

Summary	
Meeting	Education Committee
Date	9 May 2023
Title	Education Committee Minutes 7 February 2023
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Decisions required	To note
Attachments	None
Author	Britta Crawford b.crawford@rcvs.org.uk/ 020 7202 0777

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	
Classified appendix	Confidential	1

Education Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2023

Members:	Dr Abbie Calow	
	Dr Niall Connell	
	Ms Linda Ford	- Lay member
	Professor Tim Parkin	
	Mrs Susan Howarth	
	Professor Chris Proudman	
	Professor Stuart Reid	
	Professor Susan Rhind	
	Dr Kate Richards	- Chair
	*Ms Anna Bradbury	- Student representative
	Ms Kate Dakin	- Student representative
By invitation:	Dr Melissa Donald	- CertAVP Subcommittee Chair
	Professor Stephen May	- Advanced Practitioner Panel Chair
	Dr Joanne Dyer	- PQSC Chair
	Dr Susan (Sue) Paterson	- VetGDP subcommittee Chair and Observer
	*Professor Nigel Gibbens	- Chair of Accreditation Review Working Party
In attendance:	Mr Duncan Ash	- Senior Education Officer
	Dr Linda Prescott-Clements	- Director of Education
	Mrs Britta Crawford	- Senior Education Officer
	Ms Claire Holliday	- Senior Education Officer
	Mr Jordan Nicholls	- Lead for Undergraduate Education
	Ms Beckie Smith	- Senior Education Officer
	Ms Jenny Soreskog-Turp	- Lead for Postgraduate Education
	Mrs Kirsty Williams	- Quality Assurance Manager
	Ms Lizzie Lockett	- CEO

Apologies for absence and welcome

1. Apologies were sent from Anna Bradbury and Nigel Gibbens.

Declarations of interest

2. Dr Paterson, Dr Richards, Dr Connell, Professor Rhind and Professor Parkin declared that they were on the panel lists for accreditation visits. Dr Paterson also declared a conflict of interest over the AP Telemedicine paper and Dr Richards declared that she is a member of the Food Standards Scotland board.
3. The Committee were informed at this point that Dr Anderson, on the specialist list, had recently passed away.

Minutes

4. The minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2022 were agreed and noted.

Matters arising

5. The Committee noted that all actions had been completed or were in progress. The VetGDP subcommittee would be meeting in March and discuss the matter relating to EPAs. Further information about awards will be provided at the next meeting.
6. Education Committee further discussed the commercialisation of VetGDP and 1CPD and the need for specialist legal advice. Education Committee would be kept informed of its progress and FRC would discuss any resourcing for the project.

Education Department update

7. The Director of Education, Dr Prescott-Clements, gave an oral update on the work of the Education Department. The ENQA visit has been confirmed as the 5th – 7th June. The schedule is not yet in place, but members were asked, as stakeholders, to make themselves available to speak to ENQA.
8. The Committee heard that the panel member training for the new accreditation standards had now been fully launched with good initial feedback. There are approximately 50 people undertaking the course.

Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee (PQSC)

Report of the sub-committee meetings held on the 6 January 2023

9. The minutes of the PQSC meeting held in January were received. Members heard that the sub-committee had discussed the requirements regarding which teaching staff at veterinary schools are required to be MRCVS and on the practising register, and that after advice from the Registrar, a further paper would be going to PQSC in March for consideration.

10. Members heard that the school annual monitoring reports had been considered, and the new form had demonstrated that making data comparisons between years would be much easier moving forward. It was noted that the feedback from PQSC on the new process indicated some areas where further guidance on completing the forms would be helpful to maintain consistency between schools. The schools have been contacted with PQSC's requests for further clarifications, and these will be considered at the next PQSC meeting in March.
11. The committee was informed of the proposal by SRUC to include taught content suitable to meet the requirements for OV training into their new degree programme. It was noted that regular updates were being provided to PQSC for comments and questions.
12. An update was provided on the status of the Glasgow verification visit report, which had been received by PQSC and had now been returned to the School for a period of formal consultation.
13. Members were informed that there had been discussions around Utrecht's request to send two RCVS members on the AVMA visit on a consultative basis, AVMA had been contacted regarding this.
14. Finally, the committee was informed of Massey University's plans to increase their student numbers.

Ratify panel members for accreditation events in 2023

15. The committee was presented with a paper providing the names of the proposed panel members for the 2023 accreditation events and were asked to ratify the lists. Any committee members whose names were on the lists left the meeting for the duration of the discussion.
16. A question was raised regarding the involvement of officers in visitations, it was noted that this had not been allowed in previous years due to their involvement in the committee and appeals processes. Some members felt that it would be good practice if committee members were not directly involved in accreditation visits.
17. It was noted that currently, the RCVS President cannot be on a visiting panel, the EC and PQSC Chairs cannot chair a visit panel, however, they can sit on a panel. It was suggested that now there is a more extensive list of potential panel members, RCVS should work towards moving back to the original format once new panel members have completed the training.
18. Some members questioned the slightly different number of panel members appointed to certain Australasian school visits. It was explained that the MRA stated the RCVS would send 'no more than two' panel members, and the number was agreed by committees depending on the specific requirements of the accreditation. It was requested that the issue of the number of panel members sent to schools be revisited by PQSC to ensure consistency and this be made clear in the guidance.
19. Members voted unanimously to ratify the panel member lists.

Action: PQSC to revisit future panel member numbers for overseas schools to ensure consistency.

Statutory Membership Exam (SME)

SME Update

20. The Committee heard that the closing date for entry to the SME had been moved forward to January to allow for sufficient time for appeals to the written paper results to be completed before the OSCE section in July. 126 candidates including 3 from the Veterinary Council of Ireland will take the written exam this year, which is a 25% increase in candidates from last year. The team were thanked for covering the work of the exam's manager during this busy time while this post was temporarily vacant, particularly Ms. Smith, Ms. Soreskog-Turp and Mr. Ash. The written exams will take place in the week beginning the 6th of March.
21. The OSCE tender has closed, and bids are currently being considered by the exam board.
22. There has been a round of recruitment for examiners due to the increasing number of candidates. Six new companion animal examiners, four equine and four production animal/veterinary public health have been appointed which will enable us to run parallel circuits on the OSCE which is required as a result of the increasing numbers of candidates.

Mitigating Circumstances Form

23. The Committee approved the form but asked that the timescales for completion of the form be added so that we are clear on the time window to avoid confusion and disappointment. The Committee also asked that it be made explicit what wouldn't be done under mitigating circumstances and be clear that marks will not be adjusted.

Action: Education Department to update the Mitigation Circumstances Form

EMS Database

24. In November 2022, Education Committee reconsidered the draft specification for the planned EMS Database following feedback obtained from the Vet Schools Council (VSC) and the VSC EMS Coordinators Group. Upon consideration of the feedback, amendments to the specification to include an extra step for schools to give overall signoff on placements was added, allowing for checking of appropriate health and safety and insurance arrangements put in place by providers, along with the ability for students to add in details of placements that were not listed on the database. The updated specification was received by the committee, and comments were invited.
25. There was a question around the search functionality for students, and whether they would be able to search for placements using a number of criteria, for example, an equine placement in a certain location that has specific on-site facilities, or whether each criterion could only be filtered

separately. It was clarified that the aim was to be to search for as many or as few criteria as the student wished, so their search results would be able to be completely tailored.

26. Further to this point, it was suggested that search results should be randomised rather than alphabetised or other to avoid situations where students would always be clicking on the first or first few options, and it was agreed that this suggestion would be carried forward to the IT team.
27. There was also a question around if any measures could be put into place to avoid unconscious bias from providers. It was explained that this also came up in one of the recent focus groups, and the working way forward was that providers would receive “anonymous” requests for booking which only had relevant information such as what year the student was in, and their intended learning aims. Only upon confirmation of the placement would the student’s name become visible, as this would be needed to make the logistical arrangements of the placement.
28. Education Committee agreed to approve the specification as final. The specification would then be passed on to the RCVS IT team and building of the database would commence.

Action: Education Team to ensure these features including search functionality clear in the specification and communicated to the development team

Advanced Practitioner Status

Advanced practitioners working in telemedicine

29. Education committee was asked to consider whether telemedicine cases could be counted towards the case allowance for those applying for Advanced Practitioner (AP) status. APs are currently required to self-certify they have seen an average of 100 cases a year. As telemedicine is becoming increasingly used in practice, it could mean that some of these cases might be seen virtually and if so, should there be a limit on the number of cases that could count towards meeting this requirement.
30. The committee discussed the public perspective of an AP and if there were an expectation that cases were seen in person. Telemedicine helps to provide flexibility to clients who live in remote areas and may not be able to see an AP in person. In comparison, specialists can count virtual cases towards the case log but there is difference in the role and responsibilities of the AP and the Specialist. The committee felt that it is important that the standard for being an AP is met and there may be different ways to meet that standard.
31. The Committee discussed if the requirement needs to be reviewed according to specific designations as some cases or disciplines may not be suitable for telemedicine. There were suggestions that the AP assessment panel members should decide on the number of telemedicine cases that could be seen in their designation areas.

32. There was discussion around the current process and the training of AP panel members in assessing the applications. Currently, a number of applications are referred onto the Chair for a second opinion, and it was felt that the reviewers would need guidance and training if there were a change to assessing case logs.
33. The Committee did not feel they could reach a decision based on the information provided and agreed that a more detailed report was needed. As part of this work, guidelines and training for assessors may also need to be reviewed in order to ensure that the AP panel can properly assess if the standards for achieving AP status have been met.

Action: Education Department to review case criteria and bring a more detailed report to a future EC meeting.

Report from the Clinical Careers Stakeholders Event

34. The committee received and noted the paper and report of the Clinical careers stakeholder event that was held on the 7th of December last year at the Royal College of Surgeons. Many members of the committee attended the event and agreed that it had been a successful day and that it is important that we keep momentum with this work.
35. As part of the review and the next steps, it is important that we are clear about what we are trying to achieve, either to improve career opportunities or to better inform the public, or both. It may be useful to develop a career ladder and identify each step on this ladder. This should be considered carefully as several levels may be useful for the profession but could cause confusion for public unless introduced alongside clear information.
36. The committee was pleased to see suggestions for how veterinary surgeons working in primary care might progress their career through a potential workplace-based programme and felt that could have a positive impact on retention within the profession.
37. At the stakeholder event, there had been a lot of discussions about the introduction of a modular approach to training for specialisation and the committee felt that this would provide more flexibility and career opportunities for many veterinary surgeons working in clinical practice. The committee felt that the RCVS should use its influence to encourage the EBVS to and European Colleges to promote this route.
38. The committee felt it important that we publish the report to the profession in a timely manner and they were reassured that that was part of the plan. It is essential that the information in the final report about the different roles within the practice is clear as that can help educate the profession.
39. The committee discussed the possibility of linking AP status to the Practice Standards Scheme but was concerned about being too prescriptive and it was therefore suggested that we should explore positive encouragements such as PSS awards for practices with a number of APs.

Action: Education Department to discuss awards with PSS team

40. The committee agreed that the next step should be to clarify the current roles within the career ladder, explore future options and how a modular pathway for career progression to Specialist status could work and start to explore details for a workplace-based programme for GPs.

Action: Present future plans for career pathways to EC in May

41. It was felt that the other points raised in the report such as changing the name of CertAVP, establish a GP network, explore different kinds of mentorships and portfolio careers were important but should be explored in the next phase of the project.

CPD: Outcomes of the CPD Audit 2022

42. The committee received and noted the paper about the outcomes of the CPD Audit 2022.

43. The committee was disappointed about the low response rate to the audit and the low level of CPD compliance.

44. Many veterinary surgeons still do not seem understand the wide range of activities that can count as CPD or how to reflect on their learning. It was suggested that members aged 31-40 may have a high rate of non-compliance due to balancing work and family life, and that RCVS should create targeted communications to help this group.

Action: Update the CPD comms plan with targeted information to members with family commitments.

45. The committee recommended that we review the wording on emails and letters sent to members to highlight that a majority of members are using 1CPD and complying with the CPD requirement.

Action: JST to review CPD communication

46. The committee discussed if the RCVS could revoke accreditation for PSS practices that have vets who are non-compliant. It was also suggested that RCVS could display when a member is CPD compliant on 'find a vet' entry so that it is visible to the public. The CPD Policy and Compliance subcommittee will review the non-compliance data at their next meeting and explore options for further actions in order to increase CPD compliance.

Action: CPD Committee to report back on follow up actions for non-compliant members.

47. There was a question about whether the 1CPD app reminder system would be implemented to encourage regular recording of CPD. The committee were assured that this is on the 1CPD development list, however there is a slight delay due to other priorities within the IT team.

Specialist Subcommittee (SSC) Minutes

48. The minutes from the meeting held on 5th January 2023 were received and noted.

49. Education Committee approved the additions and re-additions to the List of Specialists, as recommended by SSC.

Specialist Sub-Committee – References

50. The Specialist Sub-Committee had put forward a recommendation to remove the requirement for references as part of new and reapplications for Specialist status. Whilst it was acknowledged that references may have held more weight towards applications in the past, the way both types of applications worked now was that they were pass or fail based on the content of the detail supplied by the applicant themselves as part of the application, with references merely adding subjective approval or endorsement.

51. It was therefore agreed that references should be taken out of the requirements for applications.

Action: DA to update Specialist Guidance to remove the requirement for references.

Specialist Sub-Committee – Self Assessment points

52. There was also a recommendation to remove the maximum limits to points applicants could claim to individual contributions within sections B and C on the “full” RCVS accreditation application form. Sometimes applicants were just missing out on reaching the required points levels due to the technicality of the weighting of the points able to be awarded, and therefore if they were able to add in further contributions to particular areas, they would be able to meet the minimum points threshold for the larger sections.

53. Education Committee also agreed to remove the maximum point limits to each individual contribution.

Action: DA to update guidance in relation to self-assessment points

Proposal for Direct Accreditation of EU Vet Programmes

54. The committee was presented with a paper outlining a proposal which had been sent to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), requesting funding to support the direct accreditation of veterinary programmes at EU schools whose graduates have traditionally tended to register to work in the UK. In response to RCVS Council requests for a more permanent solution to the recognition of EU graduates for registration purposes following Brexit, whereby graduates from EAEVE accredited schools are automatically recognised, this proposal sought pump-prime funding from Government to cover the costs of accreditation for certain targeted EU vet schools.

55. It was explained that Defra had requested low, medium and high ambition proposals regarding the number of schools to target, which RCVS provided based on the criteria of their programmes being currently (or planned to be) taught in English, their EAEVE approval/accreditation status renewal, and the numbers of graduates likely to register to work in the UK based on historical data.

56. The plans outlined that this funding would cover the relevant accreditation fees charged by RCVS, along with 50% of the costs associated with an accreditation visit, which RCVS would top up, for an initial accreditation visit. It was hoped that this would make direct RCVS accreditation more

attractive for the school, although it would be made clear that once successfully accredited, they would then be responsible for costs of any future accreditation events as normal.

57. It was also pointed out that for the medium and high ambition proposals, the number of schools being targeted would require additional resource within the Education department, and that a 50% contribution towards the additional staff resource required formed part of the proposal to Defra.
58. Members queried whether there was a potential risk with joint visitations involving EAEVE, and whether RCVS would be in a similar position to current joint international visits where it sometimes formed the minority representation on visitation teams. Whilst it was acknowledged that larger teams presented greater challenges on a visit, it was assured that these issues were not insurmountable and that the College would not enter into a joint visitation where it could not be assured of getting the information/evidence required to inform an accreditation decision.
59. Another query raised was whether this proposal, if achieved, would address the workforce shortages caused by the UK leaving the EU and associated removal of the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications (MRPQ) arrangement. It was explained that this was a difficult question to answer with so many unknowns, and that there were no guarantees that the schools being targeted would agree to proposals, especially as there was no immediate need with the temporary Council decision in place. However, the proposal provided incentives for EU schools to get RCVS accreditation and it was felt that if successful, it would help fill the gaps left in the workforce. Moreover, it was anticipated that the benefits to the schools in being able to attract UK students (and their associated international student fees) would make it more likely that direct accreditation would be taken up.
60. It was asked whether RCVS would be seeking to accredit individual veterinary programmes or the veterinary schools themselves, which would include all programmes on offer at an institution, and it was clarified that RCVS would be seeking to accredit only the individual programmes taught in English. It was also explained that, further down the line, it may be possible to look into accrediting non-English taught programmes. However, in-line with the approach taken by EAEVE, the schools would need to translate all materials and evidence required by the accreditation panels.
61. Education Committee was asked whether it agreed with the proposals in principle, and whether there was anything to add which would be shared with Defra. There were no further comments and the committee looked forward to hearing about progress with the negotiations at the next meeting.

Action: Update Education Committee on the Defra proposals at the next meeting.

Action: Education Department to update Risk register

Any other business

62. It was noted that minor updates to competences 11 and 12 of the Day One Competences had been made to remove references to PDP and replace them with VetGDP.

63. The Committee were informed that veterinary schools had responded to the Veterinary Times regarding its article reporting that the schools are enrolling fewer students than previous years. The article has been mis reported and was looking at the wrong data.

Date of Next Meeting

64. The date of the next meeting is 9th May and will be held remotely.

Britta Crawford

Summary	
Meeting	Education Committee
Date	9 May 2023
Title	Advanced Practitioner panel terms of reference
Summary	<p>Applications for Advanced Practitioner status are assessed independently by two panel members. Any application that is referred or declined by any panel member is then sent onto the Chair of the panel for a final decision. Similarly, if the two panel members reach different decisions, the application may be referred to the Chair for a final decision.</p> <p>During a recent appeal we were advised to update the guidance to clarify each step of the assessment process and role of the panel members and Chair.</p>
Decisions required	To approve the updated terms of reference for the Advanced Practitioner panel and clarify the role of the members and the Chair of the panel.
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

Terms of Reference for the Advanced Practitioner panel

Remit

1. Panel members will assess applications for Advanced Practitioner status, based on the published criteria, and make recommendations for approval. Each application will be allocated for review to at least two panel members, who will be asked to recommend whether or not the application should be approved.
2. In situations where the panel members assessing an application reach different decisions regarding approval, or if they feel unable to make a recommendation for any reason, the application will be referred to the panel Chair for a decision. The Chair will take into consideration the panel members comments when making their own assessment, to make a final decision on an application. Recommendations made by the Chair will be ratified by the Education Committee.
3. The panel will also make recommendations to Education Committee on the qualifications which should be approved for eligibility for Advanced Practitioner status.

Membership

4. Members of the panel will in majority be made up of those who have been granted Advanced Practitioner status, as well as Specialists. Members with expertise across disciplines to cover all designations will be invited and there should be at least two panel members per designation (members can cover multiple designations, if necessary).
5. Members will be sent guidance on how to assess applications and provided with training and support by the Education department.
6. Membership will be for a renewable three year period.

Meeting frequency

7. Applications will be circulated electronically and recommendations returned via email. Panel members may be asked to attend training and / or occasional briefing meetings at the RCVS offices in London.

Decisions required

Education committee is invited to approve the terms of reference.

Summary	
Meeting	Education Committee
Date	9 May 2023
Title	Veterinary Graduate Development Programme (VetGDP) Subcommittee
Summary	Minutes of the meeting held on 29 March 2023
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	

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Veterinary Graduate Development Programme (VetGDP) Subcommittee**Minutes of the meeting held on 29 March 2023**

Members:	Sue Paterson	-	Chair
	Rob Williams		
	Teresa Cordovil		
	*Mary de las Casas		
	Rachel Bowron		
	Claire White		
	Tim Walker		
	Robert Wiensen		
	Hannah Hodgkiss-Geere		
	*Stephanie Rae Flicker		
	Abbie Calow		
	Linda Prescott-Clements	-	Director of Education
	Britta Crawford	-	Senior Education Officer
	Jenny Soreskog-Turp	-	Lead for Post-graduate Education
	Jo Stetzel	-	Head of Marketing and Communications

Apologies for absence

1. Apologies were received from Stephanie Rae-Flicker and Mary de Las Casas

Declarations of interest

2. There were no new declarations of interest.

Minutes

3. The minutes from the subcommittee meeting held on 22 September 2022 were agreed as a true record.

Matters Arising

4. Mrs Crawford confirmed that the Actions from the minutes had been dealt with although she had not heard back from the graduate working for DEFRA.

General Update including statistics

5. The Committee secretary, Mrs Crawford gave a general update on the work relating to the VetGDP.

Processes

6. The subcommittee clarified that those required to make a VetGDP statement were made up of UK Graduates, those joining the register who had graduated overseas less than three years ago and those re-joining the register after a break of 5 years. Those who had graduated overseas did not have to participate in the VetGDP if they had more than a year's experience in a role similar to that which they would be taking up in the UK and could make a self-declaration. Those returning to the register did not have to partake in the VetGDP if they had been working overseas in a similar role.
7. Concerns were raised about the number of graduates who had made a declaration but were not yet enrolled on to the programme, especially those who had graduated in 2021. The subcommittee felt that this was a concern for the individuals and also for the message it sent to the profession. The subcommittee felt that these people should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
8. There was a discussion about the effectiveness of emails and the need for direct telephone calls and it was agreed that a "belt and braces" approach would be the most effective. The Education team would explore the possibility of funding from the discretionary fund to enable scripted phone calls to be made with the message that the graduates must make contact with the RCVS, and emails would be sent at the same time.

SECRETARIES NOTE: Statistics relating to the number of graduates who had made a declaration but were not yet enrolled on to the programme had counted those who had completed the programme and therefore appeared to be a far greater. The true number is less than 25 and therefore further resources are not required.

9. The subcommittee heard that there had still been a few requests for exemptions from meat hygiene inspector and OVs and these people had been directed to further information and told that they were not exempt. Lord Tree's aide had been in touch and there would be a meeting arranged to discuss the fit of VetGDP to their role.

ACTION: Education Team to organise meeting with Lord Trees and his aide.

10. The subcommittee heard that there was to be further VetGDP peer reviewer training. It was suggested that the BVA subdivisions should be contacted directly if there were shortages of peer reviewers in particular areas.

ACTION: Education department to contact the BVA

11. The subcommittee heard a short communications update regarding raising awareness of the VetGDP with undergraduates and case studies to target shortages and challenges within the VetGDP

Processes

12. The subcommittee discussed the need for VetGDP Adviser comments at the point of e-portfolio submission for peer review. It was agreed that given the input of the Adviser to the portfolio throughout the programme they should not be obliged to make further comment upon submission.
13. The subcommittee were informed that feedback from peer reviewers suggests that there is a misunderstanding amongst graduates and Advisers that portfolios with fewer EPAs require less input / content and therefore can be completed more quickly. However, this is not the case; sufficient content is required regardless of the breadth of the graduate's role (which determines the number of EPA's) and furthermore, peer reviewers will question a portfolio if they feel that further EPAs should have been included. The RCVS is keen to retain the value of the VetGDP in being a truly supportive and flexible programme based on the individual roles of the graduates. There is a significant risk that being prescriptive with regard to numbers of EPAs / activities / reflections would lead to VetGDP becoming a tick-box exercise.
14. The subcommittee agreed this should be avoided at all costs but also felt that the graduates may feel a bit lost with a new system and may need further guidance. The point was made that the RCVS needs to acknowledge people's discomfort when not provided with a 'number' of EPA's or a set 'list', and try to address this through providing the employers and Advisers with case studies to relay how to identify EPAs appropriately and the benefits of the VetGDP.
15. The subcommittee agreed that it would be beneficial to create a resource for those looking at choosing EPAs giving examples of the EPAs chosen in different veterinary roles whilst remaining clear that the choice should reflect the job role of the graduate.

ACTION: Education Team to create a resource to assist graduates and advisers in choosing EPAs.

16. The subcommittee were invited to discuss how to further engage employers and practices in the VetGDP. It was agreed that there should be a lot more focus on engaging the employer in the process and the value of the VetGDP in creating and retaining a professional workforce. This would assist in not only providing support for the graduates but also support for the VetGDP Adviser (including protected time), who also benefit from "giving back". It was felt that a good starting point would be an editorial piece aimed at employers, explaining the many benefits of VetGDP. It was noted that it would be possible to get demographic data from those employers engaging and not engaging with the VetGDP from the graduate completion survey at the end of the VetGDP.

ACTION: Communications Team to work on an editorial piece aimed at explaining the benefits of the VetGDP to employers.

17. The subcommittee was asked to discuss when they felt the referral process should be triggered, i.e. when graduates / advisers / employers are not engaging with VetGDP and therefore begin the process of referral to the professional conduct department as a result of not complying with the Code of Professional Conduct. In the case of new graduates not starting VetGDP, the committee felt that as graduates often take a break after leaving university it may be wise to wait 6 months before starting the process. With regard to Advisers non-engagement with the programme and /

or not supporting graduates (identified through QA), it was felt that their employers should be targeted in the first instance as they were obliged to allow Advisers time for this. It was also suggested that those advertising graduate job roles could be targeted, for example, we could talk to BEVA about not allowing graduate jobs to be advertised.

18. **ACTION: Education Department to talk to BEVA**

VetGDP for a Veterinary Nursing Centre Co-ordinator

19. The Education Department had been contacted by a new graduate who had taken a role as a Veterinary Nursing Centre co-ordinator and was keen to understand her responsibilities regarding VetGDP. The subcommittee understood that the role was advertised for a candidate qualified as either a RVM or MRCVS. The line manager is a Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN), there is a Veterinary Surgeon on the team, but they are not closely associated with the work of this graduate.
20. The subcommittee discussed whether the RVN, who is the line manager, could be the VetGDP Adviser but it was felt that whilst RVNs have incredible skills, particularly in mentoring, the VetGDP Adviser would need to observe and feedback on every aspect of the veterinary role, in all complexities. The subcommittee wished to keep this in mind for options in the future.
21. The subcommittee agreed that if she wished to retain her MRCVS then she should participate in the VetGDP. The first action would be to approach the Veterinary Surgeon on the team to see if they would be willing to do the Adviser training and support the graduate. If this was not possible then the Education Department could assist in finding a local, locum VetGDP adviser to assist on a face-to-face basis for an hour a week.

ACTION: Education Dept to inform the graduate.

QA report

22. Ms Soreskog-Turp introduced a paper summarizing the recent results from the QA questionnaires that were sent to graduates and VetGDP Advisers. The subcommittee were pleased to hear that the QA process was now being issued through the e-portfolio system with the participants unable to continue until they have completed the short questionnaire. This should greatly increase the response rate, which will help to ensure the graduate experience.
23. There is a final questionnaire for graduates and Advisers when they complete the VetGDP which will enable us to assess the effectiveness of the VetGDP.

Any Other Business

24. Following discussion at the previous meeting and with the Education Department concerning the aspirations of the Food Standards Agency to support their graduates Dr White put forward a proposal to add an EPA which would resonate with non-clinical roles entitled: "*Undertake activities which contribute to the development or application of policy, in relation to animal health and welfare, public health and one health*". The content had been written in conjunction with colleagues in the veterinary services department of the National Farmers Union.

25. The subcommittee was supportive of the additional EPA in principle and felt that it would fill some important gaps in the current provision. They acknowledged that any new EPAs would need to be at a similarly broad level to existing EPAs so that it could be applied to a variety of policy roles.
26. The subcommittee was asked to consider and feedback on the proposal with the aim of bringing an updated version to the next meeting.

ACTION: BC to circulate the proposal and subcommittee to feedback.

Date of Next Meeting

27. 5th July 2023

Summary	
Meeting	Education Committee
Date	9 May 2023
Title	Minutes of the CertAVP Sub-Committee meeting held on 16 February 2023
Summary	Minutes of the CertAVP Sub-Committee meeting held on 16 February 2023
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	

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

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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

Minutes of the CertAVP Sub-Committee meeting held on 16 February 2023

Present: Stephanie Richardson
James Horner
Melissa Donald - Chair
Chris Proudman
*Liz Chan
Rob White
Ros Carslake
*James Wood
Claudia Hartley
Rachael Gregson

In Attendance Britta Crawford
Jenny Soreskog-Turp

*Absent

The meeting was held remotely by Microsoft Teams.

Apologies for Absence

1. Apologies were received from James Wood and Liz Chan

Declarations of interest

2. There were no new declarations of interest.

Minutes

3. The minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2022 were held as a true record.

Matters arising

4. The subcommittee heard that the Registrar had been consulted regarding the question of plagiarism and had said that in cases of "cheating" the universities should follow their own procedures. The RCVS would need to be involved if a candidate was attempting to falsely obtain a qualification.
5. Each of the providers had been contacted regarding the module review and all said they would be happy to have a group discuss to gain consistency in the modules, although none had volunteered particular participants. It was agreed that the group would discuss the number of learning modules and the language used to describe them; and also agree how the structure and module content sections should be managed. The subcommittee agreed that there should be consistency across the modules.

Update

6. The subcommittee members were informed of the synoptic exams in 5 subject areas planned for this year at the RCVS and asked to volunteer to observe when the dates were finalised.
7. The subcommittee discussed the recent enquiries for Pig Medicine modules and reported no intentions of providing CertAVP modules in this field in the near future. The current structure of the CertAVP meant that modules could only be run if there was sufficient interest to justify the time and cost involved. Those interested in modules were encouraged to contact the Pig Veterinary Society and ask them to approach a provider if they felt that there was sufficient demand for modules and if they were willing to lend their expertise.

Liverpool assessment changes across modules

8. Mrs Carslake set out the planned changes to the CertAVP modules assessed at Liverpool which aim to bring the assessment levels into line with their University's QA and approval purposes as, under this scheme, all of the CertAVP modules were thought to be over-assessed. The modules have currently been approved on Liverpool's Veterinary Professional Studies Postgraduate Taught Programme on the understanding that they are dual accredited by Liverpool and the RCVS which justifies the additional assessment. The subcommittee were provided with a table of the planned changes.
9. Liverpool reported that they were confident that the learning outcomes could remain the same with the assessment changes proposed and that there were still a good number of case reports included.
10. The subcommittee felt that the changes seemed sensible in the context of national expectation but questioned where the original assessment recommendations came from. It was understood that the assessment recommendations were originally written by the old-style certificate subject boards at the on-set of the modular certificate scheme but had been adapted over time. It was felt that there was a need to review the assessment requirements and standardise them with other certificate providers. It was agreed that this was important in terms of accessibility for those vets in remote practices who may find it harder to find cases. The subcommittee agreed that the changes were suitable and would not dilute the qualification.

Synoptic Assessment Nottingham

11. Dr Richardson presented a paper for discussion regarding introducing a new designation in small animal clinical practice. They proposed that the exam would be made up of a portfolio and a viva so that examiners could have a "deeper dive" into elements of the portfolio. Nottingham felt that this would be suitable for a large variety of modular combinations.
12. The subcommittee had broad support for this, acknowledging that the need to support general practitioners was being increasingly recognised. However, the subcommittee did raise concerns over the size of the assessment, remarking that it was "a big step away" from the current one-hour assessment and also questioned the robustness of the viva methodology. The RCVS is

currently looking at the synoptic exam and introducing a QA framework for the exam with the aim of improving consistency across providers / sites. The subcommittee agreed that there was support for the proposal but there would need to be discussions with the RCVS over the synoptic review.

13. Nottingham also asked if the master's qualification associated with their CertAVP modules could be considered for Advanced Practitioner status. It was agreed that this did not come under the remit of this subcommittee but could be re-directed to the Advanced Practitioner Panel and ultimately the Education Committee.

Action: Nottingham qualification to be considered by the AP Chair

Providers' Meeting

14. The subcommittee agreed that it would be beneficial to call together a providers' meeting in the Autumn. They felt that the focus should be on assessment levels and the synoptic review. It was felt that Artificial Intelligence would form an interesting part of the assessment discussion.

Third Sit request

15. The sub-committee agreed to the request for a third sit feeling that the candidate had put in measures to increase the chances of success.
16. The subcommittee heard that the candidate who had their request for a fourth sit declined at a previous meeting had been in touch with the education department repeatedly. The subcommittee remained steadfast and repeated that the refusal to allow him a fourth sit was their final decision.

Equivalence Application

17. The subcommittee noted that the learning objectives had been mapped clearly, showing a good correlation. The subcommittee was happy to approve the application for equivalence.

ECC Module update request

18. The two providers of the ECC modules, Liverpool and the RVC has reviewed the modules and made small changes. The subcommittee were happy to agree the changes, and these would be published following the meeting to standardise the module format.

Statistics

19. The statistics were noted.

Any other business

20. Mrs Crawford informed the subcommittee that this would be her last meeting as secretary. The subcommittee thanked her for all her work and dedication to committee and CertAVP in general.

Date of the next meeting

21. Dates for the next two meetings of the year will be sent to the committee by the new secretary,

Action: Agree meeting dates for 2023

Britta Crawford

March 2023

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Summary	
Meeting	Education Committee
Date	9 May 2023
Title	Recommendation for changes to reapplication criteria and process for European Specialist applications
Summary	<p>The Specialist Subcommittee held an additional meeting in March 2023 to discuss potential amendments to the criteria for reapplications for RCVS Specialist accreditation (for non-European Diploma holders), as well as potential future processes for new and reapplications for RCVS Specialist status from European Diploma holders.</p> <p>Proposals for changes are outlined in the paper.</p>
Decisions required	<p>a) To approve the recommendation to change the reapplication criteria (for full RCVS Accreditation)</p> <p>b) To approve the recommendation to change how European Specialist new and reapplications are processed to an office-based process.</p>
Attachments	None
Author	<p>Duncan Ash</p> <p>Senior Education Officer</p> <p>d.ash@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0703</p>

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

¹Classifications explained

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²Classification rationales

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Specialist Subcommittee - Recommendation for changes to reapplication criteria and process for European Specialist applications

Background

1. Following the meeting of the Specialist Subcommittee in January 2023, Education Committee agreed to the recommendations to make the following changes to the criteria for new and reapplications for Specialist status:
 - a. Remove maximum limits to individual contributions in sections B and C of the full RCVS accreditation system (the non-European Diploma holder route);
 - b. Remove the requirement for references for new and reapplication for both routes.
2. It was also agreed that an additional meeting of the subcommittee would be held to discuss further the potential changes to the criteria, and the meeting was held on 27 March 2023. A summary of discussion and further recommendations is presented in this paper.

Reapplication criteria

3. The first item of discussion was around potentially changing the reapplication criteria for those applying for full RCVS accreditation, i.e. those who do not hold European Diplomas. Currently, new and reapplications must submit at least 250 hours of CPD over the previous 5 years, as well as meet a set points requirement across three different criteria:
 - a. Qualification and experience (to hold an eligible qualification and self-certify that they are up to date and fit to practise in their area of speciality) – 1 point minimum;
 - b. Publications & Professional contributions to the speciality – 15 points minimum;
 - c. Current membership of relevant Colleges/Societies/Bodies (including examining, supervising residents etc) – 6 points minimum.
4. In recent years, some existing Specialists have not able to meet the criteria when reapplying. This led to the recent recommendation around removing maximum limits for individual contributions that was approved in by Education Committee in February 2023. However, it was agreed that more could be done to be able to retain existing RCVS Specialists, as well as make the reapplication process less onerous.
5. It was agreed that the threshold to obtaining Specialist status was at the correct level to prove that applicants were in fact working at a specialist level, as well as obtaining the relevant qualification. However, it was argued that the criteria could be changed so that the status was more readily maintained, noting that it can be become difficult for some to be able to maintain a consistent amount of contributions, publications etc, due to outside factors, whilst they are still actively working at what would be seen to be a specialist level.
6. It was therefore put forward that instead of needing to the points requirement in both sections B and C, reapplicants should be able to demonstrate that they are able to score at least 10 points across both sections, with the proposal for reapplication criteria being:

- a. Reapplicants to self-certify that they are up to date and fit to practise in their area of speciality (as normal);
 - b. Submit at least 250 hours of CPD over the previous 5 years (as normal);
 - c. Score at least 10 points across both Sections B and C - Publications & Professional contributions to the speciality, and Current membership of relevant Colleges/Societies/Bodies
7. The points per contribution/membership would remain the same, and 10 points was suggested based on 2 points per year of accreditation. The current requirement of 16 points works out to be roughly 3.3 points per year.
 8. It should also be noted that there are different systems in place within EBVS to initially achieve, and then maintain, European Specialist status, so a change for the RCVS system would be in line with this approach.

Process for new and reapplications from European Specialists

9. Following Education Committee's approval to remove the requirement of references to be submitted, there only remains one criterion that European Diploma holders need to meet to obtain RCVS Specialist status, which is to submit proof of accreditation as a European Specialist by EBVS.
10. Previously, all applications were checked in-office to ensure that the correct proof of accreditation had been submitted before applications and references were submitted to the subcommittee for assessment. Therefore, the only real assessment being made by the subcommittee was on the quality of the references, as the proof of accreditation was already verified.
11. Therefore, the subcommittee also proposes that new and reapplications for European Specialists can be processed in-office, with those submitting correct proof of accreditation with EBVS being listed without the need for assessment from the subcommittee.
12. This would speed up the process for all involved, most notably for the applicants. Currently, new applications are considered and listed quarterly, so assessments can be more easily managed with a rough average of 30 applications being considered each time. But, without subcommittee approval being required, applicants submitting the correct documentation as proof of EBVS accreditation could essentially be listed at the point of application. This change would also ease the reapplication process, with approximately 70% of RCVS Specialists now being listed having gone down the EBVS application route.

Decisions required

13. The Specialist Subcommittee recommends the following to Education Committee:
 - a. To approve the recommendation to change reapplication criteria (for full RCVS Accreditation);

- b. To approve recommendation to change processing of European Specialist new and reapplications to office-based process.