Nottingham Trent University Accreditation Visit

12-14 April 2023

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

Contents

List of Panel Members

Emma Anscombe-Skirrow RVN – Chair

Molly Down – Student Representative

Jessica Gilby RVN – Employer Representative

Abigayle Gomez RVN – RCVS Senior Qualifications Officer (Observer)

Victoria Hedges RVN – RCVS Examinations Manager

Hilary Orpet RVN – Educator Representative

Key Staff met

Dawn Scott - Executive Dean ARES

Julia Davies – Deputy Dean

Gareth Starbuck – Head of Department

Nicola Johnson RVN - Principal Lecturer

Mandy Tamba RVN – Course leader and Senior Lecturer

Nathan Price RVN – Lecturer

Heather Imrie MRCVS – Senior Lecturer

Sophie Butler RVN – Lecturer

Katie Gazey RVN – Senior Lecturer

Alanna Willis RVN – Veterinary Nursing Centre Coordinator

Suzanne Ian RVN – Veterinary Nursing Centre Assistant Coordinator

Alex Bordin – Senior Lecturer

Summary of the Panel's findings

- Nottingham Trent University (NTU) was visited between12-14 April 2023. The following programmes were under accreditation review:

  (FdSc) Veterinary Nursing Science

- The RCVS Panel received a warm welcome from the staff and are grateful to all those who were responsible for preparing the visit, arranging the schedule, and providing supplementary information when requested. The enthusiasm, commitment, and pride of staff in what they do made it an interesting and enjoyable visit.

- The university intends to consult with students completing their first year of the programme about moving onto the second year of the new programme. The panel fully support this proposal.

The team found the following:

- NTU is to be **commended** for the commitment and dedication of the staff in the overall development of the course and although there is still some work to be done, the panel were impressed with the overall approach to the development of the programme. Staff are to be commended on their enthusiasm and active engagement and contributions to the accreditation process and in challenging existing procedures.

- Areas for further review included further review of the modules in line with credit level descriptors for higher education and consider utilising alternative assessment methodologies based on these changes. NTU policies need to be updated and student facing document must be reviewed to ensure that there is consistent and correct terminology used.

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

Programme details

Requirement	Details
Name of organisation awarding the licence to practise qualification - please specify the educational regulatory body which has approved the AEI for delivery of UK qualifications, e.g. OfQual, QAA, OfS	Nottingham Trent University (Approved by OfS)
Main address and contact details for the above organisation	School of Animal, Rural and Environmental Sciences Nottingham Trent University Brackenhurst Southwell Nottinghamshire NG25 0QF
Name of Principal or Chief Executive Officer	Dr Gareth Starbuck (Head of Department)
Name of Programme Lead	Nicci Johnson RVN (Principal Lecturer) Mandy Tamba RVN (Course Leader)
Proposed programme title(s):	Foundation Degree (FdSc) Veterinary Nursing Science
Address and contact details of proposed site/s for delivery of licence to practise qualification	School of Animal, Rural and Environmental Sciences Nottingham Trent University Brackenhurst Southwell Nottinghamshire NG25 0QF
Pattern of delivery	Full time
Intakes and student numbers	Approximately 60 students per year – one intake per year

Standard 1 – Learning culture

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

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

	Standard met		
	Accredited Education Institutions, together with Centres and Training Practices, must:		
	Requirements	**Met**	**Not Met**
1.1	Demonstrate that the safety of people and animals is a primary consideration in all learning environments. *Evidence reviewed:* *Health and safety policy* *TP/aTP monitoring paperwork* *New staff induction* *Standard Operating Procedures* *Risk assessments* *Computer use regulations* *Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Guidance for Staff* *Student inductions* *Standard Operating Procedures of onsite animals* *Fire Safety Policy* *RPA reports* *Compliance with IRR 2017* Various risk assessments and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for equipment are evident for staff to access. The NTU Health and Safety Policy at university level was last updated in 2015. Health and Safety is also managed at a local level in each department. Staff training in safety procedures is undertaken every three years and followed up with reminders via Thrive (NTU staff training website); managers keep records, and this is also covered in appraisals. Evidence of thorough induction processes for staff was provided, although the senior management needs to ensure all staff are aware of fire procedures in the animal unit. A review of all Health and Safety documentation is required to ensure it is up to date and reviewed regularly.	✓	
1.2	Prioritise the wellbeing of people. *Evidence reviewed:*	✓	

		CADQ Learning and Teaching Professional Development Policy New staff induction Staff Appraisal Process Nominated staff member for wellbeing Support at NTU NTU Student Health and Mental Wellbeing Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing ARES Mental health First Aiders Disability & Inclusion Services Staff felt they were supported and receive adequate time to be able to complete their various roles. Resources are in place at the university to support wellbeing of staff. Students are signposted to various support resources and services. The panel met with students who confirmed they felt supported and knew who they could contact.		5
1.3		Ensure that facilities and physical resources, including those used for clinical learning, comply with all relevant legislation including UK animal care and welfare standards. *Evidence reviewed:* *Training practice (TP)/Auxiliary Training Practices (aTP) lists with risk assessments* *VMD Registration* *Policy for storage and disposal of POM-VS* *Standard Operating Procedures* *Standard Operating Procedures of onsite animals* *TP/aTP monitoring paperwork* *List of locations where qualifications are delivered* *Schedule of quality monitoring activity* *Inventory of clinical equipment and consumables* The Head of the Animal Unit confirmed that they have measures in place to monitor the use of animals during teaching. Whilst they are aware of the need to prevent the overuse of animals, there were no written records available for the panel to view. Training practices (TPs) are visited annually to monitor facilities and equipment used during placements.	✓	
1.4		Ensure clients have the opportunity to give, and if required withdraw, their informed consent to students being involved in the care of their animals. *Evidence reviewed:* *Option to withdraw poster*		✓

	TP SVN Withdrawal Option *Consent forms* *TP/aTP approval forms* The RCVS Qualification Assessors visited four TPs prior to the event. They reported that none of the practices displayed posters relating to consent and only one practice had reference to this in a consent form. The TP monitoring form provided indicated that the practice did not inform clients about the option to withdraw consent but there was no action or follow up provided. In addition, NTU indicated that they did not require non-affiliated practices to meet this requirement. This policy must be reviewed to ensure that NTU is compliant with this requirement.		
1.5	Promote client, public and animal safety and welfare and maintaining confidentiality. *Evidence reviewed:* *Job descriptions* *Staff Appraisal Process* *Peer observation Policy* *Lesson observations policy* *Data Protection Policy* *Student observations* *TP/aTP approval forms* *TP/aTP risk assessments* *Student Hub Cyber Security (screen shot)* *Computer use regulations* Job descriptions provided demonstrated the distinct roles of the team. There is a technical team (placement and animal unit) and an academic team (teaching staff). A member of the team who has responsibility for setting up practical sessions has been given the title of Veterinary Nursing Technician. The panel felt this may be confusing to staff and students as the individual is not a Registered Veterinary Nurse, but an animal technician. A number of NTU policies are out of date including the Health and Safety Policy, Fire Safety Policy and the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy. Data management is covered in the curriculum within the *Practice Administration and Communication Skills Module.*		✓
1.6	Ensure students and educators understand how to raise concerns or complaints and are encouraged and supported to do so in line with local and national policies without fear of adverse consequences. *Evidence reviewed:*	✓	

	Minutes of student representative meetings *Course Handbook* *Grievance Policy* *Students Complaints Procedure* *Student Code of Behaviour* *Whistle Blowing (Public Interest Disclosure) Policy* *Computer use regulations* *Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Guidance for Staff* *NTU Student Health and Mental Wellbeing* *Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing* The grievance policy has recently been introduced for staff. Student complaints are initially dealt with at a local level and then referred to the student complaints procedure. Students are informed of the NTU Student Code of Behaviour at induction with the expectation to abide by this.			7
1.7	Ensure any concerns or complaints are investigated and dealt with effectively, ensuring the wellbeing of people and animals is prioritised. *Evidence reviewed:* *Grievance Policy* *Students Complaints Procedure* *Student Code of Behaviour* *Fitness to Practise Policy* *Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Guidance for Staff* *NTU Student Health and Mental Wellbeing* *Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing* The team indicated that students rarely raise a complaint about NTU or their placements. Students interviewed were aware that there was a process for complaining and indicated that they would normally speak to the VN Centre Co-ordinator or their course tutor if they had a concern. The programme team confirmed the process that they would follow in the event of a complaint being made. The panel were satisfied that the processes in place were sound.	✓		
1.8	Ensure mistakes and incidents are fully investigated and learning reflections and actions are recorded and disseminated. *Evidence reviewed:* *Students Complaints Procedure* *Student Code of Behaviour* *Risk assessment Safe System of Work* *Accident report* *Fitness to Practise Example and Outcome*	✓		

	An example of how concerns with student behaviour are dealt with was provided; the panel were satisfied that mistakes and incidents are investigated fully, and records are kept.			
1.9	Ensure students are supported and supervised in being open and honest in accordance with the RCVS Codes of Professional Conduct. *Evidence reviewed:* *Fitness to practise procedure* *Pre - arrival activity* *PACS Module specification* *PACS Scheme of Work* *Teaching observation* *Day One Skills Recording Tool* *NPL logging* *Reflective diaries* *Tutorial records* *Learner reviews* *Course Handbook* *Placement handbook* Students are required to complete an activity in relation to the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct (CoPC) for Veterinary Nurses prior to commencing the course. The panel commended NTU for introducing this subject at an early stage. It was felt that it would be beneficial for this activity to be revisited at a later stage in the course to allow the students to reflect on their knowledge of the CoPC as they progressed through the course. Fitness to Practise and placement induction sessions are also held to remind the students of their professional responsibilities.	✓	
1.10	Ensure the learning culture is fair, impartial, transparent, fosters good relations between individuals and diverse groups, and is compliant with equalities and human rights legislation. *Evidence reviewed:* *Teaching observations policy* *Staff training records (THRIVE)* *CPD records* *Self-Assessment Reports* *MySay Reports* *External examiner reports* *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy* *Requirements when considering requests for a variation to Study Rate Policy* *Conflict of interest forms for OSCEs* *Grievance Policy*		✓

	Students Complaints Procedure During the team presentation, graphs demonstrating the student demographics was displayed. NTU acknowledged that diversity is low on the course when compared with other programmes delivered by NTU. No information was provided in relation to what activities were being undertaken to improve this. In addition, the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy was out of date and needs to be reviewed.			9
1.11	Advance equality of opportunity through effective use of information and data. *Evidence reviewed:* *Self-Assessment Reports* *External examiner reports* *MySay Reports* *Stakeholder feedback* *Minutes of staff and/or student meetings* *National student survey data* *NTU: Access and Participation Plan 2020-2025* *Success for All Plan* A range of information and data is collected in relation to students and the programme delivery. Where feedback is received from stakeholders this has been considered during the review of the proposed programme.	✓		
1.12	Work to promote inter-professional education and inter-professional practice and support opportunities for research collaboration. *Evidence reviewed:* *Course Specification 2023-24 DRAFT* *Module Specifications* *Vets in the Community Involvement* *Research Committee meetings* *Expert witness documentation* *Group project work* NTU confirmed that it used to have strong links with the School of Veterinary Medicine and Science at the University of Nottingham, but this had been affected by the Covid 19 pandemic. More recently NTU has been working with the University of Nottingham on its Vets in the Community project. In addition, members of the team are exploring other opportunities to collaborate with other NTU programmes, such as nursing and physiotherapy.	✓		
1.13	Promote evidenced-based improvement in education and veterinary nursing practice. *Evidence reviewed:*	✓		

Research committee meetings		
Course Specification 2023-24 DRAFT		
Module Specifications		
Learning and Teaching Professional Development		
Journal clubs		
Evidence based education and veterinary nursing		
Clinical governance		
The team are actively engaged in personal development. One member of the delivery team is currently involved in research in collaboration with other healthcare professionals, and recently published a paper in the Veterinary Nurse Journal (VNJ) in relation to injection dead-space discard volumes.		

Conclusion:

The programme demonstrates a good learning culture that ensures the safety of staff and students. The animals are well looked after in the animal unit, however, there should be clear records of use to ensure their welfare during practical sessions. There is good support available for the students throughout their course. It is encouraging that the team are keen to engage with the University of Nottingham and other NTU departments to provide further interprofessional teaching and research opportunities for students.

This Standard is met overall.

Suggestions:
a. Provide online training to all staff with specific training on fire safety in the VN and animal units.
b. Records are kept, and made accessible, to the animal unit staff regarding the use of the animals for practical sessions.
c. Formalise and continue to develop the collaboration opportunities with Vets in the Community and Nottingham Vet School.
d. Explore additional collaboration opportunities within the wider NTU provision.
e. Revisit the CoPC pre-induction activity to ensure the students receive feedback on their work and continue to allow them to reflect on their increasing knowledge of the CoPC throughout the course.

Actions:
a. Provide an updated Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion policy.
b. Provide updated Health and Safety and Fire policies.
c. Redistribute Option to Withdraw Posters to all TPs and request that they are displayed in each practice. Follow up with TP if they are found to be not displayed at TP audit.

Commendation:
a. The involvement with Vets in the Community is an excellent opportunity for students.
b. The pre-induction activity on the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct introducing students to their professional requirements is an innovative idea.

Standard 2 – Governance and quality

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

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

	Standard met		
	Accredited Education Institutions, together with Centres and Training Practices, must:		
	Requirements	Met	Not Met
2.1	Comply with all relevant legal, regulatory, professional and educational requirements. *Evidence reviewed:* *QAA Higher Education Review of Nottingham Trent University* *RCVS quality monitoring report and action plans* *External examiners report and action plan* In line with university policy, the proposed programme was presented to the School Academic Standards and Quality Committee (SASQC) in 2022. The course change form does not contain the outcome. The programme team confirmed that following the outcome of the RCVS Accreditation event any changes to the programme will be presented to SASQC. The signed report from SASQC must be provided to the RCVS.		✓
2.2	Provide all information and evidence required by regulators in a timely manner i.e. within published timescales. *Evidence reviewed:* *Completed action plans from regulatory, professional and legal bodies* NTU has demonstrated that it provides information in relation to the accreditation event and RCVS Quality monitoring in a timely manner. During the event it became apparent that when students leave the programme without completion, the RCVS is not informed. The Principal Lecturer admitted that this was an oversite and immediately sent the RCVS a list of students who had withdrawn from the programme. A process for updating the RCVS in relation to enrolments needs to be implemented.		✓

2.3	Ensure programmes are designed to meet RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses, QAA Veterinary Nursing Benchmarks and outcomes relevant to the programme. *Evidence reviewed:* *Curriculum mapping document to meet RCVS Day One Competences/RCVS Day One Skills and curriculum mapping to QAA Veterinary Nursing Benchmarks.* The mapping documents provided demonstrate that the DOC/DOS have been mapped to the modules. The modules have also been mapped to the course outcomes.	✓	
2.4	Comply with the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Nurses. *Evidence reviewed:* *Module Specifications* *Course Handbook* *Course Specification* *ANIM10202 PACS Scheme of Work 2023 24* *Student and Clinical Supervisor handbooks* The CoPC for Veterinary Nurses is incorporated into the *Practice Administration and Communication Skills module*. The panel advised that the CoPC should be integrated throughout the programme and could therefore be included in the indicative content for a number of modules.	✓	
2.5	Comply with the RCVS Veterinary Nursing Registration Rules. *Evidence reviewed:* *Adequate placement provision/employment* *Course specification* *Course Handbook* The programme is designed to ensure that graduates meet the Veterinary Nursing Registration rules, but the actual rules are not referenced in any student facing documents. The requirement to complete 2990 hours of training is not included in any of the university documentation. This requirement has been further discussed in Standard 3.	✓	
2.6	Adopt a partnership approach, with shared responsibility, evidenced by a Memorandum of Understanding between the Accredited Education Institution and the delivery site and between the delivery site and the Training Practice. This must be regularly reviewed and clearly stipulate the roles, responsibilities, and regulatory requirements. *Evidence reviewed:* *Memoranda of Understanding* *Quality Assurance Procedures*	✓	

	Risk assessments *Tutorial reports* *FdSc Veterinary Nursing Placement Information* *Clinical Supervisor handbook* *Delivery Site approval documents* *TP/aTP Secondment agreement* Examples of Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with TPs and TP monitoring forms were provided. TPs are risk rated and there is evidence of training and support for the Clinical Supervisors (CSs).		
2.7	Ensure that recruitment, selection and retention of students is open, fair and transparent and includes measures to understand and address underrepresentation. *Evidence reviewed:* *Selection criteria for admission* *Quality Handbook Section 13 Admissions* *Requirements for Recognition for Prior learning and credit transfer* *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy* *Interview records* *Self-Assessment Reports* *NTU: Access and Participation Plan 2020-2025* *Success for All Plan* The recruitment process has various stages where applications are filtered. NTU considers the work experience and qualifications of applicants. An online assessment covers knowledge of veterinary equipment as well as assessing the applicants numeracy and literacy skills. Applicants are also required to provide a written piece of work answering a question provided previously. A points system is used during the interview, with additional points awarded if the applicant has secured a work placement or provides more than one reference. The panel felt that this disadvantages applicants with one excellent reference. In addition, it is the university's responsibility to find work placements for students so this should not be part of the selection process. The *NTU Access and Participation plan* and student demographics for the FdSc Veterinary Nursing Science were detailed in the team presentation. NTU need to consider how it is addressing widening participation in line with the university plans.		✓
2.8	Have entry criteria for the programme that includes evidence that the student has capability in numeracy, literacy and science, written and spoken English and mathematics to meet the programme outcomes. *Evidence reviewed:* *Course specification*	✓	

	Undergraduate Prospectus 2022 *Website* *Non A-level entry requirements* The entry criteria indicate GSCEs in English language and Mathematics at grade C/4 and above are required. There is also an online assessment that needs to be completed. In some documentation the entry requirements suggest that a 'maximum of 3 A levels is required'. This has been further discussed in Standard 3.		
2.9	Provide students with the information and support to enable them to demonstrate fitness to practise including the disclosure of any criminal convictions that may affect registration with the RCVS as qualified veterinary nurses. *Evidence reviewed:* *Fitness to practice policy* *Open Day Presentations* *Induction timetable and RCVS Guidance notes for newly enrolled student veterinary nurses.* *ANIM10202 PACS Scheme of Work 2023 24* *Selection criteria for admission* *Course Specification* *Course handbook* *RCVS registration guidance within documentation* Students are informed of the professional requirements including disclosure of criminal convictions. The course has its own Fitness to Practise policy, but student facing documentation signposts students to the RCVS *Fitness to Practise: A Guide for UK Providers of Veterinary Nursing Education and Student Veterinary Nurses.* This needs to be amended, with the NTU policy being signposted to students. This is actioned in Standard 3.	✓	
2.10	Demonstrate a robust process for recognition of prior learning (RPL). *Evidence reviewed:* *Requirements for Recognition for Prior learning and credit transfer* *RPL/APL guidance on website* The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process for students transferring onto the course was discussed and the team confirmed that while the RPL policy would be followed, each application would be on a case-by-case basis to ensure the student had met the required learning outcomes. There is also support for students wanting to transfer to other courses.	✓	

2.11	Provide students with the information and support they require in all learning environments to enable them to understand and comply with the relevant governance processes and policies. *Evidence reviewed:* *ARES UG Student Handbook* *Course Specification* *Student Placement handbook* *Fitness to practise policy* *RCVS enrolment procedure and Induction information including RCVS enrolment* *RCVS Registration guidance* *Clinical supervisor handbook* Students are provided with several different handbooks outlining information about the course. The panel suggest that the handbooks are amalgamated to reduce the need to update several documents. It was suggested that one document with course specific information could be made available on the NOW virtual learning site with links to the more generic University polices.	✓	
2.12	Have robust, effective, fair, impartial and lawful fitness to practise procedures to swiftly address concerns, and where appropriate notify the RCVS, as Regulator, about the conduct of students that might compromise public and animal safety and protection. *Evidence reviewed:* *Fitness to practise policy* *Support to Study Policy* *Academic Appeals Process* *Student Code of Behaviour* There is an NTU fitness to practice policy and evidence of meetings to address a specific concern. The panel was satisfied that any concerns would be addressed and documented in line with NTU procedures.	✓	
2.13	Confirm that students meet the required programme outcomes in full and are eligible for academic and professional award. *Evidence reviewed:* *BSc and FdSc Final Year VN Exam Board 9 June 2022* *BSc and FdSc Progression Board Minutes 24 June 2022.* *Course Specification* *Course Handbook* Award progression and conferment of the FdSc is recorded in the *Final Year VN Exam Board and Progression Board minutes.*	✓	

	Students that do not meet the requirements may be awarded a Certificate in Higher Education if they have achieved 120 credits at level 4. Students that do not complete the placement year but have achieved the 240 credits from years one and two may be award the Foundation in Science in Animal Health Studies as the 'fall back' award.			
2.14	Regularly review all learning environments and provide assurance that they are safe, effective and fit for purpose. *Evidence reviewed:* *Interim Course Report* *Student feedback* *TP/aTP quality monitoring paperwork* *Risk assessments* *Safe Working Practices of the Veterinary Nursing Centre* *Health and Safety Policy Management System* *Centre Sampling Policy* *Memorandum of Understanding* *External Examiner reports* *Standard operating procedures* *Computer use regulations* *Student Hub Cyber Security (screen shot)* The campus tour showed the Animal Unit, Veterinary Nursing Centre, library, and teaching rooms. The Lyth building teaching rooms include the flexibility to deliver group-style learning opportunities. The rooms are booked centrally and there are risk assessments for the animal unit and Veterinary Nursing Centre. It is clear that the learning environments are reviewed to ensure that they are safe and fit for use but as discussed in Standard 1 many of the policies are out of date and must be reviewed. This is actioned in Standard 1.	✓	
2.15	Appoint appropriately qualified and experienced people for programme development and delivery. *Evidence reviewed:* *Staff lists* *Staff training records (Thrive)* *RCVS CPD Records* *Job descriptions* *Academic Workload Framework* *Academic Staff Workloads* *External Examiner/Adviser recruitment policy* Job descriptions and CPD records were provided for the teaching and quality assurance team. A new External Examiner (EE) has been recruited and will take up their post in September 2023. The CV and CPD records	✓	

	for the new EE were not provided, but the programme team is aware that RCVS requires this information once the appointment has been confirmed.			
2.16	Where an Accredited Education Institution is not yet fully accredited, or at the discretion of Veterinary Nurse Education Committee, facilitate the attendance of the RCVS at the trial/mock OSCE/practical assessment at least one year in advance of the final summative assessment taking place for the relevant cohort of students. *Evidence reviewed:* *None* The FdSc Veterinary Nursing Science delivered by NTU has full accreditation and therefore this requirement is not applicable.	N/A		
2.17	Where an Accredited Education Institution plans to make any changes to its provision, including assessment, the RCVS must approve all changes prior to implementation. *Evidence reviewed:* *Correspondence with RCVS regarding proposed changes* *SASQC evidence* Programme changes, including those of low and very low impacts, are approved via the SASQC. There is a check within this process that Professional and Statutory Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs), such as the RCVS, have been consulted about the programme changes before they are approved by the University.	✓		
2.18	Provide evidence that adequate market demand and finances are in place and are sufficient to sustain and develop the programme and have been approved by the Higher Education Institution or Awarding Organisation. *Evidence reviewed:* *Financial statements 2021-22* *Self-Assessment Reports* *Financial Summary 2018-19* *Undergraduate fee breakdown 2018-19* *FdSc VN Financial Statement 2021-22* *FdSc Vet Nursing market demand 2022-23* *NSS survey* During the team presentation the panel were informed that applications were high with around 400 applicants per year. Employability is also high for graduates of the programme.	✓		
Conclusion:				

There is a good level of support and defined processes of governance from the university. In general, there is compliance with the regulatory and legal requirements. It is important to ensure consistency in all student documents from the point of recruitment and throughout their progression on the course. Further work on targeting widening participation and increasing the diversity of learners will be an important development for the course to align with the university plans and help increase the diversity of the profession.

The panel commended the team on the support provided to the Clinical Supervisor including assessment of the Clinical Supervisors developmental needs.

This Standard is met overall.

Suggestions:
a. Provide evidence to demonstrate implementation of the widening participation policy and ensure equality and diversity within the veterinary nursing provision.
b. Further demonstrate how the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Nurses is embedded throughout all modules.
c. Ensure the NTU Fitness to Practice Policy is referred to in documentation.
d. Consider amalgamating some of the handbook information and ensure the students have links provided on the NOW virtual learning site.
e. Include the 2990 hours in training requirement in the course specification and ensure that the wording for the 1800 hours in practical training is clear.

Actions:
a. Ensure that the RCVS VN registration rules are included in the programme specification and course handbook.
b. Submit SAQCS report once it has been approved by NTU.
c. Provide a written process for informing the RCVS about students who leave the programme before completion.
d. Revise and resubmit the interview process to evidence that the points system is applied fairly.

Commendation:
a. The support provided to the clinical supervisors, including the assessment of their developmental needs, is very good

Standard 3 – Student empowerment

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

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

	Standard met		
	Accredited Education Institutions, together with Centres and Training Practices, must ensure that all students:		
	Requirements	**Met**	**Not Met**
3.1	Are well prepared for learning in theory and practice having received relevant inductions. *Evidence reviewed:* *Induction (Welcome Week) documentation folder* *Induction materials for DOS recording platform* Academic and practical inductions are attended by students. The contents of the induction are revisited throughout the course including placement refreshers before each placement block; this process was introduced last year. The panel noted a spelling error in the animal unit induction PowerPoint (slide 10) which was suggested to be corrected. Currently states students 'Should use mobile phones during practical's'.	✓	
3.2	Have access to the resources they need to achieve the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses, QAA HE Benchmarks, and programme outcomes required for their professional role. *Evidence reviewed:* *Practical, equipment, consumables and animal collection resource list* *Library resources* *ILT Resources* *ARES UG Student Handbook* *Timetable* *Clinical placement audits* *TP/aTP risk assessments* Laptop loans are available on a short and long term. Short 24-hour loans are made via the library, whilst longer loans are arranged using a	✓	

				✓
	technology hardship fund. Information regarding this scheme could be included within handbooks to inform students of this. The library was well stocked with up-to-date books and journals. In keeping with other AEIs NTU are moving toward electronic access to texts and journals. The latest version of "BSAVA textbook of veterinary nursing" (6th edition) is available as an e-book only and the 5th edition is available as a print version. The panel suggest that where printed versions of books have been superseded by an e-book, a note is put on the older printed version to inform students that an up-to-date version is available online.			
3.3	Are provided with timely and accurate information about curriculum, teaching, supervision, assessment, practice placements and other information relevant to the programme. *Evidence reviewed:* *Course Specification* *Course Handbook* *Timetables via Student Hub* *Schemes of work (examples 2023-23) folder* *Module NOW learning room information* *Placement correspondence* Students are provided with a range of useful information via the website and the NOW platform. The course team indicated that they had not revised these documents in line with the proposed programme. There are a number of inaccuracies within these documents which require urgent review. Full details can be found in Appendix 1.			✓
3.4	To work with and learn from a range of people in practice placements, preparing them to provide care to a range of animals with diverse needs. *Evidence reviewed:* *Placement dates* *TP/aTP Approval forms* *Expert witness forms/statements* *Handbooks detailing utilisation of expert witnesses* Secondment resources are available for those practices who require it; however, this information could be made clearer in both the CS and student handbooks. Further comments can be found in Standard 6. NTU made it clear that witness sheets are in use within TPs, however, CSs are responsible for ensuring other members of staff within practices	✓		

	are educated how to complete the witness sheets and observe students performing skills.			
3.5	Are enabled to learn and are assessed using a range of methods, including technology enhanced and simulation-based learning appropriate for their programme as necessary for safe and effective practice. *Evidence reviewed: Course Handbook Clinical Supervisor observations Assessment Diet 23 24 DRAFT Module Specifications Clinical supervisor handbook List of clinical skills resources* The Veterinary Nursing Technician is provided with a practical design support guide for all practicals taught within the course. This guide is used by staff to support the set-up of practicals and to assist and induct new staff. The guide includes equipment lists, item locations, and photographs of station layouts. With students being limited to resources within the clinical skills areas, this guide (or similar) must be made available to students during these sessions to enhance safe and effective learning. Student feedback indicated a lack of satisfaction with the practical videos that are required to be completed and submitted throughout the year, however these have been removed from the proposed course. Further information regarding assessments can be found in section 5. The NOW platform is effective for online learning, containing recorded lectures, practice questions and academic support.			✓
3.6	Are supervised and supported in clinical placement learning in accordance with RCVS Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training. *Evidence reviewed: Clinical Supervisor Information Placement dates/hours Clinical placement audits Clinical Supervisor Handbook Student TP feedback Audit strategy for clinical placement tutorials TP visit strategy* Students are inducted to the placement process regularly and are encouraged to find practices themselves to develop life and industry skills. The panel suggested that the placement finding process could be more	✓		

transparent for students, e.g., in handbooks, to explain that a placement will be found for every student.

The panel commended the support available to students when on placement. Wellbeing forms are sent fortnightly to students and monthly to CS in order for feedback to be collected. An opportunity to have a one-to-one with the team and a follow up is arranged if necessary. Students also have contact with their academic tutor during this time.

NTU stated that the CS risk banding process is still in progress and acknowledged that there is out of date or missing details from TP paperwork. The current CS spreadsheet should be kept updated with documentation to ensure suitable risk banding is applied. This could also be confirmed by cross-referencing CS risk assessment completed on TP visits.

3.7	Are supervised according to their individual learning needs, proficiency and confidence. *Evidence reviewed:* *Placement student reports* *Requirements when considering requests for a variation to Study Rate Policy* *Student Services Centre - Our Service Standards* *Special Educational Needs support* *Clinical placement tutorial records* Good range of support available to students, however the panel suggests for this to be signposted clearly on the NOW dashboard (e.g., links to student hub/NTU resources).	✓	
3.8	Are allocated and can make use of supported learning time including blended learning and recording completion of RCVS Day One Skills for Veterinary Nursing when in practice. *Evidence reviewed:* *Timesheet* *Placement risk assessments* *Audit of Day One Skills recording tool* *Practice rotas* *Memoranda of Understanding* *Student placement handbook* *Clinical supervisor handbook* There were discrepancies noted between the student timesheets and attendance records which was clarified by the institution. Attendance records are signed by CSs within practice and uploaded by students onto the NOW platform to allow for monitoring by the placement team. NPL recording time allocation within practice is made clear in student and CS handbooks.	✓	

3.9	Are assigned and have access to a nominated academic tutor/lead for each part of the education programme. *Evidence reviewed:* *Group Tutorials and Workshop timetabled examples Doc* *Course specification* *Course handbook* *Personal tutor allocations document* *Personal tutor timetables* *Learner tutorials* Students are allocated an academic and placement support whilst out in practice. Although the panel were concerned with tutors having the possibility of overseeing up to 30 students, staff confirmed that sufficient time was provided to carry out this role.	✓	
3.10	Have the necessary support and information to manage any interruptions to the study of programmes for any reason. *Evidence reviewed:* *Course Handbook* *Student Hub* *QHB Section 2 Enabling Student Development and Achievement* *Fitness to Practise policy* NTU explained that students can have up to a year's interruption to their study. There is adequate support in place for students returning to study. Retention rates were high within the course compared with other courses delivered by the university. Staff noted that students leaving the course or interrupting studies usually occurs between the end of the second year and start of the third year, which coincides with the final placement period. Counselling is available for these students with an opportunity for a break in study available if required.	✓	
3.11	Have their diverse needs respected and considered across all learning environments. *Evidence reviewed:* *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy* *Fitness to Practise* *Support to Study Policy* The panel suggest that a proforma is developed for tutors and students to use to support the disclosure of diverse needs in a practice setting. This should encourage students to disclose and receive the necessary support in practice. Nonetheless, the panel found the evidence reviewed met this requirement and the suggestion is to encourage further disclosure.	✓	

3.12	Are provided with support and adjustments in accordance with equalities and human rights legislation and good practice.	✓	
	Evidence reviewed:		
	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy		
	Mitigating Circumstances		
	Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Guidance for Staff		
	Policies and procedures are in place for students to apply for mitigating circumstances and reasonable adjustments. A good range of adjustments was evidenced by NTU with information about how these are administered.		
3.13	Are protected from discrimination, harassment and other behaviour that undermines their performance or confidence.	✓	
	Evidence reviewed:		
	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy		
	Student Code of Behaviour		
	Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Guidance for Staff		
	Other than the out-of-date policies reference in Standard 1, relevant policies are complete and available to staff and students using the online platform.		
3.14	Are provided with information and support which encourages them to take responsibility for their own mental and physical health and wellbeing.	✓	
	Evidence reviewed:		
	ARES UG Student Handbook		
	Course Handbook		
	Course Specification		
	Personal tutoring system (DASHBOARD)		
	Personal tutorial time tables and records		
	Student Support Policy		
	Wellbeing lectures/sessions		
	Induction timetable		
	Brack Student Newsletters		
	The panel did not meet staff from Student Services; however, sufficient evidence was provided of wellbeing services within the university. The panel was unable to see a clear link to student services on the NOW platform, so it is suggested that this should appear on every page that student's access.		
3.15	Are provided with the learning and pastoral support necessary to empower them to prepare for independent, reflective professional practice.	✓	
	Evidence reviewed:		

	Quality Handbook *Course Handbook* *Personal tutorial records (DASHBOARD)* *Reflection Lecture* *Module Specifications* *Course Specification* *Assessment exemplars DRAFTS* *Guidance provided regarding the RCVS DOS* *Professional Behaviour Evaluation* There is a comprehensive induction, both verbally and written, for each placement block provided to students. Students also have multiple routes of pastoral support to prepare them for practice.		
3.16	Have opportunities throughout their programme to collaborate and learn with and from other professionals, to learn with and from peers, and to develop supervision and leadership skills. *Evidence reviewed:* *Peer assessment* *Clinical supervisor handbook* *Student representative meetings* *Essential Practical Nursing Self-evaluation* *Reflective logs* *Professional behaviour form* *Collaboration with other professionals* *Mentor programmes* *Assessment examples* *Expert witness statements* *Documentation detailing guidance regarding expert witnesses* The panel commended the 'Vets in the community' initiative, however, there is scope for improvements to encourage increased collaboration within this programme. NTU stated that there was a dip in voluntary uptake across the university, however, efforts were being taken to decrease barriers to participation including a free bus from the Brackenhurst campus and information sessions to reduce anxiety. The panel suggested that students who have been involved with this project could discuss this with other students to encourage uptake. The Veterinary Nursing team do also have the opportunity to promote further collaboration with other courses throughout the university. Staff made clear that links were beginning to form, however, this process was in the preliminary stages.	✓	
3.17	Receive constructive feedback throughout the programme to promote and encourage reflective learning.	✓	

	Evidence reviewed:		✓	
	Quality Handbook			
	Clinical Supervisor records			
	Student Feedback records			
	Reflection lecture			
	Module Specifications			
	ARES UG Student Handbook			
	Course Specification			
	Course Handbook			
	Assessment examples			
	Formative assessment procedures			
	Clinical placement tutorial records			
	Professional Behaviour Evaluations			
	DOS sampling plans			
	The panel commended the use of a reflection proforma which is completed as part of formative assessments. The panel felt that this approach could also be applied for summative assessments to truly develop reflective learners.			
	NTU explained that reflection is heavily promoted via the NPL comments for students to evaluate their skills and show progression towards competency.			
	Staff were enthusiastic regarding their PLAC29092 (FdSc Veterinary Nursing Placement) 0 credit module to encourage reflection with students having to fill out PB forms which are monitored by the placement team. Results from these are used to determine the need for follow up tutorials.			
3.18	Have opportunities throughout their programme to give feedback on the quality of all aspects of their support and supervision in both theory and practice.		✓	
	Evidence reviewed:			
	Course Specification			
	Minutes of student representative meetings			
	MySay Reports			
	NSS data			
	Support to Study Policy			
	Clinical placement evaluations			
	Personal tutorial records (DASHBOARD)			
	Recent NSS surveys show a dramatic drop in overall satisfaction for the veterinary nursing course (92 to 67%) from 2021 to 2022. Senior members concluded this was due to numerous staff changes which have resulted in miscommunications between staff and students resulting in the students being given false expectations relating to assessment results and			

				✓
	feedback. NTU were confident that this was temporary and that figures would improve over the coming years. The panel suggest for NTU to continue monitoring satisfaction rates and proactively address any ongoing concerns. Course committee meetings allow for regular communication and dialogue between NTU and students. The above evidence shows that NTU is using feedback effectively to influence changes made in theory and practice.			
3.19	Are empowered to develop their professional behaviours in line with the RCVS Professional Behaviour Evaluation. *Evidence reviewed:* *Completed Professional Behaviour Evaluations* *Professional behaviour guidance to students* *Professional behaviour guidance to Clinical Supervisors* *IQA sampling policy* NTU was unaware that the PBs are now mandatory and had not embedded them into the programme. It was agreed that the LO's and assessment methods for the PLAC29092 module would be revised to encompass the PBs. Although a PB form is used within practice, the information regarding this process must be strengthened within handbooks and inductions to allow more support to be given to students and CSs to promote importance of PBs within the industry.			✓

Conclusion:

It was clear that staff are passionate in ensuring students leave NTU as confident, competent veterinary nurses who have had a well-rounded experience. Students have the facilities to improve clinical learning, however, improvements could be made to ensure safety is paramount during these sessions.

Policies and procedures are in place for student welfare which can all be accessed via the online NOW platform; however, some updated versions are needed. This hub holds information for both students and staff which can be accessed off-campus for those on placement.

There are good opportunities for reflection via formative assessments, however, this could be progressed 'full circle' for students to see progression in assignment skills and PBs.

There is scope for further inter-professional collaboration within NTU and to promote current initiatives for increased participation.

Overall, this standard has been met.

Suggestions:

a. Provide further guidance for students and clinical supervisors in relation to secondments and witness statements.

b. Update all documents such as the Memorandum of Understanding, student handbooks and programme specification to include a link to the NTU Fitness to Practise policy instead of the RCVS Fitness to Practise guidance.

c. Include a link to the student support hub on all NOW pages.

d. Develop a proforma for tutors and students to use to support the disclosure of diverse needs in a training practice setting.

Actions:

a. Update the student facing documents including student handbooks, programme specification and placement handbooks to ensure that all terminology is current and correct. These documents must be submitted to the RCVS with tracked changes. See Appendix 1 for the full details.

b. Develop Standard Operating Procedures or skill sheets for students to use in the practical learning environments to ensure safe practice.

c. Demonstrate the embedding of the RCVS Professional Behaviours into modules.

Commendations:

a. Very good support available to students when on placement.

b. Course committee meetings allow regular communication and dialogue between NTU and students.

c. The team dynamics and the support for staff to continue to develop and progress.

Standard 4 – Educators and assessors

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

		Standard met		
		Accredited Education Institutions, together with Centres and Training Practices, must ensure that all educators and assessors:		
	Requirements		**Met**	**Not Met**
4.1	Are appropriately qualified and experienced and always act as professional role models. *Evidence reviewed:* *CV and RCVS CPD records* *Staff Training Records (Thrive)* *Clinical supervisor CV/CPD records* *Clinical Supervisor Professional Development Plan* *Lesson observation Information* *RCVS registration status of clinical supervisors* *RCVS registration status of NTU personnel (where required)* The staff have a positive attitude towards their roles and are both willing and supported in developing their skills and developing the course. Staff provided CPD records which lacked reflection in some areas; this must be updated to meet RCVS CPD requirements. Teaching observations are performed biannually by the NTU Learning Development Team. Peer teaching observations are conducted in the interim years whereby staff are encouraged to observe additional teaching styles, discussion of inter-professional collaboration and using this as an opportunity to observe teaching methods on courses provided in wider NTU. The peer observation process is not lead by management.			✓
4.2	Receive relevant induction, ongoing support, education and training which includes training in equality and diversity. *Evidence reviewed:* *RCVS CPD records* *Learning and Teaching Professional Development Policy* *Staff Training Records (Thrive)* *Appraisal process* *New Staff Induction* *Evidence of Clinical Supervisor training* *Evidence of Clinical Supervisor standardisation*		✓	

	Completed reviews of Clinical Supervisor suitability (CV, CPD, registration checks) *Mental health first aid training* *Examiner training and standardisation procedures* *Spreadsheet with list of examiners training and task preference.,* New members, who have recently joined the team, confirmed that they felt well supported and well informed during the extensive induction process. Mandatory staff training is revisited every three years, which is reviewed at appraisal. During the panel meetings with the programme team, the staff expressed their satisfaction in the systems and processes, and all felt happy in their role. Staff members felt well supported by their Head of Department and felt empowered to discuss any queries and concerns, and they also felt encouraged to develop the course and embark on initiatives supported by NTU. Training and standardisation for Time-constrained Scenario-based Practical Examination (TSPE) examiners are in place.		30	
4.3	Have their diverse needs respected and considered and are provided with support and adjustments in accordance with equalities and human rights legislation and good practice. *Evidence reviewed:* *New Staff Induction* *Equality and diversity policy* *New Staff Interview Process* *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion* *Terms of Reference for the Disabled Employees Network* *Health and Safety Training Policy* Diverse needs are respected, and reasonable adjustments implemented where required. NTU has extensive support and guidance for staff and students on their website.	✓		
4.4	Have supported time and resources to enable them to fulfil their roles in addition to their other professional responsibilities. *Evidence reviewed:* *Academic Staff Workloads* *Job descriptions* *Academic Workload Framework* *Memoranda of Understanding* *Tutorial records* All staff expressed satisfaction with workloads and the allocation of hours for various tasks. Staff felt that their workload is manageable, and they	✓		

	have sufficient allocated time for their tutees. Staff felt that their individual workload has reduced since recruitment gaps have been filled, making it more manageable. One member of staff is studying for a master's degree and has been allocated time to assist with the demands of their learning.			
4.5	Respond effectively to the learning needs of individuals. *Evidence reviewed:* *MySay Reports* *Student representative meeting minutes* *Group Tutorials and Workshop timetabled examples Doc* *Clinical placement records* *Disability and Inclusion Services* *Lesson observations* *Student Services Centre - Our Service Standards* *Special Educational Needs Support* *Student Hub Disability Services* Students have guidance on NOW for assessments and requests for reasonable adjustments. During the NTU campus tour, we spoke with a library technician whom students may go to for support and advice with academic writing. The programme has a variety of teaching methods and students felt supported by the NTU staff. An example of how the programme team has responded to learning needs was provided. Students were unhappy with a particular assessment component which was universally difficult to achieve. This has been removed in the proposed programme.	✓	
4.6	Are supportive and objective in their approach to student supervision, assessment and progression and appropriately share and use evidence to make decisions on student assessment and progression. *Evidence reviewed:* *Quality Handbook Section 15 Assessment* *Student Placement Handbook* *Clinical Supervisor Handbook* *NPL Sampling Plan* *FdSc VN Assessment Strategy 2023 24 DRAFT* *ANGOFF and Ebel Processes* *Clinical placement records/action plans* *Day One Skills recording tool* *Meeting minutes* *Day One Skills IQA strategy* *Interim Course Report* *Tutorial records*	✓	

	The Veterinary Nursing Technical Team facilitate student placements and NPL progression. During the meetings with the panel, the students expressed their satisfaction with the support they receive whilst on placement. There is good evidence that student assessment and progression is fairly and objectively managed. Staff felt that NPL tasks should be managed strictly by the Clinical Supervisors, although it was discussed that there is an opportunity to utilise the animal handling teaching and access to the animal unit to open NPL tasks in the students' first year of the FdSc course.		
4.7	Liaise, collaborate and action constructive feedback generated by colleagues, students and stakeholders to enhance their teaching assessment and to share effective practice. *Evidence reviewed:* *Policy for recruitment and training of assessment staff / moderators* *TSPE Examiner Handbook 2022-23* *Standardisation meeting minutes* *External Examiner reports* *Teaching observations* *NTU Nurse Students ViC Clinic Feedback Survey* *COHORT 14 - OCTOBER 2022 PART 1 CONTACT FORM* *TSPE Candidate Questionnaire Responses April 2022* *Clinical supervisor training and standardisation programme feedback* *Student representative meeting minutes* *Meeting minutes with actions and dissemination plans* *Examiner observations* *RCVS quality monitoring report and action plans* *TSPE QA observation report* An active collaboration between staff and students was demonstrated, with credit to the technical team for their active engagement with students on placement. Student feedback is actioned, and new staff members have ambitious plans to develop the course further.	✓	
4.8	Are expected to respond effectively to concerns and complaints about public protection, animal welfare and student performance in learning environments and are supported in doing so. *Evidence reviewed:* *Grievance Policy and Procedure* *Fitness to practise policy* *TP/aTP Risk register* *Minutes of meetings, action plans and responses*	✓	

	The Veterinary Nursing Technical team co-ordinate placements for students at TPs and assign CSs. Students are reminded in the pre-placement email to contact the technical team or academic tutors if there are any concerns or complaints. During discussions with the panel, it was clear that students felt well supported and receive responses in a timely manner. The NTU website also has information and links to procedures for filing complaints.			
4.9	Ensure the programme lead is a Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN) who has substantial experience of veterinary nurse education and training at a suitable level for the qualification(s) being delivered and holds a recognised teaching qualification. *Evidence reviewed: CV and RCVS CPD records* The programme lead is an RVN with 25 years of experience in animal and veterinary nursing education. All staff members feel supported by their course leader.	✓		

Conclusion:

This standard is met, with the newly recruited team having undergone an extensive induction process. It is evident that the team feel supported and are encouraged to develop the course with consideration of student feedback.

Suggestions:
a. Consider utilising practical lessons on site for opening and logging skills on the NPL.
b. Include the procedure for raising a concern on placement in a formal document for students to access when on placement.

Actions:
a. Provide reflections for all CPD for this year.

Standard 5 – Curricula and assessment

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

	Standard met		
	Accredited Education Institutions, together with Centres and Training Practices, must ensure:		
	Requirements	**Met**	**Not Met**
5.1	Curricula are mapped and fulfil the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses, QAA HE Benchmarks for Veterinary Nurses and programme outcomes. *Evidence reviewed:* *Course specification* *Course Handbook* *FdSc VN Curriculum Map 2023 24 DRAFT* *Module mapping document* Documents were provided demonstrating that the course outcomes and DOC/DOS are mapped to the modules. Nonetheless, there are further learning outcomes that could be included within the mapping. For example, the course outcome 'Demonstrate knowledge of relevant ethical and legal obligations and practise veterinary nursing in accordance with the Code of Professional Conduct' could be mapped to almost all modules not just the *Practice Administration and Communication Skills* module. The DOC 'Understand and apply principles of clinical governance, and practise evidence-based veterinary nursing.' could apply to most modules.	✓	
5.2	Programmes are designed, developed, delivered, evaluated and improved based upon stakeholder feedback. *Evidence reviewed:* *Curriculum meeting minute* *External Examiner report* *Stakeholder feedback* *Module specifications* Feedback has been obtained from the EE when developing the new modules and the team has reviewed all comments, although input from employers / TPs has not specifically been sought. The excellent relationship that the team have with the TPs might be a useful source to gain employer feedback.	✓	

5.3	Curricula remain relevant in respect of contemporary veterinary nursing practice. *Evidence reviewed:* *Curriculum meeting minute* *External Examiner report* *Stakeholder feedback* *Module specifications* The curricula delivered is relevant to current practice. The team should ensure that equipment in the practical skills area is relevant to current practice and update teaching as required. The team is encouraged to seek guidance from students whilst on placement and clinical supervisors.	✓	
5.4	Curricula and assessments weigh theory and practice learning appropriately to the programme. *Evidence reviewed:* *Course Specification* *Mapping to RCVS Veterinary Nursing Registration Rules* *Module specifications* *Timetables* *Assessment Diet 2023 24 DRAFT* It is acknowledged that the team feel stifled in providing a variety of assessments. There is scope to further expand the assessment types to ensure that it is more inclusive and provides opportunities for the student to demonstrate their knowledge in different ways. There also appears to be a restriction from the university on the amount of assessment suggesting each module should have only one piece of assessment. The team could consider aligning the learning outcomes to the assessment and ensure that alternative assessment methodologies better prepare students for their future careers.		✓
5.5	Curricula provide appropriate structure and sequencing that integrates theory and practice at increasing levels of complexity. *Evidence reviewed:* *Timetables* *Assessment Diet 2023 24 DRAFT* *Course handbook* *Module specifications* The programme evidences some level of increasing complexity in the modules; however, the taxonomy of the learning outcomes was not always appropriate to the academic level. NTU must review the learning outcomes across all modules, demonstrating an appropriate academic aim for students to achieve at the appropriate level.		✓

			✓	
5.6	Curricula and assessments are structured and sequenced to enable students to manage their theory and practice learning experience effectively, with progression determined at appropriate points. *Evidence reviewed:* *Timetables* *FdSc Veterinary Nursing Placement Information* *Assessment Strategy 2023 24 DRAFT* *DOC/DOS Mapping* *Student progress reports* *Course Handbook* *Level 4 and Level 5 Assessment Schedules 2023 24 DRAFTS* *BSc and FdSc Progression Board Minutes 24 June 2022* The modules are delivered over the whole academic year or part of the year in year 1 and year 2. Examinations are all held in January and May each year. Assignment submissions occur at different times in the year. It was discussed that further opportunities for spacing assessments might prevent assessment overload for the students in the May examination period. Formative opportunities are provided for students to engage with and receive feedback on a small portion of their summative assignment. The team could consider how they can provide formative practical assessments to prepare them for the third-year summative practical assessment (TSPE).	✓	
5.7	A range of appropriate assessments are delivered, within the educational setting, to accurately measure the knowledge, skills and understanding outlined in the programme. At least one summative assessment must be in the form of an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) or similarly robust, objective and evidenced-based form of practical examination to test the safe and effective acquisition of a broad range of skills and competences outlined in the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses. *Evidence reviewed:* *TSPE Sample Student Feedback April 2022* *VN Team meetings Sep/Oct 2022* *BSc and FdSc Final Year VN Exam Board Minutes 09 June 2022* *Examination code of conduct* *Online computer-based assessments* *Examples of TSPE assessment material (PCV ONLY)* *Assessment exemplars DRAFTS* *TSPE Assessment blueprint* *Assessment diet* *Policies and Procedures for TSPEs* *Assessment rationale* *TSPE Examiner Briefing and handbook* *TSPE Candidate Briefing and Handbook*	✓	

	Security policies			37
	The summative assessments include unseen examinations, open book, written assignments, individual presentations, and a practical examination in the form of a TSPE. Having one assessment for modules could be considered high risk and does not allow the students to demonstrate their knowledge in other ways. The team could consider alternative unseen assessments to provide further variety.			
5.8	Students are assessed practically across clinical placement settings and learning environments as required by their programme.	✓		
	Evidence reviewed:			
	Day One Skills recording tool			
	Observation records			
	Examination papers and mark sheets			
	TSPE Sample Student Feedback April 2022			
	NPL Sampling plan and strategy			
	TSPE Sampling strategy			
	Students are assessed on the DOS in placement via the Nursing Progress Log, which is moderated by the placement team. Further practical assessment could be undertaken utilising the practical equipment in the animal unit to prepare the students for placement.			
5.9	Processes are in place to establish a high degree of validity and robustness to support the decisions made based on the results of the assessment.	✓		
	Evidence reviewed:			
	Examination code of conduct			
	Rationale for the Design of examinations			
	Quality Handbook			
	TSPE Assessment blueprint			
	ANGOFF and Ebel Process			
	Training and standardisation of markers			
	TSPE item analysis 2022			
	Statistical analysis of item level and question level data such as analysis of question difficulty			
	Standard setting documentation			
	Quality Handbook and Course Handbook			
	Quality Handbook			
	Invigilation arrangements			
	Internal Review of HE assessment decisions template and examples folder			
	There are a number of processes in place to determine the validity of assessments, many of these were demonstrated during the event. A			

	member of the team has particular interest in the statistical analysis of the TSPE and they have developed processes for this. Both Ebel and Angoff methods of standard setting are utilised. The examinations containing multiple choice questions (MCQ) are delivered online (via NOW) which provides data on the question performance. The exam questions and marking are moderated both by the team and the EE.		
5.10	Moderation processes are in place and demonstrate that assessment is fair, reliable and valid. *Evidence reviewed:* *MySay Reports* *Across-module Moderation Meeting June 2022* *Exam Board minutes* *HE Quality Deadlines* *Internal verification of summative assessment briefs template* *Team meetings Sep/Oct 2022* *External examiner reports* *EE comments on assessments* *Internal Verification of Summative Assessment Briefs (examples) folder* *NPL Sampling plan and strategy* The examinations are moderated by the team and then sent to the EE for feedback and comment. The NPL is moderated by the placement team, but it appears that the EE is not involved in reviewing students' progress on the NPL or moderation reports.		✓
5.11	Mechanisms are in place to minimise bias in all assessments. *Evidence reviewed:* *MySay Reports* *Across-module Moderation Meeting June 2022* *Exam Board minutes* *HE Quality Deadlines* *Internal verification of summative assessment briefs template* *Team meetings Sep/Oct 2022* *External examiner reports* *EE comments on assessments* *Internal Verification of Summative Assessment Briefs (examples) folder* *NPL Sampling plan and strategy* Where possible assessments are marked anonymously to prevent bias in marking. The TSPE examiners may be known to students. There are mechanisms in place to manage any conflict including examiner observations and the number of examiners involved in the examination.	✓	

5.12	Adjustments are provided in accordance with relevant equalities and human rights legislation for assessments in theory and practice.	✓	
	Evidence reviewed:		
	Quality Handbook - Inclusive assessment.		
	Mitigating circumstances policy		
	Disability and Inclusion Services		
	Fitness to practise policy		
	The support services are comprehensive and provides guidance to students on receiving support. Examples of support provided seem appropriate.		
5.13	Clinical placement assessment is facilitated and evidenced by observations and other appropriate methods.	✓	
	Evidence reviewed:		
	Clinical Supervisor Handbook		
	Day One Skills recording tool		
	Clinical Supervisor observation records		
	DOS sampling plans		
	The assessment in clinical placement is undertaken by Clinical Supervisors that are supported by the NTU placement team. Training and standardisation is offered to all Clinical Supervisors linked to NTU students and also to affiliated practices. The Clinical Supervisors are observed regularly and are also risk assessed as well as having their own developmental needs identified.		
5.14	Students' self-reflections contribute to, and are evidenced in, assessments.	✓	
	Evidence reviewed:		
	EPN Self-evaluation sheet		
	Tutorial reports		
	Clinical placement reports		
	Student Self-reflection on formative assessments and practical sessions folder		
	ANIM10202 PACS Assignment brief 2022-23 and PLAC29092 Assignment brief 2022-23		
	Quality assurance reports		
	Professional behaviour evaluations		
	Students are provided with a template for reflection as part of their formative assessments. The team could consider how they encourage the students to reflect on their summative assessments and their overall progression on the course.		

5.15	There is no compensation between assessments that address the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses. *Evidence reviewed:* *Module specifications* *Candidate handbooks* *Course Handbook* The *Clinical Behaviour* Module has allowable compensation under the NTU assessment regulations. This module does not assess the DOC/DOS. All other module briefs that assess the DOC/DOS indicate that there is no compensation.	✓	
5.16	Ensure modules/units that address the RCVS Day One Competences for Veterinary Nurses include unseen examination as an element of the assessment strategy. *Evidence reviewed:* *Module Specifications* *Assessment Diet 2023 24 DRAFT* *Assessment compensation policy* The module briefs indicate that that an unseen examination is used to assess the DOC. The team could consider a wider variety of assessment methodologies to increase variety in assessment activities.	✓	

Conclusion:

This standard is met. The proposed course has been developed to ensure the students meet the requirements to apply to Register with the RCVS. The team has experience in designing, delivering, and assessing veterinary nursing qualifications. Further work is necessary to ensure the students meet the requirements of a foundation degree level course and that progression is seen through increasing complexity in the learning outcomes, i.e., level 4 to level 5.

Further innovation could be explored in delivering unseen assessments to provide the students with a variety of assessments and ensure inclusivity for different learning needs.

Suggestions:
a. Consider opportunities to further map modules to the RCVS DOS and DOC and course outcomes.
b. Review the introduction and rationale in the TSPE procedure to demonstrate updated research to support this methodology.
c. Ensure that practical skills teaching remains relevant in relation to contemporary veterinary nursing by seeking feedback from stakeholders.
d. Consider the use of formative practical assessment throughout the course to ensure that students are fully prepared for the final summative TSPE assessment.
e. Further explore alternative assessment approaches that are transferrable to industry and relevant to current practice.

f. Consider the alignment of the learning outcomes and assessment by considering what the students should be able to do after completing the module.

Actions:
a. Review the modules in line with credit level descriptors for higher education and provide any module changes with track changes. Consider utilising alternative assessment methodologies based on these changes.
b. Provide an assessment rationale for modules with one assessment type and for the type of unseen assessments utilised.
c. Demonstrate that the External Examiner undertakes samples of all assessments, including the NPL.

Commendations:
a. The active embedding of reflection into all formative assessments is good and could be further expanded to summative assessments
b. The commitment and dedication of the staff is clear in the overall development of the course and although there is still some work to be done, the panel were impressed with the overall approach to the development of the programme. Staff are to be commended for their enthusiasm and active engagement and contributions to the accreditation process and in challenging existing procedures.

Standard 6 – Effective clinical learning

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

		Standard met		
	Accredited Education Institutions, together with Centres and Training Practices, must:			
	Requirements		Met	Not Met
6.1	Ensure clinical learning facilities are adequate to support and deliver the RCVS Day One Skills for Veterinary Nurses. *Evidence reviewed:* *TP/aTP list including RCVS TP number* *TP/aTP approval and monitoring documentation for UK practices* *Centre permission requests* *Consumable and equipment lists* *Memoranda of Understanding* *TP/aTP risk assessments* A range of equipment for practical teaching was seen within the veterinary nursing centre. There was a lack of written learning aids and protocols for the students to refer to whilst using the facility, as discussed earlier in this report. The students suggested that written guides for the clinical skills are not supplied during practical sessions and felt the addition of these would be beneficial to their learning. With frequent practical skills teaching and animal handling sessions within the first year of the course, the opportunity to open relevant NPL skills and allow students to log would benefit them and prepare students for placement.		✓	
6.2	Ensure students are enrolled with the RCVS prior to undertaking clinical placement (in order to comply with legislation). *Evidence reviewed:* *RCVS Enrolment procedure* All Student Veterinary Nurses are enrolled with the RCVS. The Principal Lecturer receives both paper and email correspondence for student RCVS enrolment. This process is time consuming and could be made easier if an online form is sent to students to complete and compile in one folder for the Principal Lecturer to refer to when enrolling students.		✓	
6.3	Ensure students are actively learning and adequately supervised in all clinical learning environments.		✓	

	Evidence reviewed: *TP/aTP risk assessments* *Programme timetables* *Clinical placement records* *Job descriptions for educators, assessors, and support staff* *Job descriptions (NTU staff)* *MySay Reports* *Quality assurance reports* *Clinical placement evaluations* CSs within affiliated practices undergo training by NTU as detailed during the team presentation at the beginning of the accreditation event. CSs are risk assessed by the technical team and frequency of monitoring is set according to high, medium, or low risk banding. This determines the frequency of visits and correspondence from NTU to the clinical supervisor, to ensure they are supported according to their needs. The technical team monitor and audit students on placement to ensure they are supported and remain on target for NPL completion. NTU does not audit the training practice rotas, however, students are made aware of the direct and continuous supervision requirement whilst on placement and are encouraged to report this if they feel that they are being asked to work alone or without appropriate supervision.		
6.4	Ensure clinical learning environments are provided for every student, within a RCVS listed training practice or auxiliary training practice, for a minimum duration of hours as stipulated in the RCVS Veterinary Nurse Registration Rules. *Evidence reviewed:* *Non-affiliated TP list utilised for cohort 14 students.* *Memoranda of Understanding* *Timesheet* *Placement search support* *Course Specification* *Timetables* Since the last accreditation, the university has revised its policy in relation to the allocation of work placements, however, the student facing documents need further updating to reflect the allocation of work placements'. Both staff and students felt they had fair opportunity to organise placement within a TP. The staff had no concerns and felt that they have access to ample training practices to place students. Nonetheless, the policy for finding placements could be clearer in student facing documents. There must be a clear policy with a guide of when the technical team intervene to ensure the student is placed at a training practice.		✓

6.5	All students must have sufficient time within the programme to achieve the Veterinary Nurse Registration Rules hours requirement. *Evidence reviewed:* *Timetables* *Planned placement model* *Course specification* *UK clinical placement lists* The course timetable was provided, and proposed changes to the modules and placement blocks were explained, which meet the required hours. The staff feel the proposed placement blocks will ensure the students have a proficient level of veterinary nursing knowledge before entering practice and applying their knowledge and skills. The course allows students opportunity to complete the required hours for Registration.	✓	
6.6	Ensure all students are allocated a clinical supervisor responsible for confirming competency of RCVS Day One Skills for Veterinary Nurses. All clinical supervisors must be RVN or MRCVS (UK practising), be experienced and able to demonstrate an experienced level of clinical skills and ongoing professional development. *Evidence reviewed:* *Clinical Supervisor Information* *Records of co-ordination and continuity of support and supervision* *Records of CPD to support role* *Clinical Supervisors job description* *TP/aTP approval forms* *Clinical Supervisor checks made by provider* CSs within the listed TPs are screened by the NTU technical team: all CSs are risk assessed and supported by the technical team at NTU. The technical team contact the student on placement and their CSs bi-weekly to ensure they are well supported.	✓	
6.7	Maintain accurate records of student clinical learning environment attendance and provide these to RCVS upon request. *Evidence reviewed:* *Clinical placement student absence record* Absence is reported via email to the technical team and locally to the CS by the student. Absences are recorded on a calendar and frequent occurrence is discussed and assessed as per each individual student. All placement hours are recorded and monitored by the technical team, a sample of which was supplied and reviewed.	✓	
6.8	There must be sufficient TP support available for all recruited students. *Evidence reviewed:*	✓	

	TP/aTP lists *MOU's* *Secondment agreements and records* *TP/aTP visit strategy* The technical team has a clear plan for providing support to the TPs. The panel was impressed by the frequent contact to TPs and the process for risk assessing CSs ensures that there is sufficient monitoring according to their experience and individual needs. Secondment agreements are in place, however, staff identified that it is not always made clear to the students that they are placed under a secondment and the plan regarding NPL completion needs to be clearly communicated with the student.			
6.9	Ensure that training practices either hold a primary affiliation with the Accredited Education Institution itself or its delivery site, or, where the training practice is to hold a secondary affiliation, that the training practice also holds a primary affiliation elsewhere and is an RCVS listed practice. *Evidence reviewed:* *TP memorandum of understanding* *aTP memorandum of understanding* *TP / aTP lists* *Student secondment records* The documentation provided for TP MOUs showed policies are being followed as required. As discussed, students need to be provided with clear communication regarding practices under secondment.	✓		
6.10	Ensure that where a secondary affiliated training practice is used there is a Memorandum of Understanding and robust communication between the Centre responsible for the secondary affiliated training practice and the Accredited Education Institution. *Evidence reviewed:* Communication records Memoranda of understanding Panel discussion All secondary affiliated TPs are subject to onboarding processes to ensure suitability for the students. The panel discussed the processes followed. It was felt that the students under placement in an affiliated practice would benefit from a clear and transparent plan.	✓		
6.11	Be compliant with the RCVS standards framework for veterinary nursing education, including clinical requirements for all periods of learning undertaken outside the UK and comply with all relevant legislation and UK animal care and welfare standards (including the Veterinary Surgeons Act	N/A		

	1966). *Evidence reviewed:* *International placement policies* *Approval and monitoring records* *International training practice lists* Nottingham Trent University does not offer student placements outside of the UK.		
6.12	Ensure clinical learning experiences are tailored to the student's stage of learning, competences and programme outcomes. *Evidence reviewed:* Rota's - Focus skills Timetables Day One Skills recording tool audits Clinical placement records and action plans Course Handbook Student placement handbook Clinical supervisor handbook Clinical Supervisor training and standardisation The NTU team provide simulated practical teaching and animal handling teaching within the veterinary nursing building and animal unit, which helps to prepare students for clinical placement. The panel discussed the opportunity to open NPL tasks after practical sessions to further prepare students for placement. The Veterinary Nursing Technical team track NPL progress and email this to the individual student and clinical supervisor monthly. Student hours and attendance is monitored by the team and flagged with the clinical supervisor and student if reoccurring absence is noted.	✓	
6.13	The veterinary team contribute to learning in the clinical environment in accordance with the RCVS Codes of Professional Conduct. *Evidence reviewed:* Clinical placement records Staff Codes of Conduct Staff rotas / timetables Witness statements TP/aTP approval and audit forms Memoranda of Understanding TP/aTP risk assessments Discussion with panel and institution		✓

Following review of the evidence and during the panel discussions, it was noticeable that the NTU veterinary nursing technical team actively monitor the TP/aTPs and CSs. NTU provides training to CSs in the form of a PowerPoint presentation.

CSs and students are contacted bi-weekly to ensure they are on track and have the necessary support and guidance. The CSs are given feedback forms to complete, this allows NTU to tailor support and training for both the CS and students. NTU may suggest relevant CPD courses to CSs to undertake where required. The CS Handbook is an excellent resource which includes learning styles, the Grow Model, witness statements and when NPL sampling will take place.

During the quality monitoring visit to four TPs, CSs reported that the recent training provided by NTU was supportive and informative however, some CSs found it repetitive. All TPs received good NPL guidance and all CSs felt comfortable using it. They often refer to the witness statement guidance provided, allowing the wider team to contribute to student training.

CVs/CPDs/JDs are reviewed during annual audits, however, for the last three years one CS was not compliant with RCVS requirements which had not been picked up or addressed by NTU. During the panel discussion, NTU provided evidence of a spreadsheet containing CS qualifications, risk assessments and risk levels. NTU acknowledged that this document is still a working progress. It is important that NTU have a process to ensure those not meeting the RCVS requirements are identified, monitored, and reviewed.

Conclusion:

Standard 6 is met overall. The NTU veterinary nursing technical team has successfully built a clinical placement process that clearly supports both the clinical supervisor and students on placement.

The CS handbook is an excellent resource for TPs and CSs.

There are good systems in place to ensure all students are placed within clinical placement and have the opportunity to meet NPL targets. Students feel well supported by the NTU team whilst out of clinical placement.

The clinical learning facilities at NTU are excellent, the panel felt they could be utilised further by incorporating the opening of some NPL tasks during animal handling and practical teaching sessions.

Suggestions:
a. Ensure that the procedure for informing the RCVS of students who have left the course is in place.

b. Start preparing students for logging NPL during practical teaching on site.

c. Inform students which skills may not be logged during their placements and provide them with a plan to demonstrate how these will be met via secondment.

Actions:

a. Ensure that the process for providing placements for every student is transparent and consistent across all documentation and demonstrate at what point the placement team will step in to provide the placement.

b. Confirm that annual audits of clinical supervisor's CVs/CPD/JDs ensure that those not compliant with RCVS requirements are identified, monitored, and reviewed to meet requirements.