

Education Committee
Agenda for the meeting to be held on Tuesday 11 May 2021 at 10.00

1.	Welcome and Apologies for absence	
2.	Declarations of interest	
3.	Minutes of meeting held on 9 February 2021	Paper Attached
4.	Matters arising	
5.	Education Department update	Oral Report
6.	Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee (PQSC) a) Reports of sub-committee meeting held on 14 April 2021 b) Dublin visitation c) Core species	Paper Attached Paper Attached Paper Attached
7.	Accreditation Review Working Party (AWRP) a) Report of meeting held on 1 April 2021 b) New accreditation methodology	Paper Attached Paper Attached
8.	Statutory Membership Examination (SME) a) Veterinary Council Ireland members to sit SME b) English language testing exemptions	Paper Attached Paper Attached
9.	RCVS Covid-19 Taskforce update a) Temporary changes to Education policy due to Covid-19	Paper Attached
10.	Veterinary Graduate Development Programme (VetGDP) a) VetGDP Policy b) VetGDP subcommittee c) VetGDP and the CPD requirement	Paper Attached Paper Attached Paper Attached
11.	EMS a) EMS Policy Guidance	Paper Attached
12.	EBVM and QI	Paper Attached
13.	RCVS Review of Vet School Plans	Paper Attached
14.	Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice a) Minutes from the meeting held on 20 April 2021	Paper Attached

15.	Specialist Sub-Committee a) Update to criteria, guidance and application form	Paper Attached
16.	List of Approved Advanced Practitioners	Paper Attached
17.	Risk register a) Items to add to the Risk Register	Paper Attached
18.	Any other business	
	Date of next meeting	September 2021

Britta Crawford
 Committee Secretary
 April 2021
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Education Committee membership

Professor Ewan Cameron

Mr Danny Chambers

Ms Linda Ford

Mrs Susan Howarth

Professor Tim Parkin

Mrs Susan (Sue) Paterson (Chair)

Dr Kate Richards

Dr Cheryl Scudamore

Professor James Wood

Student Members:

Ms Anna Bradbury

Ms Kate Dakin

Ops Board member as observer: Dr Niall Connell

Chairs of Education Subcommittees:

Dr Melissa Donald, CertAVP

Dr Joanne Dyer, PQSC and EMS co-ordinators Liaison Group

Mr John Fishwick, Specialist Recognition Subcommittee

Professor Nigel Gibbens, Accreditation Review Group

Full terms of reference agreed by Council June 2015

1. The Education Committee shall set the policy for undergraduate and postgraduate education and training of veterinary surgeons and determine the requirements for those seeking registration, for the award of qualifications under the Charter, for continuing professional development, and for recognition as RCVS Advanced Practitioner and RCVS Specialist.
2. The Committee shall develop and keep under review education and training requirements for registration, and in particular shall:
 - define "day 1 competences" and advise on the content of the veterinary undergraduate curriculum;
 - oversee the approval process and ongoing monitoring of veterinary degrees and international recognition agreements, considering sub-committee reports on appointment of visitors, visitation reports, follow-up reports and annual monitoring reports from veterinary schools, sub-committee reports on overseas degrees from other accrediting bodies, and sub-committee reports on operation of the statutory membership examination;
 - make decisions on recognition of registrable veterinary degrees;
 - make recommendations to Council on the regulations governing the statutory membership examination and on the regulations governing practice by students.
3. The Committee shall develop and keep under review policy for continuing professional development, revalidation and postgraduate training and qualifications, and in particular shall:
 - define "year 1 competences" and monitor the postgraduate development phase;
 - set the requirements for and monitor continuing professional development within the profession;
 - develop and maintain a framework of College postgraduate awards, receiving reports from sub-committees on the standards for College-awarded certificates, diplomas and fellowships, examinations and accreditation of other recognised postgraduate qualifications as part of the framework;
 - define the requirements for RCVS Advanced Practitioner and RCVS Specialist status, receiving reports from sub-committees on the maintenance of lists for Advanced Practitioners and Specialists; and
 - recommend to Council amendments to the certificate and diploma and Fellowship bye-laws.
4. The Committee shall recommend fees to the Operational Board for candidates, examiners and visitors, Advanced Practitioners, Specialists and Fellows.

Education Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on 9th February 2021

Members:	Professor Ewan Cameron	
	Mr Danny Chambers	- Also Adv Practitioner Panel Chair
	Ms Linda Ford	- Lay member
	*Professor Tim Parkin	
	*Mrs Susan Howarth	
	Dr Susan (Sue) Paterson	- Chair
	Dr Cheryl Scudamore	
	Dr Kate Richards	
	Professor James Wood	
	Ms Katie Fox	- Student representative
	Mr Tobias Hunter	- Student representative
By invitation:	Dr Melissa Donald	- CertAVP Sub-Committee Chair
	*Mr John Fishwick	- Chair of Specialist Sub-Committee
	Dr Joanne Dyer	- EMS Co-ordinators Liaison Group and PQSC Chair
	*Professor Nigel Gibbens	- Chair of Accreditation Review Group
In attendance:	Mr Duncan Ash	- Senior Education Officer
	Mrs Britta Crawford	- Committee Secretary
	Mr Jordan Nichols	- Lead for Undergraduate Education
	Dr Linda Prescott-Clements	- Director of Education
	Mr Jonathan Reid	- Examinations Manager
	Ms Jenny Soreskog-Turp	- Lead for Postgraduate Education
	Ms Laura Hogg	- Senior Education Officer
	Mr Kieran Thakrar	- Education Assistant
	Ms Beckie Smith	- Education Assistant
	Mrs Kirsty Williams	- Quality Assurance Manager
	Mr Alal Uddin	- VetGDP e-learning content Manager
	Ms Joanne Stetzl	- Marketing Communications Manager
	Ms Lizzie Lockett	- CEO
	Dr Niall Connell	- Officer Team Observer

*absent

Apologies for absence and welcome

1. Apologies were received from Tim Parkin, Susan Howarth, Nigel Gibbens and John Fishwick
2. The meeting was held remotely via "Teams" due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
3. Tobias Hunter and Katie Fox were thanked for their valuable contributions to the committee over their two-year term as the first student members.
4. The Committee were reminded that observers were encouraged to participate in discussions but were not voting members.
5. The meeting papers reference the RCVS Council Covid-19 Taskforce. The Chair explained that this group was brought together on March 6th, 2020 to make key decisions on temporary policy changes due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The need for the Taskforce is under constant review as the pandemic continues and Council has agreed to its continuance until March 2021 at the earliest.
6. The Chair thanked the Education Department for their hard work, which was reflected in the volume and depth of papers prepared for the meeting. Her thanks were appreciated.

Declarations of interest

7. Cheryl Scudamore declared that she is advising Harper and Keele on their pathology content. Kate Richards declared that she had been made a member of the Association of Government Vets.

Minutes

8. The minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2020 were agreed as an accurate record.

Matters arising

9. The Committee understood from the meeting in November that EAEVE had questioned why there was no longer a Day One Competence (D1C) relating to food safety standards. Nigel Gibbens had drafted these words to be brought to Education Committee: Understand the principles and practice of the application of veterinary science to ensure food safety standards throughout the production chain, including performance of post-mortem inspection of food producing animals. Education Committee were happy to accept this as an addition to the recently agreed DICs.
10. The RCVS is waiting for the final approval from the South African Veterinary Council for the Mutual recognition Agreement but is being held up by the pandemic. As soon as we receive confirmation it will signed and formalised by the President of the RCVS.

Education Department update

11. The Director of Education, Dr Linda Prescott-Clements, gave an oral update on the work of the Education Department. The Committee heard that Linda Prescott-Clements had supported Sue Paterson at the BSAVA student conference at the end of January to present progress on VetGDP and would also be presenting a pre-recorded webinar with live Q&A session at BSAVA conference. The World Veterinary Association (WVA) had invited the RCVS as the current host of IAWG to join the steering group for project around global quality assurance, reporting back to IAWG.
12. The Worshipful Company of Farriers have approached the RCVS to quality assure their assessment processes. It is understood that the department is very busy but will make time for this by the end of the year.
13. Linda attended a joint meeting of PSRBs, which was also attended by the Education minister, they discussed issues across all professions in dealing with attending work experience during the Covid-19 pandemic, which was useful. Kirsty Williams had attended an ENQA conference which was also useful.
14. Alal Uddin was welcomed to the Education Department on a temporary basis to manage the content upload of the VetGDP Adviser e-learning package.

RCVS Covid-19 Taskforce update

15. The committee received and noted three papers and decisions which had been made by the RCVS Covid-19 Taskforce. The papers gave details of the two reviews of the temporary EMS policy; the review of CPD policy and approval of the SME temporary removal of the need for a letter of good standing for entry into the 2021 exam and recognising the IELTS indicator results.

Continuing professional Development (CPD)

Update from the CPD Compliance panel

16. The committee received the minutes from the CPD Compliance Panel's meeting on the 14th January 2020.
17. Ms Ford gave an overview of the main outcomes of the meeting and informed the committee that two veterinary surgeons had been referred to the Professional Conduct Department. The Panel also reviewed the CPD pauses for 2020, 111 applications had been approved, 32 from Veterinary nurses and 79 from Veterinary surgeons. More than 80% of all applications were related to parental leave.

Responsibilities of the CPD committees

18. The CPD Compliance Panel and the CPD Policy Working Party had a joint meeting on the 14th January 2020 to discuss the workload and responsibilities of each committee.
19. During the meeting, there were discussions about whether the RCVS should have two CPD committees; one responsible for the policy and another for enforcing the policy. It was decided that the purpose and terms of reference of the CPD committees should be discussed by Education Committee and VN Council so that they could consider the process and how the responsibilities should be divided.
20. Education Committee felt that it would be better to have one CPD Committee that is responsible for RCVS CPD policy as well as enforcing it, but to make sure to structure the meetings so that there is a clear delineation between the non-compliance case discussion and the items which are about encouraging and supporting the policy. The Committee will continue to report to Education Committee and VN Council, who will be ultimately responsible for the policy.
21. It was agreed that the CPD Policy Working Party will be disbanded from December 2021 as planned, but the chair of the group will be asked to join the CPD Compliance Panel from 2022 to ensure consistency.

Action: Education Department to invite the chair of the CPD Policy WP to join the CPD Panel

22. The Committee suggested that the name of the CPD Panel should be reviewed to make sure it reflects its purpose and responsibilities. Education Department will review the terms of reference for the Panel and the name and report back to Education Committee.

Action: Education Department to review Terms of Reference and name by December 2021

23. It has been beneficial to have external stakeholders involved in developing the outcomes-based model and 1CPD so Education Committee thought it would be useful to explore options for how an external CPD group could be established. The group would involve stakeholders from within the UK and overseas which will enable a wider CPD discussion, encourage innovation and development of best practice.

Action: Education Department to explore option for setting up external CPD group and report back to the committee by November 2021

Graduate Outcomes

Veterinary Graduate Development Programme (VetGDP) Update

Changes to the Code

24. Eleanor Ferguson joined the meeting to inform the Committee on the proposed changes to the RCVS code of professional conduct relating to the VetGDP. It is proposed that the Code will be updated to include VetGDP in the same areas as CPD and PDP with the same stipulation that those involved will be required to produce their records on request from the RCVS. The code will also need to be amended to clarify the relationship with the appointed senior veterinary surgeon

for each workplace. The Committee asked that the wording was not restricted to “practices” but included all workplaces and organisations.

25. The change has already been agreed in principle by the RCVS Standards Committee and RCVS Council, but the exact wording will need to be approved again by Standards Committee and get the final sign off from Council.

VetGDP Adviser Training

26. The Committee heard an update on the VetGDP adviser training and acknowledged that there is now a detailed content map for the 6 modules, which have already been approved by the Committee. The training is designed to be flexible, with each module delivered in bite sized standalone pieces. The training will be delivered using a variety of educational methods and will involve international experts at the forefront of educational research. The training will be specific to the VetGDP, drawing on current best practice applicable to the new graduates.

Communications Update

27. Joanne Stetzel joined the meeting to give a comprehensive update of the communications strategy for the VetGDP. The Committee heard about the success of the campaign to recruit 1000 VetGDP advisers and the strategy to maintain on-going interest. The Committee understood that there had been presentations to the final year students at each of the veterinary schools, with additional presentations to student conferences and employers. One interactive workshop had already been held, aimed at all employers and had been very successful, with two further workshops planned.
28. There are a range of resources on the RCVS website which are both student and profession facing, answering questions that we received during the question-and-answer sessions of the presentations. Once the guidance is published, there will be further workshops tied in with this so that the profession can have any questions answered in real time.
29. The profession has engaged strongly and positively with the new programme.

Overseas Graduates

30. For graduates going to work overseas, the Committee agreed that they would not be expected to complete VetGDP whilst abroad, as this would not be practical. The graduates could enrol, if and when they come back on the UK register, or could apply for an exemption if the programme would no longer be beneficial to them, due to their experience overseas. Non-completion of VetGDP under these circumstances would not affect the individual’s MRCVS status.
31. The Committee agreed that veterinary surgeons who qualify overseas and join the register with less than a year’s experience will need to enrol with VetGDP. All overseas registrants will have the option of enrolling as it would provide excellent support.

32. The Committee were happy for those with experience overseas but who had not been on the register for three years to apply directly to the RCVS if they wished to sign up to be an adviser.

Exemptions

33. The Committee understood that the VetGDP had been designed to be sufficiently flexible to work with almost any veterinary role, with the potential to add further work-based activities using the template provided. However, there are some instances where it may not be the best option, for those with very little or no clinical element to their roles. For example, those studying for a Master's degree or PhD may find it more appropriate to postpone the VetGDP.
34. The Committee discussed those going into the pharmaceutical industry and/or research and offered assistance in creating guidance for these individuals.

PDP

35. The Committee agreed to the proposed date of the 1st June as the final date for those eligible to sign up for the PDP. All those on the programme would be supported for three years from this date, where necessary. All graduates after this date would need to sign up for the VetGDP.

VetGDP Sub-committee

36. The Committee agreed to recommend establishing a VetGDP sub-committee (which would report into Education Committee) to the Finance and Resource committee. Education committee suggested that application for membership should be advertised widely with an outline of skills needed to be an effective committee member.

VetGDP locum advisers

37. The committee received and noted the paper about locum VetGDP advisers.
38. The committee felt that in exceptional circumstances such as a VetGDP adviser leaving unexpectedly and as a result recruiting a new VetGDP adviser is problematic, it would be beneficial for practices be able to apply for a locum VetGDP adviser to support their graduate. It is important that the time-period is clearly indicated in the application so that it does not become a permanent solution.
39. The committee agreed that the practice or workplace should pay the locum adviser directly as is normal practice when hiring a locum veterinary surgeon.
40. The committee also discussed if new graduates that are self-employed can register for the VetGDP. They felt it would be difficult for one practice to offer genuine support in circumstances where the graduate only stayed for a short time-period. The committee acknowledge that they might not be able to stop it happening, but they do not recommend it and would encourage graduates to seek opportunities where they can get support in their first role.

EMS/Clinical Education Update

Graduate Outcomes EMS & Clinical Education Sub-Group

41. The minutes from the sub-group's recent meeting on 12 December 2020 were received and noted.

New EMS Policy

42. As part of both the Accreditation Review and also the Graduate Outcomes project work, a new EMS Policy had been drafted, and the EMS & Clinical Education Sub-Group presented the update for approval from Education Committee.
43. However, although the updated policy had been drafted based on earlier input from the EMS Coordinators Liaison Group, and some Heads of Schools were members of the subgroup responsible for drafting it, not all of heads of schools has seen the draft. Therefore, before it could be approved it was agreed to be shared to Vet Schools Council for feedback before coming back to Education Committee at a later date.

Action: Education Department to get feedback from Vet Schools Council and report back to EC

44. Further to this, there were some suggested amendments around the changes to say that EMS would only be allowed to take place completely outside of the university environment. It was argued that although the EMS would be taking place in a familiar surrounding, the experience would be different to that of IMR placements, and research placements within universities were also seen to be of value despite being in the same setting. EMS that was more local to students would also help in keeping their costs down. These suggestions were noted, and the wording would be reviewed so that the requirements around this would be softened.

EMS Database

45. Education Committee had been asked to give approval for RCVS to fund and develop a new EMS database of practices in-house. However, following on from the discussions around VSC involvement in the new EMS Policy, it was also agreed to delay this until all vet school heads had the opportunity to provide feedback.

Accreditation Review

Minutes from the meeting held on 6 January 2021

46. The minutes of the meeting held on 6 January 2021 were received and noted. It was reported that the working party had considered the new EMS standards (to be presented later in the agenda), and the new RCVS accreditation methodology, which required some additional revision before being presented to both PQSC and Education Committee at their next meetings.

New EMS Standards

47. The committee was presented with the new EMS standards for consideration, which had been produced through the Graduate Outcomes sub-group tasked with taking forward recommendations from the consultation relating to clinical education and EMS. Members were presented with the proposed EMS standards, including guidance notes underpinning the standards, as well as statements on how they related to programme quality, and suggestions for the types of evidence that might support each standard and be collected during accreditation activities to demonstrate achievement. The committee had requested a number of amendments to help with clarity before recommending to PQSC and Education Committee that they be finalised.
48. There were no further additions or amendments suggested by Education Committee, and the standards were approved as final. The next steps were to present the full set of new standards to RCVS Council, alongside the new methodology once finalised.

Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee

Minutes of the sub-committee held 15th January 2021

49. The minutes of the meeting held on 15 January were received and noted. Most of the discussions formed separate agenda items at this Education Committee meeting, however it was noted that the main focus of the PQSC meeting had been to consider the annual monitoring reports from the UK veterinary schools. Feedback on the reports was currently being collated and would be fed back to the schools shortly.

Statutory Membership Exam (SME)

2020 OSCE results

50. The Committee heard a verbal update on the results of the OSCE component of the 2020 statutory membership examination. All 6 candidates passed the examination and were subsequently invited to register with the College.

Remote Based Testing

51. Education Committee had previously decided to extend remote-based test delivery to the 2021 examination, in light of the ongoing COVID situation. Given the advantages of running this component remotely rather than at a physical test centre, the Committee were asked to determine whether remote-based testing should become a permanent feature of the statutory membership examination.

52. The Committee agreed that this temporary change should be made permanent.

Minutes of the SME board held on 8 January 2021

53. The minutes of the meeting on 8 January 2021 were presented to the Committee for their information.

RCVS Review of Vet School plans

54. The Education Department are keeping up to date with the Vet School contingency plans, and we are now asking for the next iteration, using the prescribed templates.

Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice (CertAVP)

Minutes of the meeting held 4 November 2020

55. The minutes had been reported orally at the previous Education Committee meeting in November. The minutes were noted.

CertAVP review

56. The Committee heard an overview of results for the CertAVP review including figures from of the RCVS held desktop research and also the results of the questionnaire. The CertAVP sub-committee held an extraordinary meeting where they had pulled out the main themes for further investigation at focus groups and suggested data to be gathered from the assessment providers. The sub-committee suggested a focus group made up of employers to look at the currency of a postgraduate certificate and whether they are encouraged within practice. They also asked to look at potential barriers for those completing a CertAVP; the most valued subject stream and the potential for more digital delivery. There was more work to be done on looking at the weaknesses and threats to the certificate, such as one of the major assessment providers pulling out and the sustainability of less popular modules and subjects.

Specialist Sub-Committee

57. The minutes from the Specialist Sub-Committee (SSC) held on 7 January 2021 were received and noted.
58. The Committee approved the additions and re-additions to the List of Specialists, as recommended by SSC.
59. The current Chair of SSC had been nominated to step down from the committee as they had served 5 years. This was approved by Education Committee, and the change would be made in July.
60. It was reported that RCVS were developing a College wide process for appointing new committee members, and a replacement would be sought once that had been further developed.

61. The SSC were also currently reviewing the criteria for eligibility, as well as the application forms themselves. It was noted that any recommended changes to this would be put to Education Committee at its next meeting in May.

Qualifications approved for inclusion on the Registers

62. The Committee noted the additions.

Student Representatives for Education Committee and PQSC.

63. It was reported that the two-year term for the student representatives on both Education Committee and PQCS had come to an end, and that RCVS needed to advertise for four new representatives to take up the role from May. The Committee was presented with a draft advertisement describing the role and inviting application.
64. Members commented that it would be useful to try to stagger the two appointments on each committee, so that there would be some overlap and consistency between terms, and it was agreed that this would be implemented. There were also discussions about whether the time spent preparing for and attending committee meetings could be counted as part of EMS. Whilst it was accepted that students could record this professional activity as part of their EMS, it would be difficult for a student to count single days. One suggestion was that the student could count the time cumulatively as meeting one weeks EMS requirement. The committee approved the advert for publication, subject to some further clarity around the time commitment required for the role.

Action: RCVS to update advert and publish via the VSC

Risk Register

65. The committee received and noted the risk register for the Education department. There were no additional risks identified, but committee members were encouraged to contact the Education Department if any further risks should be added to the register.

Action: Committee members to review risks and send additions to Education Department

Any other business

66. In accordance with the CPD policy veterinary surgeons can pause their CPD for up to six months and the Education Department had received a query about how that would affect advanced practitioner applications. The AP guidance states that applicants must undertake a minimum of 250 hours of CPD over five years, whilst also complying with the formal RCVS requirement. It was agreed that since the pause reduce their CPD requirement for one year they would meet the criteria of being compliant with the formal RCVS requirement, but they would still need to undertake 250 hours over 5 year period.

Date of Next Meeting

11 May 2021

Britta Crawford

February 2021

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Summary		
Meeting	Education Committee	
Date	11 May 2021	
Title	Minutes of PQSC meeting held on 14 April 2021	
Summary	Minutes of PQSC meeting held on 14 April 2021	
Decisions required	To note	
Attachments	None	
Author	Duncan Ash Senior Education Officer d.ash@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0703	
Classifications		
Document	Classification ¹	Rationales ²
Paper	Unclassified	
¹Classifications explained		
Confidential	Temporarily available only to Council Members, non-Council members of the relevant committee, sub-committee, working party or Board and not for dissemination outside that group unless and until the relevant committee or Council has given approval for public discussion, consultation or publication.	
²Classification rationales		
Confidential	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others 2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation 3. To protect commercially sensitive information 4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS 	

Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee (PQSC)
Minutes of the meeting held via MS Teams on 14 April 2021

Members:	Dr Alex Berry	
	Dr Kate Cobb	
	Dr Jo Dyer	Chair
	Professor Jim Anderson	
	Mrs Jo Oultram	
	Mr Martin Peaty	
	Professor Susan Rhind	
	Dr Kate Richards	
	Dr Cheryl Scudamore	
	Professor Ken Smith	
	Mr James Statton	*
	Dr Clare Tapsfield-Wright	
Professor Sheena Warman		
In attendance:	Dr Susan Paterson	Chair of Education Committee
	Dr Linda Prescott-Clements	
	Mrs Kirsty Williams	
	Mr Duncan Ash	
	Mr Kieran Thakrar	
	Ms Eleanor Ferguson	In attendance for NVS item only

*absent

Welcome and apologies for absence

1. There were no apologies for absence.

Declarations of interest

2. Mr Peaty declared that he worked at a partner practice of the University of Surrey, and also acted as an expert witness for the Veterinary Council of Ireland.
3. Both Dr Richards and Dr Scudamore declared that they were close friends with Dr Dennison from LAVA Council, who was requesting clarification on the proposed Named Veterinary Surgeons course which would be considered by PQSC at this meeting.

Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2021

4. The minutes from the meeting of PQSC held on 15th January were received and noted. The minutes were accepted as a true record.

Matters Arising

5. It was noted that a proposed revised format of the annual monitoring forms had been intended to be presented at this meeting, however this would instead be put to PQSC at its next meeting.
6. It was reported that the agreed changes to the EMS Standards had been made following the last meeting, and Education Department had since approved the standards.

Annual monitoring reports

7. PQSC had written to Edinburgh, Cambridge, RVC and SGU for some clarification over their annual monitoring reports, and the responses were received and noted by the committee without comment.

Dublin Visitation

8. The report following the joint RCVS/AVBC/AVMA visitation to the University College Dublin School of Veterinary Medicine (UCD SVM) in November 2020 was received, along with the University Self-Evaluation Report (SER). The committee was asked to consider the report and university comments, and to recommend a decision on accreditation status to Education Committee.
9. It was noted that as the visit took place virtually, a “re-visit” was planned to take place in person 12-18 months after the visitation had taken place, if possible, to give the team an opportunity to obtain further reassurance of certain areas, such as facilities, which were difficult to gauge virtually. It was noted that this will be a standard procedure for all virtual visitations and the committee should not let the intended re-visit impact their decision on the outcome of accreditation.
10. There were some concerns with the report which stated that some animal handling tuition was being carried out following pre-clinical EMS, however it was noted that the school had planned to change this for further years and it had also not been listed as a deficiency, and therefore it was noted with no further action to be taken.
11. It was also noted that the reported necropsy figures were low, at one per student.
12. Overall, PQSC had no major concerns and agreed that accreditation for the full period of seven years should be recommended to Education Committee.

Action: PQSC recommends to Education Committee that “accreditation for seven years” be awarded to University College Dublin, subject to satisfactory annual reports.

CityU Visitation

13. The draft report following the RCVS visitation to the Jockey Club College of Veterinary Medicine and Life Sciences, City University of Hong Kong (CityU) visitation was received. It was noted that the report had been to the School for a review of factual accuracy. The next stage would be to return the report for a formal two-month consultation period so that they may respond to the visitor findings.
14. PQSC were asked to review the report, and comment on whether any amendments needed to be made before the report was returned to the University for its formal consultation period.
15. It was noted that this visitation had taken place as the first cohort of the new school had moved into their clinical years, and therefore PQSC was not yet being asked to make a recommendation on their accreditation status.
16. The deficiencies in the report were noted, and it was questioned as to whether or not these would be normal for a new school at this stage. It was clarified that it was difficult to compare different schools, however the deficiencies should act as barometers to what the school needed to change and implement before the next visitation.
17. It was also noted that the school had been visited by the AVBC, however as it was not a full visitation the AVBC report was not published and therefore still confidential so it was not available to view.
18. PQSC were satisfied with the report and agreed that no amendments needed to be made.

Vet School's COVID-19 plans

19. PQSC reviewed the School's COVID-19 plans. Further information available in the appendix.

Minutes of the Accreditation Review Working Party (ARWP)

20. The minutes of the ARWP meeting held on 1 April were received and noted.

New RCVS Accreditation Methodology

21. Following consideration of the results from both the literature review and a number of semi-structured interviews with other regulatory professions, ARWP had agreed to a set of high-level principles, which would shape the new methodology adopted by RCVS when accredited veterinary programmes. As a result of this, a new methodology has been drafted. The latest draft was presented to PQSC by ARWP, and they were invited to consider the draft and recommend approval to Education Committee.

22. There was a question around whether this document would be the only information available to schools and accreditation panel members on the new process, but it was clarified that there would likely be further guidance documents around the specific parts of the process for the relevant parties. The document intended to show a high-level overview of the whole process from start to end.
23. There was a question around how the logistics of joint visitations with other organisations continuing to work with processes more similar to the current accreditation methodology used by RCVS, would work going forwards. RCVS would need to work with the International Accreditors Working Group on exactly how joint visits would work, however, it was envisaged that this should not be a big problem or hurdle to overcome. Although the methods may be different, the evidence against the standards that each organisation would be looking for would still be essentially the same.
24. There was a question about the repository, and how this would be organised, noting that there was a similar system being used for one of the recent virtual accreditations which was not the most efficient system. However, it was clarified that the repository would be completely standardised for all schools, and checklists and index systems etc would be in place so it would be easy to see what information was required from the schools to populate it, and also easy to find any specific piece of information if a member of the accreditation panel was looking for it.
25. It was noted that the consultative accreditation events would only be available to overseas veterinary schools. However, it was agreed that there should be an option for UK schools to have “mock visits”, and this would be incorporated into that section.
26. There was also a question about the remuneration for the accreditation panel, and whether or not this had been decided. As the work was still at a relatively early stage in development, it was noted that this had not yet been considered, however the options about how much and how to remunerate the panel would start to be explored. PQSC favoured the option of a set fee per panel member, rather than a payment worked out on a time basis.
27. A number of minor wording amendments were also agreed to.
28. PQSC agreed to recommend approval of the new methodology to Education Committee, subject to the agreed amendments.

ACTION: PQSC recommends approval of methodology to Education Committee

Core Species

29. The RCVS standards for accreditation of veterinary degrees contains several references to “common UK domestic species” but does not define what these species are. This could present a challenge for visitation teams to ensure that practical teaching takes place in all species that a UK veterinary surgeon might commonly encounter. Furthermore, there is often ambiguity for overseas veterinary schools where certain species common to the UK are not able to be kept for teaching purposes due to availability or welfare issues.

30. At the last meeting of the ARWP, members were asked whether the guidance notes for the new accreditation standards should specify a list of species that would be expected to be covered in the curriculum for any RCVS accredited programme. The members felt that whilst it was important that teaching cover all species common to the UK, the focus should be on the requirement for knowledge being distinct from hands on clinical experience. One example given was the unsuitable climate in Hong Kong for keeping sheep, and that most of the ruminant teaching there could be done on goats as long as the key differences between the species were highlighted during teaching. Whilst it was accepted that detailed lists of requirements could cause challenges for veterinary schools, members felt that there needed to be some guidance. It was suggested that the species clusters set out within the EAEVE indicators could be used as a starting point when identifying an appropriate list, rather than list each individual species. These are currently:

Companion animals,
Ruminant and pig,
Equine,
Rabbit, rodent, bird and exotics,
Poultry and farmed rabbits.

31. PQSC were invited to discuss the issue and recommend a way forward to Education Committee.

32. It was initially agreed that RCVS should not use the EAEVE list. It was agreed that some of the pairings and combinations would not really make sense as to why they were grouped together in a UK centric list, for example “ruminant *and* pig”, and “poultry *and* farmed rabbits”. Although reading the list as a whole you could see which species would be “common”, these groupings could cause further confusion to visitors.

33. The term “companion animals” was also agreed to be unclear, as companion animals could include a number of different species depending on location.

34. PQSC agreed to recommend that “common species” for the UK should consist of:

Dog,
Cat,
Rabbits and exotic pets,
Large and small ruminant,
Equine,
Poultry,
Pigs.

ACTION: PQSC recommends list of common UK species to Education Committee

Accreditation classifications

35. At its meeting in January 2021, members of the AWRP requested that the RCVS classifications of

accreditation be reviewed to provide clarity. It was commented that in particular, the classifications for “C) *Accreditation may be denied*” and “E) *Accreditation is denied*” were unclear. Furthermore, the classification of “D) *Terminal Accreditation*” seemed to be out of place when considered alongside “E) *Accreditation is denied*”. ARWP had also put forward a suggestion to change the ordering to A), B), C), E), removing terminal accreditation completely and including it within *Accreditation is denied*.

36. A paper detailing the classifications was noted, and PQSC were invited to consider the current classifications and decide if any amendments would be necessary, and depending on the nature of any amendments, recommend formal changes to Education Committee.
37. There was a discussion around whether or not C) *Accreditation may be denied* should be included as a classification in its own right, as it was argued that technically it could mean the same thing as B) *Accreditation for a shorter period*. As in theory, if a 7 year accreditation was not awarded, then there would be a reason for doing so, and if the appropriate actions were not taken over the shorter period of accreditation, this would also suggest that “accreditation may be denied” after this point. However, it was still agreed that this needed to be covered, and therefore it was agreed that option B) should be redrafted so that it also incorporated option C).
38. It was also agreed that the existing options should be reviewed and redrafted, based around the original order of classifications as follows: A), B) (*including C*), D), E). As these amendments to the classifications were not critical to the approval of the content of the new accreditation standards and methodology which would be put to Education Committee in May, it was agreed that this redraft would be put to PQSC at its next meeting whilst the final work on the standards and methodology could take place. Any agreed updates would then be incorporated into the new standards at a later date.
39. It was also agreed that the initial reasons behind “accreditation may be denied” being added would be looked into so they could be considered when re-drafting.

ACTION: Re-draft of classifications to be presented to PQSC at its next meeting

Guidance on EMS Policy

40. It was noted that Education Committee recently approved the new EMS Policy, which PQSC also considered at its last meeting.
41. As well as the new policy, accompanying guidance for the schools had been drafted, which was received by the committee. The guidance would be included in addition to the new policy within the completed new Accreditation Standards. PQSC was invited to consider the draft guidance, and recommend approval of the guidance to Education Committee.
42. The possibility of international EMS placements was not ruled out under the new policy, however there was no specific mention of this within the policy it was agreed that a paragraph would be added to the guidance to explain that this would be allowed for, however schools could adopt their own policies around how it is administered at their individual school.

43. There were some inconsistencies in the wording on the guidance section for Professional EMS which differed from that of the policy, and it was agreed that this would be reviewed and amended.
44. PQSC agreed to recommend approval of the guidance on EMS policy to Education Committee.

ACTION: PQSC recommends EMS Policy guidance to Education Committee for approval

45. The new EMS policy stipulated that at least 6 weeks of clinical EMS must be completed per year during the clinical years of the degree, however there was a discussion as to whether this meant calendar year or academic year, or whether this could also be interpreted as a 12-month period. It had also been noted earlier in the meeting that some schools' models contained much less EMS in the final year, which could cause problems with implementation. The point of this particular aspect of the policy was essentially to ensure that schools were spreading EMS placements across the years and not doing large chunks, rather than to insist that schools were carrying out placements at specific times.
46. Therefore, it was also agreed to add in a minor change to point 3 of the EMS policy to state that "a *recommended* minimum of 6 weeks" was to be completed per year.

ACTION: RCVS to make minor amend to EMS Policy

Named Veterinary Surgeons Course

47. RCVS had been approached by the Laboratory Animal Veterinary Association (LAVA) to review a new Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS) course. Currently RCVS is required to formally review such courses before they can be approved and recommended for delivery by the Home Office. It was noted that there was already an existing NVS course being run, which was subject to continued annual review and approval by RCVS appointed representatives. However, there was no formal process for the approval of new courses. Therefore, PQSC were asked to consider the course and recommend approval.
48. However, members of PQSC did not feel that they could comment on the course due to the nature of the content and agreed that they would feel more comfortable giving a recommendation if it had been initially reviewed by vets with laboratory animal expertise. It was therefore agreed that RCVS would consult with LAVA on finding appropriate assessors of the course.

Action: RCVS to consult with LAVA

49. It was also agreed that a new formal process would be drafted going forward for approval of new NVS courses, and also the current annual process for continuing approval of existing courses would also be reviewed.

Action: RCVS to draft new processes

IELTS and OET Exemption Policy

50. Since 1 January 2021, the Registration department has been applying the statutory membership examination (SME) rules regarding English-language competence to European applicants who are eligible for automatic registration. They require evidence that the applicant's veterinary degree was taught and assessed entirely in English. This has created a situation whereby the English-language exemption rules differ between registrants with recognised European degrees and SME candidates as SME candidates are also required to demonstrate that their first and native language is English as well. This may potentially leave the RCVS open to challenge in the future.
51. A paper proposing a change to the English-language exemption policy was received, and PQSC were asked to agree on any changes.
52. PQSC agreed to the proposed changes to the policy.

Action: RCVS to update exemption policy

Veterinary College Ireland (VCI) – SME candidates

53. The RCVS has recently been approached by the Veterinary Council of Ireland who enquired about the possibility of accommodating future VCI exam candidates onto the RCVS statutory membership examination. The proposal was received by PQSC, and the SME Board wished to invite PQSC to consider the proposal.
54. There was a question as to whether any costs of agreeing to this would be incurred by RCVS, but it was confirmed that the additional costs of drafting questions to be suited towards VCI's Code of Conduct would be covered by VCI. VCI would also remain responsible for the administration of candidates entering the exam, and VCI candidates would also need to cover any costs of appeals.
55. PQSC agreed to approve the proposal to allow VCI candidates to sit the SME, but noted that there would need to be discussions with VCI about how the logistics around this would work.

Any other business

56. It was noted that visits to Glasgow and Surrey had recently taken place, and PQSC would be asked to consider these reports once they were finalised. The reports would be circulated by email and PQSC would be asked to consider these via correspondence outside of the usual meeting schedule.
57. It was reported that the RCVS EMS Coordinators Liaison Group would now no longer exist under the umbrella of RCVS committees. Instead, RCVS would liaise with EMS coordinators through VSC with their existing EMS Coordinator group which had largely the same membership. The difference in membership between the two groups came in the form of representation from AVS, BVA and SPVS, and RCVS will liaise with these groups on EMS matters through the Joint Officer

meetings so that there was still a line of communication with them on this issue.

58. It was also noted that this would be the last meeting that the current student representatives Dr Berry and Mr Statton's would be present at as their two year cycle had come to an end, and PQSC gave thanks to them both for their service. It was noted that replacements were currently being recruited.

Date of next meeting to be held: 16th August 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

Summary	
Meeting	Education Committee
Date	11 May 2021
Title	Core species definition
Summary	<p>The RCVS standards for accreditation of veterinary degrees contains several references to “common UK domestic species” but does not define what these species are.</p> <p>This presents a challenge for visitation teams to ensure that practical teaching takes place in all species that a UK veterinary surgeon might commonly encounter.</p> <p>Furthermore, there is often ambiguity for overseas veterinary schools where certain species common to the UK are not able to be kept for teaching purposes due to availability or welfare issues.</p> <p>At the last meeting of the Accreditation Review Working Party (ARWP), members were asked whether the guidance notes for the new accreditation standards should specify a list of species that would be expected to be covered in the curriculum for any RCVS accredited programme.</p> <p>ARWP members felt that whilst it was important that teaching cover all species common to the UK, the focus should be on the requirement for knowledge being distinct from hands on clinical experience. One example given was the unsuitable climate in Hong Kong for keeping sheep, and that most of the ruminant teaching there could be done on goats as long as the key differences between the species were highlighted during teaching.</p> <p>Another argument put forward indicated that if a veterinary programme wished for RCVS accreditation, which would make their graduates eligible to register and work in the UK, then the vet school should be required to source the experience necessary to fulfil the requirements.</p> <p>PQSC was asked to consider formalising a list, and it was initially suggested that the species clusters set out within the EAEVE indicators could be used as a starting point when identifying an appropriate list. Following discussion, PQSC felt that some of the species clusters on the EAEVE list did</p>

	<p>not make sense in a UK context, and it was agreed to recommend to Education Committee the following list of core species for the UK:</p> <p>Dog, Cat, Rabbits and exotic pets, Large and small ruminant, Equine, Poultry, Pig.</p>
Decisions required	Education Committee is asked to approve list of core species.
Attachments	None
Author	<p>Jordan Nicholls</p> <p>Lead for Undergraduate Education</p> <p>j.nicholls@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0704</p>

Classifications

Document	Classification ¹	Rationales ²
Paper	Unclassified	
¹Classifications explained		
Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.	

²Classification rationales

Confidential	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others 2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation 3. To protect commercially sensitive information 4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
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Private	5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation
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Summary		
Meeting	Education Committee	
Date	11 May 2021	
Title	Minutes of AWRP meeting held on 1 April 2021	
Summary	Minutes of AWRP meeting held on 1 April 2021	
Decisions required	To note	
Attachments	None	
Author	Duncan Ash Senior Education Officer d.ash@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0703	
Classifications		
Document	Classification ¹	Rationales ²
Paper	Unclassified	
¹Classifications explained		
Confidential	Temporarily available only to Council Members, non-Council members of the relevant committee, sub-committee, working party or Board and not for dissemination outside that group unless and until the relevant committee or Council has given approval for public discussion, consultation or publication.	
²Classification rationales		
Confidential	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others 2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation 3. To protect commercially sensitive information 4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS 	

Accreditation Review Working Party

Minutes of the meeting held on 1 April 2021

Members:	Professor David Church		
	Professor Kate Cobb	*	
	Professor Susan Dawson		
	Professor Nigel Gibbens		Chair
	Ms Joanna Green (QAA)		
	Professor Mike Herrtage	*	
	Mrs Lynne Hill		
	Dr Kamalan Jeevaratnam		
	Ms Jessica Lichtenstein (GMC)	*	
	Dr Christina Paish		
	Mr James Statton		
	Mrs Clare Tapsfield-Wright		

In attendance:	Mr Duncan Ash
	Mr Jordan Nicholls
	Dr Linda Prescott-Clements
	Mrs Kirsty Williams

*absent

Welcome and apologies for absences

1. Apologies were received from Professor Cobb, Professor Herrtage and Ms Lichtenstein.

Declarations of Interest

2. There were no new declarations of interest.

Minutes from the last meeting

3. The minutes from the meeting held on 21 January 2021 were received and noted to be an accurate reflection of the meeting.

Matters Arising

4. It was noted that PQSC would be considering the classifications of accreditation at their next meeting in April, and the WP would be asked for any comments that would be fed back to PQSC once the group had got to that section of the methodology.
5. At the last meeting it was reported that RCVS would be liaising with the Legislative Reform Working Party on the time period for schools to be consulted on factual accuracies within the visitation report, as well as the possibility for charging for accreditation visits. It was noted that this action was still on-going.
6. It was noted that the annual monitoring template would instead be presented at the next meeting of the ARWP, rather than the current one.
7. It was agreed that an active action list would be added to each of the minutes of the WP's meetings going forward to be able to keep track of any open or on-going actions.

New Methodology

8. An updated version of the new methodology was received by the WP, and it was agreed that the group would review updated document section by section. Professor Dawson complimented the team on the new document, noting the extensive work completed since the last meeting.

Introduction, Glossary and Accreditation Cycle

9. It was agreed that the updates to these sections and the addition of the glossary were much clearer. A minor point to include "normally" 7 years on the Accreditation Event Cycle was agreed.

3. Accreditation Event

10. There was a discussion around whether or not the school would also be given 6 months notice in advance of an accreditation event that was triggered outside of the normal process following annual monitoring, as there was no specific mention of this. It was agreed that schools would still be given 6 months notice, and that this would not need to be clarified any further as the process around the accreditation event would always be the same regardless of if it was triggered earlier or within the standard cycle.
11. It was agreed that the second paragraph would be amended to include mention of schools that had been given a short accreditation period for any reason.

3.1 Accreditation Panel

12. There was a discussion on the composition of the accreditation panel and whether or not the current description was overly specific on the mix of expertise on species and / or disciplines, and this could suggest that each panel member would need to have an individual area of

expertise rather than be able to have a mix, or more than one. It was therefore agreed to take out the further specific areas listed after “basic sciences, paraclinical and clinical sciences”, and simply add “to cover all aspects of the curriculum”.

13. Clarification was sought around what was meant by the term “clinical practitioner”, and it was this agreed that it should be someone from outside of academia with a background in clinical or “general” practice. There was also a discussion on what was meant by an “educationalist”, and this was clarified that it would be someone who had further knowledge on curricula, assessment standards and educational models. The paragraph would be further amended to reflect these clarifications.
14. It was agreed to take out “normally” to the sentence on the requirement of a panel chair needing previous experience on being on an accreditation panel and chairing committees, as this was an important requirement and a panel chair should not be appointed without holding this relevant experience.

3.3 Review of evidence in repository

15. A minor amendment was agreed for this section to change major or minor “deficiencies” to “concerns”.

3.4 Accreditation visit

16. It was agreed that the updated version of the methodology outlined the differences between the accreditation panel and the visitation team much more clearly. However, it was agreed that further clarification should be added to suggest that the visitation team would not necessarily only consist of the relevant panel member/s that had specific expertise in the area/s of focus. Also, it was agreed that a minimum number of at least three panel members would be the usual expectation.
17. A number of other minor amendments were also agreed, including clarification over the process of the panel informing the Education Department on the priority focus of the visit, and aspects of the visit that could be carried out virtually and / or evidence with videos rather than in person.

3.5 Accreditation Visit Rubric

18. There was a question around the rubric and how this would form the report that went back to committee and the school, as it was not necessarily clear in the methodology. It was clarified that the new process would move away from basing the final report and narrative largely around the SER. The new rubric would be more detailed to include evidence to inform standards and how these triangulated, as well as input and output data and evidence. The report would then be formed around this rubric. The rubric itself had not been drafted yet, but it was agreed that further explanation would not need to be added to the methodology itself, however for the further understanding of the WP it was agreed that the draft rubric would be put to the WP at the next or later meeting.

Action: WP to receive draft rubric

19. When following the current process of completing the rubric during an accreditation, there could be a situation of “double jeopardy”, whereby a recommendation or deficiency could be repeated across multiple standards. It was clarified that this should not be the case going forward as the new standards had been designed specifically to avoid situations like this. It was agreed that this should also be mentioned in the methodology, as whilst not specifically mentioned it could currently be read to make it seem like this would be possible going forward.
20. A number of additional minor amendments were agreed to for the rest of section 3, and section 4.

5. Classifications of standards

21. As previously noted, the WP would not be recommending direct edits to this section, but their comments would be passed on to PQSC who will be considering the classifications.
22. There was some confusion over what exactly was meant by “accreditation may be denied” and the timelines over how quickly a school could be moved into “terminal accreditation” based on that outcome. It was also not necessarily clear if the school would still be accredited in a period between “accreditation may be denied” and “terminal accreditation”. Also, it was suggested that “accreditation is denied” would be a more logical conclusion following “accreditation may be denied”, as “terminal accreditation” only applied if a school was closing, which may not always necessarily be the case.
23. It was also questioned whether RCVS could legally prevent students enrolling onto a programme after it had been classified as terminal.
24. In the instance of “accreditation being denied”, the WP agreed that there needed to be an explanation over what happened to the students, and whether or not they would follow a similar process under “terminal accreditation”.

Action: ARWP’s comments on classifications to be circulated to PQSC

6. Consultative Accreditation Event

25. It was agreed that this section would be amended so it stated that this was only available to schools outside of the UK. As part of VSA, RCVS would always need to be in consultation with new schools based in the UK, and the option of a consultative event would replace the previous requirement for new overseas schools to apply for a full visitation which resulted in a formal recommendation of accreditation. This way, schools could consult with RCVS over the standards and develop an understanding of where they may be falling short of the standards.
26. It was also agreed to include clarification that any outcome from a consultative visit may not reflect the outcome of a full, formal visit.

Next steps for the Methodology

27. The WP were thanked of their input on the methodology, and it was reported that all suggested amendments would be made before being put to PQSC at their next meeting in April. The overall aim was to have the new standards and methodology signed off by Council in June, however there would still be outstanding areas for the WP to consider such as the rubric and annual monitoring, therefore it was agreed that the WP would continue to meet until all of the work was finalised.
28. The WP also wished to thank the Education Department for all of their work on the methodology and the project so far.

Action: Methodology to be amended and circulated to PQSC

Core Species

29. It was reported that in the current standards there were references to “core” and “common” species, however it was not specifically listed as to what these may be. This had led to problems, particularly on recent international visitations, as it had been generally accepted that the core species would be those that were UK centric and there were some overseas schools that may not have been able to give students experience in sheep, or pigs due to their geographic locations, for example. The WP was therefore asked to consider whether the new standards should include a list of “core” or “common” species.
30. It was noted that there was an existing EAEVE indicator that listed different types of “common” species, which was agreed could be used as a guide. It was also agreed that the content of the list itself should be used as a guide, rather than adopting any form of the indicator being adopted formally into the standards.
31. It was also agreed that it was the knowledge of all species that should be key, rather than a specific requirement to have had hands-on teaching across all areas exclusively. For example, in an instance where a school could not provide sheep for the students, so long as they were still learning about the biology and risk of disease associated with the species, then it should not be an issue. The overall concern would be if an overseas school was RCVS accredited, then any graduate could work in the UK without the necessary experience required in a certain species that may be expected of a school in the UK. It was also agreed that a level of common sense would generally be expected to be applied, in that someone without experience in a particular area would not necessarily be looking to work in that area in which they had no experience in. The RCVS Code of Professional Conduct also dictates that veterinary surgeons should only be working in areas in which they are confident.

Next steps

32. Prior to the next meeting, the WP would be updated on progress as the methodology and standards continued through the committee process.

Date of next meeting: to be confirmed for June/July

Action Log

Amend as agreed methodology and circulate to PQSC
Forward comments on classifications to PQSC
ARWP to consider annual monitoring template at next meeting
ARWP to consider rubric at next meeting
Liaise with Legislative Reform Working Party and feedback to ARWP

Summary	
Meeting	Education Committee
Date	11 May 2021
Title	Veterinary Council of Ireland (VCI) Examination candidates
Summary	The RCVS was recently approached by the Veterinary Council of Ireland who enquired about the possibility of accommodating future VCI exam candidates onto the RCVS statutory membership examination (SME). The SME Board and PQSC have considered the proposal and were supportive, highlighting some areas which would need to be considered.
Decisions required	Education Committee are asked to support the proposal to allow VCI candidates to take the SME and for feedback on how this might be implemented.
Attachments	None
Author	Jonathan Reid Examinations Manager j.reid@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7965 1104

Classifications		
Document	Classification ¹	Rationales ²
Paper	Unclassified	

¹ Classifications explained	
Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.
Confidential	Temporarily available only to Council Members, non-Council members of the relevant committee, sub-committee, working party or Board and not for dissemination outside that group unless and until the relevant committee or Council has given approval for public discussion, consultation or publication.
Private	The paper includes personal data which should not be disclosed at any time or for any reason, unless the data subject has agreed otherwise. The Chair may, however, indicate after discussion that there are general issues which can be disclosed, for example in reports to committees and Council.

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

Veterinary Council of Ireland – Examination candidates

1. The Veterinary Council of Ireland (VCI) Statutory Membership Exam (SME) is currently administered on their behalf by Dublin Vet School. Dublin Vet School have recently contacted VCI to indicate that the exam was urgently in need of review, as it had remained unchanged for a number of years and requires updating to ensure that it is in line with current best practice. Dublin Vet School indicated that they did not currently have the resources to do this, and suggested that VCI speak with the RCVS as we have recently updated our exam.
2. Niamh Muldoon, CEO and Registrar at the VCI, contacted the RCVS Director of Education and Examinations Manager to discuss this request. Given the relatively low number of annual candidates for the VCI examination and the high cost involved in carrying out a review and implementation of a new exam, she enquired about the possibility of VCI candidates sitting the RCVS SME.
3. This proposal was discussed at the 26 February meeting of the RCVS SME Board. The VCI exam has historically had around 5-6 candidates per year, which from a logistical perspective would be easy to accommodate onto the RCVS SME now that the written component is hosted online. Additional numbers on the OSCE could prove more of a challenge but based on previous pass rates this would only entail an extra 1 or 2 candidates which would be manageable.
4. This proposal would likely entail additional work for RCVS staff. The code of professional conduct component would need to be different for the VCI candidates as they would be registering in a different jurisdiction with different laws and veterinary regulations. Any appeals from VCI candidates would also have to be dealt with by the RCVS.
5. The SME Board proposed that if VCI candidates are to be accommodated onto the RCVS SME:
 - a. VCI remain responsible for the administration of applications to sit the exam
 - b. The arrangement is reviewed after 5 years
 - c. VCI cover the costs of developing questions for the Code of Professional Conduct paper for VCI candidates (their code is different to that of RCVS)
 - d. A fee of £750 would be incurred for any VCI candidates wishing to appeal the exam results.
6. PQSC supported the proposal and asked for reassurance about the potential costs to RCVS, in particular around the code of conduct written exam. It was confirmed that the additional costs of drafting questions to be suited towards VCI's Professional Code of Conduct should be covered by VCI. VCI should also remain responsible for the administration of candidates entering the exam, and VCI candidates would also need to cover any costs of appeals.
7. Education Committee are asked to support the proposal to allow VCI candidates to take the SME in principle, to allow further discussions with VCI on the logistics of how this can be implemented.

Summary	
Meeting	Education Committee
Date	11 May 2021
Title	IELTS and OET Exemption Policy
Summary	<p>Since 1 January 2021, the Registration Department has been applying the statutory membership examination (SME) rules regarding English-language competence to European applicants who are eligible for automatic registration. They require evidence that the applicant's veterinary degree was taught and assessed entirely in English.</p> <p>This has created a situation whereby the English-language exemption rules differ between registrants with recognised European degrees and SME candidates as SME candidates are also required to demonstrate that their first and native language is English as well. This may potentially leave the RCVS open to challenge in the future.</p>
Decisions required	To consider whether to change the English-language exemption policy for SME applicants
Attachments	None
Author	Jonathan Reid Examinations Manager j.reid@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7965 1104

Classifications		
Document	Classification ¹	Rationales ²
Paper	Unclassified	

¹ Classifications explained	
Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.
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² Classification rationales	
Confidential	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others 2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation 3. To protect commercially sensitive information 4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation

IELTS and OET Exemption Policy

1. Since the implementation of the UK/EU trade agreement on 1 January 2021, the procedures for registering European veterinary surgeons with regards to demonstrating English-language competence has changed.
2. When the UK was still an EU member state, and during the transition period, EU vets could register without further assessment of their English-language competency. They were required to sign a declaration stating that their language skills were sufficient to practice in the UK, and could only be challenged if there were severe and concrete doubts about their language abilities. Under the new procedures, European vets must now provide a valid set of International Language Testing System (IELTS) or the Occupational English Test (OET). These results are set to the same standard as statutory membership examination entry requirements.
3. SME candidates may apply for an exemption from submitting IELTS or OET results if they are able to demonstrate that their first, native language is English and that their veterinary degree was taught and assessed entirely in English. In order to be considered for an exemption, candidates must provide one piece of evidence from column A and one piece of evidence from column B:

Column A	Column B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A letter sent directly to the RCVS from your university that formally confirms your whole veterinary degree was obtained at an English-speaking University where the whole course was taught and assessed solely in the medium of English. This letter must be written in English and be sent directly from the University to the RCVS at rcvsexam@rcvs.org.uk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentary evidence (e.g. a letter from your school/college or qualification certificates obtained through a recognised awarding body) that you have been educated in English at primary and/or secondary level in, for example, Australia, Canada (except Quebec), Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, USA, or the UK for at least 5 years • Certificates of secondary school or further education qualifications examined in the medium of English and awarded by an accredited UK awarding body, such as GCSEs, A levels, Scottish Standard Grades or Highers, the International Baccalaureate • Certification of a course of higher education in the UK of at least 3 years duration leading to a degree awarded by a recognised UK university.

4. Historically, exemptions from the IELTS examination were only considered relatively recently. Education Committee supported the development on an exemption policy in February 2017, and in the following two diets candidates were able to appeal directly to PQSC for an exemption and would be considered on a case-by-case basis. This generated a considerable number of exemption applications so in order to reduce the staff and committee workload as well as to ensure consistency and fairness across all candidates, the policy outlined in paragraph 3 was incorporated in the guidance for the new SME which had its inaugural diet in 2019. Providing the evidence from column A attests to the applicant's veterinary degree being taught and assessed entirely in English whilst evidence from column B attests to the candidate's first language being English.
5. When exemptions were first considered under the previous SME regulations, applications were received from a number of candidates from countries where English is not generally spoken as a first language but is the designated language of government and the state, such as India and Pakistan. There were also multiple applicants pleading for exemption who did not meet the criteria but would appeal based on the fact that they had nevertheless worked in the UK for a significant period of time or were currently studying at a UK university.
6. Whilst it was apparent from email and phone communication that the functional English-language skills of some of these applicants was fairly limited, because in some cases their university officially taught and assessed their course in English they could be granted an exemption. This is why the additional evidence requirement outlined in column B was introduced.
7. Since applying the SME rules around English-language exemptions to European veterinary surgeons, the Registrations department have received several applications from veterinary surgeons who are clearly fluent in English but do not meet the current criteria for an exemption. These have included bi-lingual veterinary surgeons who have completed a veterinary degree taught and assessed in English, but who do not currently qualify for an exemption because they were brought up in a non-Anglophone country.
8. When considering language testing of veterinary surgeons post-Brexit in November 2018, RCVS Council agreed that IELTS test results would be required from applicants who had "not studied in English **or** do not have English as a first language". Therefore, following this, the Registrations department have allowed exemptions for European applicants who hold a veterinary degree taught and assessed in English without requiring additional evidence from column B.
9. This has created a situation whereby there are different criteria for English-language exemptions between European applicants who are eligible for automatic registration, and candidates for the SME. This could leave the RCVS open to challenge from future candidates who could argue that by having different standards for European and non-European vets this would represent unfair discrimination against the latter.

10. Other regulators such as the GMC accept a wide range of evidence of registrants' English language ability from IELTS/OET tests to degree country to employer reference. Further information on their criteria can be found [here](#).
11. PQSC has reviewed these proposed changes to the policy and approved them.
12. Education Committee are asked to consider whether the exemption rule for SME candidates should also change to only require a veterinary degree taught in English as proof of English-language competence.

Summary	
Meeting	Education Committee
Date	11 May 2021
Title	Temporary changes to Education policy due to Covid-19
Summary	<p>The RCVS Covid-19 Task force was established in March 2020 to make key decisions on temporary policy changes due to the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>RCVS Council has agreed that as the UK is now coming out of lockdown, Covid-19 related business will now be handed back to parent committees to monitor changes and oversee if any policies need further amendments or temporary changes.</p> <p>This paper summaries all of the Education policy changes made between March 2020 and May 2021 and recommendations for further reviews in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CPD requirement - Advanced Practitioner status professional skills evidence extension - Remote synoptic exams for CertAVP - Temporary EMS policy - Virtual abattoir resources - Temporary amendment of accreditation standards - RCVS requirements for online / remote assessments of veterinary and veterinary nurse students - Virtual accreditation - Statutory Membership Examination
Decisions required	<p>Education Committee is asked to note the status of different policies which have been temporarily amended, and agree that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The CPD and AP policy does not need any further review b. Review the EMS policy in July c. Review the synoptic exam, virtual abattoir, virtual visitations, online/remote assessments and Accreditation standards (PSS) policies in September.

	d. Review the Statutory Membership Exam policy at the end of the year.
Attachments	None
Author	Jenny Soreskog-Turp Lead for Postgraduate Education j.soreskog-turp@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0701

Classifications

Document	Classification ¹	Rationales ²
Paper	Unclassified	

¹Classifications explained

Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.
Confidential	Temporarily available only to Council Members, non-Council members of the relevant committee, sub-committee, working party or Board and not for dissemination outside that group unless and until the relevant committee or Council has given approval for public discussion, consultation or publication.
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²Classification rationales

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. To protect commercially sensitive information 4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
<p>Private</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation

Background

1. The RCVS Covid-19 Task force was established in March 2020 to make key decisions on temporary policy changes due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Many Education policies have been amended over the past year and this paper give an overview of amendments and key decisions.

CPD Requirement

2. Following the introduction of the first lock-down restrictions in March 2020, the RCVS CPD requirement was reduced by 25% for both veterinary surgeons and nurses.
3. The RCVS Covid-19 Task Force reviewed the CPD requirement in January 2021 and recommended not to reduce the requirement for 2021 but that we instead continue to highlight the flexibility of the policy such as being able to pause your CPD. It was decided to review that decision once further information on easing of the lockdown is available.
4. As schools have re-opened and society starts to open up again, it is recommended that we do not reduce the CPD requirement for 2021 but continue to raise awareness of the ability to pause CPD. Throughout the rest of the year veterinary surgeons are able to apply to retrospectively pause their CPD if they struggle to meet the CPD requirement due to exceptional circumstances or periods away from work.

Education Committee is asked to agree that no further review or amendments to the CPD requirement is required.

Advanced Practitioner status professional skills evidence extension

5. Those needing to re-apply for their Advanced Practitioner status in 2020 had until the end of July to provide their evidence of professional key skills. We had an enquiry about extending this deadline due to the current circumstances.
6. The taskforce extended the deadline for these re-applicants from July until the end of October 2020.

Education Committee is asked to agree that no further amendment to the AP professional skills deadline is required.

Remote synoptic exams for CertAVP

7. RCVS synoptic examinations are structured, oral examinations which are usually held face to face in Belgravia House, but due to the current pandemic we proposed to hold these remotely online.

8. RCVS Council Covid-19 Taskforce approved the temporary change for RCVS synoptic exams to be held in a remote format on the 1 October 2020.

Education Committee is asked to agree that this policy change will be reviewed again at September's meeting, to evaluate whether the temporary changes should be made permanent.

Temporary EMS Policy

9. Due to practices closing and / or not being able to take on students during the pandemic, the Covid-19 taskforce has regularly reviewed the EMS policy in terms of the number of weeks required. The taskforce has approved reductions the required weeks for each year group at a number of stages during the pandemic, and the policy continues to be kept under review every 3 months. The current policy, as approved on 30 April 2021 (ratified by Council on 4 May 2021) is as follows:

Student Cohort		AHEMS requirement (usually 12 weeks)	Clinical EMS requirement (Usually 26 weeks)
Year of programme starting in September 2020	Year of Graduation		
Year 1	2025	6 weeks with online top-up around personal learning objectives	26 weeks
Year 2	2024	6 weeks with online top-up around personal learning objectives	26 weeks
Year 3	2023	6 weeks with online top-up around personal learning objectives	17 weeks with online top-up around personal learning objectives
Year 4	2022	12 weeks	13 weeks with online top-up around personal learning objectives
Year 5	2021	12 weeks	13 weeks

10. In July 2020, Taskforce approved a proposal for RCVS to collate a number of animal handling EMS resources into an online library on the RCVS website for students to use to make up for the shortfall of pre-clinical placements.

11. The requirements are being reviewed every three months, with decisions being informed by EMS placement completion data supplied by the schools. The next review is due to take place in July 2021.

12. A summary of the changes approved so far can be seen below:

Date	Summary of changes to EMS Policy
16 March 2020	Class of 2020: clinical EMS requirement reduced to 18 weeks.
3 April 2020	Class of 2021: clinical EMS requirement reduced to 13 weeks.
11 June 2020	Class of 2023 & Class of 2024: pre-clinical EMS requirement reduced to 6 weeks, and proposal for RCVS to develop online resources to supplement lack of pre-clinical placements approved.
10 July 2020	Class of 2022: clinical EMS requirement reduced to 18 weeks.
30 November 2020	Class of 2022: clinical EMS requirement reduced to 13 weeks. Class of 2023: clinical EMS requirement reduced to 17 weeks.
January 2021	Further review carried out with no further changes approved, with next review to take place in 3 months.
May 2021	Further review carried out with no further changes approved, with next review to take place in 3 months.

Virtual Abattoir resources

13. At its meeting on 25 June, the RCVS Covid-19 Taskforce approved a proposal put forward to accept the use of virtual reality abattoir resources as teaching for students in this area, while there are risks of transmission of Covid-19 associated with abattoirs and obtaining access for students is a challenge for schools.

14. Taskforce agreed that this should be subject to review of the resource(s) by Education Committee. The RCVS Education Committee chair, Dr Susan Paterson, along with committee members Dr Cheryl Scudamore and Professor Ken Smith (plus an RCVS staff member), reviewed the virtual abattoir software/online resources produced by three veterinary schools, to assess whether they were sufficient to temporarily fulfil the abattoir requirements of the RCVS Standards and to ensure that the VPH elements of the Day One Competences could be met.
15. Demonstrations of three solutions were observed: one produced by the University of Edinburgh (UoE), one produced by the University of Glasgow (UoG), and one produced by the University of Bristol (UoB). At the time of review, the UoE software was complete and already in use as a supplementary experience to the traditional abattoir visit, and research had been completed to look at its effectiveness as a teaching tool. The UoG model was still in development, however this was in the latter stages and completion was contracted to be finished by September 2020. The UoB model was complete for red meat and due to be trialled with students in the week following demonstration to the panel.
16. In conclusion, members were satisfied that whilst restrictions in place prevented students from accessing abattoirs in person, the use of the three models were sufficient to meet the requirements of the RCVS standards on abattoir teaching, subject to the following conditions:
 - a. Each model meets the learning outcomes in different ways, however all models should complement the experience with “mock” live ante mortem inspections using available farm animals, and post mortem inspection of condemned specimens if those are available from abattoirs (or, as a last resort, through the use of images).
 - b. For the Edinburgh system, teaching should be supplemented by video footage from a real abattoir.
 - c. For the Glasgow model, multiple choice questions should be designed as a teaching tool, with the correct answers highlighted/explained before proceeding.
 - d. Assessments used following the virtual experience should be comparable, where possible, to those used following a traditional abattoir visit.

Education committee are asked to approve the proposal to continue to liaise with Vet School's Council regarding gaining access to the abattoirs and review the policy again in September

Temporary amendment of accreditation standards

17. Due to restrictions put in place as a result of the pandemic, Practice Standards Scheme (PSS) assessments had been placed on hold. This had the potential to impact on student learning where RCVS standard 3.7 requires PSS accreditation for all practices where core clinical teaching takes place.
18. A proposal that a temporary amendment to this standard be made whilst PSS assessments are unable to proceed was put to the Covid-Taskforce in June 2020. It was agreed that practices should be permitted to take students on clinical rotations as long as the university

had completed their due-diligence inspections prior to the pandemic restrictions. PSS assessors would also be required to review the practice application and documentation to ensure that it is fit for purpose.

19. It was agreed that the PSS accreditation process should be completed within six months of the student taking up their placement, assuming that PSS assessments have recommenced at that point.

Education Committee are asked to agree that this policy is reviewed in September.

RCVS requirements for online / remote assessments of veterinary and veterinary nurse students

20. Due to the changes brought about as a result of the pandemic, Vet Schools and some providers of further and higher education for veterinary nurses had indicated that they have adjusted their assessments so that they can be sat remotely / online by students.
21. RCVS had provided initial feedback to schools regarding the invigilation of remote assessments, following the review of their alternative programme plans. The UK Office for Students (OfS) had also published guidance for universities in the delivery of online assessments, which references the need for them to consider any additional regulatory requirements set by professional bodies where relevant.
22. In order to ensure the reliability and integrity of assessments, a policy was drafted and approved by Taskforce, for vet schools and providers for VN education, describing the requirements they need to meet to ensure the reliability and integrity, and that student achievement remained in line with RCVS standards.
23. Given the changes that had already been implemented as a result of the pandemic across many institutions, it is likely that remote and online assessments may persist beyond the special measures that were experienced when they were initially introduced in summer 2020. Therefore, this policy may also be applicable in the longer term.

Education committee are asked to agree that this be reviewed in September.

Virtual visitations

24. When lockdown measures were introduced in March 2020, all accreditation visits were postponed and accreditation periods for those schools due a visitation extended by 12 months, to facilitate rescheduling. At the time in November 2020, with threats of a second wave of infection, and localised flare-ups both nationally and internationally, there was also no guarantee that “traditional” accreditation visits would be possible within the following 12 months.
25. Since it was not feasible to keep extending accreditation periods, another solution was required. Therefore, Taskforce approved a proposal for RCVS visitations due to take place in

2021 to be carried out virtually. All virtual visitations will be followed up with a focused in-person visit within 18 months.

26. Virtual visitations to the University of Glasgow; the University of Surrey; and CityU have since taken place in 2021.

Education Committee will be invited to review this policy in September.

Statutory Membership Examination

27. The initial lockdown made it impossible to run the written component of the SME in a physical exam centre. An alternative was found which allowed us to run the examination remotely and securely. This mode of delivery was subsequently made a permanent feature of the SME by Education Committee in February.
28. IELTS and OET availability was limited for long periods of 2020. Candidates for the 2021 diet were offered the opportunity to enter the exam without taking the IELTS or OET. Candidates who go on to pass the 2021 exam must provide valid IELTS/OET test results no later than one year after receiving their exam results.
29. The RCVS recognised both 'IELTS Indicator' and 'OET@Home' test results for the purposes of sitting the Statutory Membership Examination.
30. Under the current guidance, candidates who are unable to provide a letter of good standing from their national regulator may obtain a sworn affidavit from a solicitor. Due to the second lockdown, 2021 candidates were unable to attend solicitor offices to obtain an affidavit, therefore candidates were permitted to enter the 2021 exam without providing evidence of good standing on condition that they provide it to us at a later date.
31. A number of candidates for the 2021 diet are based in countries which are suffering another Covid-19 wave and are placed on the UK "red list" for international travel, meaning that as things stand they are prohibited from travelling to the UK. Candidates from countries on the red list who pass the written component of SME this year will be able to defer taking the OSCE until the next available opportunity.

Education Committee are asked to agree that these policies should be reviewed in November 2021.

Summary	
Meeting	Education Committee
Date	11 May 2021
Title	VetGDP Policy
Summary	The paper sets out the policy for VetGDP
Decisions required	The Committee is asked to approve the VetGDP policy
Attachments	None
Author	Britta Crawford Senior Education Officer b.crawford@rcvs.org.uk 020 7202 0777

Classifications		
Document	Classification ¹	Rationales ²
Paper	Unclassified	
¹Classifications explained		
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²Classification rationales

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RCVS Veterinary Graduate Development Programme (VetGDP) policy for Veterinary Surgeons 2021

Introduction

1. The VetGDP is a workplace-based programme, which enables new graduates to further develop their professional and clinical capabilities, beyond day one competence level, to the point where they are fully competent, confident and independent veterinary professionals across the entire scope of their role.
2. Graduates (with the support of their VetGDP Advisers) record and monitor their professional development and progress through the programme using an intuitive, versatile E-portfolio, which is structured around Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs) directly relevant to their role. Essentially, EPA's are a way of describing the overarching activities carried out by a professional in their role, in a holistic manner, which represents the 'real world' of veterinary work.
3. For the aims and objectives of the programme, see the VetGDP Guidance on the RCVS website. <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/lifelong-learning/vetgdp/vetgdp-guidance/>

VetGDP

4. From summer 2021 the VetGDP replaces the current Professional Development Phase (PDP). As part of The RCVS Code of Professional Conduct ("Code") all veterinary surgeons are required to: "*maintain and develop the knowledge and skills relevant to their professional practice and competence, and comply with RCVS requirements of the VetGDP/PDP and continuing professional development (CPD)*". For new graduates transitioning into the workplace the focus should be on completing the VetGDP. Further information on the activities and expectations of the graduate are available in the VetGDP guidance on the RCVS website.
5. The Programme is also mandatory for veterinary surgeons who return to the register after a period of 5 years or more, although they may apply for an exemption, for example, if they have been working abroad. Veterinary surgeons returning to work after a shorter period away may also request to enrol on the programme, if they feel it would be beneficial for them.

Exemptions

6. The VetGDP has been designed to be flexible to adapt to almost any veterinary roles. However, graduates who take up roles with very little or no clinical element may apply for an exemption through their "My Account".
7. Graduates going to work or study overseas do not have to participate in the VetGDP but may enrol if they come back on to the practising register if it is beneficial to do so.

8. Graduates who choose to continue to study, for example undertaking a PhD, may postpone their VetGDP until they take up a veterinary position.

Overseas Qualified Members

9. Members joining the register from overseas with less than a year's relevant work experience, post-graduation, must complete the VetGDP.
10. Members joining the register from overseas with between one year and three years veterinary work experience, post-graduation, who feel that they have enough experience can apply for an exemption through their "My Account".
11. Members joining the register more than three years after graduation are not obliged to complete the VetGDP but may do so if they feel it would be beneficial to them.

RCVS-Approved Graduate Development Practice/Workplace (Approved-Practice/Workplace)

12. From the 1 January 2022 practices/workplaces must be an "RCVS-Approved Graduate Development Practice/Workplace" to employ a new graduate. The "Code" has been amended to include an extra item in section 4 which reads:

4.6 The appointed senior veterinary surgeon must ensure that the training provided to graduates meets the requirements of the VetGDP.

With the supporting guidance in chapter 17:

17.16 Where the senior veterinary surgeon works at a RCVS-Approved Graduate Development Practice/Workplace, the senior veterinary surgeon must:

- a. Sign a declaration agreeing that the practice will provide any graduate employed at the practice with regular support as defined by the VetGDP guidance.*
- b. Engage positively with feedback on the delivery of the programme and any quality assurance activity.*

**Please refer to the VetGDP guidance for timescales and deadlines for becoming an RCVS-Approved Graduate Development Practice/Workplace.*

Requirements for hosting the VetGDP

13. From 1 January 2022, for a practice or workplace to be able to support graduates on the VetGDP they need to be a **RCVS-Approved Graduate Development Practice/Workplace**, having been accredited against the following criteria:
 - One (or more) individuals working within the workplace meet the requirements to become a VetGDP Adviser, i.e.
 - They have satisfactorily completed all modules within the RCVS e-learning programme for VetGDP Advisers, within the last five years, including any module assessments. (This programme also counts as 20 hours CPD for the individual). Advisers should ensure that they take note of the regular updates to the training programme from the RCVS.

- They have signed a declaration agreeing to provide their graduate(s) with regular support. Across the duration of the programme, this should equate to a *minimum* of 1 hour per week (per graduate), although support should be implemented flexibly in line with the specific requests of the graduate. The VetGDP Adviser must spend sufficient time at the same practice site as the graduate to have the opportunity to observe their work, provide feedback and also to be accessible when a graduate faces new challenges and may require assistance. Support activities include (but are not limited to) goal setting, planning, case discussions, observation of activities and feedback, progress review discussions, advice and guidance on practice.
 - The Approved Practice/Workplace engages positively with feedback on the delivery programme and any quality assurance activity.
 - The Approved Practice/Workplace should ideally be a member of the RCVS Practice Standards Scheme (PSS) or equivalent, either with a valid PSS accreditation or be working towards this.
14. For 2021, practices must be working towards being an RCVS-Approved Graduate Development Practice, in that it will be sufficient for the VetGDP adviser to have begun their training and commit to completing it before 3 December 2021.
15. It is the responsibility of the appointed senior veterinary surgeon to ensure that the Approved practice remains compliant with the criteria to host the VetGDP. Practices will be sent a reminder to update their details once a year.
16. There are no restrictions on how many vets within a practice can become VetGDP Advisers and we would encourage as many as possible to do so.

The role of a VetGDP Adviser

17. The role of the VetGDP Adviser is to provide valuable one-to one, in house support for the new graduate for the duration of the programme, giving the graduate the confidence and experience to progress and work independently. Further details of the role are available in the VetGDP guidance.

Continuity and locum VetGDP advisers

18. If a VetGDP Adviser plans to leave an approved practice, the practice should identify another vet who can train to be an Adviser and support the graduate. However, if the VetGDP Adviser leaves unexpectedly and / or if the practice is struggling to replace them, the practice would need to contact RCVS to apply for a locum VetGDP Adviser. The RCVS would then contact local VetGDP Advisers that have volunteered to be on the 'locum' list to help and support the graduate, until a new VetGDP Adviser in the practice can be trained (or until the graduate completes the programme, whichever is sooner). The application will need to include details about estimated time frame until a permanent Adviser will be employed, which can be extended if necessary. Payment for the VetGDP adviser will be arranged by the workplace.

The Veterinary Team

19. All members of the Veterinary team are encouraged to assist, encourage, and give feedback to new graduates. Some support activities such as supervision or observation and feedback may be delegated by the VetGDP Adviser to other team members if it falls outside their area of expertise, e.g. if the Adviser is a small animal vet and the graduate is in a mixed practice role. However, the VetGDP Adviser must still ensure that they spend at least the minimum recommended time with the graduate and are available to give advice. All members of the veterinary team involved in supporting graduates are encouraged to complete the VetGDP training if possible.

VetGDP e-portfolio

20. All graduates enrolled onto the VetGDP will have access to a bespoke e-portfolio where they can record their reflections, feedback and progress against the Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs) they have identified as being part of their role. VetGDP Advisers will also have access to the platform so that they can support their graduate when reflecting on activities and add their feedback on either observed cases / situations, or progress review discussions. They will also be able to consider the evidence supporting progress across all EPA activities with the graduate towards the end of the programme in order to agree when to submit the portfolio to the RCVS for final peer review and sign off. Further detail on the e-portfolio can be found in the VetGDP guidance on the RCVS website.

Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs)

21. The bank of EPAs can be found on the RCVS website: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/lifelong-learning/vetgdp/vetgdp-guidance/> A template to develop new EPAs, if necessary, is available with the bank. Requests for new EPAs will be reviewed by the VetGDP subcommittee.

Changing Practice within the first year

22. The e-portfolio is sufficiently flexible that if the graduate decides to move on to a new workplace before completing their VetGDP, they may take their e-portfolio with them and sign on with a new VetGDP Adviser. They can also amend their chosen EPAs if necessary.

Sign off

23. For successful completion of the VetGDP programme, graduates must demonstrate that they can perform all activities within their role without support. Their VetGDP e-portfolio will portray their journey, from their first weeks in work where they needed a lot of support to becoming a more experienced professional, working independently with confidence.
24. The graduate and VetGDP Adviser agree the portfolio is complete and submit it to the RCVS for sign off. In a small number of circumstances, the graduate and the VetGDP Adviser may not agree. In this circumstance the graduate may submit their portfolio and the VetGDP

Adviser will have the opportunity to include a statement as to why they do not feel the graduate has completed the programme.

25. Once received, each portfolio will be reviewed for completeness initially by a member of the RCVS Education Department. At this stage they will be looking to ensure there are sufficient reflections, feedback, and progress reviews to support the professional development journey of the graduate relating to each EPA activity, and that this includes an appropriate range of contexts (as highlighted in the EPA, such as different species, case complexities etc.).

VetGDP Panel

26. Providing the portfolio is considered to be sufficient in terms of content, it is then shared (anonymised) with a member of the RCVS VetGDP panel. The panel is made up of experienced vets who have completed the VetGDP Adviser learning modules and are most likely to be (or have been previously) an Adviser themselves.

Quality Assurance

27. Both the graduate and the VetGDP Adviser will be asked to feed into a quality assurance process that will allow the RCVS to make continuous improvements to the programme, in line with RCVS' commitment to evaluate our processes.
28. This process will not be onerous – a short questionnaire will be sent to the graduate and Adviser 3-4 times a year to gather feedback on how the programme is working for each of them. Should any significant problems arise, support will be provided where possible, co-ordinated through the VetGDP subcommittee.

VetGDP Subcommittee

29. The programme will be overseen by the RCVS VetGDP sub-committee. The sub-committee will report to RCVS Education Committee and will review and respond to the quality assurance processes as well as providing guidance for any issues and queries arising as the programme progresses.

Summary	
Meeting	Education Committee
Date	11 May 2021
Title	VetGDP Subcommittee
Summary	The paper sets out the composition and terms of reference for the new VetGDP subcommittee.
Decisions required	The Committee is invited to agree the terms of reference and the composition of the subcommittee.
Attachments	Annex A: Terms of Reference for the VetGDP subcommittee.
Author	Britta Crawford Senior Education Officer b.crawford@rcvs.org.uk 020 7202 0777

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	
Annex A	Unclassified	
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Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation

Background

1. The RCVS Finance and Resources Committee has agreed a proposal to establish a new subcommittee to manage the on-going work relating the VetGDP, which will report to Education Committee.
2. The terms of reference for the subcommittee are set out in Annex A for consideration and approval.

Composition

3. The subcommittee will be made up largely of those involved with new graduates, such as those in first opinion practice. Several members of VetGDP task and finish groups who helped to set up the programme have volunteered to join the subcommittee, which will be useful as they already have a good understanding of the VetGDP, but we will also advertise to the profession in the veterinary press. We envisage that the membership of the subcommittee will be between 8 and 10 veterinary surgeons and one lay member.
4. Members should have a good understanding of the needs of new graduates and an interest in supporting them. It is suggested that the subcommittee will be made up of members from:
 - the original VetGDP working party (to capitalise on existing knowledge)
 - corporate practice
 - independent practice
 - VetGDP advisers
 - new graduates
 - lay member with knowledge/involvement in a similar programme
5. The subcommittee would meet three times per year, remotely (unless there was a specific requirement to meet in person). The first meeting will be Autumn 2021.

Decisions required:

6. The Committee is invited to agree the terms of reference and the composition of the subcommittee.

Annex A

Terms of Reference for the VetGDP subcommittee.

The VetGDP subcommittee is responsible for the coordination and oversight or arrangements for the Veterinary Graduate Development Programme (VetGDP). It will:

- oversee and update the VetGDP policy and guidance documents where necessary
- receive and consider periodic quality assurance reports and to advise action where appropriate
- decide on exemptions from the VetGDP
- manage the RCVS Entrustable Professional Activity (EPA) bank, agreeing on additions and ensuring the minimum of overlap
- oversee the sign-off procedure including oversight of the VetGDP Adviser panel
- oversee updates of the VetGDP Adviser training and guidance
- deal with ad-hoc queries that may impact policy.

The subcommittee may meet up to 3 times per year, and will report to the Education Committee. The subcommittee will meet remotely, unless there is a specific requirement to meet in person and some of the business may be conducted by email if agreed appropriate by the subcommittee members.

Summary	
Meeting	Education Committee
Date	11 May 2021
Title	VetGDP and the CPD requirement
Summary	<p>This paper explores the following three options for dealing with the relationship between CPD and VetGDP and access to 1CPD:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Graduates have access to the VetGDP e-portfolio and 1CPD from their registration date. b) Graduates only have access to the VetGDP portfolio when they register with RCVS and will only gain access to 1CPD once their VetGDP e-portfolio is signed off. c) A compromise between the two, with the graduate only having access to the VetGDP e-portfolio when they register and if they are not completed VetGDP after 12 months they can also have access to 1CPD.
Decisions required	Education Committee is asked to agree when graduates should have access to 1CPD.
Attachments	None
Author	Jenny Soreskog-Turp Lead for Postgraduate Education j.soreskog-turp@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0701

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	

¹Classifications explained

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

²Classification rationales

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

Introduction

1. VetGDP is being introduced in July 2021 and this year's graduates will need to enrol onto the programme unless they are exempt. VetGDP will replace PDP from the 1st July.
2. PDP counts as the graduate's first year of CPD and they can add 35 hours to their CPD record. Many graduates are unsure of the relationship between PDP and CPD and what they need to do so it is therefore important to clarify the relationship between CPD and VetGDP before graduates register with RCVS this summer.

RCVS Professional Code of Conduct and CPD Policy

3. The RCVS requirements for CPD as well as the PDP/VetGDP are mandatory as part of the code of conduct:
 - a. *Veterinary surgeons must maintain and develop the knowledge and skills relevant to their professional practice and competence, and comply with RCVS requirements on the Veterinary Graduate Development Programme (VetGDP) / Professional Development Phase (PDP) and continuing professional development (CPD).*
 - b. *Veterinary surgeons must provide the RCVS with their VetGDP/PDP and CPD records when requested to do so.*
4. PDP is also mentioned as part of guidance for the CPD policy:

"If you are going into clinical practice and will undertake PDP, it will count towards your CPD requirement. We view undertaking and completing the PDP as a year's worth of CPD and it is therefore equivalent to 35 hours of CPD activity. If you undertake your PDP over more than one year, you can add 35 hours to any calendar year or split the hours across years during that time-period. While PDP covers your minimum CPD requirement as part of your initial development, it is likely that you will be undertaking other forms of CPD during that time (e.g., congress, practice/case discussions and meetings, reading or research), details of which should be included on your CPD record. You can count any learning or development that is relevant to you as professional person as CPD so it does not need to be formal learning or clinical CPD. Recording all CPD, including the PDP, serves as a useful reminder and prompt for skills and career development purposes."
5. Graduates who are registered for PDP will have two separate records, their PDP record which is recorded as part of the Professional Development Record (PDR) and their CPD which is recorded on the 1CPD platform. Many graduates are unsure of the relationship between the CPD requirement and PDP and either continue to meet the 35 hours of CPD per year plus PDP or think that they do not have to undertake any CPD until they have completed their PDP.

VetGDP

6. The new VetGDP e-portfolio is developed by the RCVS IT development team and will be available as an app and website just like 1CPD. It is likely that the VetGDP e-portfolio and 1CPD will be recorded by just downloading one mobile app.
7. There have been discussions around access to the VetGDP e-portfolio and 1CPD and three options for consideration are:
 - a. Same policy as PDP, graduates have access to the VetGDP e-portfolio and 1CPD from day 1 and VetGDP counts as 35 hours of CPD.
 - b. Graduates only have access to the VetGDP e-portfolio when they register with RCVS and will only gain access to 1CPD once their VetGDP e-portfolio is signed off.
 - c. A compromise between the two, with the graduate only having access to the VetGDP e-portfolio when they register with the RCVS and if their VetGDP is not completed after 12 months then they can also have access to 1CPD.
8. The three different options will be considered in further detail in this paper.

Access to both VetGDP and 1CPD

9. The CPD policy in relation to VetGDP could be similar to how it currently works with PDP, which means that when the graduate register with RCVS their CPD requirement starts but VetGDP counts as 35 hours of CPD.
10. Since the VetGDP e-portfolio and 1CPD will be one the same or similar platform, one concern is that graduates will be confused as to what is expected of them, what needs to be recorded where and how much CPD they need to record in order to meet the requirement.

VetGDP access from registration date

11. In order to make the relationship between CPD and VetGDP crystal clear, graduates could only have access to VetGDP e-portfolio from their registration date unless they are exempt from VetGDP. They will only have gain access to 1CPD once their VetGDP is signed off.
12. This option will provide clarity of what is expected as well as making sure the graduates focus on VetGDP in their first year, but they will not be able to record any additional CPD that do outside of VetGDP, such as attending conferences unless that can be captures as part of an EPA.
13. This option would work well if all graduates would complete VetGDP within their first year but currently graduates take up to three years to complete PDP. Personal circumstances such as parental leave, caring for family members, illness may also affect the graduate's ability to complete VetGDP within a 12 month's period. If their CPD requirement starts from when they completed VetGDP some graduate's will start doing CPD after one year while others will start after two or three years.

1CPD access after 12 months

14. Another solution would be a compromise between the two options above, the graduate only has access to VetGDP when they register with RCVS and that will cover their CPD requirement for the first twelve months but if it still not signed off after a year then they also get access to 1CPD to record additional CPD activities.

Next step

15. Education Committee is asked to discuss the options presented in this paper and agree how the CPD policy should work for VetGDP and when graduates should have access to 1CPD.

Summary	
Meeting	Education Committee
Date	11 May 2021
Title	Minutes of the CertAVP Sub-Committee meeting held on 20 April 2021
Summary	Minutes of the CertAVP Sub-Committee meeting held on 20 April 2021
Decisions required	To note
Attachments	None
Author	Britta Crawford Senior Education Officer b.crawford@rcvs.org.uk 020 7202 0777

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	

Minutes of the CertAVP Sub-Committee meeting held on 20 April 2021

Present: Sharon Boyd
Cathy McGowan
*Lance Voute
James Horner
Melissa Donald - Chair
*Chris Proudman
Liz Chan
Rob White

In Attendance Britta Crawford
Jenny Soreskog-Turp
Laura Hogg

*Absent

The meeting was held remotely by Microsoft Teams

Apologies for Absence

1. Apologies were received from Lance Voute and Chris Proudman

Declarations of interest

2. There were no new declarations of interest.

Minutes

3. The minutes of the meetings held on 20th November 2020 and 27th January 2021 were approved as a true record.

Matters arising

4. Regarding the CertAVP review, Cathy McGowan, who had been unable to attend the January meeting, questioned whether there had been any discussion about outcomes or what could be learned from the data. The minutes represented a true record of the discussions, but any additional comments or observations would be welcomed.

ACTION: BC and MD to discuss the review

5. The subcommittee also asked if there were any updates about the terms of reference. Those for this subcommittee had been circulated previously but a paper is being written regarding committee structure within the college and it should be possible to bring the results to the next meeting.

Module Updates

6. The subcommittee was presented with a list of currently available modules, together with the number of candidates who had achieved each module and the year in which they had last been reviewed. The subcommittee were asked to discuss a strategy and timetable for the review of modules. The subcommittee questioned what we want to achieve from the module review and clarified that providers are only accredited to assess modules and therefore the detail of the syllabus was not necessary. It was agreed that the modules needed to be reviewed to ensure that they were still relevant but that they ought to be at a sufficiently high level to not need updating with great frequency.
7. The subcommittee agreed that it would be beneficial for each module to follow the same template and that this exercise would highlight areas for review. The Education team would write a first draft of the template to be initially reviewed by the subcommittee and then the providers.

ACTION: BC to create template

Synoptic Exams

Camelid Exams to be held on-line at Liverpool

8. The subcommittee noted that a Chair's decision had been made (with advice from Sharon Boyd) to allow Liverpool to deliver their Camelid synoptic exams online on this occasion. This was due to one of the examiners and one of the candidates residing overseas and being unable to travel due to Covid restrictions.

Synoptic Dates

9. The subcommittee noted the dates of the upcoming synoptics exams. Cathy McGowan kindly agreed to cover the two SAM dates of the 17th and 18th June at the RCVS between herself and her team.

ACTION: CMc to send details

10. BC would circulate the date of the camelid exam, when available.

ACTION: BC to circulate camelid date

Applications for a third (4th) sit.

11. Candidate A was applying for a 4th sit. The subcommittee felt that looking at the examiner reports no real progress had been made and that it was hard to justify allowing a fourth sit, when a third sit had been granted by special permission. The subcommittee agreed that the guidelines should be amended to state that a fourth sit would not be allowed unless within the scope of a permitted, successful appeal. The exact wording would be taken to the next meeting of the subcommittee.

ACTION: BC to amend guidelines

12. The Subcommittee were satisfied by plans of candidates B and C to improve their performance and were happy to grant a third sit. The subcommittee would also allow a third sit for candidate D

but suggested that it would be prudent to wait at least 12 months before sitting the exam again to gain further experience, given that this would be their final attempt.

BC to inform candidates

Equivalence

13. The subcommittee congratulated the candidate in their diligent mapping of their BSAVA PGCertSAM, (including professional key skills module) qualification to the RCVS A-FAVP module and could see effective reflection through this process, given examples used from both the beginning and end of course. The subcommittee granted equivalence for the A-FAVP.1 module.

ACTION: BC to inform candidate

Veterinary Primary Care

14. A candidate had queried how many RCVS veterinary business management 'C' modules could be used to be eligible to take the synoptic exam for the Veterinary Primary Care designation. The subcommittee stated that under the modules one VBM modules could be used as "any relevant module" and a second could be used as the "free choice" module. The subcommittee cautioned the candidate into narrowing their field of learning when the synoptic exam is likely to cover a much wider field.

ACTION: BC to inform candidate

Camelid Practice

15. The subcommittee received a request from a candidate to take the B-EP.3 module as part of their module selection for camelid practice instead of the B-PAP.2 module as stipulated in the modular combinations document. The subcommittee agreed that this was appropriate as equine practice and camelid practice are both individual animal focus as opposed to herd focused and that the modular combinations document should be updated to include both.

Action: BC to update

Statistics

16. The subcommittee noted that over 15,000 individual CertAVP modules had been achieved and that this was something which should be celebrated.

ACTION: BC to contact comms re promoting and celebrating the CertAVP

Any other business

17. There was no other business.

Britta Crawford
April 2021
b.crawford@rcvs.org.uk

Summary	
Meeting	Education Committee
Date	11 May 2021
Title	Specialist Sub-Committee
Summary	<p>The Specialist criteria and guidance is reviewed annually by the Specialist Sub-Committee, and a number of updates to the document have been made.</p> <p>As part of the review, the sub-committee also made some changes to the application form for those applying through the “full” RCVS accreditation route, i.e. non-European Diploma holders.</p> <p>Education Committee is invited to consider and approve the updated criteria and guidance, and application form.</p>
Decisions required	To approve the updates to the criteria and guidance notes, and the application form
Attachments	Annex A: Criteria and guidance notes Annex B: Application form
Author	Duncan Ash Senior Education Officer d.ash@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0703

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	
¹Classifications explained		
Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked ‘Draft’.	

²Classification rationales	
Confidential	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation3. To protect commercially sensitive information4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none">5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation

Specialist Sub-Committee – Updates to the Criteria and Guidance, and Application Form

Background

1. The Specialist Information and Application Pack, contains the criteria for Specialist Status and guidance for new and re-applicants. This document is reviewed annually by the Specialist Sub-Committee to ensure that the criteria and guidance are still up to date.
2. Applicants applying with a European College Diploma who are accredited as European Specialists by EBVS have been able to apply through a streamlined system since 2015. The application process moved online for applications at that point, and the application form for non-European Diploma holders has not been reviewed since that time, therefore the sub-committee also considered updates for that alongside the criteria and guidance.

Summary of changes

Criteria and Applicant Guidance

4. The guidance has been strengthened to try and ensure that candidates submit the full and correct information when applying otherwise their application may be turned down. For example, a number of candidates were submitting incomplete or inadequate CPD records upon initial application, and many applications had outstanding references after the application deadline. The wording has therefore been updated to try and make it clearer that these are important parts of the application, and any outstanding information may lead to an application being turned down in future, rather than the RCVS office chasing and waiting on outstanding information.
5. During the assessments of the recent reapplications from 2020, it became clear that many of the EBVS Specialists' accreditations were due to expire in 2021 and/or were out of sync with the 5 year RCVS cycle. Therefore, the criteria has been updated so that all EBVS Specialists will be asked to self-certify that their accreditation with EBVS is still current, and this will taken in the form of payment of their annual fee.
6. The criteria for those applying through the European route has also changed so that applicants must apply for the same Specialist title that has been awarded by EBVS. This is to ensure consistency, and also to avoid possible situations where someone could be a European Specialist in one area, and an RCVS Specialist in another. This would go against the recent criteria changes for both EBVS and RCVS whereby Specialists can only be listed in one area.
7. Other minor updates to the wording, and application dates and deadlines were also made.
8. The updated Specialist Information and Application Pack can be seen at Annex A.

Application form

9. A change has been made with regard to information around caseloads. Whilst historically most Specialists would have been working clinically, the sub-committee agreed that the nature of Specialist

work had changed over the years. The caseload question came with a points requirement that could affect whether applications were approved or declined, therefore it was agreed to remove this question. Instead, it has been replaced with a question at the beginning of the application form around applicants giving details of their workload.

10. There were also changes to the scoring points of the self-assessment so the weighting of the application was balanced more evenly between the required contributions, publications and memberships etc.

11. The points awarded for references and CPD records were also removed as applications would not be accepted without complete references and CPD records.

12. The updated wording for the questions on the application form can be seen at **Annex B**. (Please note that there will be further guidance and instruction on how to complete the form when it is published online.)

13. The Specialist Sub-Committee recommends Education Committee to approve the changes to the criteria and applicant guidance, and the application form.

RCVS Specialists Information and Application Pack

2021 edition for 2021/2022 listing

Deadline for applications:

Friday 1 October 2021

Preface

Recognition as a Specialist by the RCVS is based upon the following criteria:

- a. Possession of an RCVS, or RCVS-approved diploma, or other relevant postgraduate qualification;**
- b. being acknowledged by peers in the area of specialisation;**
- c.**
 - i. maintaining and providing acceptable documented CPD**
 - ii. contributing to the specialty through publication, teaching, reviewing, examining, attending and participating in national and international meetings within the specialised field;**
- d. being available for referral or consultation by other veterinary colleagues (if appropriate to their area of work);**
- e. being a current active practitioner within the specialised field.**

The objectives of the RCVS list of Specialists include:

- to promote specialisation within the veterinary profession;
- to identify, for the public and the profession, veterinarians who have specialised knowledge and skills; who are active practitioners within a recognised field of specialisation; who maintain specialised competence through continuing professional development. Such individuals will meet the criteria listed in a. – e. above;
- to encourage veterinary surgeons to refer cases, as appropriate, to RCVS Specialists;
- to recognise specialised competence in key areas where there are suitable postgraduate qualifications.

Please note that the Code of Conduct has been changed, and with effect from March 2016, all Specialists “must be registered with the RCVS and included on the RCVS specialist list if they want to practise and use the title ‘specialist’ in the UK.”

We have consequently introduced a streamlined application process for European specialists, to take account of their accreditation with accepted European Colleges. Please see Section E for further information.

Section A

RCVS Specialists

RCVS Specialist status is not easily achieved. To be included on the list of Specialists, an individual must have achieved a postgraduate qualification at least at Level 8 in the [FHEQ](#) (Diploma level), and must additionally satisfy the College that they make an active contribution to their specialty. A Specialist must also be available for referral or consultation by other veterinary colleagues (**if appropriate to their area of work**). Specialist status is time bound, and the individual must reapply for recognition every five years (or earlier in certain cases) to maintain their name on the list.

This Information Pack outlines the criteria for recognition, and describes the process by which individuals can apply to have their name included on the list. This information pack is normally updated annually in early spring and applicants should ensure that they hold the most recent edition before applying.

1. How do I apply to be a RCVS Specialist and have my name included on the list?

Applications for inclusion on the list of RCVS Specialists (or re-applications for those whose initial period of recognition has expired) are considered once a year, normally in January by the Specialist Sub Committee. This is a Sub Committee of the Education Committee of the RCVS. Education Committee then approves the list of Specialists for publication.

Before proceeding with an application it is important that you read the following sections carefully to satisfy yourself that you meet all the requirements that you understand the application process and the type of information that you will need to provide. Before applying, you may also find it helpful to seek an informed opinion from a current RCVS Specialist.

- The criteria for eligibility are given in Section B.
- The list of specialties which are currently recognised are listed in Section C.
- The qualifications on which your eligibility may be based are given in Section D.
- Information for European Specialists is given in Section E
- Section F contains guidance notes on how to complete the RCVS Specialist application form.

All applications will need to be supported by two good references from referees who have known you at least 5 years. The process for obtaining and submitting references is described in **Section F**; the form that should be completed by your referees is in **Section G**. We will not be able to accept letters of reference.

To accompany your completed application form, you will also need to allow RCVS to have access to your 1CPD account (or submit a copy of your completed CPD records), covering the period of

the previous 5 years for re-applicants and previous 7 years for new applicants to the present (i.e. date of application).

Both re and new applicants complete the same application form.

There is an application fee which is reviewed annually. Current fees are set out at Annexes 2 and 6, and the appropriate fee must accompany your application. If your application is unsuccessful, we will be unable to offer any refunds.

It is essential that you make sure your application form including the requirements for CPD records and references are fully and accurately completed. Failure to do so may result in your application being rejected in the current application year.

2. What happens if my application for recognition as an RCVS Specialist is approved?

The names of those whose applications are approved are listed in the RCVS Register of Members, a new edition of which is published annually in the autumn. Recognition is given for up to five years in the first instance. After your initial period of recognition has expired, you will need to re-apply. All re-applicants are required to assess themselves against a clear set of criteria which is published on the RCVS website.

All listed RCVS Specialists must pay an annual administration fee, **by 1 July** each year, to ensure retention of their name on the published list.

Listed Specialists are also required to self-certify that they are still active as a Specialist, and confirmation of this is taken in the form of paying the annual fee.

Note that European Specialists will also be required to self-certify when they have been reaccredited by EBVS, if their accreditation period falls outside of the usual 5 year period of RCVS recognition. They will also need to self-certify annually that their EBVS accreditation is still current and up to date, including providing evidence of reaccreditation if this falls within the 5 year RCVS recognition period. Confirmation of this will be taken in the form of paying the annual fee.

3. What happens if my application to be a RCVS Specialist is rejected?

You will be notified, in writing, by RCVS with an indication of the reason for the decision.

You may appeal against the decision within 28 days of receipt of notification. Appeals must be made, in writing, and submitted to the Registrar. In no circumstances will RCVS staff or the Chairman of the Specialist Sub Committee enter into telephone discussions, correspondence or private discussions with individuals concerning appeals.

Appellants must state, succinctly, their grounds for appeal.

Your appeal will be considered by the Specialist Appeals Committee which meets as necessary, and reports directly to RCVS Council. Its membership is independent of the Specialist Sub Committee. The Specialist Appeals Committee consists of the immediate-past Senior Vice-President (Chairman), the Senior Vice-President and the Registrar. The Chairman of the Specialist Sub-Committee attends meetings of the Specialist Appeals Committee only in the capacity of Adviser.

No new or additional information unseen by the Specialist Sub Committee will be considered by the Specialist Appeals Committee.

4. How do I maintain my continued status as an RCVS Specialist?

RCVS Specialist status is granted for a period of up to five years. When this period has expired, the holder is required to re-apply if they wish their recognition to be continued. Listed RCVS Specialists are required to meet the criteria in place at the time of re-application. **It must be emphasised that these may differ from the criteria that were in place at the time of the first application.** Approval of a re-application allows retention of the RCVS Specialist's name on the List for a further period of up to five years, subject to payment of the annual administration fee on 1 July.

The annual deadline for re-applications is in the Autumn preceding the year of expiry of the status. Reminders are sent in the Summer, but it is ultimately to responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their re-application is submitted in time.

Section B**RCVS Specialist****Criteria for Eligibility****1. Membership**

Only those who are Members of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, and those on the Temporary Register, may apply to be included on the list. Members who are on the Non-Practising Register are not eligible to apply.

2. Qualifications

Both new and re applicants must hold one of the following qualifications at the date of application.

- a. An RCVS Diploma, RCVS approved European College Diploma, American College Diploma or Fellowship of Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists in, or relevant to, the specialty concerned (see Section D, paragraphs 1 and 6 for allowable Diploma titles);

(if applying with a European Diploma, please see Section E for details on how to apply)

or

- b. The RCVS Diploma of Fellowship gained by Examination¹, or by Meritorious Contributions to Learning (MCL)², in a subject which is in, or relevant to, the specialty concerned;

or

- c. A postgraduate qualification (see Section D), other than a named RCVS Diploma or a Diploma of Fellowship by Examination or MCL, which you wish to submit for consideration by the RCVS for this purpose, which is in, or relevant to, the specialty concerned. (For full details re: Diploma of Fellowship, see **Section D, para. 3**).

If your qualification is not currently listed in the RCVS Register, a certificate from the awarding body will also need to be submitted as verification.

It should be noted that obtaining an RCVS Diploma confers eligibility but does not *automatically* qualify the holder to become an RCVS Specialist; and they will also need to meet other criteria as described below.

Please see section E for the application process for those applying with European College Diplomas

¹ 1999 was the final year in which it was possible to achieve a Diploma of Fellowship by examination. This route to Fellowship is no longer available.

² 2016 was the final year that the Fellowship by MCL was awarded. This route to Fellowship is now no longer available

3. CPD Requirements (and re-validation criteria)

During the period of accreditation, the Specialist must undertake a minimum of **250 hours of CPD over 5 years** (whilst also complying with the formal RCVS requirement). **125 hours of that CPD should be in the Specialist's chosen designated field.**

Specialists should be involved with their subject or species community and be undertaking a breadth of CPD, some of which should involve engagement with other practitioners.

4. Professional Key Skills Requirements

As with Advanced Practitioners, RCVS considers it important that RCVS Specialists have developed and are maintaining their skills in key areas of professional development. The expectation is that Specialists will have developed the majority of these skills during the training and residencies required for their Diploma qualifications and thus what is required is some evidence that those skills are being utilised as part of day-to-day practice and being continually updated. We are consequently asking referees to confirm or comment on the expectation that all RCVS Specialists will:

- Use established models of professional and evidence-based reasoning to tackle complex problems in specialist practice
- Recognise the responsibility specialists have for protecting human and animal health
- Undertake specialist practice with a critical awareness of animal welfare, professional conduct and veterinary ethics
- Promote continuous improvement in the quality and standard of specialist practice
- Communicate effectively to the public and to professional colleagues.

Experience

5. Both re and new applicants must ensure that they are up to date and fit to practise in their area of speciality.

Other criteria

6. All applicants will be required to submit evidence of recent publications (i.e. in the last 5 years) in refereed journals; and/or of contributions to local, national and international meetings, and of appointments on official bodies in their field, as an indication of their continuing active involvement in their specialty. Publications in the professional and lay press will also be taken into consideration as well as expert reports not in the public domain.
7. If you do not hold either the RCVS Diploma or an approved European Diploma, (i.e. those meeting the criteria at paragraphs 2.b. and 2.c. above) you will be required to submit additional evidence of

at least 5 recent principal author papers as well as other relevant and recent contributions in refereed or specialist journals as described in para. 7 above.

8. Those applying under paragraphs 2.b. or 2.c. above may additionally be asked to sit and pass a relevant appropriate postgraduate qualification, before an application can be considered.
9. Specialists can only be listed in one area of designation.
10. Specialists cannot also be listed as an Advanced Practitioner in the same area of designation. Specialists are permitted to be listed as Advanced Practitioners in different areas.
11. Specialists are expected to contribute to the examination processes in their specialties either as examiners or by submitting questions and key points. The Sub Committee will take this into account when considering applications and re-applications. (Question 19 Section B of Application Form refers).

Self assessment

All applicants, whether submitting a re-application or new application, are required to self assess themselves against a clear set of criteria. Applicants can score themselves as the application form is completed.

Re-applications

The Specialist re-application fee is £93 (for re-applications submitted in 2021 for re-listing in 2022) with the annual administration charge being the same level at £93. (European Specialist application and annual listing fee is £46.)

Next deadline for new and re-applications

Existing Specialists due for reaccreditation will need to be apply by **1 October 2021**.

Emeritus Specialist status

Specialists who have or are about to retire, or have moved into a related but non-clinical role may be eligible for Emeritus RCVS Specialist status.

The requirements are:

- to have been previously listed as specialists normally for at least 15 consecutive years
 - listed in the Register as Non-Practising
- or

able to self certify as not being active in the area of specialisation and no longer involved in providing clinical specialist services, for example having moved into a full time managerial role

Those wishing to be listed as an Emeritus Specialist should put a request in writing to the Specialist Sub-Committee to inform them that you have either retired (or are about to), or are no longer working in the area. There is no fee for Emeritus Listing and no re-application will be required once listed.

Section C**RCVS Specialist****Specialities and Specialist titles**

This is not an exhaustive list and may be amended from time to time as required.

There are three broad groups of specialties. These are:

- A. Production Animal Medicine**
- B. Companion and Competitive Animals**
- C. Disciplines**

Specialist titles for which an application may be made are listed under one of these headings. In some areas, sub-specialties are listed beneath the full specialist title. Those shown are the sub-specialties agreed so far for each specialty. Sub-specialties indicate that the holder is a Specialist only in that restricted field. A Specialist in one of these fields must show the sub-specialty in brackets after the main title of the specialty.

Specialists can only be listed in one area, even if the fields are related. Applications to change the area of listing can be made, and must follow the usual re-application process.

Main title	Sub-specialities (where applicable)
A. Production Animal Medicine Group	
Cattle Health and Production:	Beef Dairy Genetics Mastitis Reproduction
Camelid Health and Production Deer Health and Production Fish Health and Production Goat Health and Production Laboratory Animal Science Pig Medicine Poultry Medicine and Production Sheep Health and Production:	Sheep Health and Production (Reproduction)
B. Companion and Competitive Animals Group	
Equine Medicine:	Internal Medicine Reproduction Sports Medicine Stud Medicine
Equine Gastroenterology	
Equine Surgery:	Orthopaedics

	Soft Tissue
Feline Medicine	
Rabbit Medicine and Surgery	
Small Animal Medicine:	Endocrinology Gastroenterology Internal Medicine Oncology
Small Animal Surgery:	Ear, Nose and Throat Oncology Orthopaedics Soft Tissue
C. Disciplines Group	
Animal Welfare Science, Ethics and Law Emergency and Critical Care Tropical Animal Health and Production Veterinary Behavioural Medicine Veterinary Anaesthesia Veterinary Cardiology Veterinary Clinical Nutrition: Veterinary Dentistry: Veterinary Dermatology Veterinary Epidemiology Veterinary Neurology: Veterinary Nutrition Veterinary Oncology Veterinary Ophthalmology Veterinary Parasitology Veterinary Pharmacology and Toxicology	Equine Equine Small Animals
State Veterinary Medicine	
Veterinary Pathology: * <i>(*applicants under this title are expected to be significantly involved in dealing with clinical material)</i>	Small domestic animals (dog, cat) Farm animals (cattle, sheep, pig, goat, deer) Equine animals (horse, donkey) Laboratory animals (rabbit, rat, mouse, guinea pig, hamster, dog, non-human primates) Birds (poultry, game birds, cage birds, wild birds) Fish (wild, farmed) Zoo and Wildlife Clinical pathology Microbiology Toxicology
Veterinary Public Health:	Meat Hygiene Food Hygiene
Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging:	
Veterinary Reproduction:	Cats

	<p>Cattle Dogs Goats Horses Pigs Sheep Small Animal - alternative title Small Domestic Ruminants - alternative title Theriogenology</p>
<p>Zoo and Wildlife Medicine:</p>	<p>Avian Herpetology Mammalian Pathology Small Mammal Reptilian Wildlife Population Health Zoo Health Management</p>

Section D

RCVS Specialist

Qualifications on which eligibility may be based

The following is a list of the acceptable qualifications on which an application for inclusion on the List of RCVS Specialists may be based.

RCVS Diplomas

(Section B, paragraph 2.a. refers)

- | | | |
|----|--|---|
| 1. | Animal Welfare Science, Ethics and Law | Small Animal Medicine (Feline) |
| | Cattle Health and Production | Small Animal Surgery (Orthopaedics) |
| | Equine Internal Medicine | Small Animal Surgery (Soft Tissue) |
| | Equine Stud Medicine | Veterinary Anaesthesia |
| | Equine Orthopaedics | Veterinary Cardiology |
| | Equine Soft Tissue Surgery | Veterinary Dermatology |
| | Fish Health and Production | Veterinary Ophthalmology |
| | Laboratory Animal Science | Veterinary Public Health (Food Hygiene) |
| | Pig Medicine | (Meat Hygiene) |
| | Poultry Medicine and Production | Veterinary Radiology (pre 2004) |
| | Sheep Health and Production | Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging |
| | Small Animal Orthopaedics | Veterinary Reproduction |
| | Small Animal Medicine | Zoological Medicine |

RCVS Diploma of Fellowship

(Section B, paragraph 2.b. refers)

2. A Fellowship gained **by Examination or by Meritorious Contributions to Learning**
3. RCVS Council has ruled that a Diploma of Fellowship **by Thesis** is by nature, too narrow a field to be considered as a main qualification towards RCVS Specialist status and would not normally be considered as sufficient evidence **alone**. However, a Diploma of Fellowship by Thesis would be considered as an indicator of educational attainment if offered as another postgraduate qualification (see Section B, paragraph 2.c.) along with evidence of a substantial number of publications in refereed journals.

Other Postgraduate qualifications

(Section B, paragraph 2.c. refers)

4. Other postgraduate degrees, e.g. PhDs, M/FRCPath may be submitted for consideration and approved for the purpose of specialist recognition by the RCVS in respect of any individual applicant.

6. Other Diplomas include the Diploma of the Institute of Biology in Toxicology and the Royal College of Pathologists Diploma in Toxicology.
6. Applicants relying on an MSc or other one-year qualification will have to offer a substantial amount of evidence of their expertise, such as a considerable number of publications and many years of experience.
7. **European College** Diplomas where the College has received full recognition are accepted for RCVS Specialist Status. To see the full list of approved Colleges, [please check the EBVS website](#).

Please see section E for the application process for those applying with European College Diplomas.

If the European College has not yet received full approval from EBVS, then applications will still be considered. However, applicants must go through the “full” application system until full approval is given by EBVS.

8. **American** College Diplomas and the Fellowship of the **Australian and New Zealand** College of Veterinary Scientists may also be acceptable qualifications on which an application may be based. The following are currently acceptable:

Fellow of Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists

Diploma of the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine

Diploma of American College of Veterinary Radiology

Diploma of American College of Veterinary Surgeons

Diploma of the American College of Veterinary Pathology

Diploma of the American College of Emergency and Critical Care

Diploma of the American Veterinary Dental College

This list is not exhaustive, and other American College Diplomas will be considered upon application.

European Diplomates

1. Those applying on the basis of a European Diploma from an accepted European College (i.e. where RCVS is satisfied with the standards of the College³) will normally be subject to a simplified process, as they will already have provided their College with much of the information required by RCVS. You will need to provide proof of accreditation by the relevant European College, and once on the specialist list, provide further proof each time you re-validate with your European College. This proof should be in the form of a certificate from the EBVS, or your College. If this is not available, then a letter or email from your College may be acceptable. Applications which do not contain this proof will not be reviewed.

2. **For applicants applying for RCVS Specialist Status in the same title as their European Diploma:** You will need to complete the application form online and submit evidence of accreditation by your European College. You do not need to complete a self-assessment form.

Please note: applicants wishing to apply for an RCVS Specialist title or sub-title which does not match their European Diploma will need to apply through the “full” application process to be able to provide the evidence to support recognition by RCVS of the different chosen title. Please see **Section B** for the full details on the criteria, and **Section F** for full details on how to apply via this route.

3. We have also recently introduced a professional key skills requirement for specialists, similar to that required for Advanced Practitioner status. A new section to the referees’ questionnaire has been introduced, that requires a referee to attest to the applicant’s use of professional key skills within their practice. This requirement also applies to European College Diplomates.

4. Once accepted on to the list of Specialists, you will be required to annually self certify that your EBVS recognition is still up to date and supply evidence of re-accreditation if not aligned with the RCVS 5 year period of recognition. Confirmation of this will be taken in the form of paying the annual fee.

Guidance on completing your application form

Applications should be made online on the RCVS website via the ‘My Account’ area - www.rcvs.org.uk.

³ The current recommendation about approval is ‘full recognition’ of the European College (EC) by the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS), which occurs once the EBVS is satisfied that the EC is fully functional and has introduced all aspects of the EBVS Policies and Procedures.

A representation of the application form can be seen below.

Once completed and submitted, application forms will be checked by staff in the RCVS office, before being forwarded on to the Specialist Sub-Committee for assessment.

Applications can be submitted throughout the year, and assessments will be carried out once every 2 to 3 months if and when sufficient numbers of complete applications have been received.

Applications that are submitted in the months before the general October deadline will be considered with the re-applications.

Please ensure that you include the following items with your application:

- Verification of the qualification you are offering by means of a copy of the Certificate from the European College, **if you have not already provided RCVS with this.**
- Verification that you have re-validated with your European College – your application will not be considered until this has been submitted
- Two references, covering the professional skills requirement

Please read these notes carefully before completing your application form.

Once you have logged into your account on the RCVS website, please click the button, “Apply to become a Specialist”.

You will then be taken to an initial screen which will ask if you are applying with a European Diploma or not. Please click on “apply with European Diploma” to be taken to the correct application form.

Please note, you will not be able to save your progress, so the form must be completed in full in one sitting.

Professional and academic credentials for recognition as a Specialist

You will be asked to select your European Diploma from a list, along with the date you received your award.

Then you will be asked to provide proof of award and/or current accreditation with your College. You can attach documents to the application form with the document uploader. To attach documents, click “choose file”. This will then open up a window where you will be able to select the documents from your computer. Once you have selected the relevant document, click “attach”. Once it has attached, you will then have the option to view, or remove the document.

References

You will need to supply two references, covering the professional skills requirement.

References can either be attached to the application form using the document uploader, or submitted to the RCVS by your referee.

If your referees are sending the references, they can be emailed to specialist@rcvs.org.uk, or sent in sealed envelopes addressed to the Education Department at the RCVS. Please see page 25 for further information on references and Section H for the referees' questionnaire.

Submission

Once you have completed all of the questions on the application form, you will need to confirm that the information provided is correct, then you will be able to click on "submit".

After this, you'll be taken to a confirmation screen where you will be given details on how to pay for your application. You will also receive a confirmation email.

Your application will not be considered until you have provided both the certification which shows that you are currently accredited with EBVS, evidence of reaccreditation if appropriate AND two references. RCVS may issue reminders to those who have items outstanding, however it is ultimately the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that everything is submitted.

Section F

RCVS Specialist

Guidance on completing your application form

(For those not applying based on a European College Diploma)

Applications should be made online on the RCVS website via the 'My Account' area - www.rcvs.org.uk.

A representation of the application form and details of how to complete it can be seen below.

Once completed and submitted, application forms will be checked by staff in the RCVS office, before being forwarded on to the Specialist Sub-Committee for assessment.

In order to be considered for inclusion in the following year's list, please submit your application by the specified closing date.

CPD

Applications will now be completed online. Therefore, we would strongly encourage applicants to register for an account on the online CPD recording system, 1CPD. You can sign up for an account here: www.onecpd.rcvs.org.uk if you haven't already done so.

CPD records from the previous five years must be submitted with applications (or seven years for new applications).

If you do not have an account on 1CPD, you can attach CPD records to the application form being completed online, so you will need to have electronic copies saved as .pdf files.

Alternatively, if you already record your CPD online on the RCVS 1CPD, you will need to give permission for the RCVS to access your full record. To do this, please just click "yes" when prompted with the question on the application form. The RCVS office will then be able to access your record, and share the relevant years' CPD with the Specialist Sub-Committee.

References

Your application will need to be supported by two referees. Full guidance on the references can be found below.

References can either be sent to the RCVS directly by your referees, or can be attached to your application online.

Please read these notes carefully before completing your application form.

Once you have logged into your account on the RCVS website, please click the button, "Apply to become a Specialist".

You will then be taken to an initial screen which will ask if you are applying with a European Diploma or not. Please click on “apply with other qualification” to be taken to the correct application form.

Once the form has loaded, you will be able to save your progress at any point and complete it at a later stage if required.

Qualifications

Here you will be asked to provide details of the qualification/qualifications that you are applying with. To select your qualification, click on “add new record” and you will then be given the option to select the type of qualification and awarding body from a list, before being able to specify the title of the qualification. Once you have selected the qualification, click “save” to return to the initial screen, or if you wish to add another qualification, click “save & new”.

You will then need to select the relevant points scored for your qualification. The points value is indicated after each question. A full list of the self-assessment points available is linked to at the top of the application form and can also be found [here](#).

If your qualification/s is not yet listed on the Register, you can indicate this on the form and provide proof of award. There are instructions on the form about how to attach documents to your application.

Current working situation

In order to meet the criteria for Specialist status, you are required to confirm that you are currently active, up to date and fit to practice in your area of speciality.

Publications and professional contributions to the specialty

These questions are designed to establish the extent of your active involvement in the specialty over the last 7 years. A substantial number of publications and other original contributions to your specialty would normally be expected. Alternatively, or in addition, you may present evidence of your practical/clinical workload that you believe should be taken into account.

To answer each question, please click on “add new record”, and once you have input the information, click “save” to return to the main application screen.

The Specialist Sub Committee can only make an assessment on clear, concise and specific properly detailed information.

Publications

Provide full details of your publications relevant to the specialty in refereed journals for the last 7 years (new applicants) 5 years (re-applicants). Quote author(s), year, title, journal name, volume and page numbers. If you are unsure whether the publication is refereed, include publications under Question 13. **(NB If you have a substantial number of publications, you should list just 5 that you consider to be the most significant).**

Contributions to books

Provide details of any contributions to published books relevant to the specialty in the last 7 years (new applicants) 5 years (re-applicants). Quote author(s), year, chapter title, name of book, editors, page numbers and publisher.

Non-refereed journals

Provide full details of any publications relevant to the specialty in non-refereed journals for the last 7 years (new applicants) 5 years (re-applicants). Quote author(s), year, title, journal name, volume and page numbers.

Expert and scrutineer reports

This category recognises that for some Specialists, much of their expertise is provided in the form of confidential reports. Provide details of contributions to expert reports during the last 7 years (new applicants) 5 years (re-applicants). Routine case or laboratory reports are not acceptable for this purpose. Expert reports can include legal, welfare or commercial scientific reports. Reviewing papers for refereed scientific journals can also be included.

The next category deals with advancing the subject and should not be confused with contributions to CPD.

Presentations

Give details of presentations you have given at scientific meetings in the last 7 years (new applicants) 5 years (re-applicants) that are relevant to the specialty. For each category - (a) international, (b) national, (c) local - quote date, location, organisation/sponsors.

Lay Publications

Give details of any relevant contributions to lay publications, and/or lay presentations in the last 7 years (new applicants) 5 years (re-applicants).

Please note 'in press' publications are NOT acceptable.

Contributions to CPD

Provide details of any specialist contributions during the last 7 years (new applicants) 5 years (re-applicants) to CPD activities within the profession, not otherwise mentioned above (e.g. electronic publishing, distance learning packages).

Caseload

Provide a concise description of your personal caseload and its complexity where appropriate e.g. detail and numbers of individual surgical procedures where the applicant is the lead surgeon, mode of

assessment of outcomes.

Memberships

List your current membership of Colleges, relevant Societies and/or other official bodies and indicate where appropriate how you may have contributed to your specialty through these associations (e.g. through appointments/committee membership) either now or in the past – please **do not** include 'MRCVS'.

Postgraduate Training

List any contributions to postgraduate training and examining in your specialty over the last 7 years (new applicants) 5 years (re-applicants).

- a. Training e.g. supervision of Interns/Certificate/Diploma/Residents/other postgraduate training - **give names and dates.**
- b. Examining - quote awarding body, examination and year.
- c. Involvement in RCVS or European College Boards.

Other experience

Provide details of any other relevant information or experience during the last (7 years for new applicants and 5 years for re-applicants) that you would wish to be taken into account.

CPD

NB With your application **it is essential that you** submit your completed CPD record covering the appropriate period i.e. either 7 years for new applicants OR 5 years for re-applicants.

Here, you can indicate if you are using 1CPD, or upload your own CPD records. If you are using 1CPD, then the RCVS can take your records from that and you will not need to provide anything at this stage.

If you do not use 1CPD, or wish to upload separate records, you can do this using the document uploader. Details on how to attach documents are provided in the application form.

References

References can either be attached to the application form using the document uploader, or submitted to the RCVS by your referee.

- A referee must normally have known the applicant for the five-year period prior to application/re-application that the applicant is offering as experience in their specialty.
- Referees should normally be Specialists in the same area that the applicant is applying for.

- Referees should not be, relatives or spouses of the applicant.
- You should let your referees have sight of your completed application, as they will be asked to confirm that they have seen it and agree with its contents.
- It is your responsibility to collect your references and forward them to RCVS, or to request that they are submitted by email.
- **Two** references are required.
- Provide the names and full addresses of your referees.
- Normally referees should be M/FsRCVS.
- Choice of referees should reflect the breadth of your experience.
- The College reserves the right to approach any of your referees directly.
- A referee must be a professionally qualified person in your chosen specialist field, and should be in a position to make an informed assessment of your standing and expertise.
- A referee must normally have known you for the period that you are offering as experience in your specialty and ideally, should currently be an RCVS Specialist.
- References should be of a professional nature; personal references as such are not required.
- It is normally accepted that a referee should not be a relative or partner (business or social) of the applicant.
- No more than one colleague at the same institute should provide a reference.
- A referee's questionnaire is provided in **Section H** which you should pass on to your referees to be completed and returned to the RCVS.
- **Those who are applying or re-applying for Specialist status will not be allowed to act as referees in the same round of assessments, unless under exceptional circumstances.**

Submission

Once you have completed all of the questions on the application form, you will need to confirm that the information provided is correct, then you will be able to click on "submit".

After this, you'll be taken to a confirmation screen where you will be given details on how to pay for your application. You will also receive a confirmation email.

Section G

RCVS Recognised Specialist

Referees' Questionnaire

This questionnaire should be completed and returned to the RCVS, either by email to specialist@rcvs.org.uk, or posted to Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF.

References can be typed or filled in by hand.

References form an important part of an application and must be received by the closing date. The referee should be a Specialist in the same area as the applicant.

Name of applicant:	
Title of specialty:	
Name of referee:	
Details of qualifications and Specialist listing of referee:	

1. In what capacity do you know the applicant?

The referee should not be a relative or partner (business or social) of the applicant.
(Only **ONE** colleague at the same institute may provide a reference)

2. How long have you known the applicant's work?

A referee must normally have known the applicant for the **five-year** period prior to application/re-application that the applicant is offering as experience in their specialty. A professional and not a personal reference is required.

- i. personally
- ii. by reputation

3. List the criteria by which, in your opinion, the applicant is maintaining their Recognised Specialist status.

4. The RCVS expects that all Specialists will:

- Use established models of professional and evidence-based reasoning to tackle complex problems in specialist practice
- Recognise the responsibility specialists have for protecting human and animal health
- Undertake specialist practice with a critical awareness of animal welfare, professional conduct and veterinary ethics
- Promote continuous improvement in the quality and standard of specialist practice
- Communicate effectively to the public and to professional colleagues.

I have no reason to believe that the applicant does not apply these professional key skills as part of their practice.

Please tick box

I confirm that I have read the applicant's application form.
(Not applicable for referees to those applying via the European Diplomate route)

Please tick box

I signify below, **my support** for this application for inclusion on the List of RCVS Specialists in the specialty stated.

Please tick box

Signature:	
Name (in capital letters):	
Date:	

Are you an M/FRCVS? (delete as appropriate)

Yes	No
-----	----

New applications

Annex 1

RCVS Specialist

With effect from **1 January 2020**, the following fees are payable to the RCVS with your application. The closing date for receipt for new applications is **Friday 2 October**, for consideration by the Sub Committee at its annual meeting in January 2021:

2021

- New and re-applications £93.00
- Applications and re-applications £46.00
from European Diplomates

The annual listing fee is also the same amount as the application fee.

- Restoration fee £93.00

Notes:

- a. No refunds will be made if an application is turned down.
- b. Applicants who are turned down by the Sub-Committee, or on Appeal, must pay another fee when applying again.
- c. An administration fee is payable annually for retention of a RCVS Specialist's name on the List which appears in the RCVS Register of Members. The Annual Administration fee is due for each year that your name is listed.
- d. Re-application for continued recognition as a Specialist is required every five years, or less as determined by the sub-committee in certain cases.

Annex 2**RCVS Specialist****Timetables for new applications**

• Applications due in by	Friday 1 October 2021
• Applications considered by Specialist Sub Committee:	January 2022
• Recommendations put to Education Committee:	February 2022
• Applicants advised of decision:	By email as soon as possible after Council has been held in March 2022 .

Timetables for re-applications

• The RCVS sends Advance Notice regarding renewal of Specialist status to those whose recognition is due to expire.	Summer 2021
• Payment due for retention of name on the 2021 edition of the List:	1 July 2020
• Re-application due:	1 October Those Specialists who do not re-apply will be removed from the next published List of Specialists i.e. in March 2022
• RCVS circulates completed re-application forms to Members of the SSC for consideration and recommendation:	After 1 October 2021
• SSC considers applications and re-applications at its annual meeting and agrees recommendations to go to Education Committee:	January 2022
• Education Committee considers SSC recommendations:	February 2022
• Applicants advised of decision:	As soon as possible after Council in March 2022

RCVS Specialist Application Form Wording – non-European Diploma

Please note that failure to produce full evidence of meeting the CPD requirements or to submit two appropriate references from an appropriate person which have been correctly signed are liable to render your application rejected so please check these details before submission.

1. Please select the title of the Speciality in which you wish to be recognised:

Section A

Qualification/s

2. Please select your relevant professional qualification for eligibility to Specialist status:

Points scored: 1 per qualification up to a maximum of 8

Experience

3. I can confirm that I am up to date and fit to practise in my area of speciality:

4. Please give a brief description of your workload, which could include, but is not necessarily restricted to, details of your personal caseload, and your day to day activities within the speciality:

Section B

Publications and Professional contributions to the specialty

5. Please submit lists of publications and other contributions that are relevant to the subject, and have been given in the last five years.

(For publications, please give the full citation including authors; year; title; journal name; volume; and page numbers. If you are not certain whether the journal is refereed, include the citation under the non-refereed section.

For presentations, show title; venue; date; organisation/sponsors; and differentiate between international, national or local events. Credit can also be given to practical/clinical work in the speciality.)

6. Publications in refereed journals (list no more than 5). Articles 'in press' are not acceptable. (Identify the number of papers and the journals)

Points scored: 10 points - 2 points for each paper, up to a maximum of 5 papers.

7. Contributions to book/s. Indicate extent of contribution, including chapters contributed. (List no more than 5) Articles 'in press' are not acceptable.

Points scored: Up to 5 points for each book with >50% input. 2 points for each chapter contributed to others' books, up to a maximum of 5 chapters.

8. Publications in non-refereed journals. (List up to 5) (Identify the number of papers and the journals)

Points scored: 1 point per article, up to a maximum of 5 publications.

9. Expert reports

Points scored: 2 points per report, to a maximum of 10 reports.

10. Presentations to international scientific meetings. (List meeting, date, location and title of presentation)

Points scored: 2 points per meeting, up to a maximum of 5

11. Presentations to national meetings.

Points scored: 1 point per meeting, up to a maximum of 10 meetings

12. Publications in the lay press or presentations to lay meetings including TV or radio.

Points scored: 1 point per publication/presentation, up to a maximum of 5.

13. Contributions to any other CPD activities for the profession not mentioned above, e.g. electronic publishing, distance learning packages.

Points scored: 1 point for each, up to a maximum of 5.

Section C

Memberships

14. List your current memberships of Colleges (other than RCVS and/or being a Diplomate a college), Societies, and/or relevant bodies and indicate how you have contributed to your speciality through these connections (e.g appointments/committee membership).

Points scored: 1 point for each, up to a maximum of 4.

Postgraduate training and examinations

15. a) Providing postgraduate training in your speciality, e.g. supervision of Residents, a CertAVP or Diploma candidate or other relevant postgraduate qualification

1 point per candidate

b) Acting as an examiner for postgraduate examinations in your speciality, e.g. RCVS CertAVP/Diploma examiner

1 point per exam/examination year 2 points if chief examiner

c) Involvement in RCVS or European College Committees/Boards.

1 point per time served on each Committee/Board

Points scored: up to 12

Other experience

16. If you have any other recent, relevant experience not already described above that you would like to be brought to the Sub-Committee's attention, please include it here.

No points available

CPD

(applicants will be asked to either give access to their 1CPD account or attach records)

No points available

References

(applicants will be asked to give the names of their references)

No points available

Professional Skills

The RCVS expects that all Specialists will:

- Use established models of professional and evidence-based reasoning to tackle complex clinical problems in specialist practice
- Recognise the responsibility specialists have for protecting human and animal health
- Undertake specialist practice with a critical awareness of animal welfare, professional conduct and veterinary ethics
- Promote continuous improvement in the quality and standard of specialist practice
- Communicate effectively to the public and to professional colleagues.

17. Please confirm that you apply these professional skills as part of your practice.

No points available

Summary	
Meeting	Education Committee
Date	11 May 2021
Title	List of approved Advanced Practitioners
Summary	A list of re-approved Advanced Practitioners and a list of newly approved Advanced Practitioners, approved by the panel in March 2021
Decisions required	To note
Attachments	None
Author	Laura Hogg Senior Education Officer L.hogg@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0736

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	

¹Classifications explained

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

²Classification rationales

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

List of re-approved Advanced Practitioners:

Designation	Name
Bovine Reproduction	Helen Worth
Cattle Health and Production	Lee-Anne Oliver
	Michael Fallon
	Christopher Price
Equine Internal Medicine	Joel Hotchkiss
	Zoe Wilson
	Gemma Pearson
Equine Practice	Sophie Soskin
	Jennifer Croft
	Michael Hurley
	Sara Kent
	Morven Webster
Equine Stud Medicine	James Crabtree
Poultry	Ian Lowery
Sheep Health and Production	Rebecca Mearns
	Davinia Hinde
Small Animal Cardiology	Luca Bevilacqua
Small Animal Dermatology	John Oleshko
Small Animal Medicine	Zoe Gresham
	Elizabeth McLennan-Green
	Nicola Beaney
	Jacqueline Leavitt
	Claire Bush
	Louise Robin
	Graeme McKeown
	Joanna Spelman-Marriott

	Katharyn Hildick-Smith
	Nigel Smallwood
	Christopher Saul
	Jelena Ristic
Small Animal Medicine - Feline	Audra-Lynne Turner
	Christopher Maguire
	Jamie Rushton
Small Animal Practice	Jennifer Millington
Small Animal Surgery	Emma Havard
	Fraser Goldie
	Kelly Freezer
	Edric Cross
	Matthew Gittings
	Fiona French
	Tom Leonard
	Andrew Nelson
	Arunsalam Sithamparanathan
	Kerry Billington
	Graeme McKeown
	Mark Taylor
	Alison Somers
	Carl Thompson
	Gabriella Papa
	James Garland
	Sebastian Daly
	Joseph Fox
	Rachael Porter
	Marc Worley
Veterinary Anaesthesia	Ian Thomas

	Clifford Maw
Veterinary Cardiology	Rosemary Brandon
	Oliver Garrod
	Antonis Moneva-Jordan
Veterinary Dermatology	Helen Fryer
Veterinary Ophthalmology	Sarah Harrison
	Isabella Buehler
	Gudrun Janssen
	Audrey Chanoit
	Janine Ryan
	Jennifer Lambert
Zoological Medicine	Suzetta Cameron
	Steven Bexton

List of new approved Advanced Practitioners:

Designation	Name	Qualification
Cattle Health and Production	Elinor Button	CertAVP(Cattle)
Emergency and Critical Care	Nina Cooke	BSAVA PGC
	Victoria Travail	BSAVA PGC
	Jane Feneley	Harper Adams PgC
	Nicola Higson	CertAVP(ECC)
	Charlotte Gray	Harper Adams PgC
	Daria Gago Torres	CertAVP(ECC)
	Candice Buchanan	CertAVP(ECC)
	Elaine Stewart	BSAVA PGC
	Chloe Delimal	BSAVA PGC
	Natalie Tate	Harper Adams PgC
	Emma Holt	BSAVA PGC
Equine Dentistry	Nicola Harries	CertAVP(ED)
	Michael Barton	CertAVP(ED)
	Joseph Sharps	CertAVP(ED)
Equine Internal Medicine	Katherine Kershaw	CertAVP(EM)
	Helen Braid	CertAVP(EM)
Sheep Health and Production	Lee-Anne Oliver	CertAVP(Sheep)
Small Animal Cardiology	Jamie Rushton	Harper Adams PgC
Small Animal Dermatology	Aisling McGrath	Harper Adams PgC
	Mary-Jane Vance	Harper Adams PgC
Small Animal Medicine	Joshua Bleakley	BSAVA PGC
	Magdalena Doherty	Harper Adams PgC
	Ruth Cawston	CertAVP(SAM)
	Kate Allgood	CertAVP(SAM)
	Louisa Graham	CertAVP(SAM)

	Katie Wright	CertAVP(SAM)
	Candice Cadwallader	CertAVP(SAM)
	Kirsty Hambley	BSAVA PGC
	Justine Barton	Harper Adams PgC
Small Animal Medicine - Feline	Caroline McMillan	Harper Adams PgC
	Kathleen Pohl	Harper Adams PgC
	Nadine Smith	Harper Adams PgC
Small Animal Practice	Struan Rafferty	MVetSci
Small Animal Surgery	Corinne Martin	Harper Adams PgC
	Thomas Roberts	CertAVP(GSAS)
	Sebastian Prior	CertAVP(GSAS)
	Sally Potter	Postgraduate Certificate
	Rebecca Elmore	CertAVP(GSAS)
	James Higson	CertAVP(GSAS)
	Oliver Wilkinson	CertAVP(GSAS)
	Victor Ortiz Valderrey	CertAVP(GSAS)
	Antonis Auty	CertAVP(GSAS)
	Alexandra Russell	CertAVP(GSAS)
	Dervla Martin	CertAVP(GSAS)
	Damiano Giordano	Harper Adams PgC
Veterinary Anaesthesia	Bethan Lawrence	CertAVP(VA)
Veterinary Cardiology	Katie Howell	CertAVP(VC)
	Riccardo Minelli	CertAVP(VC)
Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging	Nicholas Morrell	Harper Adams PgC
	Gregory Dixon	Harper Adams PgC
	Hugh Somerville	CertAVP(VDI)
	Alexander Howell	Harper Adams PgC
	Karen Errington	Harper Adams PgC
	David Rawlinson	CertVDI

	Duncan Greeff	CertAVP(VDI)
Veterinary Ophthalmology	Sara Seedall	BSAVA PGC
	Giuseppe Nacci	Harper Adams PgC
	Evdokia Kritsiligkou	BSAVA PGC
	Helen Walton-Collett	BSAVA PGC
	Emer Lenihan	BSAVA PGC
	Josephine Parker	BSAVA PGC