

14 July 2020

Email : president@rcvs.org.uk
Website : www.rcvs.org.uk

Dear Veterinary Student

Re: Temporary changes to EMS regulations, to support veterinary students during the Covid-19 pandemic

First, I would like to introduce myself as your new RCVS President – I took over from Dr Niall Connell at RCVS Day on 10 July and I am delighted that my first official letter as President is to students – no more important audience.

Further to the letter from Niall on 12 June, I am now happy to be able to update current third-year students on the temporary changes to EMS requirements. The RCVS Covid-19 Taskforce has now approved a proposal to reduce the minimum amount of clinical EMS placements required by eight weeks during the pandemic, i.e. from 26 weeks to **18 weeks**.

We recognise that there have been lost opportunities for EMS placements over the Easter break and over the summer. We have consulted with all of the schools regarding realistic expectations of how much EMS could be completed before graduation, and have surveyed practices to gain an idea of what availability of EMS placements might be in the months ahead as, hopefully, restrictions around the pandemic continue to ease.

The total number of weeks of EMS required for the graduating class of 2022, including the 12 weeks pre-clinical EMS, will therefore be 30 weeks. To make up for the potential eight-week shortfall of “hands-on” EMS, online EMS will be permitted to supplement this. The types of online resources should be considered and agreed with your tutors, against your individual learning objectives. However, if “hands-on” EMS placements become increasingly available in the near future, I would urge you to complete as much of the 26 weeks in this format as possible, as graduates have frequently told us how valuable this experience is.

We will continue to review the situation in the event of any restrictions being re-introduced, or other actions that may cause further disruption to the availability of placements. We will post any further updates on the RCVS website www.rcvs.org.uk and communicate with you again.

These are unprecedented times, and the uncertainty experienced because of the continually evolving restrictions due to the pandemic have created challenges for everyone. I would like to thank you for your patience during this time and I hope that this latest change provides some reassurance for you.

I wish you well and hope you are keeping safe,



Dr Mandisa Greene
President, RCVS