

Council Meeting

Thursday, 3 October 2019 at 10:00 am to be held at the RCVS, Belgravia House,
62/64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Agenda

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| 1. President's introduction | Oral report |
| 2. Apologies for absence | Oral report |
| 3. Declarations of interest | Oral report |
| 4. Minutes of the meetings held on 5 September 2019 | Refer to Council minutes |
| 5. Matters arising | |
| a. Obituaries | Unclassified |
| b. Council correspondence and matters for report | Oral report |
| c. CEO update | Oral report |
| 6. Matters for decision by Council (unclassified items) | |
| a. Accreditation of Surrey Veterinary School | Unclassified |
| b. Veterinary Council of Ireland Mutual Recognition Agreement | Unclassified |
| 7. Reports of committees – to note | |
| a. Advancement of the Professions Committee | |
| i. Minutes of the meeting held 7 May 2019 (previously confidential until agreed) | Unclassified |
| ii. Minutes of the meeting held 10 September 2019 (Professor D J Argyle) | Unclassified |
| b. Audit and Risk Committee | |
| i. Minutes of the meeting held 25 April 2019 (previously confidential until agreed) | Unclassified |
| ii. Minutes of the meeting held 12 July 2019 (draft) (Ms E Butler) | Confidential |
| c. Education Committee (Dr S Paterson) | Unclassified |
| d. Finance and Resources Committee (Dr C P Sturgess) | Confidential |

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| e. Standards Committee
(Dr M A Donald) | Unclassified |
| f. PIC / DC Liaison Committee | |
| i. Minutes of the meeting held 11 July 2019 | Unclassified |
| ii. Minutes of the meeting held 19 September 2019
(Ms A K Boag) | Unclassified |
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| 8. Reports of statutory committees – to note | |
| a. Preliminary Investigation Committee
(Registrar) | Unclassified |
| b. RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee
(Registrar) | Unclassified |
| c. Disciplinary Committee and RVN Disciplinary Committee
(Registrar) | Unclassified |
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| 9. Notices of motion | Oral report |
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| 10. Questions | Oral report |
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| 11. Date of next meeting | Oral report |
| Thursday, 7 November 2019 at 10:00 am (reconvening in afternoon 2:00 – 4:00 pm) | |
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| AFTERNOON SESSION: 2:00 – 4:00 pm (TO BE HELD IN COMMITTEE) | |
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| 12. Matters for decision by Council and for report (confidential items) | |
| a. Certification issues | Confidential |
| b. Under care – call for evidence | Confidential |
| c. Discretionary Fund report | Oral report / Confidential |
| d. Estates Strategy | Oral report / Confidential |
| e. Charges for veterinary school accreditation | Confidential |
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| 13. Any other College business | Oral report |
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| 14. Risk Register, equality and diversity | Oral report |

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 Secretary, RCVS Council
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Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 5 September 2019 at Belgravia House,
62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Members:

Dr N T Connell (President in the Chair)	
Dr C J Allen	Dr M O Greene
Professor D J Argyle	Professor R A Hammond
Mr C T Barker	Mr D J Leicester
Miss L Belton	Miss R M Marshall
Ms A K Boag	Professor S A May
Professor D Bray	Mrs C-L McLaughlan
Professor E Cameron	Dr S Paterson
Mr J M Castle	Mr M L Peaty
Dr D S Chambers	Dr C L Scudamore
Ms E K Cox	Professor K Smith
Professor S Dawson	Col N C Smith
Dr M A Donald	Dr C P Sturgess
Dr J M Dyer	Dr C W Tufnell
Professor G C W England*	Mr T J Walker
Ms L Ford	Professor J L N Wood
Ms L V Goodwin	Ms J S M Worthington

*Absent

In attendance:

Ms E Butler	Chair, Audit & Risk Committee
Ms E C Ferguson	Registrar
Ms L Lockett	CEO
Ms C McCann	Assistant Registrar / Director of Operations (DoO)

Guests:

Mr K Bolton	y? consulting (agenda item 07c only – Strategy Development)
Dr S Doherty	President, British Veterinary Association (open session only)

President's introduction

1. The President extended a warm welcome to guests and outlined the order of the meeting.

Apologies for absence and welcome to new members

2. Apologies for absence were received from:
 - Professor G C W England
3. The President welcomed Miss Belton and Professor Smith to their first meeting as Council members; and Professor Hammond as a returning member of Council.

Declarations of interest

4. Declarations of interest were received from:
 - Mr D J Leicester: Clinical Lead on a Vets-Now video triage service;
 - Dr C L Scudamore: appointed to the Food Standards Agency Committee on Toxicity;
 - Professor S Dawson: Chair of Vet Schools Council from July 2019.

Minutes of the meetings held on 13 June and 12 July 2019

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2019

5. The President reported that Council had the opportunity to comment on the minutes electronically via the new Boardpacks system for the first time – this would be the process going forward.
6. The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2019

7. Council had the opportunity to comment on the minutes electronically.
8. The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

Matters arising

Obituaries

9. There had been no written obituaries received.
10. Council and guests stood and observed a minute silence for all members of the College who had passed away since the last meeting.

Council correspondence

11. The President reported:

RCVS Day 2020

12. This would be held on Friday, 10 July 2020 at One Great George Street, Westminster.

Contacts and Calendar Booklet 2019 – 2020

13. This year's booklet was in the process of being printed and would be sent to Council shortly.

Fellowship Day 2019

14. Council was reminded that the forthcoming RCVS Fellowship Day would take place on Friday, 20 September 2019 at The Royal Institution in London. Dr John Glen would be delivering a presentation entitled: *'Try, try and try again: some personal reflections on the development of the anaesthetic, Propofol'*. The President looked forward to welcoming the new Fellows then.

CEO update

15. The CEO reported the meeting was not following its usual format as committees had not met since the last full meeting in June. There was a new schedule post-Legislative Reform Order (LRO) where governance of the College had been changed in order to reduce the number of Council members but increase the number of meetings. This meant that the committees were in the process of getting into the new schedule of working and the October Council meeting would have a large amount of papers.

16. The CEO highlighted:

- there had been good progress across the current Strategic Plan, and a number of projects would be complete by the end of the year; a new Strategic Plan was currently being worked on;
- the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) app: the call for volunteers had generated 150 responses;
- global work: 'veterinary surgeon' had been returned to the Shortage Occupations List by the Migration Advisory Committee;
- following comments in the veterinary press about the amount of business taking place 'in committee' and a perceived lack of transparency, she stressed that: with the addition of the new Finance and Resources Committee (FRC), and the Advancement of the Professions Committee (APC), more work was being carried out in a transparent fashion than ever before, meanwhile the default position was that items at Council meetings would be discussed in the public session unless there was a good reason why not to. Over the summer, subcommittees and working groups had been added to the RCVS website, detailing the work undertaken and their Terms of Reference, together with membership. A project to review the ongoing relevance of groups working underneath the committee structure would be undertaken during this presidential year.

17. It was questioned whether point E6 of the update had moved forward so the College was now proactively engaging with members of the veterinary and veterinary nursing professions so they had input into the College's work. The CEO confirmed that this had moved forward, but needed to go further, and quicker; she would pick this up as a matter of priority. It was further commented that the College had been progressive in improving student engagement, which was noted when meeting members of the professions.

18. The report was noted.

Matters for report

Under care review – incorporating telemedicine / 24-7 emergency cover – update

19. Dr Paterson declared a conflict of interest for this item and refrained from joining the discussion.

20. The Chair, Standards Committee (SC), reported that Council would have received the papers for the forthcoming SC meeting – once they had the opportunity to read them, SC would welcome any comments.

21. It was commented that the work had broadened into a review of ‘under care’ but this appeared to have turned into a telemedicine update – the College should refer to the issue in its correct terms. The CEO apologised for the oversight and this was agreed and has been reflected in the heading for this section of the minutes.

22. The update was noted.

Notices of motion (agenda item taken out of order)

23. There were no notices of motion received.

Questions (agenda item taken out of order)

24. There were no questions received.

Any other College business (agenda item taken out of order)

Election challenge

25. The Registrar reported that the College had received an election challenge following the official declaration of the election results at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 12 July 2019, and the process to deal with it had commenced as per the Council Election Scheme 2006.

26. It was questioned whether the Panel composition to deal with the challenge would be the same as previously used, and confirmed that there would be a new Panel as this was better practice. The Legal Assessor (who would act in an advisory capacity only) would be the same as before.

Risk Register, equality and diversity

27. There were no risks identified from the open session.

Date of next meeting

28. The date of the next meeting is Thursday, 3 October 2019 at 10:00 am (reconvening in afternoon 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm).

RCVS Knowledge Annual General Meeting

29. RCVS Knowledge Trustees had received their papers in August 2019; the minutes would be recorded separately to the RCVS Council minutes herewith.

[Pages 6 to 10 confidential to Council Members ONLY]

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Executive Summary of the Accreditation Visit to the Veterinary School at the University of Surrey

25th February – 1st March 2019.

Report to the Council of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS)
in accordance with Section 5 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966

List of visitors

Representing RCVS

Professor Norman Williamson MVSc MANZCVS DipACT

Chairman of the Visitors

Mr David Black BVM&S DBR MRCVS

Professor Malcolm Cobb VetMB MA DVC PhD MBA MRCVS

Mrs Jill Nute BVSc MRCVS

Professor John Elmerdahl Olsen DVM PhD Dr.Vet.Sci

Dr Clare Tapsfield-Wright BVMS MRCVS

Representing the Australasian Veterinary Boards Council Inc. (AVBC)

Professor Kym Abbott BVSc MVS PhD FACVSc

Representing the South African Veterinary Council (SAVC)

Dr Boitshoko Ntshabele BVMCh MBA DMS

Also present

Dr Susan Paterson MA VetMB DipECVD DVD FRCVS

Observer

Miss Hannah Mason BVSc MRCVS

Student representative

Dr Linda Prescott-Clements

Director of Education, RCVS

Mr Jordan Nicholls

Senior Education Officer, RCVS

Recognition of the University of Surrey's Veterinary Degree

Background to the establishment of the new veterinary school

In July 2012, the University of Surrey contacted RCVS to announce their plans for the establishment of a School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM). Professor Chris Proudman was appointed Head of School and has since led the establishment and development of the School, based in Guildford. The Manor Park and Sports Park campus, where the SVM sits, comprises new teaching and research facilities as well as a Vet School Pathology building and a Vet School Large Animal Clinical Skills Unit.

RCVS has been monitoring the new veterinary degree course at Surrey since 2012, when it was invited to comment on the draft curriculum. The University admitted its first student cohort to the course in September 2014, and these students graduated in July 2019. As of September 2018, the School had 556 undergraduate students, 35 postgraduate students and 159.7 full-time equivalent (FTE) teaching and support staff.

Since the School has been established it has attracted research funding totalling over £9 million, from a variety of sources, and has ranked in the top 100 universities in the world in Veterinary Science Research in Shanghai International ranking 2017 and 2018.

The new veterinary curriculum at Surrey

Since the announcement of the new School, RCVS and the University agreed that there should be a close dialogue to enable the School to develop its curriculum in line with RCVS guidelines and to ensure that students graduate with core clinical competencies. Regular six-monthly progress meetings were established to facilitate this dialogue and to provide advice and guidance on how to meet the RCVS standards for accreditation of veterinary degrees.

The new 5-year veterinary curriculum was designed to deliver outcomes that include all RCVS Day One Competences, and also many of the attributes highlighted by the RCVS/BVA Vet Futures project. Confidence, resilience, innovation, broad career horizons and animal health and welfare are all key components of the curriculum. The first three years of the programme are largely systems-based and spiral in design; year 1 focussing on the 'normal', year 2 on the 'abnormal' and year 3 on diagnosis, prognosis and treatment of disease across the body systems. During year 4 students study the role of the veterinarian in various types of animal industries as well as strengthening the students' skills in clinical reasoning and communication.

Year 5 studies take the form of intra-mural rotations (IMR) where students further develop their clinical and professional skills whilst hosted by Surrey's partner practices. Each IMR rotation is 4 weeks in duration; each student undertakes three rotations in small animal practice, one rotation in equine first opinion practice and one rotation in farm animal practice. A combined pathology/public health rotation is the sixth core rotation. Additionally, each student chooses two 4-week elective rotations allowing them to tailor their IMR experience to individual career objectives.

Partner Practices

Clinical teaching during IMR takes place in partner practices. At the time of the final visit in February 2019 there were 49 partners in the network. The partnership network is managed by the Director of Veterinary Partnerships and Animal resources; delivery of IMR is managed by the Director of Clinical Education with a team of ten Veterinary Clinical Teaching Fellows – VCTF's - (five for the first cohort of students) and is supported by two members of the placements administration team from Student Services.

Use of the partner practices avoided the need for an on-site hospital at the SVM. Consequently, both financial and personnel resource is directed into supporting an effective experiential learning environment around a caseload appropriate for teaching Day One Competences.

RCVS visitations

2017

In accordance with Section 5 of the 1966 Veterinary Surgeons Act, RCVS undertook an inspection with a team of visitors in 2017 when this first cohort had reached the third year of the course. The Visitors' remit was to assess whether the arrangements that had been made, and those which would be put into place over the next two years, were likely to be sufficient to enable the RCVS to recommend to Privy Council that the degree of Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine and Science (BVMSci) from the University of Surrey should be recognised for registration purposes.

The report of this preliminary visit and University response was considered by both the Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee (PQSC) and the Education Committee (EC) in 2017. Both committees felt that whilst there had been some good progress at the School, with a number of commendable areas, there were serious concerns over the lack of progress that had been made in putting all necessary arrangements in place to deliver and assess year 5 of the curriculum to meet the required outcomes. There had been considerable concern that the School may not fully meet the RCVS standards by 2019, when the final visitation was due, and it was agreed that RCVS would complete a full revisit in February 2018 to assess the implementation of plans for final year arrangements as outlined in the University response to the 2017 visit report.

It was also agreed that RCVS would seek an update in September 2017 on progress towards implementation of arrangements for the final year, which was considered by EC in October 2017. The update was felt to be constructive and helpful, indicating that key roles had been filled. It also contained information that had not been available at the year 3 visit such as training programmes for those involved in teaching students in Year 5 and for the Veterinary Clinical Teaching Fellows, who have a pivotal role in overseeing year 5 rotations.

2018

The report and University response following the year four visit were considered by PQSC and EC and it was noted that whilst many of the final year plans were still to be implemented, it had been positive to see that the visitor recommendations from the 2017 visitation were being taken seriously and that RCVS looked forward to seeing the results of these implementations in 2019.

From September onwards, RCVS visitors began the task of visiting all partner practices being used by Surrey for the IMR placements, which all needed to be inspected as part of the final visitation, since there would not be time to visit them all during the week-long visit in 2019. Visitors from the visitation team, along with co-opted expertise from the RCVS list of visitors, inspected the practices in pairs in the weeks leading up to the final visitation. During the week of the final visit, the plan was for the visit team to inspect 12 of the practices again to enable representatives from the South African Veterinary Council (SAVC) and the Australasian Veterinary Boards Council (AVBC), who would join the visit team for the first time, to sample some of the practices for themselves.

2019

The final visitation to the University of Surrey SVM occurred in February 2019. The school had prepared a Self-Evaluation Report (SER) in accordance with the RCVS standards and procedures for the accreditation of veterinary degrees which was circulated to the Visitor team well in advance of the visit and which formed the basis of discussions with staff during the week. The Visitor team met with the veterinary school staff and students, toured all the relevant facilities at the school, and undertook visits to a sample of practices that will be used by students for clinical training. Between September 2018 and January 2019, a sub-set of the Visitor team visited all Surrey partner practices contracted to take students from cohort one for the IMR, as well as those practices intending to take students from cohort two.

Visitors were pleased to see that the School had made efforts in addressing previous concerns, such as VCTF numbers and contingency plans within the partner network. Visitors commended the staff, partner practice network and student body of Surrey University for their enthusiasm and commitment to the School. The large and diverse medical and surgical caseload available through the partner practices gave students access to an excellent learning resource.

RCVS External Examiners

As well as appointing visitors to inspect the course and advise Privy Council, RCVS also appointed two external examiners, Mrs Jennifer Hammond and Professor Mark Bowen. These external examiners monitored assessment processes and the final examinations throughout the final year to ensure that the standards set for the final year assessments were appropriate and that the examinations covered all the significant areas as defined by the RCVS Day One Competences. The RCVS external examiners have overseen final year summative assessments since October 2018 and have taken a full part in the standard setting and moderation process for final year students. They have approved examination materials, attended examination working group meetings, visited partner practices and sampled students' summative assessment work. They also took part in the final examinations and the examiners' board meetings where final pass marks were ratified in accordance with the terms of reference that were agreed between Surrey University and the RCVS.

This arrangement was agreed with the Secretary of State for DEFRA, acting as Privy Counsellor. It was put into place as a contingency to protect the interests of students in case there was any delay in processing the Recognition Order in time for Surrey's graduation ceremony in July 2019. With RCVS external examiners working alongside Surrey's external examiners, the final examinations have in effect operated as joint RCVS/Surrey exams, enabling Section 4 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act to come into effect. Section 4 entitles students at a UK veterinary school without a Recognition Order, who pass an

RCVS examination, to register as Members of RCVS. Therefore, if there was an unexpected delay in processing the Recognition Order through the Privy Council and laying it before Parliament in time for the University's graduation ceremony, students who passed their final exams would still be entitled to register with RCVS.

This arrangement under Section 4 of the Act will be superseded once a Recognition Order comes into force. RCVS External Examiners signed off the 2019 pass list and therefore had control over which students graduated in July.

Summary of the visitor findings and the University responses

Standard 1 – Organisation

Recommendations

1. The School must give immediate attention to providing additional resource to ensure the resilience and sustainability of the IMR rotation management.

Response: The School recognises the need for additional resource to support IMR management and will address this as a matter of urgency. We have completed a review of requirements and are working to provide appropriate resource to ensure a resilient management structure.

2. The School must use a real-time method of recording any deficiencies at partner practices and the consequent mitigations and resolutions. This may include findings from audit, self-assessment or VCTF observation. These systems must be established with sufficient resource provision to manage audits and effect prompt remediation.

Response: The School will enhance the utility of the current IMR Practice Resources Log through provision of dedicated IMR management support (see response to Recommendation 1). The manager will be trained to undertake practice audits, to record and monitor deficiencies and will be tasked with maintaining an action tracker.

3. The School must continue to ensure that annual external audits of IMR providers continues until the cohort size of the programme stabilises.

Response: The School will continue to undertake an annual external audit of IMR provision at each site in addition to introducing interim, internal self-assessments.

Standard 2 – Finances

There are no recommendations or suggestions.

Standard 3 – Physical Facilities

Commendation

4. The enthusiasm and engagement shown by the partner practices in providing resources for the rotations in final year is commended.

Recommendation

5. Students and staff visiting the white meat abattoir must use suitable PPE and follow Good Hygiene Practices to ensure their own safety and the safety of the food items produced by the abattoir.

Response: The School has already amended requirements for staff and students undertaking abattoir visits and has purchased appropriate PPE following advice from the visitors. School staff will work with the abattoir to ensure that current legislation relating to personal protection and Good Hygiene Practices is adhered to.

Suggestions

6. Efforts to find a FSA-approved white meat abattoir for student visitation should continue in order to replace or complement the facility currently used.

Response: The School continues to seek such a teaching resource.

7. The School should continue monitoring whether adequate space is available for students on campus at peak hours.

Response: The School is committed to ongoing monitoring of space usage with Faculty and University teams to ensure that adequate provision is made for students on the Manor Park campus.

8. The School should ensure that there is sufficient and appropriate dedicated space for the VCTF team to meet tutees either in person or virtually, and/or to have confidential videoconference discussions with them.

Response: The School is working with the University's Head of Strategic Space Management to ensure that adequate, appropriate meeting spaces are available for the VCTF team and other School staff working in the VSM building.

9. The School risk register should continue to be actively reviewed and updated frequently enough to enable monitoring of the risks around scaling up of the programme to ensure effective IMR provision.

Response: The School will continue to update its risk register every 6 months and the IMR Operations Group will continue to review progress against IMR-specific mitigating actions monthly.

Standard 4 – Animal Resources

Commendation

10. The School is commended on the provision of a large and diverse medical and surgical case load through the relationship with partner practices, which includes a high proportion of first opinion cases.

Suggestions

11. Steps should be taken to ensure that each student in the following classes has the opportunity to necropsy sufficient numbers of companion and farm animals.

Response: The School continues to grow its pathology service, thereby increasing opportunities for student practical experience. The School also has established alternative routes of acquiring materials to support this requirement

12. The placement of students in a referral practice before they complete a placement in a primary care practice should be avoided if possible. In the event that this is unavoidable, the School should monitor the students' experience in the referral practice to ensure that there are no untoward impacts on student learning.

Response: The School will seek feedback from multiple sources on this situation to determine any potential detriment to learning.

Standard 5 – Information Resources

Suggestion

13. The School should ensure that students have reasonable access to online resources whilst on IMR rotations.

Response: The School will continue to monitor access to online resources at partner practices through audit and student feedback. We will develop bespoke solutions to any issues that arise.

Standard 6 – Students

Suggestion

14. As cohort size increases, attention should be paid to the workload of VCTFs to ensure they have sufficient time to continue to provide effective levels of pastoral care to both students on IMR and their personal tutees in fourth and final year.

Response: The School will continue to monitor VCTF workload. Additional VCTF posts will be recruited according to the School's staffing plan. Supplementary non-academic, logistic support for IMR management (see Recommendation 1 above) is expected to have a beneficial impact on VCTF workload.

Standard 7 – Admission & Progression

Suggestions

15. The school should place more emphasis on the need for students to undertake compulsory EMS in their own time and at their own expense on the school admissions information pages of the website and in other marketing materials.

Response: The School will work with the University marketing team to place more emphasis on the financial and time requirements of EMS in its admissions information.

16. The school should continue seeking innovative ways to explain clearly to potential applicants what they might expect during IMR rotations.

Response: The School will continue to enhance its communications to applicants about IMR. In particular, it will use student accounts of IMR to build realistic expectations amongst applicants.

Standard 8 – Academic & Support Staff

Recommendation

17. The School must review staffing in mission critical areas to ensure that there is sufficient depth of expertise and experience to ensure that the teaching programme can continue to operate smoothly if key individuals are not available or resign.

Response: The School is in the process of making several staff appointments which, in addition to their primary roles, will provide resilience in key areas of teaching provision. A review of teaching resilience and succession planning will be led by the Programme Director and recommendations made to the Senior Management Team.

Standard 9 – Curriculum

Suggestions

18. The School should ensure appropriate and consistent provision of computers, textbooks and student study areas at the various IMR placements.

Response: The School is committed to providing a standard set of student study resources in all IMR practices. In addition to furniture, a set of rotation-specific, hard-copy textbooks is provided. A range of bespoke IT solutions has been implemented to ensure consistent student access to clinical records and for students to undertake private study. Resource to maintain this provision has been incorporated into the School budget. A laptop loan system will be implemented for any students who do not own a laptop or who have problems with their own laptop.

19. The school should ensure that pre-placement review of learning objectives and the delivery of feedback to students on rotation between placements is consistent.

Response: The IMR Educational Advisory Group has recently reviewed the implementation of pre-placement learning objectives during the mid-module review, and has recommended refinements for the 2019/20 academic year. Further training of VCTFs and CIMs in light of these changes will ensure greater consistency of engagement with learning objectives and student feedback.

Standard 10 – Assessment

Suggestion

20. The School should consider enhancing the construct validity of summative assessment of students' clinical ability.

Response: Summative assessment of clinical ability is achieved through a range of established formats. We will continue to monitor validity and once sufficient evidence is available we will make appropriate changes as necessary.

Standard 11 – Research Programmes, Continuing & Higher Degrees

There are no recommendations or suggestions.

Standard 12 – Outcomes Assessment

There are no recommendations or suggestions.

Surrey Recognition Order

RCVS Primary Qualifications Subcommittee (PQSC) and Education Committee considered the visitation report, the University response, and subsequent external examiners reports of the final year assessments at Surrey SVM. Whilst there remained some minor deficiencies to be addressed, they were reassured that the RCVS standards for accreditation had been met and that the first cohort of students would graduate as Day One Competent.

It was agreed that RCVS Council should be invited to commend the report of its visitors to the Privy Council, with advice that Surrey's new veterinary degree of Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine and Science (BVMSci) should be recognised by the Privy Council for registration purposes under Section 3(1) of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966.

Once the Recognition Order is laid before Parliament, which is planned for November 2019, Surrey University will then enter the cyclical RCVS accreditation process and be subject to routine inspection through annual monitoring and University visitations.

PQSC and Education Committee recommended that the next full visitation of Surrey SVM within this cycle should be in two years' time, to inspect Surrey's progress in addressing the comments, suggestions and recommendations from the visit report.

Meeting	Council
Date	3 October 2019
Title	Veterinary Council of Ireland Mutual Recognition Agreement
Classification	Unclassified
Summary	<p>The Veterinary Council of Ireland (VCI) is keen to explore a Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) with RCVS so that, following Brexit, the mutual recognition of veterinary degrees in the UK and Republic of Ireland is continued. RCVS staff drafted an MRA based on the ones which it holds with both Australian Veterinary Boards Council (AVBC) and the South Africa Veterinary Council (SAVC), with subtle differences to reflect the fact that VCI is not currently part of the International Accreditors Working Group (IAWG). The draft presented to Council has been considered by the Education Committee of the VCI on 6 September and no further changes were suggested.</p>
Decisions required	To approve the MRA.
Attachments	MRA between RCVS and the VCI.
Author	<p>Jordan Nicholls Senior Education Officer j.nicholls@rcvs.org.uk 020 7202 0704</p>

AGREEMENT FOR MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF PROGRAMMES OF VETERINARY EDUCATION

AGREEMENT BETWEEN

THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SURGEONS (RCVS)

of Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF, United Kingdom

AND

THE VETERINARY COUNCIL OF IRELAND (VCI)

Of 53 Lansdowne Rd, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4, Ireland

MADE ON [date]

This Agreement is entered to facilitate the mutual recognition of programmes of veterinary education between the United Kingdom and Ireland, in the context of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union, in an effort to ensure continued accessibility for Veterinary Practitioners seeking registration in Ireland and the United Kingdom.

This agreement enables the acceptance of systems of accreditation and visitation in the United Kingdom (carried out by the RCVS) and in the Republic of Ireland (carried out by the VCI) as the basis of recognising veterinary qualifications for the purpose of registration, as follows:-

1. The recognised qualifications shall be accepted as the basis for registration to practise veterinary surgery by the RCVS in the United Kingdom and by the VCI in the Republic of Ireland, subject to meeting any other requirements which may be set out in the relevant legislation of the country or state in which registration is sought. Each party to this Agreement shall inform the other of any changes in such legislation.
 2. The recognised qualifications shall include veterinary degrees awarded by the UK universities accredited by the RCVS prior to the date of this agreement, and the University College Dublin veterinary degree accredited by the VCI in the Republic of Ireland.
 3. Accreditation by the RCVS and the VCI means direct accreditation of institutions by those organisations and does not include recognition of institutions accredited by third party accrediting organisations.
 4. The RCVS and the VCI shall carry out regular visitations of the veterinary in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, respectively, normally on a seven year cycle and with no more than a 10 year interval between visits to an individual school, and shall send each other for information only, a draft copy of each visitation report as soon as it has been checked for factual accuracy by the university concerned. These visitations of the veterinary schools may be carried out in conjunction with or as part of any international accreditation body, to include European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) or American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), as agreed between the parties. Each organisation shall then send to the other organisation the final version of each report as soon
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as it has been approved by either the RCVS in the case of the UK schools, or by the VCI in the case of schools in the Republic of Ireland. Any unreasonable delay in carrying out a visit, or sharing a visitation report, may be grounds for acting in accordance with paragraph 7 8(iv) of this Agreement.

5. The RCVS and the VCI shall furnish each other with complete copies of the current visitation procedures and documentation specifying standards and methods of evaluation and provide immediate information about any material changes made. Each party to this Agreement reserves the right to call for a review of this Agreement if material changes are made to the standards, the procedure or the documentation used for visitations.
 6. For visitations to veterinary schools in the United Kingdom or The Republic of Ireland, both RCVS and the VCI will reserve the right to send normally at least one, but no more than two, visitors with full voting rights. It is open to either the VCI or RCVS to waive this right or option at their discretion, on the basis of any individual accreditation.
 7. Once final visitation reports have been received, as described in Paragraph 3 4 above, the Council of the receiving organisation shall decide whether to:-
 - i. accept the report, on the basis that no material deficiencies have been identified and the receiving organisation is satisfied that the qualification is sufficient to meet the current registration requirements in that country or state; or
 - ii. specify that certain steps should be taken, within a stated period of time: for example, to provide further information, to effect changes or remedy any deficiencies, if there are deficiencies that have been identified, or if the receiving organisation has concerns. In such a case it would be expected that the University in question should formally respond within two years in a letter from the Vice-Chancellor / Dean of the College; and/or
 - iii. make a further visit itself, subject to the agreement of the school in question, to investigate its continuing concerns or to confirm that there are no longer any material deficiencies; and/or
 - iv. withdraw recognition, if there is any unnecessary delay in responding to a request for changes to be made or for further information to be provided.
 8. In the event that either of the parties to this Agreement, or the relevant registration authorities, is not satisfied that a qualification is sufficient to meet their statutory or other requirements for registration, the RCVS and the VCI have the right to withhold or withdraw recognition. Any withdrawal of recognition shall have immediate effect unless a different date is specified.
 9. In the event of withdrawal of recognition for a degree, graduates who achieved their degree prior to the withdrawal of recognition will remain eligible for registration on the basis of their veterinary qualification, provided all other statutory and registration requirements of the registering authority have been met.
 10. The visitors' vouched travel, accommodation and any vouched/documented loss of earnings allowance payable by the visitors' home accrediting body will be borne by the accrediting
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Minutes of the Advancement of the Professions Committee held on Tuesday, 7 May 2019 at
2pm at Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Members:	Dr C J Allen*	Council Member
	Professor N Bacon*	Chair, RCVS Fellowship Board
	Ms A Boag*	President and Leadership lead
	Dr N Connell	Junior Vice-President
	Professor G England (Chair)	Council Member
	Ms L Lockett	Chief Executive
	Miss R Marshall*	Chair, Veterinary Nurses Council
	Mrs J Molyneux	Chair, Board of Trustees for RCVS Knowledge
	Professor S Reid	Chair, Mind Matters Initiative
	Dr C Tufnell	Innovation and Global lead
	Mr T Walker	Lay Council Member
In attendance:	Mr A Roberts	Director of Leadership and Innovation
	Mr O Glackin	Leadership Initiatives Manager and APC Secretary
	Mrs J Dugmore	Director of Veterinary Nursing
	Mr C Gush	Executive Director, Knowledge
	Ms L Quigley	Mind Matters Initiative Manager
	Dr G Wild	Policy and Public Affairs Officer
	Mr B Myring	Senior Policy and Public Affairs Officer
	Mr I Holloway	Director of Communications
	Ms L Prescott-Clement	Director of Education
	Ms E Ferguson (part, item 7)	Registrar
	Mr L Bishop	Senior Communications Officer

*absent

Welcome and apologies for absence

1. The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting of the APC.
2. Apologies were received from:
 - Dr C J Allen
 - Professor N Bacon
 - Ms A Boag
 - Miss R Marshall

Declarations of Interest

3. No new declarations of interest were received.

Minutes of the last meeting, held on 5 February 2019

4. The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.
5. In relation to matters arising from paragraph 6, the Director of Leadership and Innovation explained that the advice received was that whilst the Fellowship, being a membership category of the RCVS, was not open to veterinary nurses, the Charter does allow for the awarding of other designations to suitable individuals. Accordingly, such a designation could come in the form of an Associate Fellowship for VNs whose contributions distinguish them. VN Council was invited to consider working up a proposal setting out what such a designation would comprise. Assistance in doing this was offered by the Director of Leadership and Innovation, if required.
6. In relation to matters arising from paragraph 12, the Chair expressed content that the improvements asked for in the workstream activity summaries had been implemented and had resulted in greater uniformity in reporting.
7. A member of the Committee then took the opportunity to remind members of the exciting opportunity the remit of the APC provided. In particular they noted how synchronising workstream activities could make them more impactful and asked members to have this at the forefront of their minds as they discussed the activity update summary.

Updates from APC workstreams

8. The responsible Committee members or the relevant staff lead provided an update on each of the eight workstream areas that come within scope of the APC, this reflected the contents of the paper (APC May 19 AI10).

9. The Committee considered these updates as well as specific matters raised, brought to it for discussion and in some cases decision. These are highlighted here in addition to the main questions and comments each area prompted.

a) Diversity and Inclusion Working Group

- The first meeting of the Group had only recently been held. The workstream comprises several themes and ordering these was, therefore, a priority. Levels of enthusiasm amongst the group's membership was high. There was now a need for it to start gathering data so that it could better understand the landscape and where interventions could be most effectively made.
- The purpose of the Group is not to provide oversight but rather to identify and recommend where diversity issues need to be taken into account and embedded into working processes. This would be done organically – first, looking within the RCVS; second, in the ways the RCVS interacts with the profession and the public; and, third, within the professions more widely.
- Although the need for funding at this stage was negligible as the group still needed to understand its priority areas, any initial funds which were thought to be necessary to allow it to do its work would come via the discretionary fund. Doing so would ensure it received appropriate scrutiny through the newly formed Finance and Resources Committee.
- It was confirmed that part of the Group's remit was to consider how it could increase the social diversity of the professions.

b) Fellowship of the RCVS

- Before the Committee discussed and decided on two issues brought to it, a general point was made about the important role that the Fellowship Science Advisory Panel could be playing in raising the profile of the Fellowship. It was also raised that the Fellowship had an excellent and exciting strategy that was agreed by RCVS Council last year and that there was a strong appetite to see parts of that delivered.
- The Committee agreed to the proposal to further develop and roll out an online Fellowship Directory. Doing so, and making it publically available, was considered to be an important step in highlighting the pool of expertise that the Fellowship can boast. There was agreement that safeguards should be in place to prevent the Directory from being used for specific marketing – however, a balance needed to be struck as the Directory should not prevent Fellows from promoting their professional expertise and achievements.
- The Committee agreed the proposal to invite Fellows to make a voluntary contribution of £50 to attend Fellowship Day this year. Fellows would not be

required to make this contribution if they brought someone with them who was a Member but not a Fellow, if they were contributing to Fellowship Day in some capacity or if they were being awarded a Fellowship. The Committee heard that doing this was a move to increase attendance at Fellowship Day as well as supporting the Fellowship's other outreach work. Without seeking to recover some costs it would be increasingly difficult to justify the current level of expenditure on the event.

c) Innovation

- It was agreed to defer discussion of this activity stream to the later agenda item – Innovation (ViVet) Strategy paper (APC May 2019 AI13).

d) International – RCVS Global

- Discussion of this topic was deferred to the later agenda item – Findings from the RCVS visit to the Commonwealth Veterinary Conference (CVC), Bangalore (APC May 2019 AI12).

e) Leadership

- The Director of Leadership and Innovation raised the topic of the Edward Jenner Leadership Programme and its tripartite collaboration (RCVS, NHS Leadership Academy and FutureLearn). There was acknowledgement that this presented a low level risk, owing to the memorandum of understanding that underpins the relationship. Ways to solidify this were being pursued. A further complication was the restructuring currently affecting one of the partners.
- Comments and questions raised about the leadership programme included but were not limited to the importance of the programme's final module in judging its impact, and what was the next step after the Jenner programme. In response to the latter it was explained the College would have to consider how far it was appropriate, and had the capacity, to provide or support more advanced leadership training or other associated interventions.
- It was noted that work to deliver a short campaign showcasing leadership and the diversity of leadership roles in the professions was earmarked to be launched at RCVS Day in July.

f) **Mind Matters Initiative**

- An overview reflecting the contents of the workstream activity summary was provided to the Committee.
- Questions and comments included but were not limited to whether a date had been set for the publication of the College's response to the Open Minds Consulting review of the RCVS's disciplinary practices. It was confirmed that this was expected in May. There were several suggestions from the Committee of individuals who might be able to present MMI-sponsored webinars, including the provider of the MMI/British Small Animal Veterinary Association-backed resilience training, although the disadvantages of this were noted in terms of potentially reducing the number of delegates on the courses, and the recipients of the MMI research grants.
- It was noted that a risk register covering MMI's work was being worked up and would be presented to the Audit and Risk Committee in July.

g) **RCVS Knowledge**

- An overview reflecting the summary document was provided to the Committee.
- Highlighted for comment was the decision to cancel Vet19, instead providing a digital version of the event, and the headwinds that made it increasingly challenging to stage cost-neutral events.
- It was also highlighted that the RCVS Knowledge's Veterinary Evidence publication was attracting an increasing number of international plaudits.

h) **VN Futures**

- Nothing further was reported beyond the contents of the workstream activity summary.

Fellowship Board: Composition, elections and appointments

10. The Committee had before it a paper that presented proposals for the future composition of the Fellowship Board, the process for appointing/electing new members to the Board and how to ensure a phased transition that will maintain necessary continuity (APC May 2019 AI11).

11. Following the presentation of the paper's key points by the Director of Leadership and Innovation questions and comments from the Committee included, but were not limited to:

- The distinct need to ensure the right balance of skills on any Fellowship Board. In particular, in the context of the Fellowship having the stated aim of becoming a thriving and active learned society, it was felt that the Board's make up needed to

reflect this in terms of the number of positions and the profile of those who filled them;

- Concerns were raised that too much of the Board's people resource, 50 per cent, would be focussed on the Fellowship appointment process. The result of this being that there would potentially be insufficient capacity to drive the Fellowship's other strategic objectives;
- To have the capacity to fulfil its broader goals, there was a suggestion that the Board might benefit from having more members or alternatively the ability to establish sub-groups of Fellows with the task of delivering discrete objectives;
- A specific issue was raised about the role of Chair of the Fellowship Science Advisory Panel (FSAP) and Vice-Chair of the Fellowship always being synonymous. Whilst it was explained that the shared role, as currently proposed, emphasised the importance of the FSAP, concerns remained that this might mean it was perceived as overly burdensome with the result that good candidates might be deterred from applying;
- A general point was made about the need for the Fellowship to have a secure budget. It was stressed that implementing the proposals contained in the paper would go towards ensuring that this could be done.

12. The Committee concluded its discussions by agreeing that it was broadly supportive of the proposals contained in the paper. It asked, however, for the Fellowship Board to consider:

- Creating some flexibility that would allow the role of Vice-Chair of the Fellowship and the Chair of the FSAP to be offered separately if it was considered to be advantageous to do so; and
- For the Board to have the right to add a further Fellow, a third member, to the Board if required.

Action: Leadership and Innovation

Innovation (ViVet) Strategy

13. Before the paper providing details of the RCVS innovation programme (APC May 2019 AI13) was put to the Committee, the Committee heard from the invited speaker Tris Dyson, Executive Director of NESTA's centre for challenge prizes.

14. Points the speaker made included but were not limited to:

- How regulation can create an enabling environment in which valuable innovation can flourish;
- Regulators are under political pressure to be innovation enablers;
- That innovation cuts across existing regulatory boundaries, and/or has implications across many regulated spaces. As a consequence: individual regulators may not

understand the broader implications; multiple regulators in the same space increases complexity/cost for innovators; and the risk of innovations “falling between the cracks” is greater;

- Anticipatory Regulation is at the cutting edge of current practice and is being adopted by Government. Anticipatory Regulation incorporates several key aspects: inclusive and collaborative; future-facing; proactive; iterative; outcomes-based; and decentralised experimentation.
- Challenge prizes form part of regulatory innovation by using competitions to: create better solutions; bring together innovators to help them thrive; and to unlock systemic change.
- A number of challenges are underway or are planned working in collaboration with other UK regulators. Several of these use the method of sandboxing to test regulatory innovation. These are controlled test environments in which increasingly difficult scenarios can be created that rigorously test the regulatory regime.

15. Comments and questions arising as a result of the presentation included but were not limited to: how are the challenge prizes funded – do regulators make a contribution?; how do regulators manage the obvious risk that they appear to be supporting one small group of innovators over another?; and what are the best ways of disseminating the results of sandbox trials?

16. Following the presentation the Committee went on to consider the RCVS innovation paper. This was presented by the Director of Leadership and Innovation. The Committee was provided with background on the genesis of ViVet and its purpose. The paper raised a number of points for discussion. These covered:

- the role of ViVet in providing regulatory advice and guidance and whether the approach it was taking to do this was felt to be appropriate;
- what innovation accelerator programmes it would be appropriate for Vivet to support or organise;
- whether there was merit and support for ViVet to develop a network for veterinary innovation; and
- that the current presentation of the Vivet brand as being at arm-length of RCVS should be reviewed so that the connection to RCVS was instead emphasised.

17. Questions and comments from the Committee included, but were not limited to:

- That this is an exciting and important programme. It is correct that the RCVS should be giving regulatory advice and guidance to those who want to innovate and that this should come early in the process;
- The steps being taken to safeguard against any conflicts of interest are reassuring;

- ViVet has a role in helping identify areas that might benefit from innovation – thus providing focus for innovators;
- That there might be merit in using the website to set out with greater clarity what ViVet is doing with external bodies;
- There needed to be some acceptance that innovators and entrepreneurs will push boundaries and that the College should recognise this, encourage it, but ensure appropriate regulation is maintained;
- That ViVet was an important part of the College's work, that positioning it more closely within the College's brand was appropriate and would be beneficial;
- That ViVet should be more ambitious with its Hackathons;

18. The Committee concluded by agreeing to all the proposals contained in the paper with the caveat that at this point an innovation accelerator should not extend beyond the boundaries of collaborating with NHS England.

Report on RCVS visit to the CVC in Bangalore and options for the RCVS Global Strategy

19. The Committee was given a verbal update on previous international visits in relation to the RCVS Global Strategy and had before it a paper (APC May 2019 AI12) that provided feedback on a recent visit RCVS made to the CVC in Bangalore. Building on these findings and an earlier 'deep-dive' into the College's international activity, options that could be pursued under the College's Global Strategy were presented.

20. Following the paper's presentation, questions and comments from the Committee included:

- That membership of the World Veterinary Association (WVA) is an attractive proposition and the College could no doubt learn a great deal and also make a contribution. But before making any decision on the appropriateness of RCVS joining, a rigorous costs and benefits analysis should be carried out, with the option of becoming an observer for a period of time being considered;
- Some caution should be exercised around the harmonisation of standards and development of mutual recognition agreements, as while there is currently a great deal of commonality between some jurisdictions the underpinning assurance processes are often different;
- That the options proposed for developing the College's Global Strategy further should be rooted in an objective review of the countries that the College should focus its resources on;

- That India does provide a useful test case to overlay the options onto in order to understand whether they are viable.

21. The Committee agreed that all of the options contained in the paper should be worked up and brought back to it for further consideration. The Committee was also content for India to be viewed as a test-bed for some the options, if that was appropriate.

Action: Global Strategy

Any other business

22. It was noted that this was the last APC chaired by Professor England. The Chief Executive thanked him for his time and commitment in setting up the APC and cementing its position within the College's governance structures.

Date of the next meeting

23. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as the afternoon of Tuesday, 10 September 2019.

Draft Minutes of the Advancement of the Professions Committee held on Tuesday, 10 September 2019 at 2pm at Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Members:

Dr C J Allen	Council Member
Professor D Argyle (Chair)	Council Member
Professor N Bacon*	Chair, RCVS Fellowship Board
Ms A Boag*	Senior Vice-President and Leadership lead
Dr N Connell	President, and Chair, Diversity and Inclusion Group
Professor S Dawson	Chair, Mind Matters Initiative
Ms L Lockett	Chief Executive
Miss R Marshall	Chair, Veterinary Nurses Council
Mrs J Molyneux	Chair, Board of Trustees for RCVS Knowledge
Dr C Tufnell	Innovation and Global lead
Mr T Walker	Lay Council Member
In attendance: Mr A Roberts	Director of Leadership and Innovation
Mr B Myring	Policy and Public Affairs Manager
Mr I Holloway	Director of Communications

*absent

Welcome and apologies for absence

1. The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting of the APC. He noted he was new to the Committee and proposed a discussion about the function and future role of the Committee under 'Any Other Business'.
2. Apologies were received from:
 - Professor N Bacon
 - Ms A Boag

Declarations of Interest

3. Lizzie Lockett noted she was now a member of the Communications and Fundraising Committee of the Mental Health Foundation.

Minutes of the last meeting, held on 7 May 2019

4. The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

Updates from APC workstreams

5. The responsible Committee members or the relevant staff lead provided an update on each of the eight workstreams that come within scope of the APC, this reflected the contents of the paper (APC Sept 19 AI03).
6. The Committee considered these updates as well as specific matters raised, brought to it for discussion and in some cases decision. These are highlighted below in addition to the main questions and comments each area prompted.

Diversity and Inclusion Working Group

7. It was noted that good progress was being made, despite the Group having only met twice. Feedback was sought from the Committee on a 'statement of intent' the Group had drafted on diversity and inclusion.
8. In discussion about the statement the following points were discussed:
 - a. Why have a statement when it just stated what was already the law? It was noted that evidence showed that having such a statement had a positive impact on organisations' culture in relation to diversity and inclusion;
 - b. The statement should also address how the profession looks to the wider public and issues of discrimination in relation to socio-economic status and access to veterinary care. In response it was proposed that 'access to veterinary services' should be included in the statement in addition to 'access to...the veterinary professions';
 - c. Concern was raised that the statement redefined protected characteristics, for example, it did not include pregnancy. There needed to be a need clear rationale if different language or characteristics were being used;
 - d. 'Staff team' should be extended to 'governance team' as well.
 - e. Where does the statement go? APC from a governance perspective and after that it becomes part of internal policy and 'how we work' documents. Its existence would be promoted via the usual media channels.

Fellowship

9. It was noted that there was 'disquiet' amongst the Fellows about being asked to contribute financially or to bring an MRCVS to Fellowship Day. In response, it was noted that it was important that the Day engaged the veterinary community beyond the Fellowship and the contribution or bringing a colleague who may become a Fellow in the future helped to achieve this goal. No Fellow, however, was required to do either and they were still able to attend free of charge.
10. A proposal was made that Fellowship Day could be held on a rotating basis at the UK veterinary schools in order to reduce costs and improve engagement. It was noted that the Board was considering alternative formats and venues, and this would be fed into discussions.
11. Concern was raised about the gender split of new Fellows and the need to undertake further work to encourage women to apply. The Committee asked the Board to look at this issue and noted that it looked forward to promotion of a bold strategic vision from the Fellowship as to how it will become a thriving learned society.
12. The Fellowship was also encouraged to communicate more actively with the veterinary schools about the next wave of Fellows on Tour events, to ensure the continued success of this well-received initiative.

Global

13. It was noted that there had been constructive discussions with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) regarding its statutory bodies twinning scheme, a programme which seeks to share knowledge and raise standards in jurisdictions with no, or with emerging, statutory bodies. A shortlist of countries for potential twinning was being discussed.
14. Discussions had been held with the World Veterinary Association (WVA) about becoming members and the WVA was keen for the RCVS to become 'Observers'. A key concern about WVA membership had been the cost, but there was no cost to being an observer. Furthermore, the British Veterinary Association had been positive about the RCVS joining on this basis. The Committee, therefore, made a decision that the RCVS should become an WVA Observer Member.
15. There was a wider discussion about the potential global commercialisation of RCVS Knowledge resources, such as access to the online journal, Veterinary Evidence. Significant concerns and issues were raised about the implications of such a decision and further discussions would be required before any decisions were made.

Innovation

16. It was noted that a new format of regional innovation networking evening had been successfully trialled at the University of Edinburgh's Easter Bush Campus. This would now be rolled out at other locations and universities.
17. There was a discussion about the forthcoming symposium and the wider difficulties that organisations had been experiencing in getting veterinary professionals to attend non-clinical continuing professional development (CPD). It was noted that all sessions at the symposium would be recorded and the content made available on the ViVet website to ensure the largest possible audience.
18. It was noted that a key challenge was convincing the profession to engage with innovation and the impact of technological change.

Leadership

19. The Committee discussed Workstream Two of RCVS Leadership, which focused on making the RCVS an exemplar of leadership development. Discussion focused on the types of training that might be offered to staff and Council members, and how to utilise the Council skills matrix more effectively when populating committees and identifying skill gaps. The issue of introducing appraisals for committee chairs was also discussed. It was agreed that once the programme of work was developed it would go to the Officer Team before being taken forward.

Mind Matters Initiative

20. It was reported that lots was happening with the initiative including: a series of resilience courses with the British Small Animal Veterinary Association; the presentation of the inaugural Sarah Brown Research Grant at RCVS Day; a pilot of Schwartz Rounds, the first Veterinary Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Roundtable and the second Veterinary Mental Health Research Symposium.
21. There was a broader discussion about mental health issues in the profession and wider society, and the fact that many support services were now becoming overwhelmed.
22. From a veterinary nursing perspective, improved support to help Clinical Coaches dealing with students suffering from mental health issues was highlighted as a critical issue. The CEO acknowledged this and said she had presented Mind Matters activities at the Clinical Coach Congress and that working with VN educators and coaches would be a priority in 2020. If the first Veterinary Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Roundtable proved successful, a similar event for VN students would be considered.

RCVS Knowledge

23. It was reported that work to support the profession to adopt a culture of Quality Improvement (QI) was ongoing. There had been a successful joint bid with the University of Kent for a PhD to examine the impact of the College's formation on the profession. Veterinary Evidence continued to expand and was introducing QI resources and case studies. Consideration was being given to how the Knowledge could work with Fellows to help generate Knowledge Summary questions.

VN Futures - Update

24. The Chair of the Veterinary Nurses Council provided a detailed update to the Committee on the progress made on the VN Futures programme.
25. It was noted the RCVS had tried to reinvigorate the project board, and had recently hired a project manager to drive the programme forward. The membership of all working groups had been reviewed, although the majority of members had remained in position. The working groups had identified priority issues and were focusing on addressing these. The Sustainable Workforce Group had previously identified diversity as a key issue, but the group had decided that promoting veterinary nurse STEM ambassadors was their top issue. The Careers Development Group was focusing on the delivery of webinars and the One Health Group had determined that Community Nursing was their main issue.
26. It was noted that discussions would be had with the British Veterinary Nursing Association (BVNA) regarding how to make the Board more effective and to improve its strategic role in driving the project forward.

Any other business

27. The Chair noted that he understood the important governance role the Committee played, but he wanted to explore how the Committee could become better than the sum of its parts and use the reports it received to make a difference to the profession.
28. The Committee welcomed the proposed discussion and a number of members noted their frustration that the Committee was yet to fulfil its potential to bring together the exciting projects it governed, and to add value by aligning them behind a vision to advance the professions.

29. It was agreed that the governance role had worked well and brought transparency around key areas of work and expenditure. Guest speakers had work well too but there needed to be more focus as to what the Committee does with the intelligence and insights it gains.
30. It was proposed that at the next meeting a speaker could be sought on the issue of big data, as this is an area that will impact all aspects of the profession, the role of professionals and the role of the College.
31. The CEO proposed that an overarching theme for the year might help to unify workstreams and bring focus to the Committee and suggested 'Advancing the Professions through Primary Care Practice' as a theme as this had been something that two previous Presidents had been keen to explore but resourcing issues had made this impossible at the time. Each workstream reporting to the Committee was tasked with thinking about how work in their areas could be developed to support this theme in 2020 and be prepared to discuss this at the November meeting of the Committee.

ACTION: Committee members and staff leads

32. It was noted that the Committee must remember animals and their owners and not focus exclusively on the profession. The absence of animal owners around the table was notable compared to similar human healthcare settings, where patient groups always now had a voice.
33. The Chairman thanked members for their constructive input into this discussion and noted he felt reassured as to the direction of travel and role of the Committee.

[Date of the next meeting](#)

34. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as the afternoon of 12 November 2019.

Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 25 April 2019 at Belgravia House, 62/64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Members:

Ms E Butler	Chair
Mr D Bray	
Professor T R C Greet*	
Mr V Olowe*	
Ms J Rutherford	
Ms J Shardlow	

* Not present

In attendance:

Dr C P Sturgess	Treasurer
Ms L Lockett	CEO
Ms C McCann	Director of Operations (DoO)
Mr A Roberts	Director of Innovation & Leadership Strategy (DoLI) (for item XXX)
Mr A Quinn-Byrne	Secretary and Governance Officer
Mr L Bishop	Senior Communications Officer
Ms N May	Audit Partner, Crowe

Apologies for absence

1. Apologies for absence were received from Professor Greet and Mr Olowe.

Declarations of interest

2. Ms Butler has been appointed as a non-executive Director at Connect Health Ltd, based in Newcastle, UK.

Minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2019

3. The minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2019 were accepted as a true record.

Matters arising (not covered elsewhere)

4. Matrix of Assurance - work is currently on going, it was noted that the Senior Team is collating all fraud activities and details about how service delivery is reported
5. Risk Register - a new electronic risk register was currently being reviewed. It would provide evidence for the assurance matrix and it is hoped that it would be before the Committee in July 2019.
6. Corporate credit card - there is a total monthly credit limit of £68,000, with a monthly allowance of £2,500 for each card user, and a limit for each purchase.
7. Delegation Scheme -this had been to the Operational Board in April where minor amendments were suggested and is to go to RCVS Council in June.

Update from CEO

8. The CEO updated the committee on activities since the last Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) meeting in January 2019, and commented on several issues:
9. Brexit - over the last few months staff had prepared robustly for Brexit from both a 'deal' and 'no deal' perspective, however current political developments had left elements of this process uncertain. It was reiterated that the RCVS was prepared in the current interlude of political impasse but, due to uncertainty, no one could be sure as to the full extent of the risks that may arise. The Committee discussed areas of concern that stemmed from Brexit that could have an impact on risk for the College as follows:
 - Impact of overseas-graduated vets working in the UK.
 - Statutory Examination for Membership and recognition of European degrees.
 - If there was a 'no deal' scenario, the issue of certification of food products.
 - Temporary registration and the fact that there is currently no appeal process for decisions.
 - Relationships with large corporate employers.
10. The Committee noted that due to the uncertainty surrounding Brexit, it was important for the College to identify and map out not only what the risks were but also to distinguish, and be specific, in terms of the distinction between risks to the RCVS, and overall risks from Brexit to the country.
11. College recruitment - Mr Alan Quinn-Byrne had been appointed to the newly - created role of Governance Officer. This role would entail the management of risk and contract registers; continued work on the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)/ Information Governance; and acting as Secretary to this committee and the newly established Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) from July 2019.
12. The CEO was in the process of hiring an Executive Assistant for herself and the Officer team. In addition, a Deputy Director of Legal Services would be appointed in the coming months to support the Registrar/Director of Legal Services, particularly with work around accreditation; increasing numbers of Challenge Panels; election reviews; Judicial Reviews; and succession

planning. This would allow the Director of Legal Services to have more time to be involved in strategic decision making. It was noted that the hiring process for the HR Director position was ongoing, and three candidates had been invited back for second interviews.

13. The Committee asked for an update on the estate strategy. RCVS Council had approved the sale of Belgravia House and potentially leasing it back for up to 18 months. A paper would go to June Council covering location, borrowing needs and the type of building the Estate Strategy Project Board would be tasked with finding.
14. The Committee requested that the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the new FRC be circulated to the ARC.
15. Looking to the future it was suggested that a joint meeting of both FRC and ARC should be held on the same day to review the accounts, instead of meeting at separate times and duplicating work.

Action: FRC ToR to be circulated to ARC, timing of meetings for next year to be aligned

Annual Audit and Accounts

16. Nicola May, Audit Partner from Crowe, presented the findings of the Audit Report to the Committee and reported that the audit had gone smoothly. She went through each section of the report and drew attention to Disciplinary costs. There had been no change to accounting policies in 2018 and the auditor was satisfied with the approach adopted.
17. The Chair asked for an amendment to the comment about the large number of concerns against veterinary surgeons as she believed this was not accurate when compared to other regulated professions. Ms May agreed and undertook to change the report. It was noted that it may be useful going forward to compare how many hearings were held across the various regulators.
18. Cyber security was also highlighted. It was noted that, previously, staff and others had used their own devices but the implementation of a new Boardpacks system would mitigate this risk, as the system was designed to keep the data within the Boardpacks system and, if a device was lost or stolen, the IT Department had the ability to wipe the data remotely.
19. The draft Audit Findings Report refers to Charity and this is to be amended to College.

**Actions: Crowe to amend ARF;
RCVS to research how many complaints were received by other regulators per '000 registrants
Third party risk discussion all members of ARC**

20. On behalf of the Committee, the Chair expressed her gratitude to the RCVS team and Crowe on the smooth running of the Audit.

The Annual Report and Accounts

21. The Chair asked the Committee for comments.
22. The Treasurer had commented that the investments policy note needed to be reviewed.
23. A query was raised about the 2018 Governance costs being higher than 2017, whilst the number of Council members was decreasing, and how it compared with other regulatory organisations. It was explained that there are now more meetings at RCVS and that the Treasurer reviewed the expenses to ensure people were claiming within the specified guidelines.
24. It was noted that pensions are very rarely mentioned. RCVS operates a defined contribution scheme and has no pension liability. It was agreed it was positive to note that there was no pension liability.
25. Cash flow figures and the realised losses on the cash flow statement were queried as they were larger than normal. Nicola May agreed the note was unclear and would discuss with the DoO to make wording clearer.
26. Clarification was sought regarding the reserves and why they were at the current level. It was explained that the reserves were above the agreed Reserves Policy in preparation for the expected move of the RCVS / purchase of a new building,
27. Gender pay gaps are not currently disclosed within the accounts although this is becoming best practice. The CEO suggested that the data could be collated in preparation for the arrival of a new HR Director who could then work on the narrative.
28. On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked everyone involved in the creation of a good set of accounts and Annual Report.
29. Ms May reported that there were no matters she wished to raise privately with the committee without RCVS staff being present.

Action: DoO and Crowe to amend wording

Departmental Risk Register – Leadership and Innovation Department

30. The Director of Leadership and Innovation (DoLI), presented the Leadership and Innovation Department's Risk Register. He provided a summary of the work of the Department, noting it had been running for two years since its development out of research from Vet Futures. Research had concluded that there was a failure of leadership across the veterinary profession and changes to technology could potentially shift how business models and the

delivery of veterinary services worked in the future. This meant that there was a chance the veterinary profession could have been left behind.

31. The work of ViVet, a wide-ranging programme to showcase and support innovation in the veterinary profession, was outlined. This programme comprised three streams of work: showcasing innovation; accelerating innovation; and regulation and innovation.
32. In relation to Leadership it was noted that a key project was the Edward Jenner Veterinary Leadership Programme, an online leadership course which was developed in conjunction with the NHS Leadership Academy. The Department was now moving into two new streams, namely: how the RCVS showcased the diversity of leadership opportunities for the profession and ensuring the RCVS itself was an exemplar of leadership development and behaviours.
33. The Chair noted the development of telemedicine in human healthcare, and that it was right that this area was on the Risk Register.
34. The final risk raised was Risk 21, concerning the provision of guidance to innovators. It was noted the failure to provide strong advice may lead to reputational damage.
35. The DoLI noted there had been at least 20 meetings with innovators seeking advice and guidance since the beginning of the year and engagement with this part of the programme had been extremely positive. However, there needed to be more guidance around this to mitigate risk of misrepresentations from companies on collaborations they have with the RCVS and to ensure that there is transparency where companies may be seeking to influence the RCVS.
36. It was advised that it was important to have clear policies in place around this area, including those that exist, such as: conflict of interest policies, a hospitality/gifts Register, a code of conduct on anti-bribery and anti-corruption. These were all important documents for mitigation and crucial to keep the College untainted in the commercial sector. It was also noted it was important to continue to develop good market intelligence and ensure Declarations of Interest were up to date; transparency must remain key.
37. On behalf of the Committee the Chair thanked the Director of Leadership and Innovation for his presentation of the risk register. The Director of Leadership and Innovation left the meeting.

Corporate Risk Register

38. The DoO informed the Committee that the RCVS was introducing an online risk register, Magique. This will be used to record and report risks and monitor actions in the future.

ARC – Annual report to RCVS Council

39. The presentation of the Annual Report to Council was discussed. It was noted that it was useful to remind Council of the role of ARC and present highlights of the year.

European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) update

40. The Chair noted that there had been good progress across the board made on ENQA's recommendations. The CEO highlighted that a project plan was being put before the May meeting of the Education Committee to consider a review of the veterinary educational standards and processes around these.

Topics for next meeting

- Update on Fraud Resilience Policy
- Mind Matters Initiative Risk Register
- ENQA Update
- Brexit
- Third Party Risks
- Entry to the Register discussion

Any other business

41. It was noted that Ms Rutherford's last ARC meeting would be 10 July 2019.

Date for Next meetings

- 10 July 2019
- 12 September 2019 (am)
- 14 November 2019 (TBC)

Action list

Actions	By whom	Target date
RCVS to compare Council code against the Charity code	Governance Officer	October 2019
ARC to receive TOR of FCR	Governance Officer	July 2019
Point 27 Nicola May agreed the note was unclear and would discuss with the DoO to make wording clearer	Director of Ops and Crowe	July 2019
Crowe to amend ARF	Crowe	July 2019
Review expenses and loss of earnings	Dir of Ops	November 2019
Third Party Risk discussion	ARC Committee	July 2019
Review of various regulators on volume of disciplinary proceedings	Governance Officer	July 2019
Business continuity plan to come to ARC	Dir of Ops	October 2019
Brexit impact on the RCVS	Various	November 2019
Fraud Resilience – The CEO and DoO will review activities being carried out to prevent fraud across the College would be gathered together to give a wider	CEO and Dir of Ops	July 2019

organisational perspective and to produce a written policy to ensure the College is applying best practice		
ENQA work to be incorporated into role of new QA staff member	Dir of VN	TBC
ENQA Update to Committee on mock Visit to be set up as a training tool	Dir of Ed	TBC
CEO to review points made by ARC on delegation scheme	CEO	July 2019
Finalise meeting date for November ARC Meeting	D.O / CEO/ Governance Officer	

Alan Quinn-Byrne

Secretary, ARC

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Meeting	Council
Date	3 October 2019
Title	Education Committee Minutes
Classification	Unclassified
Summary	Minutes for the Education Committee held on the 10 September 2019
Decisions required	To note
Attachments	Education Committee Minutes 10 September 2019
Author	Britta Crawford EC Committee Secretary 020 7202 0777 b.crawford@rcvs.org.uk

Education Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2019

Present:	Professor Ewan Cameron		
	Mr Danny Chambers		Also Adv Practitioner Panel Chair
	Ms Linda Ford	-	
	Professor Richard Hammond		
	*Mrs Susan Howarth		
	Dr Susan (Sue) Paterson	-	Chair
	Dr Cheryl Scudamore		
	Professor Kenneth Smith		
	Professor James Wood		
	Ms Katie Fox	-	Student representative
	Mr Tobias Hunter	-	Student representative
By invitation:	Professor Susan Dawson	-	PQSC Chairman
	*Professor Jill Maddison	-	CertAVP Sub-Committee Chair
	*Mr John Fishwick	-	Chair of Specialist Sub-Committee
	Dr Joanne Dyer		EMS Co-ordinators Liaison Group
	Professor Stephen May	-	Graduate Outcomes Working Group
In attendance:	Mr Duncan Ash	-	Senior Education Officer
	Mrs Britta Crawford	-	Committee Secretary
	Ms Shelley Hannick	-	Education Administrator
	Mr Jordan Nichols	-	Senior Education Officer
	Dr Linda Prescott-Clements	-	Director of Education
	Mr Jonathan Reid		Examinations Manager
	Ms Elizabeth Rowland	-	Quality Improvement Manager
	Ms Jenny Soreskog-Turp	-	Senior Education Officer
	Ms Joanne Stetzel	-	Marketing Communications Manager
	Ms Lizzie Lockett	-	CEO
Officer Team	Ms Amanda Boag		
Observer:			

* Absent

Apologies for absence and welcome

1. Apologies were received from Jill Maddison, Susan Howarth and John Fishwick

Declarations of interest

2. Amanda Boag declared that she is the chair of EBVS; Susan Dawson declared that she is now the chair of Vet Schools Council and Stephen May declared that he has joined the Home Office animals in science committee.

Minutes

3. The minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2019 were approved.

Matters arising

4. It was not possible to include 'CPD Policy and flexibility' on the agenda for the RCVS Diversity Group in June and the item will therefore be included in a subsequent meeting.

Education department update

5. The Director of Education, Dr Linda Prescott-Clements, gave an oral update on the work of the Education department. The Committee welcomed Liz Rowan, the new Quality Improvement Manager, who will be developing an internal QI strategy for the department and managing the ongoing QA and QI activities. Her role includes the actions required for the Education Department and the Veterinary Nursing department by ENQA. The Committee also welcomed Shelley Hannick who will be supporting Jordan with the administration of accreditation visits, and Jenny with the CPD audits.
6. The committee heard that there has been good progress with the development of the CPD recording platform, in line with Council's decision to move forward with outcomes based CPD for 2020, becoming mandatory in 2022. The first version of the App has now been approved on both the Google Play Store and the iOS App Store. This is with thanks to the hard work of the IT team and Jenny who have regular monthly meetings. Following an article in Vet Times, and information in RCVS news, over 250 members, including veterinary surgeons and nurses, have contacted us to volunteer to test the new App. This testing will take place from October. The Communications department are working alongside Education to develop a detailed communications strategy to include case studies, detailed guidance on what constitutes CPD with vlogs and other media.
7. At the previous meeting, the Committee discussed the level of access that the RCVS should have to reflective notes and other material uploaded to the portal and that the Education Department were seeking legal advice to make sure that we got the privacy setting right for all users. The advice received was that we should state that we will not seek to use reflective comments, but the courts may require it. This is similar to the GMC's policy.
8. Linda Prescott-Clements has worked with BSAVA to write an article on the PDP for their Student Companion magazine, which will be published imminently. The article aims to raise awareness

and provide information on the aims of the PDP and a practical guide on how to register. The article also included a section signposting our high level aims and future developments of the PDP, following the Graduate Outcomes consultation and previous evaluation.

9. The committee heard that the review of accreditation project is now underway, the working group is being finalised and we are just waiting for confirmation from the proposed Chair. A wide range of stakeholders will be involved, including representation from vet schools with different models of curricula, and external representatives such as the GMC and QAA. We are hoping that the group will hold its first meeting this month and the development of the ITT for the evidence review is in the final stages.
10. Linda Prescott-Clements will be observing an EAEVE accreditation in Helsinki next week, and an AVMA accreditation in the US in November. Observations from these visitation will feed into the review and provide comparison of accreditation processes.

Statutory Exam Update

11. The committee received an update on the recently completed 2019 diet of the Statutory Membership Examination (SME). Sixteen candidates had entered the SME, seven of which had passed the written component. One candidate opted to defer their OSCE attempt to the 2020 diet, leaving six candidates to proceed to the 2019 OSCE.
12. The OSCE was held at Glasgow Veterinary School on 17th July 2019. Thanks were given for the dedication and hard work of their staff in supporting the OSCE, as well as for the quality of their facilities. Of the six candidates who undertook the OSCE, three had passed and were admitted to the College at a registration ceremony on 2nd September 2019.
13. This was the first diet of the new format SME and a comprehensive review of the 2019 diet would be carried out. The review paper would be discussed at the next meeting of the SME Board on 4th October 2019. The final version would be presented to the Education Committee on 12th November 2019.
14. Concerns were raised by the committee about the lack of resit options for SME candidates. They were assured that this would be considered in the review paper.
15. The committee also asked about the relatively low number of candidates who entered the 2019 diet, and what support was made available to them. It was commented that the likely reason that just 16 sixteen candidates had entered was due to the increase of the exam fee to £2,500. The 2020 application window was due to open on 15th September 2019, and a more accurate estimate of final candidate numbers could be shared at the 12th November 2019 Education Committee meeting. The committee were also informed of the support provided by the RCVS to its SME candidates, including a comprehensive reading list, the opportunity to undertake extra-mural studies, a formative MCQ and a pre-OSCE equipment-familiarisation session.

Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee (PQSC)

Report of sub-committee meeting held on 7 August 2019.

16. Professor Dawson presented the updates from PQSC, as newly appointed chair of the sub-committee, taking over from Dr Clare Tapsfield-Wright. Dr Tapsfield-Wright was thanked for her contribution to PQSC over the years and for the tremendous amount of hard work which had been put into the role. The draft minutes from PQSC were noted.

RCVS Visitors

17. Proposed visitors for the visitations to Cambridge, Glasgow, Pretoria and Dublin in 2020 were presented to Education Committee for ratification. It was noted that the Dublin visitation was dependant on AVMA agreeing to allow RCVS participation as one of the locally nominated representatives.
18. In addition to the teams listed on the paper, PQSC has also nominated Professor Ed Hall from Bristol University to join the AVBC/AVMA team visiting Melbourne in 2020, which the committee ratified.

Action: RCVS visitors for visitations in 2020 are confirmed

RCVS/AVBC Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA)

19. The agreement between RCVS and AVBC has been updated by both organisations to reflect some minor changes in AVBC structure, and to ensure that accreditation is understood to mean direct accreditation by RCVS/AVBC, not including institutions accredited by third party accrediting organisations.
20. Education Committee had no further suggested amendments and agreed this draft be finalised.

Action: RCVS to sign the finalised RCVS/AVBC MRA

RCVS/VCI MRA

21. The Veterinary Council of Ireland (VCI) had approached the RCVS to explore an MRA so that, following Brexit, the mutual recognition of veterinary degrees in the UK and Republic of Ireland is continued. A number of amends had been recommended by PQSC, which were incorporated into the draft presented to Education Committee. It was agreed that negotiations with the VCI should proceed based on this version.

Action: RCVS to proceed with negotiations on the VCI MRA

Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice

22. The Committee received and noted the minutes of the sub-committee date 12 June 2019. The Committee were dismayed to understand that a candidate could achieve more than one designation using the same combination of modules, which suggested that there may be too many designations within the scheme. The committee suggested that the sub-committee discussed further the potential for candidates having to pass three further modules before taking a second designation in order to reduce the practice of collecting overlapping designations.

ACTION: Education to take advice back to the sub-committee

Advanced Practitioner Status

List of approved practitioners

23. The list of Advanced Practitioners approved by the panel in July 2019 was noted and approved.

Equine Lameness Designation for AP status

24. In April 2017 the CertAVP Sub-Committee approved the addition of Equine Lameness as a designation area for CertAVP. After a short discussion, the Committee approved the addition of Equine Lameness as a designation area for Advanced Practitioner status.

Project Plan for the Review of Advanced Practitioner Status

25. At the May Education Committee it was agreed that an evaluation of Advanced Practitioner status should be undertaken. It has been five years since the status was introduced and the first round of applicants will be re-applying this year so is an appropriate time to review the status. The Committee was presented with a project plan which they were asked to approve and provide feedback on any gaps or additional areas for inclusion. The Committee approved the project plan.

Specialists: Dual Listings

26. Following the criteria change to no longer allow dual listed Specialists, those existing dual Specialists were contacted to inform them that they would only be permitted to re-apply for listing in one area when they were due for reaccreditation. Two responses from Specialists who disagreed with this were received and initially considered by the Specialist Sub-Committee. Whilst the Sub-Committee was not of the view that the position should be changed, they felt that as the initial decision was made by Education Committee, a robust response should also include the full Committee. The Committee was therefore invited to offer comment before a response was drafted.
27. The Committee recognised that there was overlap in some areas so could sympathise to an extent with those who had responded, but ultimately agreed that the position should not be changed. It was also noted that there were on-going discussions around the same issue within EBVS. The British College of Veterinary Specialists (BCVSp) had reported at a recent Joint Officers meeting with RCVS that they planned to consult with their members for their opinions on the issue. Therefore it was agreed to wait for the results before forming a response to take the views of more Specialists into account.

EBVS

28. It was also reported that the BCVSp had asked if RCVS would consider writing a letter of support for EBVS to accept RCVS Specialists who were not also EBVS Specialists to be able to supervise EBVS residences. This request had come from the BCVSp membership and was particularly aimed at helping grow the number of residency programmes, and therefore the numbers of specialists in some of the smaller Colleges.
29. The Committee supported the idea in principle, and it was agreed that a letter could be drafted, but it would also need to come with a clear explanation about why an RCVS Specialist would hold a qualification at an appropriate level to be able to supervise an EBVS residency.

ACTION: RCVS to write a letter of support

New Qualifications

30. The Committee received the current list of qualifications approved for inclusion in the Registers and a list of recently approved qualifications that would be included in the next version of the list.

Global Reach: AP and Specialist Status

31. Linda Prescott-Clements spoke about the Global Reach agenda within the RCVS strategy. This included proposals to explore the internationalisation of the Advanced Practitioner and Specialist Status. Given the time constraints for this meeting the Committee was asked to email Linda with any thoughts or ideas.

ACTION: Committee to email Linda with thoughts and ideas regarding the internationalisation of AP and Specialist status.

Risk Register

32. The Committee noted and updated the risk register which was tabled for the meeting.

Any other business

33. Following the Council decision for RCVS to accept EAEVE accreditation as a route to membership with RCVS following Brexit on an interim basis, DEFRA had been in contact for clarification regarding the implications for where a university was on "Conditional" EAEVE accreditation.
34. It was pointed out that "Conditional" accreditation is designed to be a temporary status, granted to give schools the opportunity to remedy identified deficiencies, with the expectation that they will be revisited within three years and then achieve full accreditation. It was agreed that RCVS would accept graduates from schools with conditional accreditation where:
 - a) The school was fully accredited before receiving conditional status during revalidation

- b) The applicant graduated within three years of the school receiving conditional accreditation, in line with EAEVE's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).

Education Committee was happy with this definition.

Date of next meeting

35. Tuesday 12 November 2019 at 10am

Britta Crawford
Committee Secretary
September 2019
b.crawford@rcvs.org.uk

Minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee held on Thursday, 12 September 2019 at Belgravia House, 62/64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Members:

Dr C P Sturgess	Chair / RCVS Treasurer
Dr C L Scudamore	Education Committee
Mr C T Barker	RCVS Council Member
Dr C W Tufnell	Advancement of Professions Committee
Ms J S M Worthington	Lay Member RCVS Council
Mr M L Peaty*	Standards Committee
Mr M E Rendle*	Veterinary Nursing Council
Dr M A Donald	PIC/DC Liaison
Miss R M Marshall	Veterinary Nursing Council Chair
Mr T J Walker	Lay Member RCVS Council

In attendance:

Ms L Lockett	CEO
Ms E Ferguson	Registrar / Director of Legal Services
Ms C McCann	Director of Operations (DoO)
Mr A Quinn-Byrne	Secretary FRC/Governance Officer

*not present

Apologies for absence

1. Apologies for absence were received from Mr Peaty.
2. Mr Rendle was not in attendance due to a communication issue. The Secretary informed the Chair of this.

Declarations of interest

3. There were no declarations of interests to note.

Introductions

4. All members of the Committee introduced themselves and highlighted for the record the Committees that they were representing.

Review of Terms of Reference (TOR)

5. As this was the first meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee (FRC), the Committee reviewed the TOR for the Committee.
6. A discussion took place on the overarching role of the Committee and where it sat in the Governance Framework of the RCVS.
7. It was noted that it was imperative the Committee did not become a finance committee that only looked at figures, but also ensured RCVS resources were allocated appropriately and effectively. In particular, the current review in relation to the complex arrangement of groups working underneath the committee structure and issues arising from this, was discussed, and will come back to a future meeting.
8. Regarding future FRC agendas, it was agreed that the process should be an inclusive approach by all members and the Secretary would collate requests for agenda items; thereafter they would be discussed amongst the Secretary, CEO and Chair. It was agreed that the management accounts would be a standing item on the agenda, and the Committee was asked to think about other standing items and potential agenda items and to come back to the next meeting with suggestions.
9. There was a request for the Officer Team to consider Council members having access to the papers from all standing committees prior to the meetings, rather than the work purely being delegated to the committees, as now.
10. It was noted that the Chair and Secretary were looking into a central system where agenda items could be logged and documents stored.
11. How to structure the agenda was discussed. It was agreed that the larger more in depth items requiring greater discussion should be at the beginning of the agenda and matters for update only toward the end of the agenda.
12. It was noted that due to the schedule of meetings being four times a year, there may be issues that arise in between those meetings that require attention or a decision to be reached by the Committee and the best way forward to communicate with each other outside the normal Committee meeting schedule was discussed. It was agreed that there was a willingness to work outside the schedule where necessary, and that the way in which this was done would depend on the urgency and complexity of the issue. It was agreed requests should come through the Secretary to gather relevant information and bring it to the attention of the Chair to decide next steps.

13. The confidentiality of Committee minutes was discussed. It was agreed that minutes should be dealt with in the same manner as other standing committees, in as much as the default position would be that minutes were unclassified, and available on the website and to all Council members, but that if items of a sensitive nature were discussed – for example, financial information that it was prudent to keep confidential, or personal information, or items of policy that were in the early stages of development - then this would be put into a confidential version of the minutes only seen by Council and committee members. It was further agreed that there should be an action list to highlight work to be done because of short space of time between meetings.
14. It was questioned whether Boardpacks could be used more efficiently for College-wide business, this would be investigated.
15. [After note] Boardpacks is limited to Committee members because the only way the full Council would be able to view the papers would be if they were made a 'member' of the Committee and this would cause confusion.

Action: Committee was asked to think about other standing items and topics and to come back to the next meeting with suggestions.

Secretary to find a central library for storing agenda items and documents for members.

Look into a central system where agenda items could be logged and documents stored for Committee to communicate more effectively

[Date and time of next meeting](#)

12 November 2019 (2pm).

Minutes of the Standards Committee held on Monday, 9 September 2019 at 10 am at Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

Members:

Prof D Argyle	
Mr M Castle	
Mrs L Cox	
Dr M A Donald	Chair
Mr D Leicester	
Ms C-L McLaughlan	
Mr M Peaty	
Ms Belinda Andrews-Jones	
Miss Linda Belton	
Dr Caroline Allen	

In attendance:

Ms E C Ferguson	Registrar
Mr N Oldham	Standards and Advisory Manager
Mrs V Price	Senior Standards and Advisory Officer
Ms B Jinks	Senior Standards and Advisory Officer
Mr N Connell	President (observer from RCVS Operational Board)
Ms L Lockett	CEO
Mr I Holloway	Director of Communications (Present for AI 1-3(f) only)
Mr A Roberts	Director of Leadership and Innovation (Present for AI 1-3(c) only)
Mr P Jinman	Chair – Certification Sub-Committee (Present for AI 3(f) only)
Mr K Patel	APHA (Present for AI 3(f) only)

AI 1 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

1. The Chair welcomed the President to the meeting as an observer.
2. Apologies for absence were received from Linda Belton, Liz Cox, David Argyle and Dave Leicester.
3. Mr Castle declared that he is a lay member of the House of Lords conduct committee, and Dr Allen confirmed her role as Chief Veterinary Officer at the RSPCA. No additional declarations of interest were declared.

AI 1 Minutes of last meetings held on 10 April and 28 May 2019

4. The minutes from both meetings were noted and agreed as accurate.

5. The Standards and Advisory Manager confirmed that all actions from the meeting in April had been actioned.
6. In relation to Action Item 3(d) from the April meeting regarding how often the GDPR information document had been accessed, the Standards and Advisory Manager stated that from March 2018 to May 2019 there were just under 3000 hits on the relevant page on the RCVS website.

AI 2 Standards and Advice update

7. The Committee noted the update and there were no further comments.

Matters for decision

AI 3(a) Scottish Equine ID

9. The paper was introduced and it was explained that the suggested changes to the Supporting Guidance have been prompted by new legislation. It was noted that the Scottish regulations are similar to the English regulations considered by the Committee at its April meeting, and do not create a need to significantly alter the supporting guidance.
10. The Committee were advised that the Standards and Advice Team currently await comment from BEVA and World Horse Welfare regarding their understanding of the regulations. Once these comments have been considered the Committee will be contacted further by email circular if required.
11. The Committee noted that the legislation in each jurisdiction takes effect on a different date, possibly creating gaps in application, that the legislation applies to all equines including donkeys, and there is no App for the Scottish Equine Database. It was also noted that DEFRA had confirmed its view that there are no wild horses in Scotland.

Action: Standards and Advice Team

AI 3(d) Informed consent case studies and mental incapacity

24. It was requested that 'euthanasia' be used rather than 'put to sleep' throughout the case studies. Further work was requested on case studies 12 and 14 to soften the tone and ensure accuracy of symptoms for species. The case studies will return to the Committee again for consideration after amendment.
25. No objections were raised to the proposed amendment to paragraph 11.32 of Chapter 11 of the supporting guidance, to remove the suggestion that where a client lacks mental capacity a veterinary surgeon may obtain consent from someone close to the client who is not legally entitled to act on the client's behalf.

Action: Standards and Advice Team

AI 3(e) Schedule 3 case studies and checklist

26. The case studies were considered by the Committee in April 2019 and updates made in accordance with the Committee's feedback were provided for further consideration.
27. It was agreed that case studies 6, 7 and 10 should be removed as they did not demonstrate best principles.
28. For case study 16, it was noted that suture removal is minor surgery therefore supervision is required, and it was queried whether suture removal and ear cleaning are appropriate for nurses to perform as suggested. It was also requested that the reference to a nurse doing a first vaccination be removed as it might be confusing.

29. It was agreed that a further case study on a PCA overnight needing to administer methadone would be useful, that Ms Andrews-Jones would write this in the next week/by 16 September, and that the case studies should be sent around to the Committee by email once more.

**Action: Standards and Advice Team/
Ms Andrews-Jones**

30. The finalised Schedule 3 checklist was noted by the Committee and it was agreed that the checklist will be sent to all RVPPs at the same time as the Schedule 3 case studies.

Action: Standards and Advice Team

Matters for report

AI 4(a) DC report

43. The Committee noted the report.

AI 4(b) Riding Establishments Sub-committee Report

44. The Committee noted the report.

AI 4(c) Practice Standards Scheme Report

45. The Committee noted the report.

AI 6 Risk and equality

49. No items were raised.

Any other business and date of next meeting

50. The date of the next meeting is Monday, 11 November 2019 at 10am.

Meeting	Council
Date	3 October 2019
Title	Preliminary Investigation Committee and Disciplinary Committee Liaison Committee Report
Classification	Unclassified
Summary	Minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2019
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Author	Dawn Wiggins Secretary, PIC DC LC 020 7202 0737 d.wiggins@rcvs.org.uk

Minutes of the Preliminary Investigation Committee / Disciplinary Committee Liaison Committee meeting held on Thursday, 11 July 2019

Members:	Mr C T Barker	Member of Council
	Ms A K Boag	Member of Council / President (Chair)
	Mrs S K Edwards	Chair, RVN PIC
	Mr I R Green*	Chair, DC
	Dr K A Richards	Chair, SC
	Col N C Smith	Member of Council
	Dr C P Sturgess	Member of Council / Treasurer
	Dr B P Viner	Chair, PIC
	Ms J S M Worthington	Member of Council

In attendance:	Ms E C Ferguson	Registrar / Director of Legal Services
	Ms L Lockett	CEO
	Mrs V Soames	Head of Professional Conduct
	Mrs D Wiggins	Secretary
	Ms Y Yusuph	Clerk to DC

*Denotes absent

Apologies for absence

1. Apologies for absence were received from:
 - Mr I R Green.
2. Dr Viner was welcomed to the meeting as the new Chair, Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC).

Declarations of interest

3. There were no new declarations of interest.

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 11 April 2018

4. The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.
5. Noting the action points:

- paragraph 15: Feedback following case closure: this was under consideration to see what more could be done; the team currently sent an email via Survey Monkey to parties that requested feedback. It would be on-going as part of the First Rate Regulator (FRR) review;
- paragraph 17: KPIs agreed at last meeting and Stage 2 additional information was now included;
- paragraph 20: this was a long-term action for the future;
- paragraph 22: review of disciplinary processes: summary reports for PIC and Disciplinary Committee (DC) would be published in conjunction with the Open Minds Consulting (OMC) report, which had been delayed;
- paragraph 24: annual DC case statistics: noted;
- paragraph 31: process for DC chair: this would be taken with the paper later in the meeting;
- paragraph 37: DC report: it should be communicated to the profession that Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) was important and members should check they had adequate cover;
- paragraph 41: feedback to Standards Committee: this was working. It was agreed that regular feedback from Veterinary Client Mediation Service (VCMS) should be a standing item on the agenda and Terms of Reference extended to formally include it.

Updates – general

6. The Registrar gave a report of on-going matters:

Open Minds Consulting (OMC)

7. This had been touched on in the action points as noted above. Focus would be on signposting to sources of support and there was a meeting scheduled with Vetlife the following week to discuss the potential for a mentoring scheme for those within the complaints process.

Veterinary Client Mediation Service (VCMS)

8. This was Item 06 on the agenda. With reference to reviewing costs, VCMS had provided a draft proposal to the Registrar, who had responded with a number of queries and requested more information / transparency. This would need to be on a forthcoming Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) agenda for discussion.

Action: Secretary/FRC Secretary

Statutory committees – Chair appraisals

9. Appraisals for the Chairs of statutory committees had taken place with the Registrar and President where there had been some useful feedback. DC members were no longer annually completing 360° feedback as there wasn't a consistent panel for hearings – it varied each time –

instead they had a meeting at the end of each hearing to discuss what did, and did not, work well. This was deemed to be a more useful exercise, however, the Chair would still have an annual appraisal and it was commented that 360° feedback would still be appropriate for this.

Boardpacks

10. Boardpacks was now used for meeting papers for standing committees and PIC, and it was envisaged that this would be widened to encompass DC in August.

ProfCon computer system

11. This system was now stable and the team was getting used to the system. There was a problem with webform data not coming through that generated an issue with a large amount of memory being used; this caused a very short period of difficulty for users, which was now resolved.

Privy Council appeal

12. The Registrar explained the circumstances that led to the appeal on which a judgement had just been issued; where the respondent was partially successful, and the RCVS partially successful. Unusually, the Privy Council had decided the appeal on the paperwork alone without requiring the parties to attend, and, again unusually, had not simply substituted their own sanction; rather in this case they had referred the matter of sanctions back to the College. It was agreed that, when relevant, Privy Council reports would be circulated to the Committee.

Action: Registrar

Terms of Reference

13. It was noted that the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Committee needed changing when Council next considered the RCVS Delegation Scheme (last amended June 2019):

- under paragraph 2: an additional point should be included (per paragraph 5, final point of these minutes) to include a feedback 'loop' from VCMS to Standards Committee;
- at paragraph 3: 'Operational Board' should be amended to read 'Officers' particularly with regards to the VCMS costs element.

Action: Secretary/Council Secretary

Monitoring / performance / working methods / outcomes / dashboard / KPIs

14. The Head of Professional Conduct (HoPC) introduced the paper and highlighted:

- Stage 1 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): were not yet back to where they should be, but there had been a small improvement. This should also be seen in the context of an increase in the numbers of cases being worked through, to address the small backlog which had built up, and which included some older cases;
- Stage 2 KPIs: had removed the percentage and now included a brief explanation of the reasons particular cases had not met the set timeframes;

- external audit of PIC processes: there was now a system in place to make sure all parties received regular updates; also in hand were plans to formalise and record the Case Examiner Group (CEG) decisions; taking stock of and reviewing the Department's information leaflets, and reviewing the closing letters in order to provide more structure and focus around the decision. It was noted that cases requiring clinical, or expert, reports took longer to process, and listing cases for DC within timeframes depended on committee and all other parties' availability.
15. It was commented that where possible it would be good for cases closed within two-three months to be highlighted to show the College was being pro-active. However, it was further noted that there could be a request for a review on any closed case, which would then prolong the timeframe.
16. It was frustrating that there remained the perception of either go to VCMS or 'get struck off', there were a lot of matters that were taken into consideration before any decision could be made. However, the College continued to try to change such perception.
17. The team were thanked for their hard work and the paper was noted.

Annual PIC and DC cost review

18. The Registrar outlined the paper and stated that it was clear that the costs were substantial. Relating to sitting days for DC: in 2017, there had been 18 cases with 43 days sat; whereas in 2018 there were 25 cases with 87 days sat so, unsurprisingly, the costs had increased. For longer cases, more DC members sat and, in some instances, cases had to go off-site because of lack of available meeting rooms within the College, the cheapest venue worked out to c. £3,500 – £4,000 per day.
19. There were some anomalies inasmuch as some costs were 'zero' but this meant that cost figures had been included in the previous year. Other costs included training (fees/loss of earnings) for 20 committee members and seven Legal Assessors.
20. It was commented that on PIC there was a high volume of cases coming through for decision fortnightly – the recent 'bundle' of papers was 2,678 pages, with a fixed reading allowance of one day [claimable]; it was not possible to read that number of pages properly in one day. The Registrar responded by saying the fixed day was what people had 'signed up' for, however, there had been claims for substantially more reading time per meeting – the amount claimed was at the discretion of the Chair and Registrar. It was noted that a review of all payments College-wide was taking place and the outcome would be reported back to the Committee in due course.
- Action: Registrar**
21. It was suggested to benchmark costs with other regulators, particularly around the number of members sitting – only three panel members sat per hearing in the medical field. Regrettably, reducing the number of members sitting was not possible without a change to legislation so whilst

benchmarking could be done for certain costs, such as external legal expertise; the College could not easily change the number of DC members sitting per case. The Committee was reassured that the Legislation Working Party (LWP) was aware of this issue and it would be part of the LWP report at the end of the year/start of 2020.

22. Within the current framework, the Treasurer confirmed that costs were reduced College-wide. For the main provider of external legal services, it was felt they were good value for money as they provided additional services free of charge. However, because the College was not 'in control' of cases that were referred, costs were always variable. Audit and Risk Committee also had oversight of costs to make sure the College was charged the appropriate rates. Consideration of the number of complaints compared to the number of members of the profession showed that the RCVS was at the lowest figure. Rather than benchmark costs against other regulators because the College was limited in what it could do, consideration should be given to whether there was anything else it could do, or could do better, within its remit.
23. It was questioned how much priority was given to running multiple DCs concurrently in the College's own space. It was confirmed that there was not enough space to run two parallel hearings within Belgravia House, and that space requirements were part of the consideration when searching for a new building. In particular, the rest of the College would still need to be able to function efficiently and hold other meetings at the same time – in the current building a DC hearing shuts down at least the top two floors of meeting rooms. It should also be noted that should the Standard of Proof be amended, that might have an impact and could start to further increase costs.
24. The paper was noted.

Alternative Disputes Resolution highlights

25. The Registrar introduced the paper and confirmed that she was awaiting clarification on the time taken per phase and as to how some figures had been reached in the VCMS Q2 report 2018-2019 – as some were incorrect (noting that the numbers used for the overall outcomes were correct). She highlighted paragraph 6 in Annex B: that 17% of cases had gone forward to mediation. Overall, veterinary practices were joining in with the Scheme; the Scheme was well run, and feedback was positive.
26. In the two years since the Scheme became permanent, it was noted that 65 – 68% of enquiries received by VCMS were directed back to the veterinary practice to complete their complaints process first; and that only 3% were coming back to the College. VCMS had indicated that were it to receive more than 2,500 enquiries in a year, they would require more investment, though it was unclear what that investment would involve. It was commented that consideration should be given on ways to 'tighten up' information to stress that clients should complete the veterinary practice complaints process first – although it was noted that this was already on the RCVS website.

27. It was noted that Nockolds were planning to commence work with another regulator and questioned whether the quality of service would drop. The Registrar reassured the Committee that each mediation service provided to the different professions by Nockolds had its own staff structure and was not a 'combined effort'.
28. It was further noted that it was a good service for the profession and the public, but due diligence would continue – the Committee would consider the VCMS reports alongside the Professional Conduct Department KPIs, and the new Finance and Resources Committee would need to sign off on the costs.
29. The paper and annexes were noted.

Disciplinary Committee Chair and Vice-Chair selection

30. The Registrar introduced the paper and the selection process. The newly appointed Chair and Vice-Chair were both long-standing members of the Disciplinary Committee; they would take up their roles at the DC annual training in October to facilitate a smooth transition.
31. The (current) Chair, DC, highlighted that there would no longer be two Vice-Chairs, as there was now a 'pool' of members who had undertaken training that could take the Chair as necessary.
32. The Committee noted the appointments.

Disciplinary Committee report

33. The Registrar introduced the report in the DC Chair absence.
34. It was questioned how experts were chosen as it was suggested in one instance that the expert was not disinterested and could seem to be in direct competition. The desirability that an expert in one area should give an opinion in that field only and no other area was also discussed. The Registrar confirmed that PIC took a lot of care over the people chosen and would try to avoid anybody with an actual, or perceived, conflict: there had been no objections raised regarding the person used. However, it was noted that if there was difficulty in finding an expert this could lead to delays and added stress to the parties concerned.
35. There was a suggestion that there could be a 'list of experts', but this was not deemed to be feasible. Reasons why not included:
 - there was the danger of a person becoming a 'professional expert' rather than a practitioner being used as an expert as appropriate;
 - members did not want to put themselves forward too often and be perceived as the RCVS' person; and,

- expert witnesses were paid the same amount as Legal Assessors (who were paid as directed by the court system) – there were some practitioners that refused on the grounds that they could earn much more than that per day.

36. There was discussion about the language in judgements and the need for these to be carefully worded to avoid inadvertently putting pressure on those later reading them. During discussion, it was questioned whether there needed to be any change to the Code of Professional Conduct (CoPC) or Supplementary Guidance (SG) regarding matters such as 24/7 care; post-operative hospitalisation; or consent. It was noted re: post-operative care that, as with any consultation, actions and thought processes should be adequately recorded as this would explain the reasons as to how a decision was reached. It was further noted that an effective way of getting information across was by publicising case studies and there could be one on this subject.

Action: Standards Committee/Communications Department

37. The report was noted.

Feedback to Standards Committee v.v. Liaison Committee

38. Per paragraph 36 of these minutes, future case studies from Standards Committee should include one on consultation / post-operative care and the need for adequate recording of actions and thought processes.

Action: Standards Committee/Communications Department

Any other business

Risk Register, equality and diversity

39. The matter of the profession having confidence in the decisions made by DC was raised. There was discussion about ownership of any press release and confirmed that it was the College that put out the press release on behalf of the Committee – which was where the confusion stemmed from – but that the Communications Department could potentially make it clearer.

40. It was agreed that lack of confidence in a DC decision should be recognised as a risk and that the format of press releases should be considered in order to include learning points. It was discussed that this had been the case in the past when cases were reported via RCVS News but this had been discontinued at the request of the then-DC.

Action: Registrar/DC Clerk/DC#/Communications Department

Departure of Chair, Standards Committee (SC)

41. Dr Richards, Chair, SC, was due to retire from RCVS Council at RCVS Day the following day. The Chair took the opportunity to thank Dr Richards for her input into PIC/DC Liaison Committee over the years.

Date of next meeting

42. The date of the next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, 19 September 2019 at 10:00 am.

Dawn Wiggins

Secretary, PIC / DC Liaison Committee

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Meeting	Council
Date	3 October 2019
Title	Preliminary Investigation Committee and Disciplinary Committee Liaison Committee Report
Classification	Unclassified
Summary	Minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2019
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Author	Hannah Alderton Secretary, PIC DC LC 020 7856 1033 h.alderton@rcvs.org.uk

Minutes of the Preliminary Investigation Committee / Disciplinary Committee Liaison Committee meeting held on Thursday, 19 September 2019

Members:	Mr I Arundale*	Chair, DC (from October)
	Ms A K Boag	Member of Council / President (Chair)
	Dr M A Donald	Chair, SC
	Mrs S K Edwards*	Chair, RVN PIC
	Mr I R Green	Chair, DC (to October)
	Col N C Smith*	Member of Council
	Dr C P Sturgess*	Member of Council / Treasurer
	Dr C W Tufnell	Member of Council
	Dr B P Viner	Chair, PIC
	Ms J S M Worthington*	Member of Council

In attendance:	Miss H Alderton	Secretary
	Ms E C Ferguson	Registrar / Director of Legal Services
	Ms L Lockett	CEO
	Mrs V Soames	Head of Professional Conduct
	Mrs D Wiggins	PA to the Registrar

*Denotes absent

Apologies for absence

1. Apologies for absence were received from:

- Mr I Arundale
- Mrs S K Edwards
- Col N C Smith
- Dr C P Sturgess
- Ms J S M Worthington

2. Dr C Tufnell and Dr M A Donald were welcomed to the Committee.

Declarations of interest

3. There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 11 July 2019

4. The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.
5. Noting the action points:
 - Paragraph 7: Review of Open Minds Consulting report: Vetlife had decided against assisting the College with general support for members going through the disciplinary process, which was disappointing. The Committee agreed that it should be an independent service that provided practical support and other suitable organisations would be contacted, in the meantime, other regulators should be contacted to see if they ran similar programmes;
Action: CEO, as Director of MMI
 - Paragraph 12: Privy Council appeal: this had been actioned;
 - Paragraph 13: Terms of Reference: this had not yet gone through Council;
 - Paragraph 20: it was noted that the College-wide review of payments / loss of earnings (LOE) for committee members was ongoing. In the meantime, any adjustments to the amount claimable based on high volumes of reading were being made on a per meeting basis;
 - Paragraph 36: Disciplinary Committee report: this had been noted;
 - Paragraph 40: Risk Register, equality and diversity: this had been noted.

Updates – general

6. The Registrar gave a report of ongoing matters:

Professional Conduct system

7. A meeting had been organised for Tuesday, 24 September 2019 to discuss the system and issues that had been noted. Any additional feedback from PIC members who work 'remotely' would be appreciated; it was understood that comments had already been fed into the team.

Legal Assessor resignation

8. One of our Legal Assessors had resigned due to a move to Ireland. The vacancy would be filled through an open recruitment process and ratified by Council. It was suggested that there should be two new Legal Assessors recruited so there was a bigger 'pool' at the College's disposal.

Privy Council decisions

9. A recent decision by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council had been circulated to the Committee and it was noted when the case would next be before DC.

Staff change

10. The current Head of Professional Conduct, Ms Soames, was leaving and would be moving on from her position to become an Independent Reviewer at the Bar Standards Board. She would leave mid-October and our current Senior Case Manager, Ms Crossley, had been promoted to the role. Recruitment was ongoing to fill the Senior Case Manager role / appoint a new Case Manager. Ms Soames was thanked for all her work, especially in relation to the key performance indicators (KPIs).

Monitoring / performance / working methods / outcomes / dashboard / KPIs

11. The Head of Professional Conduct (HoPC) introduced the paper and highlighted:
 - Stage 1 KPIs: were now at 92%, this was in part due to the increased staff resources available;
 - Stage 2 complex case KPIs: were now at 100%
12. The Committee agreed that the dip in last year's KPIs was due to largely to staffing issues (though also the introduction of Profcon 2), it was clear how staffing affected them and long-term resourcing was discussed.
13. The suggestion of the College undertaking private prosecutions re those carrying out acts veterinary surgery contrary to the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 was put forward to the Committee. It was noted that while potentially possible there were practical issues re gathering of suitable evidence, considerations re cost, issues re: actual penalties that could be imposed even if successful. On the other hand this was an ongoing area of concern for the profession and benefits re: animal welfare were noted. It was agreed that the matter should be explored further, and include any potential costs.

Action: HoPC

14. Re: paragraph 18 of the paper: the Committee noted the cause of the delay and the transparency was appreciated.

Veterinary Client Mediation Service (Alternative Disputes Resolution) highlights

15. The Registrar introduced the paper. The data highlighted the volume and spread of cases at each phase in the mediation process. There had been a slight change in successful mediation numbers, which were relatively small, but broadly the same as before. It showed that the overall pattern over the last year was being maintained.

Veterinary Client Mediation Service (VCMS) – financial review (to note)

16. The Registrar introduced the paper and reported that it had been before Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) as it related to the fee review for Nockolds Solicitors – FRC had agreed the proposed costs. There had been a discussion about the 4% of the budget required for insight sharing, but the Committee felt it was worthwhile to continue.
17. The high number of cases which were sent back to the practice in question was discussed as well as possible preventative measures. It was questioned whether the VCMS should do more and noted that Nockolds had produced the leaflet to inform the public about going straight to the veterinary practice to begin with.
18. The Committee agreed that the service was working well overall. It was noted that it had been agreed that in year three a tender process should be set up for the future. Current desk-research had not shown any other potential providers on the market that met the full needs of the College. Further investigation of this would take place prior to any tender exercise. Other regulators had gone for an arbitration service but this was previously rejected by the College as a mediation service worked better for its requirements. The Committee agreed that the VCMS had, so far, been very positive and there was a benefit to it, which may not be easily quantifiable. It was highlighted that the satisfaction rate was high and this should be advertised to encourage all practices to use the service; the Registrar highlighted that currently only around 9% of those asked did not engage.
19. It was noted that there was potentially only one person at VCMS who was the driving force behind the service and who fully understood all of the issues facing the College. There was some concern as expressed that there might not be anyone else to take over if that need were to occur and the matter of succession planning should be broached.

Action: HoPC

Disciplinary Committee Report

20. The Chair of DC introduced the report and stated that the new veterinary members were now sitting on hearings, and the committee had felt their inductions had been appropriate. Following a recent matter arising, the process following decision-making was discussed.
21. With regards to the back-dating of equine passports, i.e. premeditated dishonesty, there was some discussion that a reprimand might be perceived as inadequate and sending out the wrong message and the extent to which cases such as this would set a precedent. It was suggested that stronger sanctions helped the veterinary profession understand the importance of certification and maintaining professional integrity. It was clarified and appreciated that all decisions were made on a case-by-case basis and it was down to the Disciplinary Committee to clarify the differences to justify its decision.

22. The Committee noted that Mr Green would shortly be standing down as DC Chair and thanked him for all of his work.

Feedback to Standards Committee v.v. Liaison Committee

23. Themes arising from PIC meetings were discussed:

- a) Full consent regarding dentistry;
- b) Specific consent about additional risks in brachycephalic animals;
- c) Record keeping to prevent disputes in which it was one person's word against another.

Any other business

DC panels

24. At the recent meeting of the Legislation Working Party (LWP) held on Tuesday, 17 September 2019, there was a discussion on the size of Disciplinary Committee panels and whether the quorum should be reduced from five members to three, in line with other regulators; with the option of increasing the quorum to five members in specific cases. It was questioned whether the quality of decision-making and speed of administration would improve. The Committee was asked to submit their thoughts to the Chair to feed into the LWP in due course.

Action: Committee

Risk Register, equality and diversity

25. There were no comments to note.

Date of next meeting

26. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 21 November 2019 at 10:00 am.

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Meeting	Council
Date	3 October 2019
Title	Preliminary Investigation Committee Chair's Report to Council
Classification	Unclassified
Summary	This report describes the work of the Preliminary Investigation Committee since RCVS Council's last meeting, including by reference to key stage indicators, and provides information about the nature of concerns being considered by the PIC.
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Authors	<p>Gemma Crossley Senior Case Manager g.crossley@rcvs.org.uk</p> <p>Velia Soames Head of Professional Conduct v.soames@rcvs.org.uk</p>

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Preliminary Investigation Committee

Chair's Report to Council 3 October 2019

Introduction

1. This report provides information about the activities of the Preliminary Investigation Committee from June to 20 September 2019 (20 September being the date of writing the report).
2. Since the last Report to Council (which gave information to the end of May 2019), there have been seven Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) meetings: 5 and 19 June, 10 and 24 July, 14 August, and 4 and 18 September 2019.

New cases considered by the PIC

3. The total number of new cases considered by the Committee at the seven meetings referred to above is 54. Of the 54 new cases considered:
 - 31 were concluded at first consideration by the Committee. Of these:
 - 19 cases were closed with no further action; and
 - 12 cases were closed with advice issued to the veterinary surgeon.
 - 23 were referred for further investigation, that is, further enquiries, visits and/or preliminary expert reports; and
 - None were referred to DC.
4. No cases have been referred to the RCVS Health or Performance Protocols in the reporting period.

Ongoing Investigations

5. The PI Committee is currently investigating 33 ongoing cases where the Committee has requested statements, visits or preliminary expert reports for example. This figure does not include cases on the Health and Performance Protocols.

Health Protocol

6. There are three veterinary surgeons either under assessment or currently on the RCVS Health Protocol.

Performance Protocol

7. There are no veterinary surgeons currently on the RCVS Performance Protocol.

Professional Conduct Department - Enquiries and concerns

8. Before registering a concern with the RCVS, potential complainants must make an Enquiry (either in writing or by telephone), so that Case Managers can consider with the enquirer whether they should raise a formal concern or whether the matter would be more appropriately dealt with through the Veterinary Client Mediation Service.

9. In the period 1 June to 20 September 2019:

- the number of matters registered as Enquiries was 1180; and
- the number of formal Concerns registered in the same period was 156.

10. The table below shows the categories of matters registered as Concerns between 1 June and 20 September 2019.

Concerns registered between 1 June and 20 September 2019

Description of Category	Number of Cases
- Advertising and publicity	1
- Certification	1
- Client confidentiality	0
- Clinical and client records	8
- Communication and consent	7
- Communication between professional colleagues	2
- Conviction/notifiable occupation notification	3
- CPD Compliance	0
- Equine pre-purchase examinations	1
- Euthanasia of animals	6
- Giving evidence for court	1
- Microchips and animals without microchips	1
- Miscellaneous	6
- Practice information, fees & animal insurance	2
- Referrals and second opinions	2
- Registration investigation	1
- Social media and online networking forums	1
- Treatment of animals by unqualified persons	1
- Use of samples, images, post-mortems and disposal	1
- Veterinary care	104
- Veterinary medicines	3
- Veterinary teams and leaders	1
- 24-hour emergency first aid and pain relief	3
Total	156

Data source – Profcon computer system concerns data.

Referral to Disciplinary Committee

11. In the period 1 June to 20 September 2019, the Committee referred five cases to the Disciplinary Committee; these cases referred arose from concerns around clinical matters and dishonesty in a variety of contexts.

Veterinary Investigators

12. The Veterinary Investigators and the Chief Investigator carried out 2 announced visits in the period June 2019 to September 2019, and are currently assisting two enforcement agencies in the investigation of alleged breaches of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966. These investigations are ongoing and at various stages. No health related or performance related or review visits were undertaken in the period.

Concerns procedure

13. At Stage 1 of the process, the aim is for the Case Examiner Group to decide 90% of cases within 4 months of registration of complaint (the Stage 1 KPI). For each complete month from June to August 2019, the monthly percentage of cases achieving the KPI is 75%, 78% and 92% respectively.

14. The Stage 2 KPI is now for the PIC to reach a decision on simple cases before it within 7 months, and on complex cases within 12 months. A case is deemed to be complex where the PIC requests that witness statements and/or expert evidence be obtained.

15. In the period 1 June to 20 September 2019, the PIC reached a decision (to close, hold open or refer to DC) within the relevant KPIs:

- in 77% of simple cases; and
- in 73% of complex cases.

16. Performance against the KPIs continues to be reported and discussed in detail at the PIC/DC Liaison Committee meetings.

Operational matters

17. The new Chair of PIC, Dr Viner, took up his post as such in July, and is supported now by two Vice Chairs, an arrangement which works well and allows for the management of any conflicts of interest.

18. Appraisals of PIC and RVN PIC members took place in July 2019 and gave an opportunity to discuss also training needs and suggestions, both on an individual and committee level, including visits to vet schools, consideration of mitigation at CEG and PIC stages, and case studies.

19. Work continues in accordance with the department's aim of continuous improvement, with implementation of enhancements around updating of parties, and the information given to parties when a case is referred to PIC. Feedback form for witnesses at hearings have been introduced, with very positive feedback given about the support given before and during hearings.

Conclusion

20. The Committee continues to consider concerns on a wide variety of topics, with veterinary care continuing to form the largest single category of complaint.

Meeting	Council
Date	3 October 2019
Title	RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee Chair's Report to Council
Classification	Unclassified
Summary	This report sets out the work of the Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN) Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC).
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Authors	<p>Sandra Neary Professional Conduct Officer 020 7202 0730 s.neary@rcvs.org.uk</p> <p>Velia Soames Head of Professional Conduct 020 7202 0740 v.soames@rcvs.org.uk</p>

Registered Veterinary Nurses Preliminary Investigation Committee

Chair's Report to Council

Introduction

1. Since the last Report to Veterinary Nurses Council there have been two meetings of the RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee (14 May and 2 July 2019). The next scheduled meeting is on 15 October 2019.

RVN Concerns received / registered

2. Between 9 April 2019 and 21 August 2019 there were ten new Concerns received against RVNs. Of these ten new Concerns:
 - Four are currently under investigation by the Case Examiner Group (a veterinary and lay member on RVN PIC and a Case Manager);
 - Two Concerns were closed by the Case Examiner Group as there was no arguable case; and
 - Four are in the process of being assessed.

RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee

3. There was one new case considered by the RVN PIC between 9 April 2019 and 21 August 2019. This Concern related to an allegation that an RVN prescribed and administered a prescription-only medicine (Metacam) to a cat without authorisation from a veterinary surgeon. The Committee decided that based on the information presented, there was insufficient evidence to pass the realistic prospect threshold in regard to the RVN prescribing and administering the medication without authorisation. However, in closing the Concern, the RVN PIC decided it was appropriate to issue advice to the RVN under part 2.5 of the Code of Conduct for Veterinary Nurses:

“ 2.5 Veterinary nurses must keep clear, accurate and detailed clinical nursing and client records.”

Ongoing Investigations

4. At its meeting on 2 July 2019, the RVN PIC considered a case relating to an RVN's failure to respond to numerous requests to provide CPD records as part of the CPD audit. This case had been adjourned for three months at the meeting on 26 February 2019 to allow the RVN to submit records. The Committee was satisfied with the hours recorded within the three-month period and it decided to adjourn the case for one year to monitor the RVN's CPD progress.
5. In a previous report to VN Council, the RVN PIC Chair reported on one case that the Committee had referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee for a public hearing. This case related to a police caution which the RVN had accepted in relation to the theft of veterinary drugs from a practice. Since the referral of the matter to the RVN Disciplinary Committee, the Crown Prosecution Department had the caution withdrawn to enable the police to carry out a criminal investigation. The RVN's trial is listed to take place in September 2019. In the light of this development, the Committee decided to adjourn listing the case pending the outcome of the criminal prosecution.

Health Concerns

6. There are currently two RVNs being managed in the context of the RCVS Health Protocol.

Performance Concerns

7. There are currently no RVNs being managed in the context of the RCVS Performance Protocol.

Referral to Disciplinary Committee

8. Since the last report to VN Council, the RVN PIC has not referred any cases to the RVN Disciplinary Committee.
9. On 20 and 21 May 2019, an RVN appeared before the Disciplinary Committee in relation to her conviction in August 2017 at Glasgow Sheriff Court, for causing unnecessary pain and suffering to a two-year-old dog, contrary to section 19(2) of the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006 ("the Act"). The gap between the conviction and the Disciplinary Committee hearing was due to the RVN initiating an appeal. The Disciplinary Committee concluded that the RVN's conduct represented a serious departure from professional standards and was incompatible with being registered as a veterinary nurse. The Committee decided that the only appropriate and proportionate sanction was removal from the Register. The RVN's name was removed from the Register of veterinary nurses on 24 June 2019.

Training

10. The RVN PIC, PIC, Veterinary Investigators and members of the Professional Conduct team took part in a day of training on 13 May 2019. Among the topics covered were departmental updates and refreshers on threshold tests (arguable case/realistic prospect), evidential issues and relevant recent case law. Attendees also participated in case studies on the extent to which issues in a registrant's personal life should be considered by their regulator.

Meeting	Council
Date	3 October 2019
Title	Disciplinary Committee Report
Classification	Unclassified
Summary	Update of Disciplinary Committee since the Council meeting on 13 June 2019
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
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Report of Disciplinary Committee hearings since the last PIC DC Liaison meeting on 11 July 2019

Background

1. Since the last update to PIC/DC Liaison on 11 July 2019, the Disciplinary Committee ('the Committee') have met for 4 hearings. The Veterinary Nurse Disciplinary Committee have not met.
2. The Committee been given access to BoardPacks and have been using the system to read papers ahead of the hearing since the beginning of August. The Clerk continues to send papers (password protected) via email, until all the Committee members familiarise themselves with BoardPacks. Training on the use of BoardPacks will be provided to the Committee at its Annual Training in October.

Hearings

Dr Eleanor Corsi

3. On Monday 3 June 2019, the Committee met for 5 days, with an extra day on Wednesday 19 July 2019, to hear the Inquiry into Dr Eleanora Corsi. The Inquiry was in relation to five charges against her.
4. The first charge was that, on 14 December 2017, having previously consulted on 30 November 2017 with Kika's owners in relation to the management of her pregnancy, and having on that occasion taken a radiograph of Kika which indicated the presence of at least four puppies, Dr Corsi failed to advise her owners that Kika required an immediate veterinary examination in circumstances where she was informed by the owner over the telephone that Kika had produced two live puppies and one dead puppy during the previous night.
5. The second charge was that, having been telephoned for a second time by the owner, she still failed to advise the owners that Kika required an immediate veterinary examination.
6. The third charge was that, following an examination of Kika that afternoon, and having ascertained that Kika required a caesarean section to remove one undelivered puppy, Dr Corsi failed to perform the caesarean section that day and advised the owner that Kika could undergo the caesarean section (at the practice, performed by her) the next day (or words to the effect). The charge also states that she failed to advise the owner that Kika's health and welfare required the caesarean section to be performed that day; and that she failed to advise them that, if she or another veterinary surgeon at the practice could not perform the surgery that day, Kika needed to be referred to the out-of-hours clinic so that the caesarean section could take place on 14 December 2017.
7. The fourth charge was that Dr Corsi failed to recognise that Kika's health and welfare required a caesarean section to be performed on 14 December 2017.

8. The fifth charge was that, on 16 December 2017, having been telephoned by the owner at about 5pm and having been informed that Kika was weak and had not been eating post-operatively, Dr Corsi failed to advise the owner that Kika should be presented urgently for a veterinary examination.
9. The full charges can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/corsi-eleonora-july-2019-committee-decision/>
10. In considering the facts of the case, the Committee heard evidence from a number of witnesses, which included the owners of Kika and Dr Corsi herself. The Committee also heard evidence from Mr Maltman, who was called as a witness on behalf of the College and Mr Chitty, who was called as an expert on behalf of Dr Corsi.
11. After consideration of all the evidence before them, the Committee found Charges 1 and 2 proven in their entirety. In relation to Charge 3, the Committee found the majority not proven, although it did find that Dr Corsi advised Kika's owners that she could undertake the Caesarean section on 15 December 2017. In light of the Committee's findings in respect of Charge 3, the Committee found Charge 4 not proved. Finally, in relation to Charge 5, the Committee concluded that this had not been proven.
12. The Committee then went on to consider whether the charges proved amounted to disgraceful conduct.
13. In consideration, the Committee took into account the aggravating factor and was of the view that there was a risk of harm or injury as a result of Dr Corsi's failure. *"The Committee took into account that, at the time of both calls, Dr Corsi had a rationale for her decision, that she asked appropriate questions and received answers which led her to make what she considered to be a reasoned assessment. She had also made arrangements in both calls to be kept updated either at a pre-arranged time or sooner if Kika's condition changed. On this basis, the Committee was satisfied that, while this was an error of judgement, it did not fall so far short of what was expected as to amount to disgraceful conduct."* In conclusion, the Committee decided that while Dr Corsi's conduct in Charges 1 and 2 demonstrated a departure from professional standards, the falling short was not so grave as to amount to disgraceful conduct.
14. The full decision can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/corsi-eleonora-july-2019-committee-decision/>

Dr Jatinder Dhami

15. On Tuesday 23 July, the Committee met for 4 days to hear the Inquiry into Dr Jatinder Dhami. The Inquiry was in relation to three charges against him, all of which took place whilst he was in practice at Vets4Pets in Market Harborough, Leicestershire.
16. Dr Dhami attended the hearing and was legally represented.
17. The first charge against him was that on 14 November 2017, he used unnecessary force towards a Staffordshire Bull terrier cross, by kicking and stamping on her. The second charge was that

between 1 October and 30 November, he failed to have adequate regard to the welfare of a Jack Russel terrier, in that he left it in a sink without adequate reason for an excessive period of time. The third charge was that, between 22 April 2017 and 25 March 2018, he failed to have adequate regard to the welfare of a kitten, in that he failed to take adequate steps to provide care to the kitten.

18. The full charges can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/dhami-jatinder-july-2019-charges/>
19. In establishing whether the facts of the case can be proved, the Committee took into consideration all the oral and documentary evidence put before it, along with the submissions of both parties. In relation to the first charge, the Committee noted that Dr Dhami admitted to the stem of Charge 1, and Charge 1(a), in that he kicked the Staffordshire Bull terrier cross twice with unnecessary force. The Committee went on to consider whether Charge 1(b) was proved. They took into account the statement of AG, which stated that Dr Dhami *“shut the door and I saw him kick the dog across, enough force for dog to fall on its side and slide across, me and James looked before we could act he did it again and again.”* The Committee found AG to be a credible witness and as such the Committee was satisfied that Dr Dhami did stamp on the Staffordshire Bull terrier cross as alleged in Charge 1(b) and that Charge was found proved.
20. In relation to Charge 2, Dr Dhami admitted from the outset that he put the Jack Russell in the scrub sink, explaining that he was using the sink as a hold pen, and realised that she needed prompt attention. However, the alleged charge stated that Dr Dhami left the Jack Russell in a sink without adequate reason, for an excessive amount of time. The Committee concluded that the evidence provided as to the period of time the Jack Russell was left in the sink was unsatisfactory, as the witnesses herself was moving around dealing with other matters. The Committee considered that Dr Dhami probably put the Jack Russell in the sink for convenience. Although not ideal, the Committee did not consider that it was harmful to the animal, and did not consider it was a threat to the welfare of the dog. In the above circumstances, the Committee was not satisfied that the facts alleged in Charge 2 have been proved, and therefore dismissed Charge 2.
21. In relation to Charge 3, Dr Dhami admitted that he placed the kitten on a tub table and admitted that the kitten was in a very poor state, and needed urgent attention. There was a dispute as to whether the kitten was wrapped in a cloth or a blanket, when placed on the table. Dr Dhami called for assistance from AD, and after some three or four minutes, according to her evidence, she took immediate steps to provide the kitten with bedding and warmth. Dr Dhami had realised that this was required and had requested it. The Committee did not find it necessary to decide whether or not the kitten was wrapped in a blanket or a cloth when placed on the table. The kitten received proper care after about three or four minutes, which the Committee considered to be not unreasonable. The Committee considered that the short delay did not prejudice the welfare of a very sick animal, which ultimately made a good recovery. The Committee was not satisfied that the Dr Dhami failed to have adequate regard to the welfare of the kitten, as alleged in this Charge. The Committee was not satisfied so that it is sure that the allegation is made out, and this Charge was dismissed.

22. The full decision on facts can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/dhami-jatinder-july-2019-decision-as-to-facts/>
23. The Committee went on to establish whether Charge 1 amounted to disgraceful conduct.
24. The Committee firstly took into account the aggravating factors, and it concluded that there was risk of injury to the dog by Dr Dhami's conduct. The Committee did not consider that there was any reliable evidence to prove that Dr Dhami's act was not a deliberate act committed in anger. The Committee was also satisfied that this act was premeditated.
25. In mitigating, the Committee accepted that the conduct involved an isolated incident. Dr Dhami's Counsel submitted that the fact that he had been bitten and was in pain was a mitigating factor- in which the Committee agreed. As such, the Committee had no doubt that Dr Dhami's conduct amount to disgraceful conduct.
26. The Committee went on to establish what sanction to impose in respect of Charge 1. The Committee was satisfied that Dr Dhami had a hitherto long and unblemished career; he apologised to colleagues immediately after the relevant incident; there has been a lapse of some 20 months since the incident occurred, during which period the Respondent has worked throughout with no problems. In relation to insight the Committee accepted that Dr Dhami had provided some evidence of reflection into the matters found proved. From the start he admitted kicking the dog twice, and accepted that his conduct, admitted and found proved by the Committee, amounted to disgraceful conduct in a professional respect. The Committee had received evidence as to matters of personal mitigation which it also took into account.
27. It came to the attention of the Committee that Dr Dhami and members of his family had been subjected to hostile communications. During the hearing, Dr Dhami received an anonymous letter couched in clearly racist terms. The Committee deplored the fact that Dr Dhami and his family had been subjected to such campaign and noted that the College shared that view.
28. The Committee took into account all of the above, and appreciate the fact that Dr Dhami had insight into the seriousness of the misconduct and there was no significant risk of repeat behaviour. In conclusion, the Committee decided that a propionate sanction in this case was that Dr Dhami be suspended for a period of 4 months.

Dr Lynn Davies

29. On the 7 August 2019, the Committee met for a further Hearing of an Inquiry which was originally adjourned on 23 January 2018 and thereafter on 30 July 2018. On both occasions, the Committee decided to postpone the final decision on sanction having regard to the Undertakings which the Dr Davies was prepared to enter into.
30. The charges against Dr Davies were in relation to two drink driving offences, breaching the terms of her undertakings to the College as part of its Health Protocol, and being under the influence of alcohol on three occasions while she was on duty as a veterinary surgeon in December 2016.

31. In relation to the recent hearing on 7 August, Dr Davies served an additional witness statement, which addressed each of the Undertakings she had given to the Committee at the conclusion of the Adjourned Hearing on 30 July 2018 and her compliance with them.
32. In reaching its final decision on sanction, the Committee gave careful consideration to the nature and content of the charges she admitted at the original Hearing. The Committee decided that Dr Davies should be subjected to a Reprimand as to her conduct and Warned as to her future conduct, stating that she *“must understand that she has been given an opportunity to prove that, for the remainder of her time in practice, she can meet the high standards expected of all registered veterinary surgeons from both other practitioners and from members of the public who entrust the care and treatment of their animals to members of this profession”*
33. The full decision can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/davies-lyn-jo-ann-august-2019-further-resumed-hearing/>

Dr Michael Jones

34. Between Monday 19 August and Wednesday 21 August, the Disciplinary Committee met to hear the Inquiry into Dr Jones in relation to three charges against him.
35. The first two charges against him were that on 21 March 2018, Dr Jones made signed entries in the passports and made corresponding entries in clinical records for four horses, indicating that he had administered an influenza vaccination booster to each horse on 15 March 2018 and in relation to another horse a tetanus-booster when in fact he had administered the vaccination boosters on 21 March 2018. The third charge against Dr Jones was that, on or around 21 March 2018, he failed to make any entries in the clinical records for a horse in relation to an examination which he carried out on 21 March 2018.
36. The full charges can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/jones-michael-richard-august-2019-charges/>
37. At the outset of the hearing, Dr Jones, who was legally represented, admitted the facts in the first and second charge. However, he denied the third charge.
38. In light of Dr Jones' admissions, the Committee found both Charge 1 and 2 proved. They then went on to establish whether Charge 3 was proved. The Committee heard evidence from the owner of the horses who claim they were present during the examination. The Committee found the owners evidence credible, and were satisfied that Dr Jones did in fact examine the horse on 21 March 2018 and he had a duty to make a brief clinical note upon examination. Dr Jones admitted that he made no notes, and as such, the Committee found the charge to have been proven to the requisite standard.
39. Next the Committee went on to establish with or not Dr Jones' proven conduct amounted to disgraceful conduct. In doing so, the Committee took into account the aggravating and mitigating factors. They concluded that Dr Jones' conduct as found proved in relation to Charles 1 and 2, did amount to disgraceful conduct. However, having regard to the third charge, the Committee accepted that Dr Jones simply forgot that he had examined the horse and, therefore, the

Committee was not satisfied that the failure to compile a record entry covering the horse's examination constituted disgraceful conduct.

40. The full decision on finding of facts and disgraceful conduct can be found here:

<https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/jones-michael-richard-august-2019-decision-on-facts-and/>

41. Finally, the Committee went on to consider the appropriate sanction to impose. In doing so, the Committee took into account the 78 written testimonials and 4 character witness called on behalf of Dr Jones. The Committee concluded that it's *"decision on sanction has been based on an acceptance that the respondent's conduct on this occasion was out-of-character, as the evidence of his character witnesses and the contents of the letters submitted in his support by his clients and other veterinary colleagues assert. The Committee also accepts that the respondent self-reported himself to his employer and to the College and has made a full and frank admission of his wrongdoing"*.

42. The Committee therefore decided to suspend Dr Jones from the Register for two months.

43. The full decision on sanction can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/jones-michael-richard-august-2019-decision-on-sanction/>

Upcoming Hearings

44. There are currently three Inquiry hearings listed before the Disciplinary Committee on the following dates:

23-27 September 2019

14-23 October 2019

28 October- 8 November 2019

45. A case that was adjourned for a year in January 2019, has been relisted for 23 September 2019

Appeals

46. On 1 July 2019, the Privy Council released a Judgment in respect of the Schulze Allen appeal. At the conclusion of its Judgment, the Board of the Judicial Committee referred the second charge in the case back to the Disciplinary Committee for it to identify the appropriate sanction.

47. The full Judgment of the Privy Council can be found here: <https://www.jcpc.uk/cases/jcpc-2018-0022.html>