatory training is monitored centrally and both faculty and students are introduced to this from induction. Similar familiarisation with the university's culture and values could be extended to external individuals/providers working with students.</p> <p>The panel was encouraged by the vast array of initiatives promoting the learning culture which was evidenced throughout the accreditation event. AU has a bilingual policy to ensure that the Welsh language is treated no less favourably than English, which was well celebrated by faculty and students and promotes inclusivity.</p>	✓		
1.11	<p>Advance equality of opportunity through effective use of information and data.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i></p>	✓		

	<p><i>External examiner reports</i> <i>Student feedback</i> <i>Stakeholder feedback</i> <i>Minutes of staff and/or student meetings</i> <i>National student survey data</i> <i>Fee and Access Plan</i></p> <p>The panel was reasonably assured that the university External Examiner Report for the Veterinary Science department, along with evidence of its response to said report, would meet this criterion. Student and stakeholder feedback, alongside the intention to ensure Veterinary Nursing students are involved in the feedback avenues such as the National Student Survey, will allow equality opportunities. Data collected so far is visible in the <i>Fee and Access Plan</i>.</p>			
1.12	<p>Work to promote inter-professional education and inter-professional practice and support opportunities for research collaboration.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Programme level intended learning outcomes</i> <i>Module/unit handbooks</i> <i>Secondment policy and timetables</i> <i>Guest (expert) speaker timetables</i> <i>Expert witness documentation</i></p> <p>Inter-professional education and practice is embedded throughout the programme. Plans to collaborate with the Veterinary Science and Human Nursing students regarding zoonosis and community nursing promotes this opportunity. There are plans to approach guest speakers for various elements throughout the programme.</p>	✓		
1.13	<p>Promote evidenced-based improvement in education and veterinary nursing practice.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Programme level intended learning outcomes</i> <i>Module/unit handbooks</i> <i>CPD policy</i> <i>Secondment Policy</i> <i>Guest (expert) speaker timetables</i> <i>Quality improvement policies and procedures.</i> <i>OSCE procedure</i></p> <p>AU has incorporated evidence-based nursing throughout the programme with a plan for various expert guest speakers to</p>	✓		

	<p>visit the students. They aspire to include, but not be limited to, bandaging, wound management, physiotherapy, and emergency critical care. Clinical supervisors working in local practices are being recruited to develop the OSCE stations. Annual monitoring and periodic departmental reviews will be carried out.</p>			
<p>Conclusion:</p> <p>This Standard is met.</p> <p>The learning culture at Aberystwyth University clearly promotes excellent wellbeing for all individuals associated with the Campus. The health and safety of educators and students is evident, with an emphasis on mental health. The value of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is apparent throughout all learning environments. The CoPC is embedded throughout the programme and is incorporated into the FtP documentation. Overall, this standard has been met; there are some suggestions and actions to ensure the learning culture at AU is suitable for the VN programme.</p>				
<p>Suggestions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consider linking the risk assessment for clinical procedures in the SOPs accessed via the QR codes. b. VMD registration to be sought if/when appropriate, to ensure AU meets regulatory requirements. c. Onsite Animal policy to be provided once reviewed. d. Waste segregation to be made clear through signage on bins and posters. e. Client opportunity to withdraw consent poster to be created and provided to TPs. f. Consider how to facilitate external visitors/learning providers' alignment with the university cultures and values. <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. An example of incident investigation to be provided from another department at AU. b. Ensure Policies are reviewed appropriately, and recorded dates are accurate. 				

Standard 2 – Governance and quality

There are effective governance systems that ensure compliance with all legal, regulatory, professional and educational requirements and clear lines of responsibility and accountability for meeting those requirements.

All learning environments optimise safety and quality, taking account of the diverse needs of, and working in partnership with, students and all other stakeholders.

Standard met				
Accredited Education Institutions, together with Centres and Training Practices, must:				
	Requirements	Met	Part Met	Not Met
2.1	<p>Comply with all relevant legal, regulatory, professional and educational requirements.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Financial Regulations, Procedures and Policies</i> <i>Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) report and action plans</i> <i>External examiners reports and action plans</i> <i>Minutes from the Portfolio Planning Committee</i></p> <p>An early application for accreditation with the RCVS has been sought from AU following successful university validation, with external input from a subject matter expert. A business case identified areas for legal and regulatory compliance which had been addressed where possible in advance of the accreditation event.</p>	✓		
2.2	<p>Provide all information and evidence required by regulators in a timely manner i.e. within published timescales.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Completed action plans from regulatory, professional and legal bodies</i></p> <p>The notification of intent and subsequent application documentation have been submitted in a timely manner. The institution identified and documented a process for subsequent communication of information to the RCVS.</p>	✓		
2.3	<p>Ensure programmes are designed to meet RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses, QAA Veterinary Nursing Benchmarks and outcomes relevant to the programme.</p>	✓		

	<p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> Curriculum mapping documents to meet RCVS Day One Competences/RCVS Day One Skills Curriculum mapping document to QAA Veterinary Nursing Benchmarks (HEIs)</p> <p>The documentation provided shows accurate mapping of the DOC and DOS to modules and associated assessments. Full mapping of the QAA Benchmarks has been included within the programme specification.</p>			
2.4	<p>Comply with the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Nurses.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> Module/unit documentation Programme curriculum Peer Support of Teaching Schemes of Work Work placement handbooks</p> <p>The Code of Professional Conduct (CoPC) has been referred to within the programme handbook and has been specifically integrated into the curricula.</p>	✓		
2.5	<p>Comply with the RCVS Veterinary Nursing Registration Rules.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> Adequate placement provision/employment Programme specification Qualification Handbook</p> <p>RCVS Veterinary Nursing Registration Rules are embedded into the programme and are referred to in many student facing documents.</p>	✓		
2.6	<p>Adopt a partnership approach, with shared responsibility, evidenced by a Memorandum of Understanding between the Accredited Education Institution and the delivery site and between the delivery site and the Training Practice. This must be regularly reviewed and clearly stipulate the roles, responsibilities, and regulatory requirements.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> Memoranda of Understanding Quality Assurance Procedures Risk assessments Clinical Supervisor handbook Delivery Site approval documents</p>		✓	

	<p><i>TP/aTP secondment documents</i></p> <p>Example MOUs for training practices have been provided and highlight the responsibilities of both parties. AU has stated that a current partnership with Pembrokeshire College is in place for another programme and can be used by this proposed programme for exotic animal handling. The MOU for this delivery site is not yet currently available, however, the programme team has discussed the review of this provision and possible alternative arrangements. An MOU for the agreed delivery site will therefore be required for submission when this is available.</p>			
2.7	<p>Ensure that recruitment, selection and retention of students is open, fair, and transparent and includes measures to understand and address underrepresentation.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Selection criteria for admission</i> <i>Accredited Prior Learning (APL)/Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) policy</i> <i>Equality of opportunity policy</i> <i>Interview records</i> <i>Self-Assessment Reports</i> <i>Widening access strategy</i></p> <p>There are clear criteria for admissions and AU has confirmed that it will review the work experience consideration if this proves challenging for students to achieve.</p> <p>AU has many processes and strategies in place to explore and address widening participation within the wider university, however, it is recommended that data relating to the Veterinary Nursing programme is collected and a strategy developed to understand and address any underrepresentation, if identified, along with widening participation factors.</p>	✓		
2.8	<p>Have entry criteria for the programme that includes evidence that the student has capability in numeracy, literacy and science, written and spoken English and mathematics to meet the programme outcomes.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Programme specification</i> <i>Prospectus</i> <i>Website</i> <i>Social media</i></p>	✓		

	<p><i>Careers leaflets</i></p> <p>The entry criteria for the programme are clear and look to ensure that the applicant has capability in numeracy, literacy, and science, written and spoken English and mathematics to meet the programme outcomes.</p>			
2.9	<p>Provide students with the information and support to enable them to demonstrate fitness to practise including the disclosure of any criminal convictions that may affect registration with the RCVS as qualified veterinary nurses.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Fitness to practise policy</i> <i>Induction procedure</i> <i>Timetables</i> <i>Personal tutorial timetables</i> <i>Student Recruitment and Widening Participation</i> <i>Student interviews</i> <i>Student handbook</i> <i>Fitness to practise and conviction questionnaire</i></p> <p>From the reviewed paperwork it is clear that there is a process in place to ensure that students declare any criminal convictions both at the start of the programme and throughout their studies. The fitness to practise (FtP) procedure is provided to students within the programme handbook and is visible on the AU webpage.</p>	✓		
2.10	<p>Demonstrate a robust process for recognition of prior learning (RPL).</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>RPL/APL Policy</i> <i>RPL/APL documentation</i> <i>RPL/APL decision recording</i> <i>RPL/APL guidance on website</i> <i>Scheme approval documentation</i> <i>VN regulations and conventions</i> <i>Regulations for FdSc Veterinary Nursing</i></p> <p>There is an RPL policy in place. This states that for Veterinary Nursing, credit transfer or RPL is only permitted for up to 120 credits and only if the previously studied modules have been mapped to the RCVS DOC and DOS. The online document <i>Regulations for FdSc Veterinary Nursing</i> states that <i>‘incoming students must evidence that they have successfully completed assessments mapped to the RCVS Day One Skills</i></p>		✓	

	<p><i>in any modules they wish to gain credit in'. This information needs to be updated to ensure that the DOC are also considered as per the original policy.</i></p>			
2.11	<p>Provide students with the information and support they require in all learning environments to enable them to understand and comply with the relevant governance processes and policies.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Student handbook</i> <i>Fitness to practise policy</i> <i>RCVS enrolment guidance</i> <i>Clinical supervisor handbook</i> <i>RCVS CoPC references within relevant documentation</i></p> <p>The evidence provided a comprehensive overview of AU policies and procedures. This information is easily available to students through the AU website, programme handbook and via the virtual learning environment, Blackboard.</p>	✓		
2.12	<p>Have robust, effective, fair, impartial and lawful fitness to practise procedures to swiftly address concerns, and where appropriate notify the RCVS, as Regulator, about the conduct of students that might compromise public and animal safety and protection.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Fitness to practise policy – website</i> <i>Veterinary Nursing Fitness to practise policy</i> <i>Fitness to study policy</i> <i>Appeals procedure and policy</i> <i>Unacceptable Academic Practice</i> <i>Student Code of Conduct</i></p> <p>AU has a generic FtP procedure available on the university webpage with a supplementary process applicable to the Veterinary Nursing Programme. The <i>Veterinary Nursing FtP policy</i> has an initial review stage prior to that of the main AU FtP investigation. There is no reference to the initial review within the main policy, therefore the institution may wish to review the clarity of the process and to define the trigger point for communicating with the RCVS.</p>	✓		
2.13	<p>Confirm that students meet the required programme outcomes in full and are eligible for academic and professional award.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Examinations and Examination Boards</i></p>	✓		

	<p><i>Student progression information</i> <i>Exit award details</i></p> <p>The evidence provided, and panel discussions, confirmed that students will be awarded either their full award or the exit award, both confirmed by a Board of Examiners. The RCVS registration components have been added to the programme requirements.</p>			
2.14	<p>Regularly review all learning environments and provide assurance that they are safe, effective and fit for purpose.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Course reviews</i> <i>Student feedback</i> <i>TP/aTP quality monitoring paperwork</i> <i>Risk assessments</i> <i>Health and Safety Policy</i> <i>Centre Sampling Policy</i> <i>AEI visit documentation (site visit or site review documentation)</i> <i>Memorandum of Understanding</i> <i>External Examiner reports</i> <i>External Quality Assurance reports</i> <i>Standard operating procedures</i> <i>e-safety policy</i> <i>Student training regarding online safety</i> <i>Campus tour</i></p> <p>The evidence confirmed that there are a range of student safety policies in place which are easily accessible by both staff and students. There are a range of learning environments including study spaces and group learning areas which are available to all students across the campus.</p>	✓		
2.15	<p>Appoint appropriately qualified and experienced people for programme development and delivery.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Staff lists</i> <i>Staff development plan</i> <i>Staff in-house training records</i> <i>Job descriptions</i> <i>Staff time allocation</i> <i>Recruitment policy</i> <i>External Examining of Taught Schemes</i> <i>Plan in place</i></p>	✓		

	<p>AU has appointed an appropriately qualified and experienced programme lead who has been supported by the Head of school and external subject expert. There is a detailed plan in place to recruit further staff to support the development of the proposed programme and future delivery.</p>			
2.16	<p>Where an Accredited Education Institution is not yet fully accredited, or at the discretion of Veterinary Nurse Education Committee, facilitate the attendance of the RCVS at the trial/mock OSCE/practical assessment at least one year in advance of the final summative assessment taking place for the relevant cohort of students.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Proposed dates for trial/mock examination</i> <i>Programme Handbook</i></p> <p>AU has a proposed plan and as part of this the RCVS has been informed of provisional OSCE dates.</p>	✓		
2.17	<p>Where an Accredited Education Institution plans to make any changes to its provision, including assessment, the RCVS must approve all changes prior to implementation.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Procedure for informing RCVS of any changes</i></p> <p>AU has developed and documented a process to ensure that the RCVS is informed about changes to the student enrolment status and any proposed programme changes. The panel suggested that AU adds a section to the <i>Procedure for informing RCVS of any changes</i> detailing the process that will be followed if the Veterinary Nurse Education Committee (VNEC) does not approve the proposed change.</p>	✓		
2.18	<p>Provide evidence that adequate market demand and finances are in place and are sufficient to sustain and develop the programme and have been approved by the Higher Education Institution or Awarding Organisation.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Budget</i> <i>Institution's annual report containing audited accounts</i> <i>Budgetary forecast for the accredited programme</i> <i>Evidence of actual and/or projected income sources</i> <i>Evidence of demand for the programme (the market)</i> <i>Marketing strategy for the programme</i> <i>NSS survey</i> <i>End of programme evaluation</i></p>	✓		

	<p>Detailed evidence has been provided which explores the market demand within Wales and incorporates national considerations relating to shortages within the veterinary nursing profession. Financial considerations and projections have been documented and are continually reviewed.</p>			
<p>Conclusion:</p> <p>This standard is met.</p> <p>There are clear, robust policies and procedures in place to support effective student learning, taking into account the diverse needs of students.</p> <p>AU has taken time to explore the market demand for the proposed programme and has embedded its findings into the business case. Financial considerations have been explored in depth and have been detailed within the documents provided.</p>				
<p>Suggestions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Collect EDI data on students within the Veterinary Nursing programmes and devise a strategy to understand and address any underrepresentation and widening participation factors. b. Add a section to the <i>Procedure for informing RCVS of any changes</i> showing the process to be followed should proposed programme changes not be accepted by the RCVS. <p>Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide a MOU for the delivery site used for exotic animal handling. b. Revise the credit transfer / RPL policy published within the Regulations for FdSc Veterinary Nursing to ensure that modules referenced to the DOC are included. 				

Standard 3 – Student empowerment

Students are provided with a variety of learning opportunities and appropriate resources which enable them to achieve the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses and programme outcomes and be capable of demonstrating the professional behaviours in the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Nurses.

Students are empowered and supported to become resilient, caring, reflective and lifelong learners who are capable of working in inter-professional teams.

Standard partially met				
Accredited Education Institutions, together with Centres and Training Practices, must ensure that all students:				
	Requirements	Met	Part Met	Not Met
3.1	<p>Are well prepared for learning in theory and practice having received relevant inductions.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Induction handbooks</i> <i>Induction timetables</i> <i>Induction materials for DOS recording platform</i></p> <p>Intended academic and practical induction materials are comprehensive, referencing the CoPC, DOC/DOS, FtP and RCVS enrolment. It is intended that the induction for the DOS recording platform will be covered in the <i>Preparing for Placement</i> module in year 1 delivered by the IQA once appointed.</p>	✓		
3.2	<p>Have access to the resources they need to achieve the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses, QAA HE Benchmarks, and programme outcomes required for their professional role.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Practical, equipment, consumables and animal collection resource list</i> <i>Reading Lists</i> <i>ILT resources</i> <i>Timetabled resources</i> <i>Clinical placement audits</i> <i>TP/aTP risk assessments</i></p> <p>Students will have access to good quality practical equipment within the Veterinary Education Centre (VEC). The plan for</p>	✓		

	<p>purchasing practical equipment for the new provision as needed is appropriate and has been approved by the university. The equipment to be purchased will enable students to achieve the DOS.</p> <p>TP/aTP risk assessments and clinical placement audits were not available to the panel as AU has not yet recruited any TPs.</p>			
3.3	<p>Are provided with timely and accurate information about curriculum, teaching, supervision, assessment, practice placements and other information relevant to the programme.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Programme handbooks</i> <i>Student handbooks</i> <i>Timetables</i> <i>Schemes of work</i> <i>Module handbooks</i></p> <p>Comprehensive student facing documents for all aspects of the programme were provided.</p> <p>Students being recruited onto the programme will be informed that it is provisionally accredited by the RCVS. The <i>Student Handbook</i> contains information about the process for being considered for Full Accreditation, but the timings published for this (one year before graduation) is incorrect. In addition, there is an indication that if full accreditation is achieved students may apply to have their name added to the register if they have also completed the NPL, OSCE and required programme and clinical placement hours as detailed in the registration rules. These aspects are included within the programme, and it is therefore misleading to indicate that these are additional aspects which need to be completed.</p> <p>Furthermore, no information is available to prospective students about the potential costs of exam support, travel, and accommodation, or any financial or other support that will be provided by AU should full accreditation not be achieved.</p> <p>Students are also informed within the <i>Student Handbook</i> that the programme modules are assessed via unseen examination because they are referenced to the RCVS Day One Skills. This should read RCVS Day One Competences.</p>			✓

	<p>Modules <i>VE11120 Professional Practice</i> and <i>VE20020 Applied Veterinary Nursing</i> contain assessments which have zero weighting. Students need to be informed that these elements are marked as pass/fail and must be successfully completed.</p> <p>Clear information also needs to be provided to students regarding practice placements and the associated costs. The university plans to only provide placements to students in Welsh practices in the first instance. If, however, the student rejects this provided placement and wishes to be placed in a practice outside Wales, the university will support the student with finding this placement. This should be made clear to prospective students to allow them to be fully informed prior to accepting a place on the course and to ensure they are aware of the potential costs of placement that is not close to their home location. This information also needs to be included within the programme documentation.</p> <p>Students access their OSCE stations via the VLE part way through their clinical placement. Consideration needs to be given to providing this information earlier in the programme, so they approach the clinical skills required to complete the workplace assessment and the OSCE in the same way.</p>			
3.4	<p>To work with and learn from a range of people in practice placements, preparing them to provide care to a range of animals with diverse needs.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>TP/aTP Approval forms</i> <i>Expert witness forms/statements</i> <i>Handbooks detailing utilisation of expert witnesses</i></p> <p>It is intended that students will complete 52 weeks of practice placement over years 2 and 3 of the course, comprising of semester 2 of year 2 of the course and semester 1 of year 3. No TPs are currently recruited due to the accreditation status of the programme and no students are planned to be on their practice placement until academic year 2025/26.</p> <p>It is intended that once recruited, clinical supervisors (CS) will be trained appropriately on the use of <i>Expert witness forms/statements</i> and <i>Handbooks detailing utilisation of expert witnesses</i> will be provided to both students and CS prior to placement in year 2.</p>	✓		

3.5	<p>Are enabled to learn and are assessed using a range of methods, including technology enhanced and simulation-based learning appropriate for their programme as necessary for safe and effective practice.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Programme handbooks</i> <i>Example assessments</i> <i>Assessment plans</i> <i>Module/Unit descriptors</i> <i>Clinical supervisor handbook</i> <i>List of clinical skills resources</i></p> <p>There is a good range of assessment methods throughout the modules which will enable students to achieve the DOC/DOS. The clinical learning facilities shown to the panel in the VEC were of a high standard.</p>	✓		
3.6	<p>Are supervised and supported in clinical placement learning in accordance with RCVS Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>TP/aTP staffing lists</i> <i>CS training</i> <i>Clinical placement audits</i> <i>Student TP feedback</i> <i>Clinical placement visit strategy</i></p> <p>All listed evidence provided to the panel was comprehensive and the intended CS training and support, including mental health first aid training, should enable students to be well supported in their clinical placements. An IQA for the course is yet to be appointed.</p>	✓		
3.7	<p>Are supervised according to their individual learning needs, proficiency and confidence.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Individual learning plans</i> <i>NPL monitoring</i> <i>Reasonable adjustment policy</i> <i>Student support services</i> <i>Clinical placement tutorial records</i></p> <p>The plan for recruiting CSs and the structure surrounding their standardisation and training is in place. The wellbeing support provided by the university via the <i>Student support services</i> is excellent, including links to external organisations.</p>	✓		

3.8	<p>Are allocated and can make use of supported learning time including blended learning and recording completion of RCVS Day One Skills for Veterinary Nursing when in practice.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Timetables</i> <i>CS training</i> <i>Audit of Day One Skills recording tool</i> <i>Practice rotas</i> <i>Memoranda of Understanding</i> <i>Clinical supervisor handbook</i></p> <p>Students will be encouraged to take responsibility for their own clinical learning with support from the TP/aTP. The <i>Clinical supervisor handbook</i> states that students should be given time to complete the Nursing Progress Log (NPL) whilst on clinical placement, but this information also needs to be written into the <i>Memoranda of Understanding</i> (MOU) with the TP/aTP once they are recruited. No practice rotas were viewed by the panel due to no TPs having been recruited.</p>		✓	
3.9	<p>Are assigned and have access to a nominated academic tutor/lead for each part of the education programme.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Group tutorial records</i> <i>Student feedback</i> <i>Programme specification</i> <i>Student handbook</i> <i>Personal tutor timetables</i></p> <p>It is intended that students will have a personal tutor assigned in the first year to offer support throughout the duration of the programme. The policy is clear that one-to-one meetings will be held four times in an academic year as a minimum. Information on personal tutors and academic tutors is readily available to students in the <i>Student handbook</i>.</p>	✓		
3.10	<p>Have the necessary support and information to manage any interruptions to the study of programmes for any reason.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Student handbook</i> <i>Temporary with Permanent Withdrawal</i> <i>Rules and Regulations</i> <i>Fitness to Practise policy</i></p> <p>Students will be well supported by the wellbeing and student services teams as well as being encouraged to take</p>	✓		

	<p>responsibility for their own mental and physical wellbeing whilst at university and on practice placements.</p> <p>The <i>Student handbook</i> contains information on FtP and the CoPC. The FtP policy is clear and allows any concerns to be reported and fully investigated by the institution.</p>			
3.11	<p>Have their diverse needs respected and considered across all learning environments.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Equality and diversity policy</i> <i>Reasonable adjustment policy</i> <i>Fitness to Practise</i> <i>Fitness to study policy</i></p> <p><i>The Student support services</i> are to be commended for supporting students with a variety of diverse needs. Students are encouraged to inform the university, and any placements, of any reasonable adjustments to learning. Information on additional learning support and FtP is readily available to all students. The intended programme will be delivered in English, but students will be able to request assessments in Welsh.</p> <p>It is suggested that that the university drafts a policy in relation to the wearing of religious clothing in veterinary education and clinical placement settings. The other policies listed above as evidence provided to the panel were appropriate and up to date.</p>	✓		
3.12	<p>Are provided with support and adjustments in accordance with equalities and human rights legislation and good practice.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Equality and Diversity policy</i> <i>Reasonable adjustments policy</i> <i>Special considerations policy</i> <i>Student feedback</i> <i>Safeguarding policy</i></p> <p>All policies surrounding human rights and equality are in place and up to date. Various student feedback channels are also in place. The support from student services is excellent and will be readily available to all students both on campus and on placement.</p>	✓		

3.13	<p>Are protected from discrimination, harassment and other behaviour that undermines their performance or confidence.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Equality and Diversity policy</i> <i>Report and Support</i> <i>Complaints Policies and reports</i> <i>Student feedback</i> <i>Case study of discipline outcome</i> <i>Safeguarding policy</i></p> <p>Relevant policies to promote a culture of equality and diversity at the university are in place and up to date. The <i>Report and Support</i> system is in place to encourage students to challenge any barriers to this and enable appropriate steps to be taken to support them.</p>	✓		
3.14	<p>Are provided with information and support which encourages them to take responsibility for their own mental and physical health and wellbeing.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Student handbook</i> <i>Personal tutoring system</i> <i>Personal tutorial timetables and records</i> <i>Student Support Policy</i> <i>Student feedback</i> <i>Induction timetable</i></p> <p>Students are actively encouraged to disclose any reasonable adjustments to learning or other additional needs via various student services support channels. The information required to do this is all contained within the comprehensive <i>Student handbook</i>.</p>	✓		
3.15	<p>Are provided with the learning and pastoral support necessary to empower them to prepare for independent, reflective professional practice.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Student handbook</i> <i>Personal tutorial records</i> <i>Module/Unit descriptors</i> <i>Student feedback</i> <i>Assessment examples</i> <i>Guidance provided regarding the RCVS DOS</i> <i>Professional Behaviour Evaluation policy</i></p>	✓		

	<p>The wellbeing support from <i>Student support services</i> at the university is excellent. In particular, the collaboration with various local charities surrounding current mental and physical health topics is to be commended. Information surrounding personal tutors and academic support is readily available to students on the virtual learning environment (VLE) and in the <i>Student handbook</i>.</p>			
3.16	<p>Have opportunities throughout their programme to collaborate and learn with and from other professionals, to learn with and from peers, and to develop supervision and leadership skills.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Student representative meetings</i> <i>Professional behavioural tool</i> <i>Guest (expert) lecturer timetables</i> <i>Peer Support</i> <i>Assessment examples</i> <i>Expert witness statements</i></p> <p>The planned interprofessional education sessions with human nursing students and veterinary science students are to be commended, including topics such as zoonoses and One Health. The proposed plan for guest speakers is varied.</p> <p>As there are currently no veterinary nursing students, it is intended that students will be given a peer mentor who is in year 2 or 3 of another programme at the university for support.</p>	✓		
3.17	<p>Receive constructive feedback throughout the programme to promote and encourage reflective learning.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Marking Procedures and Moderation</i> <i>Clinical Supervisor records</i> <i>Module/Unit descriptors</i> <i>Student Handbook</i> <i>Assessment examples</i> <i>Formative assessment procedures</i> <i>Clinical placement tutorial records</i> <i>Professional Behaviour Evaluations</i> <i>DOS sampling plans</i></p> <p>The panel were assured that reflection will be embedded into the modules and review of assessments post completion to encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning and progression. There are various channels in place</p>	✓		

	already which will enable students many opportunities to feed back to the programme team and wider university.			
3.18	<p>Have opportunities throughout their programme to give feedback on the quality of all aspects of their support and supervision in both theory and practice.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Student surveys</i> <i>Student representative meetings</i> <i>Use of National Student Survey</i> <i>Aber Skills - Study Skills Resources</i> <i>Clinical placement evaluations</i> <i>Personal tutor records</i></p> <p>There are various opportunities in place for students to provide feedback. Currently no examples of feedback can be seen due to there being no students on the course.</p>	✓		
3.19	<p>Are empowered to develop their professional behaviours in line with the RCVS Professional Behaviour Evaluation.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Completed Professional Behaviour Evaluations</i> <i>Professional behaviour guidance to students</i> <i>Professional behaviour guidance to Clinical Supervisors</i> <i>IQA sampling policy</i></p> <p>No <i>Completed Professional Behaviour Evaluations</i> were able to be viewed by the panel due to a lack of students. However, the panel were reasonably assured that this will be met as all policies and guidance are appropriate and a structured plan in place.</p>	✓		

Conclusion:

This Standard is partially met.

Overall, the culture at the university encourages students to take responsibility for their own mental and physical wellbeing whilst providing various methods of support for student wellbeing, including partnership working with local charities, which the panel commends. Students are encouraged to seek support for any difficulties they may face whilst on campus and on placements, as well as to support their peers where appropriate.

This Standard is partially met as further clarity is required in some student facing documents. This is necessary to ensure transparency for students in terms of practice placements and accreditation status implications, and to ensure there is opportunity to make informed decisions at the application and offer stages.

Suggestions:

- a. Consider allowing students to access the OSCE station tasks prior to commencing their placement year.
- b. Create information for students on wearing religious clothing in veterinary education and clinical placement settings.

Actions:

- a. Update student facing documents to ensure that students are aware that all zero weighted assessments are marked as pass/fail and must be completed.
- b. Provide the information that prospective students will receive about the status of the programme, and any financial or other support that will be provided by AU should graduates be required to enter the RCVS Pre-registration examination.
- c. Update the student handbook in relation to RCVS registration to remove information that only those who have completed the 'licence to practise' requirements may apply to register with the RCVS.
- d. Update student facing documents in relation to unseen examinations being required in all modules referenced to the DOC.
- e. Clear information needs to be provided in student facing documents, and the programme specification, regarding practice placement location and the associated costs of this.

Standard 4 – Educators and assessors

Theory and clinical learning, and assessment are facilitated effectively and objectively by appropriately qualified and experienced professionals with necessary expertise for their educational and assessor roles.

Standard met				
Accredited Education Institutions, together with Centres and Training Practices, must ensure that all educators and assessors:				
	Requirements	Met	Part Met	Not Met
4.1	<p>Are appropriately qualified and experienced and always act as professional role models.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>CV and CPD record for Emma Anscombe-Skirrow</i> <i>1.5d Peer support of teaching</i> <i>1.2f Dignity and respect at work</i> <i>Emma Anscombe Skirrow- RCVS Registration number 6378897</i></p> <p>Review of the documentation and panel discussions confirm that university staff are appropriately qualified and act as professional role models. AU codes of conduct such as <i>Dignity and respect at work</i> ensure staff have clear guidance and training available to them.</p>	✓		
4.2	<p>Receive relevant induction, ongoing support, education and training which includes training in equality and diversity.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>CPD records</i> <i>CPD policy</i> <i>Professional development plans</i> <i>Annual appraisal process</i> <i>Induction procedures</i> <i>Evidence of Clinical Supervisor training</i> <i>Completed reviews of Clinical Supervisor suitability (CV, CPD, registration checks)</i> <i>Mental health first aid training</i> <i>Examiner training and standardisation procedures</i></p> <p>Review of evidence and panel discussions confirm that robust inductions are implemented for new staff members joining the university. All staff have access to a range of comprehensive policies and training including equality and diversity.</p>	✓		

	Processes have been developed to ensure that clinical supervisors have adequate training and development to support learners in the clinical environment.			
4.3	<p>Have their diverse needs respected and considered and are provided with support and adjustments in accordance with equalities and human rights legislation and good practice.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Staff induction policy</i> <i>Equality and diversity policy</i> <i>Recruitment policy</i> <i>Staff support services</i> <i>Disability policy</i> <i>Health and safety policy</i></p> <p>The evidence reviewed confirms that there are comprehensive policies in place to support the diverse needs of educators and clinical supervisors. Reasonable adjustments are considered and implemented for students where appropriate and supported by teams within student services.</p>	✓		
4.4	<p>Have supported time and resources to enable them to fulfil their roles in addition to their other professional responsibilities.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Job description- Programme Lead</i> <i>Staffing allocations</i> <i>AU workload allocation and management policy</i> <i>AU workload allocation management guidelines</i></p> <p>AU has implemented a workload model for this academic year and will be using this for the programme lead in addition to open discussions with their line manager. Staff contract and job descriptions further define the roles of individuals. The university has a recruitment plan in place.</p>	✓		
4.5	<p>Respond effectively to the learning needs of individuals.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Student Feedback</i> <i>Student representative meeting minutes</i> <i>Personal tutorial timetables / minute</i> <i>Clinical placement records</i> <i>Reasonable adjustments records</i> <i>Lesson observations</i> <i>Student support services</i></p>	✓		

	<p><i>Special educational needs support</i></p> <p>AU offers a strong range of support for students with clear policies and procedures in place to address individual learner needs. Students have the ability to feed back to the university using a range of effective mechanisms.</p>			
4.6	<p>Are supportive and objective in their approach to student supervision, assessment and progression and appropriately share and use evidence to make decisions on student assessment and progression.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i></p> <p><i>Qualification assessment strategy</i></p> <p><i>Clear evidenced-based rationale for calculation of pass mark / cut score in assessment</i></p> <p><i>Clinical placement records/action plans</i></p> <p><i>Day One Skills recording tool</i></p> <p><i>Day One Skills IQA strategy</i></p> <p>The evidence highlighted that there are robust procedures in place for exam boards, where appropriate decisions on student assessment and progression can be made.</p> <p>AU has a number of mechanisms in place to minimise bias in assessment marking.</p>	✓		
4.7	<p>Liase, collaborate and action constructive feedback generated by colleagues, students, and stakeholders to enhance their teaching assessment and to share effective practice.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i></p> <p><i>External Examiner reports</i></p> <p><i>RCVS pre-accreditation visit</i></p> <p><i>Teaching observations</i></p> <p><i>Student feedback</i></p> <p><i>Stakeholder feedback</i></p> <p><i>Meeting minutes with actions and dissemination plans</i></p> <p><i>Examiner observations</i></p> <p>The evidence demonstrated that effective mechanisms are in place to address feedback collated from external examiners, students, and colleagues for the proposed programme.</p>	✓		
4.8	<p>Are expected to respond effectively to concerns and complaints about public protection, animal welfare and student</p>	✓		

	<p>performance in learning environments and are supported in doing so.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Complaints procedure</i> <i>Fitness to practise policy</i> <i>TP/aTP Risk register</i> <i>Minutes of meetings, action plans and responses</i></p> <p>AU has a clear complaints and appeals procedure which is provided to students and staff. The panel reviewed examples of complaints from other programmes which contained clear reviews and outcomes.</p>			
4.9	<p>Ensure the programme lead is a Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN) who has substantial experience of veterinary nurse education and training at a suitable level for the qualification(s) being delivered and holds a recognised teaching qualification.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>CV and CPD records</i> <i>Panel discussion</i></p> <p>The Programme Lead is an RVN with substantial experience of veterinary nurse education and training. It was evident there is a clear personal development plan facilitated and supported by AU.</p>	✓		
<p>Conclusion:</p> <p>This standard is met.</p> <p>Procedures and policies for theory and clinical learning, and assessment are in place to ensure that they are facilitated effectively and objectively by appropriately qualified educators and assessors within the proposed programme.</p> <p>Strong consideration has been given to the staffing within the proposed programme including the use of subject specialist educators from other AU programmes and external speakers, in addition to the carefully planned recruitment of new staff.</p>				
<p>Suggestions: None.</p> <p>Actions: None.</p>				

Standard 5 – Curricula and assessment

Curricula and assessments are designed, developed, delivered, evaluated and validated to ensure that students achieve the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses, QAA HE Benchmarks for Veterinary Nurses (for HE) and outcomes for their approved programme.

Standard not met				
Accredited Education Institutions, together with Centres and Training Practices, must ensure:				
	Requirements	Met	Part Met	Not Met
5.1	<p>Curricula are mapped and fulfil the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses, QAA HE Benchmarks for Veterinary Nurses and programme outcomes.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Programme specification</i> <i>Programme handbook</i> <i>Module/unit mapping documents</i></p> <p>This requirement has been well evidenced by the programme team. Curricula are fully mapped to the RCVS DOC/DOS and QAA HE Benchmarks for Veterinary Nurses.</p>	✓		
5.2	<p>Programmes are designed, developed, delivered, evaluated and improved based upon stakeholder feedback.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Self-assessment reports</i> <i>Annual programme reviews</i> <i>Periodic programme reviews</i> <i>Programme meeting minutes</i> <i>Stakeholder meeting minutes</i> <i>Evidence of implementation of feedback</i></p> <p>AU has sought feedback for the programme from clinical staff, external advisors and the External Examiner for the AU BVSc programme. This stakeholder feedback has been considered during the development of the programme.</p>	✓		
5.3	<p>Curricula remain relevant in respect of contemporary veterinary nursing practice.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>External Examiner reports</i></p>	✓		

	<p><i>Stakeholder feedback</i> <i>Module/unit documents</i> <i>Equipment list DOS</i></p> <p>AU has considered contemporary veterinary nursing practice when developing the programme. Due to this being the first veterinary nursing programme delivered at AU, it has purchased equipment which will aid the teaching of contemporary veterinary nursing. There are plans to expand the VEC and purchase other equipment such as a digital radiography machine and advanced veterinary mannikins.</p>			
5.4	<p>Curricula and assessments weigh theory and practice learning appropriately to the programme. <i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Programme specifications</i> <i>Mapping to RCVS Veterinary Nursing Registration Rules</i> <i>Module/unit documents</i></p> <p>Modules and their learning outcomes are appropriate and have been through the institution's own validation process. In the absence of timetables, the panel has looked at additional evidence to assess the weight of theory to practice within the curricula. One <i>module document (VE10020 Anatomy and Physiology)</i> contains detailed information relating to specific allocation of teaching hours for theory and clinical/practical learning, however this is not standardised across other module descriptors and, therefore, it is not possible to assess the ratio of theory to practice within the curricula.</p>			✓
5.5	<p>Curricula provide appropriate structure and sequencing that integrates theory and practice at increasing levels of complexity. <i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>External consultation</i> <i>Assessment strategies</i> <i>Curriculum map (include vertical and horizontal integration)</i> <i>Programme handbooks</i> <i>Module/unit documents</i></p> <p>The panel viewed the learning outcomes against the sample of assessment briefs and examinations provided and these were deemed to be structured appropriately with both theory and practical assessments being included.</p>	✓		

5.6	<p>Curricula and assessments are structured and sequenced to enable students to manage their theory and practice learning experience effectively, with progression determined at appropriate points.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Clinical placement plans</i> <i>Assessment matrix/ overview</i> <i>DOC/DOS Mapping</i> <i>Student handbook</i> <i>Assessment plans</i> <i>Regulations and conventions</i></p> <p>Modules are assessed at the end of each semester. The outline assessment schedule was not provided and therefore it was not possible for the panel to be satisfied that the workload would be manageable.</p> <p>A range of carefully designed and authentic summative assessments have been integrated within the proposed programme. There is a broad range of assessment types, and the programme team may wish to consider how the planned formative assessments will be implemented to support the scaffolding within the curricula to ensure that students are able to transition from one assessment type to another.</p>			✓
5.7	<p>A range of appropriate assessments are delivered, within the educational setting, to accurately measure the knowledge, skills and understanding outlined in the programme. At least one summative assessment must be in the form of an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) or similarly robust, objective and evidenced-based form of practical examination to test the safe and effective acquisition of a broad range of skills and competences outlined in the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Examples of assessment material for each different assessment methodology</i> <i>Assessment blueprint</i> <i>Assessment rationale</i> <i>Examiner handbook</i> <i>Student handbook</i> <i>Security policies</i></p> <p>The module descriptors detail the format that the assessment will take. There are a variety of assessments including written reports, group presentations, web content development, case</p>			✓

	<p>studies, professional discussion, literature reviews and practical assessments. Written examinations generally consisted of short answer, and Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQ).</p> <p>There is an intention to deliver a 12 station OSCE, but the stations and other aspects of the delivery process had not been finalised at the time of the accreditation. The panel is reasonably assured that this will be in place ahead of the planned mock/trial OSCE taking place in 2025/26. Documents must be provided to the RCVS as they are finalised.</p>			
5.8	<p>Students are assessed practically across clinical placement settings and learning environments as required by their programme.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Day One Skills recording tool</i> <i>Observation records</i> <i>Examination papers and mark sheets</i> <i>Sampling plan</i></p> <p>The panel is reasonably assured that students will be assessed practically through a range of assessments both in clinical placement and in the teaching environment.</p>	✓		
5.9	<p>Processes are in place to establish a high degree of validity and robustness to support the decisions made based on the results of the assessment.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Examination policy and procedure documents</i> <i>Rationale for the Design of examinations</i> <i>Moderation policies</i> <i>Assessment blueprint</i> <i>Mark schemes</i> <i>Training and standardisation of markers</i> <i>Test and item statistical analysis mechanisms</i> <i>Statistical analysis of item level and question level data such as analysis of question difficulty</i> <i>Standard setting documentation</i> <i>Mechanisms to detect plagiarism</i> <i>Assessment appeals policy</i> <i>Invigilation arrangements</i></p> <p>There are a number of processes in place within the AU regulations to determine the validity of assessments. In the case of assignments and examinations these are well</p>	✓		

	<p>established. The programme team has also documented the processes they will apply to ensure that there is a high degree of validity and robustness within the OSCE. The panel were reasonably assured that these will support the outcomes of the programme.</p>			
5.10	<p>Moderation processes are in place and demonstrate that assessment is fair, reliable, and valid.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Student feedback</i> <i>Module Action Plan</i> <i>Moderation protocol</i> <i>External examiner reports</i> <i>Responses to action plans</i> <i>Sampling strategy</i> <i>DOS sampling plans</i></p> <p>Overarching moderation processes for written assessments and the OSCE are in place. The sampling plan includes sampling all fails and a minimum percentage across other grade boundaries. Where there are small cohorts, the panel was concerned that the sampling size may be insufficient, and the university may wish to consider revisiting this approach.</p>	✓		
5.11	<p>Mechanisms are in place to minimise bias in all assessments.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Examination Policies and Procedures</i> <i>Examiner handbook</i> <i>Rationale for the design of the examination</i> <i>Invigilation arrangements</i> <i>Examiner standardisation processes</i> <i>Moderation processes</i></p> <p>There are a number of mechanisms in place to minimise bias. This includes the number of examiners involved in the OSCE as well as anonymous marking where possible. Where anonymity is not possible two markers will mark independently before agreeing the final mark.</p> <p>Moderation and second marker procedures are in place and implemented by AU. The programme team may wish to consider the implementation of marking calibration to enhance the assessment marking procedure where two or more markers are employed.</p>	✓		

5.12	<p>Adjustments are provided in accordance with relevant equalities and human rights legislation for assessments in theory and practice.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i></p> <p><i>Reasonable adjustment policy documentation</i></p> <p><i>Mitigating circumstances policy</i></p> <p><i>Fitness to practise policy</i></p> <p>This requirement has been well evidenced by the programme team. The institution has clear processes and procedures in place to provide adjustments and the panel were reasonably assured that these would be implemented for the programme under review.</p>	✓		
5.13	<p>Clinical placement assessment is facilitated and evidenced by observations and other appropriate methods.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i></p> <p><i>Moderation policy</i></p> <p><i>Day One Skills recording tool</i></p> <p><i>Schedule of activity</i></p> <p><i>CS training</i></p> <p><i>Clinical Supervisor observation records</i></p> <p><i>DOS sampling plans</i></p> <p>The requirement for clinical placement assessment has been well proposed by the delivery team. The documentation produced for IQA sampling and monitoring of the NPL, direct observations of the CS and CS training will encourage effective assessment and observation. There is ongoing recruitment for a faculty member to ensure the implementation of these plans.</p>	✓		
5.14	<p>Students' self-reflections contribute to, and are evidenced in, assessments.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i></p> <p><i>Student feedback forms</i></p> <p><i>Tutorial reports</i></p> <p><i>Clinical placement reports</i></p> <p><i>Reflective logs</i></p> <p><i>Example assessments</i></p> <p><i>Professional behaviour evaluations</i></p> <p>Reflection is embedded into the assessment process, and it is clear that the university aims to develop reflective learners.</p>	✓		

5.15	<p>There is no compensation between assessments that address the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Regulations and Conventions</i> <i>Module handbooks</i> <i>Course handbook</i></p> <p>The panel was satisfied that there is no compensation within or between modules referenced to the DOC/DOS and this had been detailed in university regulations.</p>	✓		
5.16	<p>Ensure modules/units that address the RCVS Day One Competences for Veterinary Nurses include unseen examination as an element of the assessment strategy.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Module/unit mapping</i> <i>Assessment methods</i> <i>Assessment compensation policy</i></p> <p>This requirement has been well evidenced by the programme team. All modules mapped to the DOC contain an unseen examination element.</p>	✓		
<p>Conclusion:</p> <p>This Standard is not met.</p> <p>The new programme presented for accreditation has been carefully constructed and considered. There is an intention to further develop the clinical skills and teaching facilities to assist this programme in being contemporary.</p> <p>The range and quantity of assessment methods has been well considered, with the inclusion of unseen/closed booked assessments where necessary.</p> <p>An outline of the OSCE processes was presented but these need further work before delivery and the OSCE stations need to be developed fully.</p> <p>Many of the requirements for this standard are met but until the module handbooks and OSCE processes are finalised, the panel felt that this would significantly affect the education of students and, therefore, this standard is currently not met.</p>				
<p>Suggestions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consider how the moderation sampling plan facilitates the sampling of sufficient students where there are small cohorts. b. Devise a strategy for implementation of formative assessment and consideration for ensuring students are given the tools and skills to move between differing assessment types and methods. 				

- c. Implement marking calibration where two or more markers are employed.

Actions:

- a. Provide module descriptors and module handbooks for the programme, including information about the LOs being addressed for each assessment, and the number and length of lectures, seminars, tutorials, and practical teaching.
- b. Provide a proposed overview of the assessment schedule for all years of the programme.
- c. Provide OSCE procedure and OSCE station documentation once finalised.

Standard 6 – Effective clinical learning

All students are provided with safe, effective and inclusive clinical learning experiences. Each clinical learning environment has the governance and resources needed to deliver education and training. Students actively participate in their own education, learning from a range of people across a variety of settings.

Standard partially met				
Accredited Education Institutions, together with Centres and Training Practices, must:				
	Requirements	Met	Part Met	Not Met
6.1	<p>Ensure clinical learning facilities are adequate to support and deliver the RCVS Day One Skills for Veterinary Nurses.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>TP/aTP list including RCVS TP number</i> <i>TP/aTP approval and monitoring documentation for UK practices</i> <i>Centre approval forms</i> <i>Consumable and equipment lists</i> <i>Memoranda of Understanding</i> <i>TP/aTP risk assessments</i> <i>MOU for the off site delivery site.</i></p> <p>The proposed plans for clinical learning facilities reassured the panel that the support for, and delivery of, the RCVS DOS will be sufficient. The VEC will support VN students alongside veterinary students. Currently there are no approved TPs/aTPs, however, research and a four-phase digital project is currently underway to accomplish an adequate number of clinical practices for the first planned cohort.</p> <p>It is suggested that AU considers contingencies for providing appropriate TPs to all potential students, including those outside of Wales.</p> <p>It is suggested that the university considers the utilisation of clinical learning facilities with access to animals to provide support and deliver DOS.</p>	✓		
6.2	<p>Ensure students are enrolled with the RCVS prior to undertaking clinical placement (in order to comply with legislation).</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i></p>	✓		

	<p><i>Enrolment policies and procedures</i></p> <p>Student enrolment with the RCVS is planned to be at the beginning of year 1 at induction, well in advance of any students commencing clinical placement. The panel are reassured that this policy will be adhered to.</p>			
6.3	<p>Ensure students are actively learning and adequately supervised in all clinical learning environments.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Programme timetables</i> <i>Clinical placement records</i> <i>Work Placement handbook clinical supervisor</i> <i>Student feedback</i> <i>CS training</i></p> <p>Through discussion the panel has reasonable assurance that the planned CS training incorporates learning and assessment techniques to ensure VN students will be adequately supervised and actively learning during their clinical placement (CP).</p> <p>Sampling plans indicate the planned student supervision from AU during the placement, including NPL monitoring. The relevant paperwork is in place which outlines the role of the CS. Programme timetables provide proposed learning and supervision across the semesters.</p>	✓		
6.4	<p>Ensure clinical learning environments are provided for every student, within a RCVS listed training practice or auxiliary training practice, for a minimum duration of hours as stipulated in the RCVS Veterinary Nurse Registration Rules.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Clinical placement lists</i> <i>Memoranda of Understanding</i> <i>Student handbook</i> <i>Work placement handbook STUDENT</i> <i>Programme specification</i> <i>IQA Handbook Jan 2023</i></p> <p>Currently there are no approved TPs/aTPs. AU confirmed the imminent recruitment of personnel with specific responsibilities for developing TP relationships and partnerships and aims to establish twenty approved TPs prior to the initial cohort's clinical placement.</p>			✓

	<p>AU is confident in its ability to provide sufficient TPs for the minimum duration of hours as required by the RCVS registration rules. A list of approved TPs/aTPs is required to provide evidence that sufficient clinical learning environments are provided for every student.</p>			
6.5	<p>All students must have sufficient time within the programme to achieve the Veterinary Nurse Registration Rules hours requirement.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Planned placement model</i> <i>Programme specification</i> <i>UK clinical placement lists</i> <i>Work placement handbooks</i></p> <p>VN students at AU have a period of 52 weeks to achieve the 1800 hours in CP hours. There is sufficient scope with an additional 4-week period to ensure students can meet the minimum hours. The panel were assured by the PL that any interruptions during this time, such as absences or assessment resits, would not have an overall effect on the hours achieved.</p>	✓		
6.6	<p>Ensure all students are allocated a clinical supervisor responsible for confirming competency of RCVS Day One Skills for Veterinary Nurses. All clinical supervisors must be RVN or MRCVS (UK practising), be experienced and able to demonstrate an experienced level of clinical skills and ongoing professional development.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>CVs</i> <i>TP/aTP approval forms</i> <i>Clinical Supervisor checks made by provider</i></p> <p>The panel is assured that once recruited, CSs will be trained, monitored, and supported adequately by the delivery team at AU. The <i>TP/aTP approval forms</i> and CS checks will be carried out prior to students commencing CP. CSs will be RVN or MRCVS (UK practising) and suitably experienced. AU may wish to consider a contingency plan to ensure all students are appropriately supervised in the event there is no suitable CS candidate in a TP.</p>	✓		

6.7	<p>Maintain accurate records of student clinical learning environment attendance and provide these to RCVS upon request.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Records of training</i></p> <p>Attendance will be monitored closely by the delivery team whilst VN students are on CP. The documentation created to record this is sufficient and reliable. The PL reassured the panel that the proposed recruitment for faculty would manage the volume of students, with plans to expand the team if required.</p>	✓		
6.8	<p>There must be sufficient TP support available for all recruited students.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>TP/aTP lists</i> <i>MOUs</i> <i>Secondment agreements and records</i> <i>TP/aTP visit strategy</i> <i>Four Phase Digital Project</i></p> <p>AU currently has no approved TPs, however, utilisation of the <i>Four-Phase Digital Project</i> and proposed connections with local veterinary surgeries is promising. The panel was reasonably assured that sufficient TPs would be in place prior to the first cohort requiring them.</p> <p>As previously referenced in Standard 3, the university documentation currently lacks any reference to the intention to only provide TPs within Wales. The university is encouraged to consider TP provision for students who require their CP to be undertaken elsewhere in the UK.</p>	✓		
6.9	<p>Ensure that training practices either hold a primary affiliation with the Accredited Education Institution itself or its delivery site, or, where the training practice is to hold a secondary affiliation, that the training practice also holds a primary affiliation elsewhere and is an RCVS listed practice.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>TP memorandum of understanding</i> <i>TP / aTP lists</i> <i>Student secondment records</i></p> <p>Whilst there are currently no TPs affiliated to AU, the proposed processes assured the panel that any TP/aTP will</p>	✓		

	<p>be affiliated with AU or another RCVS accredited providers as required.</p> <p><i>Student secondment records</i> are sufficient to ensure that any students who attend CP in a secondary affiliated practice will meet the RCVS requirements.</p>			
6.10	<p>Ensure that where a secondary affiliated training practice is used there is a Memorandum of Understanding and robust communication between the Centre responsible for the secondary affiliated training practice and the Accredited Education Institution.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>IQA handbook</i> <i>Memoranda of understanding</i></p> <p>The panel is assured that where a secondary TP is required the communications between the AEI and the aTP will be sufficient. As previously addressed in the report in Standard 3 there is an associated action for the MOU in reference to allocation of time for students to record DOS.</p>	✓		
6.11	<p>Be compliant with the RCVS standards framework for veterinary nursing education, including clinical requirements for all periods of learning undertaken outside the UK and comply with all relevant legislation and UK animal care and welfare standards (including the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966).</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i></p> <p>AU confirmed that it has no intention to use placements outside of the UK.</p>	N/A		
6.12	<p>Ensure clinical learning experiences are tailored to the student's stage of learning, competences and programme outcomes.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Day One Skills recording tool audits</i> <i>Student handbooks</i> <i>Placement handbooks</i> <i>Clinical Supervisor training and standardisation</i></p> <p>The proposed <i>Clinical Supervisor training and standardisation</i> discusses mentoring and covers the NPL monitoring tool. <i>Day One Skills recording tool audits</i> will ensure students' clinical learning experiences are tailored appropriately. The <i>Student</i></p>	✓		

	<p><i>handbooks and Placement handbooks</i> include guidance on NPL completion. It is suggested that the university considers opportunities for students to gain valuable handling and restraint experience with a variety of small animal species prior to clinical placement.</p>			
6.13	<p>The veterinary team contribute to learning in the clinical environment in accordance with the RCVS Codes of Professional Conduct.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Clinical placement records</i> <i>Witness statements</i> <i>TP/aTP approval and audit forms</i> <i>Memoranda of Understanding</i> <i>TP/aTP risk assessments</i></p> <p>Contributions to learning will be monitored by the IQA, TP visits and through the NPL via witness statements. Clear communication from the delivery team to the TP and CS at various points during the student's clinical placement should ensure the RCVS COPC is met. AU has ambitions to collaborate with veterinary practices to upskill the veterinary teams.</p>	✓		
<p>Conclusion:</p> <p>This Standard is partially met.</p> <p>AU has demonstrated the ambition to provide all students with sufficient clinical learning experiences. Whilst there are currently no approved training practices available, the proposed plans show consideration for recruitment, and support clinical supervisors and students to achieve the DOC/DOS. The proposed clinical supervisor training and potential incorporation of the mental health first aider training shows the university's proactive and forward-thinking approach to support students throughout clinical learning. Ambitious plans to collaborate with the Welsh veterinary industry and to provide opportunities to upskill veterinary professionals will allow opportunity for the overall team involvement in student clinical learning experience.</p>				
<p>Suggestions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a contingency plan to ensure all students are appropriately supervised if there is no suitable CS candidate in a TP. Consideration of TP provision and support for any students outside of Wales is suggested. Consider opportunities for students to gain valuable handling and restraint experience with a variety of small animal species prior to clinical placement. Consider the utilisation of clinical learning facilities with access to animals to provide support and deliver DOS. 				

Actions:

- a. Provide a sufficient list of approved TPs/aTPs to ensure adequate provision for initial recruitment of students.