

## Council Meeting

Thursday, 20 January 2022 at 10:00 am, to be held remotely by Zoom

### Agenda

	Classification <sup>1</sup>	Rationale <sup>2</sup>
1. <b>President's introduction</b>	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
2. <b>Apologies for absence</b>	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
3. <b>Declaration of interests</b>	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
4. <b>Minutes</b>		
i. Meeting held 11 November 2021 - unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
ii. Meeting held 11 November 2021 - classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</b>
iii. Meeting held 21 December 2021 – classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3</b>
5. <b>Matters arising</b>		
a. Obituaries	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
b. Council correspondence	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
c. CEO update	Unclassified	n/a
6. <b>Matters for decision by Council and for report (unclassified items)</b>		
a. Temporary Council decision to recognise graduates from EAEVE accredited schools	Unclassified	n/a
b. Lay members of Council – re-appointment process	Unclassified	n/a
c. Public involvement with RCVS activities	Unclassified	n/a
7. <b>Reports of standing committees – to note</b>		

a. Advancement of the Professions Committee		
i. Unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
ii. Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1</b>
b. Audit and Risk Committee		
i. Unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
ii. Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3, 4</b>
c. Education Committee		
i. Unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
ii. Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1</b>
d. Finance and Resources Committee		
i. Unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
ii. Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3, 4</b>
e. Registration Committee		
Unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
f. Standards Committee		
i. Meeting held 25 August 2021 – Unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
ii. Meeting held 25 August 2021 – Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3</b>
iii. Meeting held 13 September 2021 – Unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
iv. Meeting held 13 September 2021 – Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3</b>
v. Meeting held 26 October 2021 – Unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
vi. Meeting held 26 October 2021 – Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3</b>
vii. Meeting held 15 November 2021 – Unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
viii. Meeting held 15 November 2021 – Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3</b>
ix. Meeting held 15 December 2021 – Unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
x. Meeting held 15 December 2021 – Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3</b>
g. Veterinary Nurses Council		
i. Unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
ii. Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3, 4</b>
h. PIC/DC Liaison Committee		

i. Unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
ii. Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 3</b>
<b>8. Reports of statutory committees – to note</b>		
a. Preliminary Investigation Committee	Unclassified	n/a
b. RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee	Unclassified	n/a
c. Disciplinary Committee and RVN Disciplinary Committee	Unclassified	n/a
<b>9. Notices of motion</b>	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
<b>10. Questions</b>	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
<b>11. Any other College business (unclassified)</b>	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
<b>12. Risk Register, equality and diversity (unclassified)</b>	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
<b>13. Date of next meeting</b> Thursday, 17 March 2022 at 10:00 am	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
<b>14. Matters for decision by Council and for report (confidential items)</b>		
a. Estates Strategy – update	<b>Oral report Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3</b>
<b>15. Any other College business (confidential items)</b>	Oral report <b>Confidential</b>	<b># TBC</b>
<b>16. Risk Register, equality and diversity (confidential items)</b>	Oral report <b>Confidential</b>	<b># TBC</b>
Dawn Wiggins Secretary, RCVS Council 020 7202 0737 / <a href="mailto:d.wiggins@rcvs.org.uk">d.wiggins@rcvs.org.uk</a>		

**<sup>1</sup>Classifications explained**

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

**<sup>2</sup>Classification rationales**

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

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Council
Date	20 January 2022
Title	November 2021 Council minutes
Summary	Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 11 November 2021
Decisions required	To approve the unclassified minutes and classified appendix
Attachments	Classified appendix ( <b>confidential</b> )
Author	Hannah Alderton Committee Liaison Officer <a href="mailto:h.alderton@rcvs.org.uk">h.alderton@rcvs.org.uk</a> / 020 7856 103

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	<b>Private &amp; Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3, 4, 5.</b>

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## Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held remotely via Zoom on Thursday, 11 November 2021

### Members:

Dr K A Richards (President in the Chair)	
Dr L H Allum*	Professor S A May*
Mrs B S Andrews-Jones	Mrs C-L McLaughlan
Miss L Belton	Professor T D H Parkin
Professor D Bray	Dr S Paterson
Mr J M Castle	Professor C J Proudman
Dr D S Chambers	Mr M E Rendle*
Dr N T Connell	Dr N C Smith*
Dr M A Donald	Mr T J Walker
Dr J M Dyer	Dr C M Whiting
Ms L Ford	Professor J L N Wood
Dr M M S Gardiner	Ms J S M Worthington
Dr M O Greene	

\*Absent

### In attendance:

Ms E C Ferguson	Registrar
Ms L Lockett	CEO
Ms C McCann	Assistant Registrar / Director of Operations (DoO)
Miss C H Middlemiss	(UK) Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) (Observer) (closed session only)

### Guests:

Ms C Ashcroft	MRCVS.co.uk/visionline (open session only)
Ms K Clark	<i>Veterinary Record</i> (open session only)
Mr P Imrie	<i>Veterinary Times</i> (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

2. Apologies for absence were received from Professor May, Mr Rendle, Dr Smith and Dr Allum.

3. Professor Bray experienced technical issues during the meeting and submitted apologies as he was unable to continue in attendance

## Declarations of interest

4. New declarations of interest were received from:
  - Professor Proudman: in relation to 14e on the agenda he advised that he was co-supervisor to the person submitting a Fellowship thesis.
  - Dr Paterson: had recently been elected as the President of the World Association for Veterinary Dermatology.

## Minutes of the meeting held September 2021

5. Council had had the opportunity to comment on the unclassified minutes and classified appendix electronically.

6. A vote was taken to approve the minutes and classified appendix:

For:	18
Against:	0
Abstentions:	0
Remaining:	1

7. Dr Greene submitted an email vote as she experienced technical difficulties.
8. The minutes and classified appendix were as accepted as true records of the meeting by a majority vote.

## Matters arising

### Obituaries

9. Written obituaries were received on behalf of former Council member Dr David Bartram and former editor of the Veterinary Record and Honorary Associate Edward Boden. The College had also been informed of the passing of Mr David Ames MP who was an MP and supporter of animal welfare and the College, Emeritus Professor Sir James Armour who was Dean of Glasgow Vet school from 1986-1991 and a former RCVS Council member and Mr John Gripper who was also a former Council member and long-term RCVS trustee. Due to Armistice Day the members were asked to include thoughts of those that had passed since the last meeting during the two-minute silence at 11 o'clock.



### Council correspondence

10. The President reported:

### RCVS Council Election 2022

11. A notice would shortly be going into *RCVS News*, and to the members due to retire at the 2022 AGM. The deadline for nominations would be 5:00 pm on Monday, 31 January 2021.
12. Council was reminded that its members were not permitted to nominate anyone to stand for Council and that if retiring members intended to re-stand, then registered addresses should be used for the Nomination Form.

### CEO update

13. The CEO highlighted:

- the workforce project discussed at the previous meeting was ongoing and the Summit would take place on Tuesday 30 November 2021. Before that meeting a number of online insight groups with vets and vet nurses had taken place, particularly with those who worked in practices. The aim was to gather a sense of the issues faced by those on the ground, in order to feed into the Summit meeting. The Summit meeting attendees would include those who had the power and resources to influence decision making. The intention was to avoid spending too much time on the day narrating the problems and instead to focus on solutions;
- an event to discuss Extra mural studies (EMS) had been scheduled for 22 November. Its purpose would be to outline what EMS should achieve and how that could be done in a changing world. Factors affecting successful delivery of this important aspect of the student experience included increasing student numbers and more schools operating a distributed model, and so greater requirement for clinical practices to also deliver intra-mural rotations (IMR). Both EMS and IMR had been impacted by the pandemic. The increasing number of overseas students also needed to be taken into consideration;
- the College and the Veterinary Policy Research Foundation had jointly launched a new EMS programme for students who wished to develop their understanding of veterinary policy and regulation;
- a six-week consultation on new veterinary nursing day one competences, skills and professional behaviours had been launched on Wednesday, 10 November. This was as a result of a huge amount of work by the veterinary nursing team, who were thanked for their efforts;
- in relation to the VetGDP programme, that had been launched earlier in the year, a comprehensive communications programme with both new graduates and advisers had been run. To date, 2,476 advisers had signed up to the e-learning course, of which 850 had completed the six modules. Just over 1,300 of those advisers had signed the declaration to support their graduate to start the programme. There were roughly 160 students who were outstanding and within them many were exempt due to remaining in academia or working abroad;

- the Legislation Working Party's proposals, which had been signed off by Council at a previous meeting, had now been sent through to DEFRA and meetings were being held with a range of stakeholders. The response so far had been positive;
- Richard Burley, the Chief Technology Officer (CTO), was due to leave the College after four years in mid-January. A huge thank you for his work was given. A review of the interim support needed, whilst a replacement CTO was found, was underway;
- Academy Manager, Jennifer Ayers, had started in July and was making great progress in the role. A plan would be submitted to the next Finance and Resource Committee meeting in relation to the foundations of this new project, which featured in the Strategic Plan;
- the Practice Standards Group had contracted with the Centre for Sustainable Health Care to launch a new project looking at building sustainability requirements into the Practice Standards Scheme. It was commented that the opportunity for the 70% of practices coming under the ambit of the Scheme to make meaningful changes would have a really positive impact;
- Council was thanked for the speed with which they had approved the recent changes to the English language testing policy, and impacts from the change had already been seen. Four people who had not previously been able to enter the Register were now registered and two more had moved across from the temporary category of the Register. An additional 11 who had previously fallen short of the English language standards had been contacted and a number of others may now be able to register because of the change;
- the support for refugees had been expanded by the College working with a number of organisations, including RCVS Knowledge, to ensure provision of free access to libraries and CPD for those working towards the Statutory Membership Examination. It had been acknowledged that payment of the exam fees and contribution to travel, which was already RCVS policy, had been only one of many barriers for some people, and it was hoped that these new offers would help further. The huge value of overseas graduates to the UK team was acknowledged and Council was informed that a third survey to gauge the impact of Brexit on EU vets and vet nurses working in the UK was underway;
- with regards to Mind Matters the Kite app had been launched in early September, it was explained that this was a micro-learning programme to support vets' and vet nurses' wellbeing and over 1,200 people had already signed up. An online research symposium was due to take place shortly, to which hundreds of attendees had signed up. There would be a number of international speakers, plus several researchers who had previously been awarded Sarah Brown Mental Health Research Grants would be sharing the impact that they had. Mind Matters had also been doing a lot of work with student vet nurses to better understand the impact of poor workplace culture, including bullying, on them;
- Fellowship Week had taken place, with over 260 people watching the event. It was confirmed that the new application round was now open, and emphasis was made on the wish to hear

from people of more diverse backgrounds to continue to ensure that the Fellowship was a vibrant collective;

- a new People Plan has been communicated to the staff team and more diversity and inclusion training was taking place. Dr Greene and the communications team were given a huge thank you for the series of videos that had been produced for Black History Month.

14. There were no questions, and the report was noted.

### **Professor Bray left the meeting**

## **Matters for decision by Council and for report (unclassified items)**

### **Discretionary Fund**

15. The Director of Operations (DoOps) introduced the paper and explained that the Discretionary Fund was an allocation in the budget for expenditure on items not provided for to allow for new ideas within a budget year, and to enable strategically important changes to be fast-tracked. There were financial controls in place and the provision in the 2021 budget was £150,000. To date £146,092 had been spent, this amount included the two applications that had been approved since the last meeting. The first was a project to examine in more detail data from the 2019 Surveys of the Veterinary Professions specifically exploring factors associated with intention to leave the profession. The second was to contribute to the cost of the Workforce Summit. All of the figures included Value Added Tax (VAT).

16. The paper was noted.

### **Legislation Working Party (LWP) – interim recommendations**

17. Council was reminded that its approval of the package of proposals from the LWP at the previous meeting included some that could be implemented without a change in primary legislation, ie those that related to the formation of the Stage One PICs (Mini-PICs) and the introduction of the Charter Case Committee. It was explained that many conversations had taken place with those who would be called upon to implement the changes, the Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) members, and also the members of PIC / Disciplinary Committee (DC) Liaison Committee.

18. The papers about the Stage One PICs included the different permutations that were thought possible whilst remaining within the requirements of the Veterinary Surgeons Act and paragraph eight set out the final proposal. This included having four- Stage One PICs with the Chair remaining as a separate member who could, along with other members, sit on any groups to fill in for absences. The plan was outlined to have the composition of each of the groups to change every six to 12 months, with a quorum of three made up of one lay member, one veterinary member and one other. Case managers would be allocated to each group for legal input and administrative assistance and each group would have a lead rather than a formal chair. It was proposed that there would be a review after 12 months of implementation and feedback would be given to Council at that stage. The plan to make the same changes regarding the veterinary nursing process was confirmed.

19. The Charter Case Committee was the second change that was outlined. This was a new concept so all the documentation up for approval was new. Council was taken to paragraph 11 of the report, which outlined the proposed composition of the new Committee, which was to have three independently appointed members, one of whom would be legally qualified, who would take responsibility for the drafting of the decision. It was highlighted that there would only be a limited number of cases that would meet the criteria to be suitable to be heard by this Committee, criteria which included satisfying the public interest.
20. Along with the approval of the documentation, Council was asked to approve the name 'Charter Case Committee'. It was explained that there had been some concern that while this name explained where the committee came from it did not explain what it did – alternatives would be gratefully received.
21. The next steps, pending all the proposals being approved, were set out. This included recruitment of the additional members needed for both the Charter Case Committee and the increased PIC numbers, and suitable training for all of those involved. It was estimated that the changes would be ready to be implemented in the spring of 2022.
22. It was asked if there were any questions.
23. After some confusion it was clarified that Case Examiner Groups and the arguable case threshold was being removed. Instead, there would only be one threshold test - that of realistic prospect of establishing serious professional misconduct. The stage one PIC could close cases where it decided that threshold was not met. Where more information was required in order to make a decision; typically, where formal statements via external solicitors or expert opinion were required - these cases would be referred on to a stage two PIC. This would have the current five-people quorum.
24. It was asked whether there was a communication plan as this was recognised to be quite a complex and sensitive topic. Council was informed that it had not been possible to develop a plan until it was known what the approved direction would be, but once that was in place a plan would be developed.
25. It was explained that a legally qualified person for drafting purposes for the charter case committee was deemed to be a good addition by the PIC/DC Committee. Although Legal Assessors routinely assisted the Disciplinary Committee, PIC had instead sought legal advice as and when it was required.
26. It was highlighted that only cases that would have previously met the threshold to be referred to Disciplinary Committee were going to be considered for the Charter Case Committee. No one whose case previously would have been closed at PIC was at risk of having a more significant sanction against them. It was also confirmed that cases would only go to this Committee rather than the Disciplinary Committee if certain criteria were met - notably that insight had been shown and it was considered that there was no future risk to animal welfare and the public interest.

27. It was explained that the changes appeared to increase the work of the PIC members and it was questioned whether the members had an issue with that? The answer was given that it would be different work rather than more. The Committee would recruit more members, but it was the same cases that they would be dealing with previously, they would just no longer be sitting on the Case Examiner Group as well as PIC.
28. It was asked whether the staff members had any issue with no longer having any deciding vote as the Case Examiner Groups were being removed. It was confirmed that the Professional Conduct department had been consulted on all the changes and that they would be assisting and guiding PIC and be instrumental in the process.
29. The structure of the PIC was questioned and whether it would be better for the members of the groups to be decided on a case-by-case basis so as to allow more flexibility. It was explained that administratively that would cause many issues and be very difficult.
30. The suggestion was made as to whether the proposal could be run alongside the existing process so that any issues could be fixed before it was fully implemented. It was explained that that would not be possible, but there would be a 12-month review at which point it would be brought back to Council for evaluation.
31. In response to a question, the plan for publication of the Charter Case Committee decisions was explained. The proposition was not to have press releases like in the Disciplinary cases, but the decisions would be publicly available on the RCVS website.
32. [Council observed a two-minute silence at 11 o'clock for Armistice Day.]
33. Council was asked to approve the establishment of four mini-PICs (Stage 1 PICs):
- |          |    |
|----------|----|
| For:     | 18 |
| Against: | 0  |
| Abstain: | 1  |
34. This was agreed by a majority vote.
35. Ms Worthington experienced technical difficulties and submitted an email vote.
36. Council was asked to approve the draft amended PIC and DC Protocol:
- |          |    |
|----------|----|
| For:     | 18 |
| Against: | 1  |
| Abstain: | 0  |
37. This was agreed by a majority vote.
38. Council was asked to approve the constitution of the Charter Case Committee:

For:	18
Against:	1
Abstain:	0

39. This was agreed by a majority vote.

40. Council was asked to approve the draft Charter Case Protocol:

For:	18
Against:	1
Abstain:	0

41. This was agreed by a majority vote.

42. Council was asked to approve the drafter Charter Case Committee Rules:

For:	18
Against:	1
Abstain:	0
Did not vote:	0

43. This was agreed by a majority vote.

44. A discussion took place around the naming of the 'Charter Case Committee', comments and questions included but were not limited to:

- the word appraisal (part of a suggestion made by PIC/DC Liaison Committee) was felt to be inappropriate;
- Professional Conduct Review Committee or Evaluation Committee was suggested;
- some felt the suggested name was not an issue as long as the clarification was clear;
- it was agreed that the name should explain what the committee did rather than where it came from.

45. Council was asked to decide if it wished the working title 'Charter Case Committee' to be retained or to rename. It was clarified that voting yes would indicate their wish to keep the name Charter Case Committee and voting no would be in favour of renaming:

For:	6
Against:	10
Abstain:	2
Remaining:	1

46. The decision was made for a different name to be proposed.

### New RCVS accreditation standards for veterinary programmes.

47. Council was reminded of the formal consultation that had taken place in relation to the methodology and standards for the RCVS accreditation of undergraduate veterinary education and were informed of the high level of engagement and passion that had been evident in that process: 107 responses from 19 different veterinary organisations had been received. The hard work of the Education Department was acknowledged in pulling together a comprehensive report in a short space of time.
48. The final iteration of the standards and methodology was being proposed to Council for discussion and sign off. It was explained that the proposed timeline was to have the new accreditation standards and methodology implemented in January 2023 with the caveat that the Education Department would be committed to working with the schools to help provide guidance and support.
49. Comments and questions included but were not limited to;
- ref standard 3.3, which was in relation to the head of a school needing to be an MRCVS, was questioned as it may have unintended consequences when potentially hiring a professor from another country who would then have to take the Statutory Membership Exam before taking the job;
    - o it was answered that a head of a UK vet school would be using their veterinary qualification as part of that role, and would therefore need to be on the RCVS Register as a practising member;
  - the definitions around clinical education, general practice and casework were emphasised to be crucial to the vet schools to be able to understand and plan for the likely impact. The current wording stated that the syllabus 'must' consist of 70% of the clinical teaching being in a general practice setting. The word 'must' did not allow for any flexibility for a potential accreditation visit in February 2023;
  - the ethos of the new accreditation was to be outcomes-driven rather than a tick-box exercise without a clear prescribed percentage, so it was asked the reasoning behind giving the specific 70% number;
    - o it was explained that there feedback to the consultation asked for an indication of what a majority meant, and the previous suggestion of 50% had been viewed by the majority of the profession as far too low;
  - more work needed to be done with regard to clarity on timing in the transition period for vet schools as they were subject to detailed scrutiny and they needed to provide detailed information on what the students were going to receive in their programme before they started;
    - o this was supported and agreed that it would be different for every school and the College was hoping to be as supportive and flexible as possible;

- the document was praised as being very encouraging of change, with positive intentions;
- the 70% figure was concerning for vet schools as it was so prescriptive and seemed to be an arbitrary number taken from strong opinion-based evidence - largely not from those involved in the education field. It was not argued that the number was wrong but included with the word 'must' and the lack of definition around what 'in the context of general practice' meant, it may result in schools failing accreditation if the accreditors disagreed with the school's interpretation. It was asked that the document not to be approved at the meeting until there was a clear definition and guidance on exactly how it will be measured with consistency across the schools;
- some schools may have to undergo profound change which would take years;
- specifics could be ironed out with the relevant committees rather than not approving the document.

50. Council members were thanked for their comments and questions. It was commented that definitions were very important to have in the paperwork so that everyone was on the same page for years to come. It was added that there seemed to be a consensus that the document was a very positive one, that clearly had had a lot of work put into it, but that there were some concerns around very specific points. It was added that those points would be looked at by the appropriate committees to address the issues.

51. Council was asked to approve the accreditation standards and methodology, for implementation in January 2023:

For:	16
Against:	3
Abstain:	0
Remaining:	1

52. This was agreed by a majority vote.

#### **Policy for recognising graduates EAEVE-accredited schools for RCVS registration: EAEVE backdating policy**

53. Council was reminded that in preparation for the UK leaving the EU and the resultant loss of the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications Directive, the RCVS agreed a temporary decision to continue to accept graduates from European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) accredited schools. It was explained that it had come to light that EAEVE had a policy of backdating accreditation following a successful revisit. This meant that there could be confusion about the accreditation status of a school at the time of someone graduating from it, as opposed to the status applied retrospectively.

54. Council was given two options, the first was that the RCVS collected longitudinal data, of EAEVE accredited schools, every six months to establish a clear timeline of when accreditation state was in place or absent. Individuals would then only be able to register with the RCVS if their school



was accredited at the time of their graduation. The second option was for the RCVS to consider the most recent list of EAEVE accredited schools and individuals would be able to register despite graduating at the time when a school had several major deficiencies in standard at the time of their graduation.

55. It was questioned whether this would be a large undertaking and how confident would the College be with the validity of the information they received. It was answered that EAEVE sent out the information itself every six months, so it would be a matter of collating and recording the data.
56. It was asked whether this change would have any potential implications in the future if the College ever attempted to negotiate mutual recognition with a specific school. It was answered that speculation was difficult and the best course of action would be to deal with the issues at hand and react to any changes in the future.
57. It was clarified to Council that there would be a paper going to January Council for the annual review of the temporary measure but that the College was not going to be proposing anything that would impact the decision that Council was being asked to make.
58. The point was made that in order for a school to be accredited it was guaranteeing that any students graduating from that point forward had the required education. It was not the case that a student would have part of their education below the standard and part meeting the standard.
59. Council was asked to decide whether RCVS should use the accreditation status of the school at the point at which the graduate completed their programme (Option 1), or from the most current list of accredited schools supplied by EAEVE (Option 2):

Option 1:	14
Option 2:	0
Abstain:	5

60. Option 1 was agreed by a majority vote.

### **RCVS Investment Policy**

61. The Director of Operations explained that Council was being asked to consider the draft policy and also to agree to divest from fossil fuels. The College used charity guidance as a basis for their decision making. The Environmental and Sustainability Working Party had come forward with the proposal to divest from fossil fuels.
62. It was asked whether the College should be alert to any potential conflicts of interest if investments were made in large multinationals that now own veterinary practices or had veterinary divisions. It was explained that the investment managers can screen for issues such as that, to ensure that there would be no conflict.
63. Council was asked to consider and approve the investment policy and agree to divest from fossil fuels:

For:	19
Against:	0
Abstain:	0

64. This was agreed by a majority vote.

65. Dr Whiting and Dr Chambers submitted an email vote as they experienced technical difficulties.

## Reports of standing committees – to note

### **Advancement of the Professions Committee (APC)**

66. There were no comments or questions, and the report was noted.

### **Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)**

67. There were no comments or questions, and the reports and classified appendices were noted.

### **Education Committee (EC)**

68. There were no comments or questions, and the report and classified appendix were noted.

### **Finance and Resources Committee (FRC)**

69. There were no comments or questions, and the report and classified appendix were noted.

### **Standards Committee (SC)**

70. There were no comments or questions, and the reports and classified appendices were noted.

### **Veterinary Nurses Council (VNC)**

71. There were no comments or questions, and the report and classified appendix were noted.

### **Preliminary Investigation Committee and Disciplinary Committee Liaison Committee (PIC/DC LC)**

72. Concerns around the KPI numbers were raised and the continued issue with case managers. It was questioned whether the College was fulfilling its duty of care to the case managers. Council was informed that there were a multitude of reasons why people left jobs, but one element was the level of emotions that the case managers had to deal with, both from the public and the profession. Additional support was provided along with training, including bereavement training. This was a topic that the PIC/DC Liaison Committee had investigated in depth.

73. The report and classified appendix were noted.

## Reports of statutory committees – to note

### **Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC)**

74. There were no comments or questions, and the report was noted.

### Registered Veterinary Nurses Preliminary Investigation Committee (RVN PIC)

75. There were no comments or questions, and the report was noted.

### Disciplinary Committee (DC)

76. There were no comments or questions, and the report was noted.

### Notices of Motion

77. There were no notices of motion received.

### Questions

78. There were no questions received.

### Any other College business (unclassified)

79. There was no other College business identified from the public session of the meeting.

### Risk Register, equality and diversity (unclassified)

80. Risk around Agenda Item 6C 'New RCVS accreditation standards for veterinary programmes' would be on the Education Committee risk register, but it was commented that it may also need to be on the Council one.

### Date of next meeting

81. The next meeting would be on Thursday, 20 January 2022. This meeting would be held in person.

**[Afternote: This was amended to a remote meeting as the government had re-introduced Covid restrictions.]**

### Matters for decision by Council and for report (confidential items)

#### Groupage Export Facilitation Scheme - review

82. This information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 1 – 11.

**RCVS accreditation model and the regulation of animal behaviourists**

83. This information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 12 – 22.

**Estates Strategy – update**

84. This information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 23 – 41.

**Budget 2022**

85. This information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 42-46.

**Fellowship by Thesis**

86. This information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 47 -48.

**Any other College business (confidential items)**

87. This information is available in the classified appendix at paragraph 50.

**Risk Register, equality and diversity (confidential items)**

88. This information is available in the classified appendix at paragraph 51 – 52.

89. The meeting was brought to a close.

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	RCVS Council
Date	20 January 2022
Title	CEO update, including progress against Strategic Plan
Summary	This paper offers a summary of activity against the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan
Decisions required	To note
Attachments	None
Author	Lizzie Lockett CEO l.lockett@rcvs.org.uk

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification</b>	<b>Rationales</b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

## Background

1. The RCVS Strategic Plan 2020-2024 was approved at the RCVS Council meeting in January 2020 and came into immediate effect. The full report, including all of the narrative, together with case studies from the previous plan's successes, can be found here:  
<https://www.rcvs.org.uk/news-and-views/publications/rcvs-strategic-plan-2020-2024/>
2. For each action, progress to date, responsibilities and next steps have been identified in the following table. At its meeting in July 2020, the Officer Team felt it appropriate that an update be given to Council three times a year – in September, January and June – but information about a specific action can be made available to any Council member on request in between times.
3. Outside of those changes noted in the Strategic Plan table to follow, since the November 2021 Council meeting we have also:
  - a. Attended the London Vet Show and engaged with members of the veterinary team on a range of issues including VetGDP and plans for the RCVS Academy
  - b. Hosted a cross-professional event on the future of Extra-mural Studies (EMS)
  - c. Started the process of exiting Belgravia House, including hiring a project management company
  - d. Held a Workforce Summit and are in the process of developing an action plan
  - e. Celebrated the fact that 92% of veterinary nurses who had their CPD audited were compliant
  - f. Opened the nomination period for candidates for the RCVS and VN Council elections
  - g. Hosted a webinar for students and recent graduates on handling difficult situations in practice
  - h. Carried out a consultation on VN professional requirements
  - i. Seen 1,504 members complete all six modules of the VetGDP e-learning
  - j. With regards to Covid, put out guidance to the professions about the wearing of masks and reintroduced remote assessments for the Practice Standards Scheme and temporary guidance on remote prescribing
  - k. Updated our guidance following changes on fish and seafood export rules
  - l. Published an e-book to celebrate the VN Diamond Jubilee
  - m. Sought support from the Prime Minister for Afghan veterinarians
  - n. Launched a new hub to help the profession develop key leadership skills

## A: Clarity

**Ambition:** to ensure that we have clarity of purpose and that our internal and external stakeholders and service-users understand our role in the world. We will endeavour to become a proactive regulator that remains a step ahead, even in the face of constant change and uncertainty. We will listen widely, consult meaningfully, make confident decisions, then communicate with clarity, appreciating that the final outcome may not suit everyone.

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
1. Continue, via the work of the Veterinary Legislation Working Party (LWP) and other groups, to review the regulatory landscape to ensure we develop world-leading, robust standards and approaches that are grounded in evidence and risk-based, in order to safeguard animal health and welfare, and public health, and maintain trust in the veterinary professions.	LWP/ Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LWP reported to Council in June 2020; Council agreed to consult on proposals, consultation opened 5 November 2020 and closed on 23 April 2021. Responses to consultation were considered by Council at its June 2021 meeting and recommendations went to Defra during August.</li> <li>A new set of veterinary education accreditation standards has been agreed, which accommodate different models of curricula and delivery and enable flexibility whilst driving quality improvement.</li> <li>A new accreditation methodology has been agreed, which is more outcomes-focused and adopts a risk-based approach.</li> <li>Following introduction of new VN accreditation standards in January 2020, we carried out a small-scale review to ensure they were outcomes-focused and to remove any duplication. Completed and approved by VNC 10 February 2021. Updated Standards Framework available on the website.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive responses to the legislation proposals have been forthcoming from Defra / the Minister (albeit short of a formal commitment to go ahead). The Public Affairs team is progressing a programme of engagement with MPs and others and liaison continues with the BVA and BVNA in respect of narrowing areas of disagreement.</li> <li>Work on implementation of new veterinary education accreditation standards now underway.</li> <li>Day-One Competences and skills for veterinary nursing (to include the professional behaviours) being reviewed; consultation closed on 22 December 2021. Proposed amendments going to VNC in February 2022.</li> </ul>
2. Ensure that we are addressing what matters to our stakeholders and that we horizon-scan for issues that are beyond the scope of our immediate view. For example, regulation of new technologies, regulation of practices, review of our concerns and disciplinary process, and	APC/ LWP/ PICDCL EC?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing work with ViVet, including events around creativity and reflecting on the impact of Covid-19 and the professions' response to it.</li> <li>Regulation of practices falls part of A1 above.</li> <li>Review of concerns/disciplinary processes consultation alongside LWP – see A1 above.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Workforce Summit with key stakeholders was hosted by ViVet on 30 November 2021. Engagement with the wider professions was completed in advance using an independent consultant (virtually). A follow up 'road map' is currently being designed.</li> <li>Consideration of the regulation of wider vet team ongoing. The Vet Techs Working</li> </ul>

<p>regulation of the wider veterinary team and the environment in which they work.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lot of focus on ‘what matters to our stakeholders’ has been carried out during pandemic work.</li> <li>• Stakeholder event took place online on 23 October 2020 to discuss current consultations and impact of Brexit; second stakeholder event on 8 December 2021.</li> <li>• Updates to PSS published May 2021.</li> <li>• Review of mental health impact of concerns process has been published, alongside updated action plan, with launch of ProfCon Investigation Support – June 2021.</li> </ul>	<p>Group reporting to Registration Committee has met and while issues have arisen over the nature of the work being undertaken and whether there are sufficient numbers to allow financing, discussions continue. Likewise there have been discussions with behaviourist groups and issues over the nature of the work and whether it crosses over into acts of veterinary surgery are being referred to the Fellowship Science Advisory Panel. With the progress of the LWP proposals pending (A1 above) Council has agreed to put a hold on the accreditation model at this time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of mini-PICs and the Charter Case Protocol are proceeding, with the recruitment of the additional members required shortly to be undertaken.</li> <li>• Horizon-scanning process to take place for Vet Futures #2 and VN Futures #2– inc impact of Covid-19 – we continue to liaise with BVA on this.</li> <li>• Under care review ongoing. The practitioner survey has been completed and data gathered from both SAVNET and VetCompass; Standards Committee is now considering updated guidance, which it is anticipated will come to Council in March 2022 for consideration.</li> <li>• Increasing challenges with the availability and implementation of EMS requirements in future recognised. We hosted a stakeholder event to look at the longer-term solutions, which was successful, and proposals for a way forward are under development.</li> </ul>
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Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
3. Review whether we can take a more proactive role around breaches of the Veterinary Surgeons Act involving unqualified individuals, or courses that purport to lead to registration but do not, both through education to end-users of veterinary services, and working more actively to support those wishing to raise concerns with the relevant authorities.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some work on this had started pre-Covid and will be revisited once resources allow.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review resources post Under care/out of hours (UCOOH) review.</li> </ul>
4. Work with our partners overseas to ensure that the UK remains relevant in the veterinary world post-EU exit, including sharing knowledge, marketing our standards and services, and building an engaged diaspora of members of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (MsRCVS) and registered veterinary nurses (RVNs). Ensure there is a global element to all that we do, and that our international members feel engaged and included.	APC/ FVE/ Brexit T/F EC?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing work via Advancement of the Professions Committee to consider global offering.</li> <li>Signed up to World Veterinary Association in observer capacity.</li> <li>Building relationships via MMI International, with two events held during 2021 and a third planned for 2022.</li> <li>Continuing to play a role in the International Veterinary Regulators Network (IVRN): hosted a session on mental health as part of the June 2021 series of educational events.</li> <li>Continuing to play a role in the Global Veterinary Innovation Network.</li> <li>Presented on Mind Matters at World Small Animal Veterinary Association Congress (March 2021).</li> <li>Continuing to work with International Accreditation Working Group (IAWG) to facilitate joint accreditations. RCVS chaired a virtual meeting of IAWG autumn 2021.</li> <li>Signed up to World Veterinary Association statement on global climate crisis.</li> <li>Protocols for joint virtual visitations agreed with IAWG members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop actions from overseas member research.</li> <li>Work ongoing to develop more permanent solution to loss of mutual recognition of professional qualifications – also engagement with government around the Professional Qualifications Bill and its likely impact.</li> <li>Have run third EU graduates survey ref impact of Brexit and will publish shortly.</li> <li>Continue to play strong role at the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE): still aiming to host rescheduled London GA in summer 2022; hosted a workshop on wellbeing on 7 December; joined working group on pan-European Survey of the Professions.</li> <li>Hosting an event with IVRN on workforce on 10 January 2022.</li> <li>Planning pilot with the Australasian Veterinary Boards Council (AVBC) to develop a process for future joint visitations, in light of our new accreditation standards and methods.</li> <li>Pick up work with OIE on twinning once pandemic resolving.</li> </ul>

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
5. Build a closer relationship between the College, the professions and the public by continuing our outreach programme. Review how we gain input from stakeholders at all levels, including the development of an improved process for seeking input from members of the public.	APC/ Comms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder research published January 2020.</li> <li>Feedback from practices sought as part of regular Covid-19 surveys.</li> <li>Much of our face-to-face public outreach on hold again in 2021 due to Covid.</li> <li>Stakeholder events held in October 2020 and December 2021.</li> <li>New role established in Communications team to support student and new graduate engagement and planning work underway with Education and VN teams. Planning and production of content for new student-focused area of the website underway, along with review/update of <i>RCVS Guide for New Members</i>. New welcome videos produced for 2021 freshers to explain role of College and help establish positive early relationships.</li> <li>Role of Head of Insight and Engagement established in January 2021 to support this work and also A6 below.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposals to Council on public engagement for discussion at January 2022 meeting.</li> </ul>
6. Establish clarity around a data-sharing commitment, and ensure that our views, our data & our insights are shared regularly in an easy-to-search way, for example, easy-to-find FAQ on key issues, insights gained from concerns & complaints data, and self-service facts and figures about the professions. Make available accessible & anonymised versions of the data we hold to all stakeholders to enable them to generate value and insights for the sector.	FRC/ Digital/ Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prototype of sharing mechanism for core data ready for review.</li> <li>FAQ on Covid have been well received, along with those for CPD, LWP, Practice Standards and VetGDP.</li> <li>Role of Head of Insight and Engagement established January 2021 to support this work.</li> <li>New Research Officer hired January 2021 to support this work and a broad range of other research across the organisation.</li> <li>FAQ on medicines published spring 2021.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data sharing policy reviewed by Audit and Risk and Finance and Resources Committees end of 2021.</li> <li>Review data-sharing prototype and launch</li> <li>Develop dashboard on key metrics – process of identifying key areas underway.</li> <li>Develop approach for mining concerns and complaints data for content for Academy.</li> <li>Survey on impact of Covid on vets and nurses due for publication during January.</li> </ul>

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
<p>7. Plan and implement a cycle of review and improvement for our educational standards and processes, to ensure we continue to take a leadership role with our international partners.</p>	<p>Ed Cttee/ VN Education Cttee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launched Day-One Competences 2/7/20.</li> <li>• VN Standards reviewed and published and CertAVN developed with four Higher Education Institutions now delivering in a range of areas.</li> <li>• Working party, Primary Qualifications Subcommittee (PQSC) and Education Committee agreed new accreditation standards &amp; methodology. Council approved following consultation with the profession in Nov 2021.</li> <li>• Advanced Practitioner (AP) and CertAVP surveys completed. The AP Focus groups were held in June and results were discussed by EC in September 2021.</li> <li>• Hosted virtual International Accreditors Working Group (IAWG) in 2020 and 2021.</li> <li>• Presented new standards and methodology to IAWG in July 2021, and established future proposals to pilot methods for joint visitations.</li> <li>• The VN Qualifications Team is in regular contact with HEIs and Colleges to provide support and understand Covid-related challenges and changes to provision.</li> <li>• Education Team in regular contact with Veterinary Schools Council to mitigate impact of Covid on veterinary undergraduate education – many temporary amends made to policy to support schools and students during this time, being kept under review.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See A1 for VN DOC/DOS details.</li> <li>• New vet school accreditation standards and methodology approved for implementation in 2023 – work now focuses on developing guidance and new training for accreditation panel members, as well as liaising with schools on the new standards.</li> <li>• Working groups established to explore future proposals for AP status.</li> </ul>
<p>8. Ensure clarity of appeal across all the areas where we make decisions, modernising where appropriate; where appeal is unavailable, clearly justify.</p>	<p>Legal services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fellowship Board has reviewed appeals process and some changes have been made</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit current processes; review best practice – process underway.</li> </ul>

## B: Compassion

**Ambition:** to be a compassionate upstream regulator and a supportive Royal College by ensuring that high standards continue to be met while working in an empathetic way that respects all of our stakeholders and service-users as individuals. We will recognise that a compassionate approach involves helping members of the veterinary team build the skills and knowledge they need to meet our standards, which is ultimately in the interests of animal health and welfare.

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
1. Endeavour to ensure that the College is seen as approachable, helpful, fair and accessible to all.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All RCVS websites were compliant with key requirements of new Accessibility Regulations by September 2020 deadline.</li> <li>Review of communications around registration renewal and renewal of AP, Specialist and Fellowship statuses has taken place.</li> <li>Good positioning of all external vacancies, providing insights into our role and key values.</li> <li>Data on KPIs (ProfCon) regularly published.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review data/identify training priorities.</li> <li>Review public- and profession-facing documentation for 'Plain English'.</li> <li>Develop online version of Regional Question Times to take questions from members.</li> <li>Tie-in with stakeholder mapping (A5, above)</li> <li>Review of key web content ongoing, including conversion of all PDF documents to web pages where possible, or provision PDF and web versions of key publications, eg <i>Diversity &amp; Inclusion Strategy</i> to ensure improved accessibility.</li> <li>Taking forward work of DIG to review all our process to ensure they are fair and do not discriminate, eg work underway with Fellowship regarding application process.</li> </ul>
2. Enable our teams to deliver compassionate regulation by providing structures, training and support to ensure they can help vets and nurses meet the standards required in a compassionate way, and take ownership and communicate clearly when things don't go to plan. Recognising that, in order to achieve this, our team members must also feel well supported and that they are compassionately treated.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data from Survey of Professions.</li> <li>Peakon staff engagement tool gives 'real time' view on how staff are feeling.</li> <li>Launched e-cards to celebrate staff members who meet our values.</li> <li>Created 'Opportunities Group' of mid-career staff to help understand where support may be needed, particularly for new managers.</li> <li>Have rolled out Diversity &amp; Inclusion training for all staff.</li> <li>MH for Managers training taken place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review data and identify priorities for staff training and review of materials – ongoing process.</li> <li>Reviewing options for online learning system for staff – some delays with this project.</li> <li>Review discussions data from Peakon and other staff meetings for training gaps.</li> <li>Encourage and support managers in acting on findings/comments from Peakon tool.</li> <li>Supervision / support for those taking stressful calls – process under development.</li> <li>Refresh plans for 'away day' for all staff.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support sessions ref virtual working for staff have taken place.</li> <li>• Training for staff dealing with people in difficult situations completed.</li> <li>• Update for staff taken place on resources available via our Employee Assistance Programme.</li> <li>• ProfCon Investigation Support service launched in June 2021.</li> <li>• Staff invited to attend all appropriate Mind Matters sessions, for example, campfire chats, resilience training.</li> <li>• Pronoun policy written and staff training underway.</li> <li>• Stress management workshops completed to support staff back into BH.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisit values cards to promote recognition of being compassionate.</li> </ul>
Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
3. Review our concerns process through the eyes of each of our stakeholder and service-user groups to ensure that it is fair, forward-thinking and compassionate, and set out a programme of quality improvement.	ProfCon MMI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ProfCon Investigation Support Service launched June 2021 – keep under review.</li> <li>• Audit of impact of concerns process on MH published summer 2021.</li> <li>• Ongoing engagement with new graduates to support their transition into practice, including myth-busting seminars.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposals for engagement with public before Council in January 2022.</li> <li>• Package of modernising proposals is due for consultation – see A2 above.</li> <li>• Review how we gather data, moving to a 'live' feedback model – consult with consumer organisations.</li> </ul>
4. Help our regulated professionals to meet the standards expected of them by their peers, the public and society at large by launching the RCVS Academy, which will house a range of online educational tools to help veterinary surgeons, veterinary nurses and other potential associates of the College understand what is expected of them in terms of meeting standards, and to support them acquiring relevant knowledge and staying up to date in a creative, accessible and inspiring way.	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideas for content have been listed. Focus groups have been carried out. Testing of concept also at London Vet Show.</li> <li>• Academy Plan approved by FRC Nov 2021.</li> <li>• VetGDP Adviser Training now launched on RCVS Knowledge Moodle platform VetGDP Adviser e-learning modules actively being used –2,758 people have registered on it, and 1,504 have completed all six modules.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RCVS Academy team recruitment continues, with addition of educational designer and administrative support. Moodle developer role under consideration.</li> <li>• Review transfer of video content for 'Introduction to the UK Veterinary Professions' course for overseas-qualified vets/VNs to the new Academy.</li> </ul>

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
5. Continue to support the mental health and wellbeing of members of the veterinary team, and our College staff, through the Mind Matters Initiative under its workstreams of 'prevent, protect and support' (see <a href="http://www.vetmindmatters.org">www.vetmindmatters.org</a> ), and also help veterinary professionals to take account of the mental health of those with whom they come into contact.	MMI/ APC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MMI has been adapting to the Covid world with online tools and Covid-specific advice and guidance.</li> <li>• Successful research project and roundtable held on student VN working culture.</li> <li>• Third MMI Symposium on Mental Health Research held Nov 2021, with international speakers.</li> <li>• MMI Kite App launched September 2021.</li> <li>• See <a href="http://vetmindmatters.org">vetmindmatters.org</a> for other specific activities under Mind Matters.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow up training and resources for SVNs to be launched spring 2022.</li> <li>• New training providers have been short-listed and will be trialled early 2022, full programme to be announced Q2.</li> <li>• New strategic plan for MMI under development.</li> </ul>
6. Continue to foster a reflective learning culture amongst members of the veterinary team, so that they can continue to grow and develop in a supportive, no-blame environment.	APC/ Ed Cttee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch of 1CPD app January 2020 (with further updates) to enable reflective learning – recent webinars (winter 2020-1) supported this – compulsory from January 2021 CPD year.</li> <li>• Support of RCVSK QI work ongoing.</li> <li>• Addressed via Edward Jenner Leadership MOOC modules.</li> <li>• Speech to World Small Animal Veterinary Association Congress (March 2021) on learning culture and the role of the regulator.</li> <li>• VetGDP will help promote and develop a learning culture for new graduates.</li> <li>• VetGDP Adviser e-learning specifically covers how to develop a positive learning culture, guide reflection and coaching techniques and support for new graduates – 2,758 vets have already started the e-learning modules, and 1,504 have completed the training in full.</li> <li>• Campaign regarding reflective approach ongoing, running from launch of 1CPD to direct email campaigns, including videos, social media campaigns, media coverage and recent well-attended webinars. Current stage includes direct email campaign to target those who have not yet engaged with 1CPD and offer 1-2-1 support to encourage them to do so.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to deliver communications campaign and support members of the profession in completing 1CPD. Use of 1CPD becomes mandatory Jan 2022.</li> <li>• Evaluation data collection for VetGDP to explore impact – to be considered by EC and Council later in 2022.</li> <li>• New VetGDP Subcommittee has been established to oversee programme delivery and monitor quality. First meeting took place October 2021.</li> <li>• New Leadership Library launched January 2022.</li> <li>• Edward Jenner Leadership MOOC, in partnership with the NHS, being updated and re-launched Q2.</li> </ul>

## C: Courage

**Ambition:** we will have the courage to take a leadership role within the professions, to ensure that the pervading culture is healthy, sustainable, inclusive, innovative and respectful; through this, will develop confident veterinary professionals.

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
1. Continue to seek culture change within the wider professions around help-seeking behaviour to support both mental and physical health, learning culture, leadership, innovation, sustainability and diversity.	DIG MMI APC Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DIG published strategic plan.</li> <li>See B5 for MMI progress.</li> <li>See B6 for learning culture.</li> <li>Leadership – strategic plan in place but requires review. New Inclusive Leadership Manager in place.</li> <li>New plan in place for ViVet.</li> <li>Sustainability WG established, working with Fellowship Science Advisory Panel (FSAP) and Practice Standards Group to look at Core / Award goals</li> <li>EDI to be included in next PSS levels</li> <li>BAME Student WG ongoing</li> <li>Staff-level EDI plan underway</li> <li>VetGDP Adviser e-learning modules specifically focus on learning culture and the need to support graduates' help-seeking behaviour and see this as a positive thing to be actively welcomed when supporting new graduates. Modules also cover wellbeing of new grads.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FSAP to define sustainability project (Net Zero Surgery)</li> <li>Continue development of Edward Jenner – awaiting NHS to restart the programme – Q2.</li> <li>Leadership Library launched.</li> <li>BAME Student WG report and recommendations to be shared Q1.</li> <li>Work of Environment and Sustainability Working Group drawing to close, and workflow distributed to owners throughout the College, such as PSS for the Sustainability Award, internal Green Team to deliver IIE Award.</li> <li>Sustainability added to the proposed RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses.</li> <li>VetGDP e-learning module for graduates planned for summer 2022.</li> </ul>
2. Celebrate the art as well as the science of veterinary medicine and ensure that wider professional skills are properly and credibly supported.	APC/ RCVSK Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-clinical skills have been highlighted as part of the Graduate Outcomes review and now reflected in Day One Competences.</li> <li>Professional skills focus within the VetGDP, including training for VetGDP Advisers.</li> <li>MMI developed new webinar programme, celebrated Neurodiversity Week, and delivered other materials to support the impact of Covid.</li> <li>VN Diamond Jubilee celebrations launched and underway, with some webinars/podcasts already published, social media engagement underway and other activities being planned.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop materials for Academy.</li> <li>Nominations period open for 2022 Honours and Awards following successful virtual event in September 2021.</li> <li>VN Diamond Jubilee e-book published at end of 2021.</li> <li>Wider cultural project to celebrate history and development of modern veterinary practice – tie in with new building?</li> </ul>

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
3. Work with other stakeholders to retain skills and talent within the professions, by developing return-to-work options that build confidence in those who have had a career break, for whatever reason.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial conversations started with Defra, British Veterinary Association, Veterinary Management Group and others to better understand recruitment and retention needs but this has been impacted by Covid.</li> <li>Initial conversations with MMI ref a return-to-work network founded on issue of insurance, needs picking up.</li> <li>VetGDP is available for those returning to the profession, upon request (not mandatory).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following 30 November 2021 Workforce Summit, action plan under development that will address recruitment, retention and return.</li> <li>Materials for the Academy.</li> <li>Review our policies to ensure return to work is as accessible as possible.</li> <li>Will be reviewing Period of Supervised Practice for RVNs during 2022.</li> </ul>
4. Ensure a pathway for career progression for vets and nurses via postgraduate/post-qualification accreditations and qualifications – to meet the needs of vets and nurses at all stages of their careers.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review has started ref AP and CertAVP for vets - surveys completed and findings reported to Education Committee. The AP focus groups took place in June 2021 and results and next steps were discussed by Education Committee in September 2021.</li> <li>Advanced qualifications framework for VNs published and we now have four HEIs accredited with a further two accreditations booked. A range of focused qualifications are now available (for example, anaesthesia, oncology, emergency and critical care, dentistry, coaching and mentoring and evidence-based nursing).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publish recommendations on vet quals/status.</li> <li>VN career progression linked to LWP proposals.</li> <li>Review development routes for general practitioners.</li> <li>Working groups established to explore future changes to AP status.</li> </ul>
5. Develop extra-mural studies (EMS) and work experience opportunities at the College, together with more opportunities for veterinary professionals and members of the public to become engaged with the work of the regulator at first hand and gain an understanding of its complexities.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet the RCVS Days, stakeholder days on hold.</li> <li>New online EMS programme developed and piloted, jointly with the Veterinary Policy Research Foundation.</li> <li>EMS student attended placement with RCVS w/c 19 July 2021, spending time with Ed/PSS.</li> <li>Podcasts recorded with Webinar Vet and British Cattle Veterinary Association to better explain role of the College to their members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Next round of EMS placements to take place early 2022.</li> <li>Develop modules for Academy to better explain our key functions.</li> <li>Video developed to demystify RCVS for first-year vet students.</li> </ul>



Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
6. Create an innovation funding pot to enable the professions to help solve regulation and professional standards issues that matter to them.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have approval of the small bursaries pot – for individuals' personal development aligning to strategic plan – not yet launched due to Covid.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch bursary scheme once travel and in-person CPD more feasible – early 2022.</li> <li>Consideration of challenge prize on hold due to pandemic and other priorities.</li> </ul>
7. Continue to develop the Fellowship into a learned society that reflects the varied achievements of the veterinary profession; encourages the advancement of standards; and, develops public awareness of veterinary medicine and science, for example, via the development of a Fellow on the Public Understanding of Veterinary Science.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement with Sustainability WG underway</li> <li>Unconscious bias training of Fellowship Board and Credential Panellists to continue (March).</li> <li>Fellowship Week took place in September 2021, online, with good attendance and engagement.</li> <li>Restoration and fee payment policies completed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fellowship strategy being finalised and published by the Board.</li> <li>Communications and marketing plan to support the work of the Fellowship, including public outreach.</li> <li>Discussion forum ready for launch January 2022.</li> <li>New newsletter launching shortly.</li> <li>Next Fellowship event to take place in person in September 2022.</li> <li>Elections for new Chair to take place during 2022.</li> </ul>
8. Review new ways of reaching consensus and driving change within our leadership and governance structure.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unconscious bias training took place after September Council meeting</li> <li>One-to-one interviews taken place with Council members and independent facilitator – discussion took place at meeting in June 2021.</li> <li>Council Culture action plan approved November. Meetings took place in December and second round planned for January.</li> <li>Pack for potential Council/VNC members updated.</li> <li>Paper on in-person/virtual meetings approved by Council June 2021.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Five Culture teams met in December and will meet again in January. Meeting of Steering Group to be fixed for February and proposals to come (ideally) to Council in March.</li> <li>Review impact of 2018 LRO on Governance (see also D1).</li> </ul>
9. Work with the BVA and the BVNA to evaluate the success of the first action plans for Vet Futures and VN Futures respectively, assess whether the ambitions remain relevant, and develop new action plans accordingly. Work with the FVE and our European colleagues to support the delivery of Vet Futures Europe.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan agreed with BVA that we review research and ambitions, then develop second action plan.</li> <li>Evaluation of first action plans started but to be completed – interrupted by Covid.</li> <li>Interim VNF Report published September 2021.</li> <li>Review of pandemic response took place at Council in September 2021.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case studies on VF successes under development, to form part of VF evaluation document (with BVA).</li> <li>RCVS to evaluate VNF feedback from BVNA events and develop an action plan for phase two.</li> </ul>

## D: Confidence

**Ambition:** in order to deliver our Strategic Plan we must not only have the mandate that is secured by the Veterinary Surgeons Act and our Royal Charter, but also the confidence to succeed that will be brought by the right underpinning – the governance, people, finance, communications and IT structures that are crucial to our success.

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
1. Review the bedding-in of the 2018 Legislative Reform Order to ensure that our Council and committee structure is efficient, effective, and transparent, and provides the right level of strategic oversight coupled with skills-based input to allow the College to function to the best of its abilities.	Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are not mandated by govt to do a review (unlike for the 2013 LRO) but it is good practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scoping in 2022 for review in 2023 (previous plan for informal review in 2021 not completed due to Covid).</li> </ul>
2. Review the structure of all of our groups operating below committee level, to ensure the right mix of skills are available to tackle the tasks at hand and that each group has clear membership, purpose, principles, time-frame and sense of what success will look like.	FRC/ Ops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Process has started, with more transparency over ToFR, membership and composition – all now online.</li> <li>Delegation scheme (to committee level) updated annually.</li> <li>CPD working groups consolidated.</li> <li>Skills matrix updated with new Council members.</li> <li>More recently set up groups – eg Environment and Sustainability Working Group – had much tighter terms of reference and end dates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring together all groups into one document, with ToR, membership, quorum, etc – project ongoing.</li> <li>Improve transparency around terms of office and reappointment – process ref lay members coming to Council January 2022.</li> <li>Most parent committees reviewed groups reporting to them during November 2021, some outstanding.</li> </ul>
3. Develop and embed a meaningful dashboard to help ensure that appetite for risk is clear, risk is managed and any early warning signs are addressed.	ARC/ FRC/ Ops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Magique risk management tool now in place for all areas, clear ownership, regularly updated.</li> <li>Risk Workshop took place with Council in October 2020.</li> <li>Departmental risk registers reviewed on a cycle by Senior Team and Audit and Risk Committee</li> <li>Better signposting to committees of where risk registers can be found on BoardPacks.</li> <li>Business continuity planning meeting held August 2021 to reflect on Covid experience.</li> <li>VNC risk workshop held September 2021.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make ‘any items for the risk register’ agenda items more meaningful.</li> <li>Risk workshop planned for January 2022 Council meeting postponed until we can meet in person – March? Followed by session with Senior Team.</li> </ul>

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
4. Collate and review our member and service-user feedback on an ongoing basis, against key performance indicators, and work with RCVS Knowledge to employ a quality improvement and innovation methodology to ensure we are providing services that meet the needs of our audiences and society at large.	ALL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have gathered a list of sources of current feedback.</li> <li>Data tile on RCVS.me (RCVS intranet) for internal use showing current and historical information on membership, which provides a useful reference tool for trends.</li> <li>Customer journey exercise carried out.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis of data held and future data requirements underway.</li> <li>Develop QI process – Education team developing via Education QI manager and also to link to Head of Insight and Engagement.</li> <li>Process for reviewing / analysing all complaints about RCVS, regardless of area of work, under development.</li> </ul>
5. Ensure our financial systems are customer-focused, fraud-resistant and efficient, and improve communication and clarity over where money is spent and its impact.	FRC/ Ops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have gathered data ref fraud prevention activities across the organisation.</li> <li>We are reviewing the systems and reporting processes of our accounting systems so deliver more transparency over how money is spent and on a timely basis.</li> <li>No issues raised by 2020 or 2021 audits.</li> <li>Regular cyber-security training for staff.</li> <li>Review of Finance Team roles taken place to improve division of duties.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review data/prioritise areas for improvement.</li> <li>Ensure database upgrade includes a flexible customer interface.</li> <li>Strengthening the Finance Team continues, with new Head of Finance appointed, who is reviewing financial systems.</li> </ul>
6. Put in place a People Strategy that develops our talent, diversity, leadership and culture, across the staff team, Council and committee members, examiners, assessors and all others who work on behalf of the College.	Exec O/ HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diversity and Inclusion plan in place.</li> <li>Diversity and Inclusion training for all staff.</li> <li>Talent &amp; Leadership (T&amp;L) framework conversations taken place ref competencies.</li> <li>People Plan video and overview communicated to all staff.</li> <li>Recruitment policy developed.</li> <li>Agreements with BAME recruitment experts.</li> <li>New 'Where we work' policy designed to support remote working.</li> <li>People systems developed to support new employees into the organisation.</li> <li>Pay policy developed and communicated.</li> <li>Pronoun policy in place, training underway.</li> <li>Allyship training completed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refreshed internal communications strategy agreed by Senior Team Due to be rolled out in Q1 2022.</li> <li>Provide data ref current position on gender and other diversity strands by end of Q3 2022.</li> <li>Pilot mentoring scheme.</li> <li>Complete T&amp;L toolkit.</li> <li>Recruitment training for legal, best practice and systems to take place before year end.</li> <li>Leadership training designed to support T&amp;L framework.</li> <li>Salary benchmarking taking place by end Feb 2022.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated My Progress managers guide to support feedback conversations.</li> <li>Learning management system agreed – content &amp; provider under review.</li> <li>Stress management sessions completed to support staff returning to BH in place.</li> <li>Competencies agreed for all College roles – wider framework in progress.</li> </ul>	
Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
7. Put in place a People Strategy that develops our talent, diversity, leadership and culture, across the staff team, Council and committee members, examiners, assessors and all others who work on behalf of the College.	Exec O/HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal Diversity and Inclusion Strategy in place: Diversity and Inclusion training for all staff carried out; agreement with BAME recruitment experts in place; pronoun policy in place and training completed; allyship training completed.</li> <li>External Diversity and Inclusion Group strategy published February 2021 and interfaces with internal strategy.</li> <li>Talent &amp; Leadership (T&amp;L) framework conversations taken place ref competencies.</li> <li>New recruitment policy developed and in place.</li> <li>New 'Where we work' policy designed to support remote working.</li> <li>People systems developed to support new employees into the organisation.</li> <li>Pay policy developed and communicated.</li> <li>Stress Management sessions completed to support staff returning to BH in place.</li> <li>Competencies agreed for all College roles – wider framework in progress.</li> <li>Salary benchmarking completed.</li> <li>People Plan approved, launched and communicated to all staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refreshed internal communications strategy agreed by Senior Team January 2021 – engagement sessions already taken place</li> <li>Use McKinseys succession planning model to evaluate internal and planning leadership training.</li> <li>Provide data ref current position on gender and other diversity strands by end of Q3 2022.</li> <li>Pilot mentoring scheme.</li> <li>Complete T&amp;L toolkit.</li> <li>Recruitment training for legal, best practice and systems to take place by end Q1 2022.</li> <li>Learning management system review remains ongoing.</li> <li>Crucial conversations training material developed to support pay and performance discussions, to be rolled out Q1 2022.</li> </ul>

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
8. Develop and implement a technology strategy that puts digital first, is collaborative, and focuses on simplification and convergence.	Exec O Digital/ FRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New strategy approved in principle by FRC but new CTO being recruited and may require flexibility to review strategy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resourcing risk at present.</li> <li>New CTO recruitment underway.</li> <li>Ongoing recruitment for developer resources and to support data management.</li> <li>Actions underway to support move to temporary office accommodation and to continue to support flexible working models and hybrid meetings.</li> </ul>
9. Purchase a new property that aims to serve the needs of the College for the next twenty years, while not putting an undue future financial commitment on our members.	Estates/ Ops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sale of BH completed; exit by end March 2021.</li> <li>Membership of the Estates Strategy Group has been refreshed and it will continue to work as per strategy and reporting to RCVS Council at each meeting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work on purchase of new building continues.</li> <li>Contract signed for 18-month lease on temporary workspace in shared accommodation, available 1 February 2022.</li> </ul>
10. Put in place a communications strategy that will focus on clarifying what we are, and what we are not, and be stronger about calling out those who seek to undermine the College; own our shortcomings and be clear about where and how we will change; and be bolder about celebrating our successes and our unique contribution to animal health and welfare, and public health. Empower our wider team to become communications ambassadors for the College.	Comms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marcoms Officer and Media &amp; Publications Officer now recruited to support expanding workload of coms team. Further recruitment under review.</li> <li>New system being built to consolidate and guide the use of RCVS brand assets, style and language guidelines and web/print accessibility.</li> <li>Trial period for additional social media monitoring/commenting role for Committee Chairs and Officers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revisit planning meetings with all teams to identify departmental long-term aims and activities.</li> <li>RCVS comms survey of key stakeholders (including professions, public etc) to establish preferences and gain feedback.</li> <li>Use feedback to devise coms strategy to support strategic ambitions, departmental activities and stakeholder requirements.</li> <li>Produce social media guidance.</li> </ul>
11. Develop and implement a corporate social responsibility strategy that befits an organisation that works in the public interest.	FRC/ Ops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green Team has developed internal sustainability policy and committed to working towards Investors in the Environment Bronze Award.</li> <li>Council agreed investment policy and to divest from fossil fuels in November 2021.</li> <li>Covid has been positive in reducing impact of travel, both overseas and domestic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental impact of any new building under consideration.</li> <li>Work ongoing with UKHACC.</li> <li>Push to encourage staff to make more use of volunteering days to support social responsibility of the organisation.</li> </ul>

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Council
Date	20 January 2022
Title	Eligibility of veterinary graduates from European Association for Establishments of Veterinary Education (EAEVE) approved / accredited Schools for RCVS registration
Summary	<p>In June 2019, RCVS Council agreed the recommendation from Education Committee to implement a temporary policy to recognise vet graduates from EAEVE approved / accredited schools as eligible for RCVS registration, when the transition period post-Brexit came to an end and the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications (MRPQ) no longer applied.</p> <p>The rationale for this temporary decision was to mitigate the expected reduction in registrants coming from the European Union as a result of Brexit, and the negative impact this would have on the veterinary workforce in the UK.</p> <p>As it was recognised that EAEVE accreditation standards are not directly equivalent to our own, this was a temporary policy decision which was to be kept under annual review.</p> <p>This paper outlines the current situation and invites Council to consider whether the temporary decision to recognise graduates from EAEVE approved / accredited schools should remain in place for another year.</p>
Decisions required	To consider whether the temporary policy to recognise graduates from EAEVE approved / accredited schools as eligible for RCVS registration should remain in place for another year, until the next annual review.
Attachments	Appendix 1: EU registration numbers 2014 – Dec 2021.
Author	L Prescott-Clements Director of Education <a href="mailto:L.Prescott-Clements@rcvs.org.uk">L.Prescott-Clements@rcvs.org.uk</a>

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
<b><sup>1</sup>Classifications explained</b>		
Unclassified	Papers will be published on the internet and recipients may share them and discuss them freely with anyone. This may include papers marked 'Draft'.	
Confidential	Temporarily available only to Council Members, non-Council members of the relevant committee, sub-committee, working party or Board and not for dissemination outside that group unless and until the relevant committee or Council has given approval for public discussion, consultation or publication.	
Private	The paper includes personal data which should not be disclosed at any time or for any reason, unless the data subject has agreed otherwise. The Chair may, however, indicate after discussion that there are general issues which can be disclosed, for example in reports to committees and Council.	

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

## Eligibility of veterinary graduates from European Association for Establishments of Veterinary Education (EAEVE) approved / accredited schools for RCVS registration

### Background

1. In June 2019, RCVS Council agreed the recommendation from Education Committee to implement a temporary policy to recognise veterinary graduates from EAEVE approved / accredited schools as eligible for RCVS registration, when the transition period post-Brexit came to an end and the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications (MRPQ) directive no longer applied.
2. The rationale for this temporary decision was to mitigate the expected reduction in registrants coming from the European Union (EU) as a result of Brexit, and the negative impact this would have on the veterinary workforce in the UK. Prior to Brexit, approximately half of new RCVS registrants each year were from the EU, and there were concerns that a reduction in EU registrants due to ineligibility as a result of MRPQ no longer being in effect, could have an immediate and significant negative impact on the veterinary workforce in the UK, which was already under pressure.
3. Although EAEVE is a member of the International Accreditors Working Group (IAWG) and members have worked to harmonise accreditation standards, the recently approved new Standard Operating Procedures and accreditation standards used by EAEVE were noted and it was recognised that EAEVE processes and accreditation standards were not directly equivalent to our own. Although the recognition of EAEVE accredited schools provided more assurance of educational standards than the previous MRPQ legislation (which meant that veterinary graduates from any school within the EU were eligible for RCVS registration), it was not a direct equivalent to RCVS accreditation standards.
4. Consequently, it was agreed that this policy decision should be a temporary measure, to be kept under annual review by Council, until a more permanent solution could be identified

### Post-Brexit Data

5. The transition period for the UK withdrawal from the EU ended on 31 December 2020, at which point the temporary decision approved by Council came into effect. In addition to this however, the Covid-19 pandemic was also having an impact on applications for registrations from overseas graduates.
6. Although EU registrations were reduced at the beginning of 2020 compared to previous years (which may have been due in part to Covid-19 lockdowns), the number of EU registrants appeared to recover somewhat in the later half of 2020 (Appendix 1).
7. The number of EU registration fell rapidly again in Jan / Feb 2021 and have remained lower than usual to date. This is likely to be as a result of both the pandemic and Brexit, although the decision to recognise graduates from EAEVE accredited schools will have mitigated this to a degree.



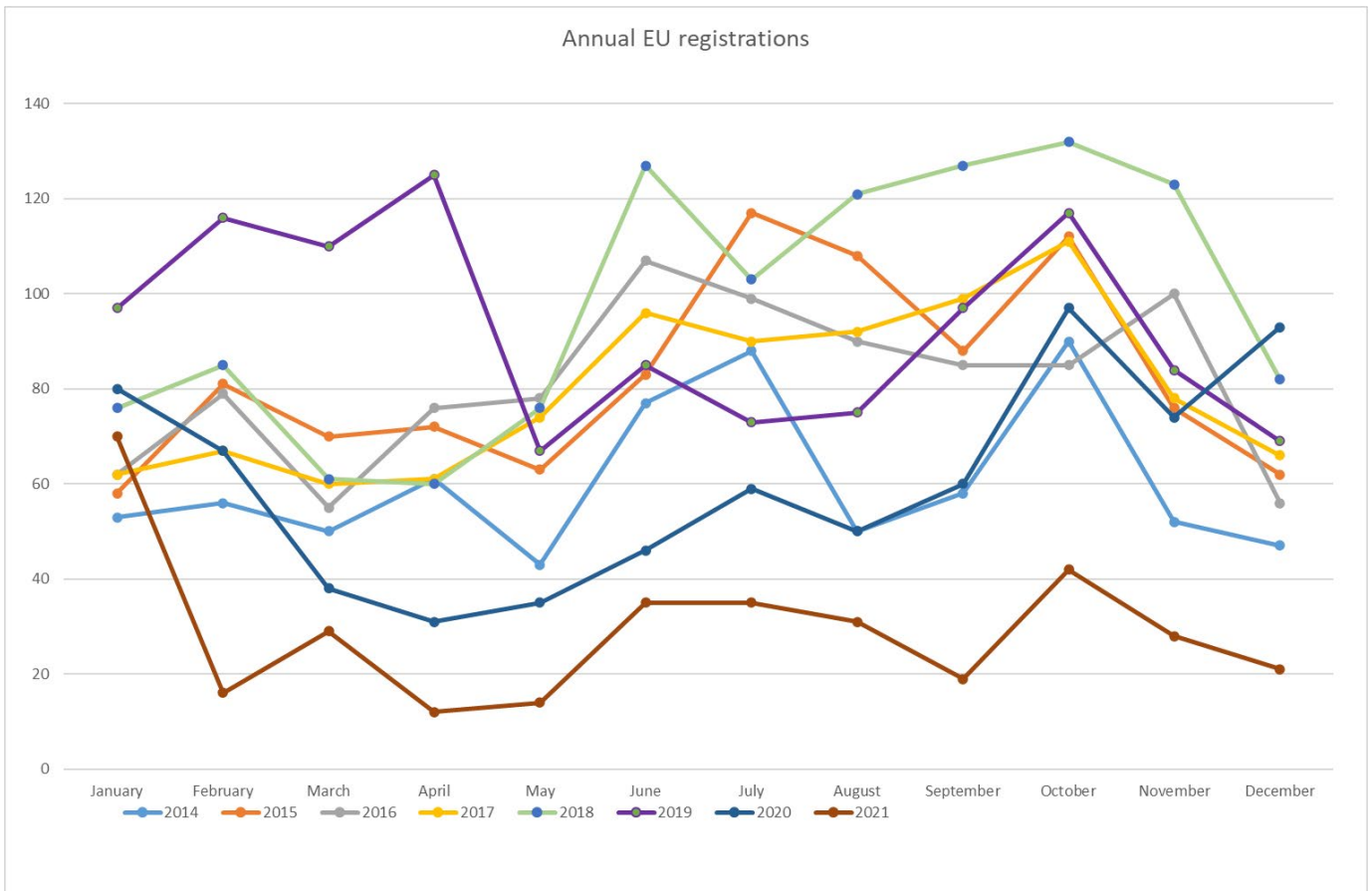
**Alternative measures under consideration**

8. RCVS continues to consider a number of alternative measures, which could offer a more permanent mechanism for RCVS to gain assurance of educational standards of graduates from overseas Schools. These include consideration of new Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) where an RCVS visitor would attend local accreditation events and consider evidence against RCVS Standards, in addition to direct RCVS accreditation of schools overseas, such has been the case with St Georges University, Grenada.
9. An MRA has been successfully established with the Veterinary Council of Ireland (VCI). However, there are challenges with replicating this with other EU schools as the regulatory landscape differs widely.
10. RCVS has had enquiries from a number of EU schools regarding direct RCVS Accreditation, and we will continue to liaise with these schools should they wish to proceed. However, this work has been hampered somewhat by the pandemic.

**Decision**

11. Council is asked to consider whether – given the current number of EU registrants – the temporary decision to recognise veterinary graduates from EAEVE accredited schools should remain for another year, until the next annual review.

**Appendix 1: EU registration data**



Month	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
January	53	58	62	62	76	97	80	70
February	56	81	79	67	85	116	67	16
March	50	70	55	60	61	110	38	29
April	61	72	76	61	60	125	31	12
May	43	63	78	74	76	67	35	14
June	77	83	107	96	127	85	46	35
July	88	117	99	90	103	73	59	35
August	50	108	90	92	121	75	50	31
September	58	88	85	99	127	97	60	19
October	90	112	85	111	132	117	97	42
November	52	76	100	78	123	84	74	28
December	47	62	56	66	82	69	93	21
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>972</b>	<b>956</b>	<b>1173</b>	<b>1115</b>	<b>730</b>	<b>352</b>

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	RCVS Council
Date	20 January 2022
Title	Lay members of Council – reappointment process
Summary	This paper asks Council to consider a process for the reappointment of lay members to RCVS Council. This is outlined in two stages: for immediate use; for 2025.
Decisions required	Is the two-stage process outlined fit for purpose?
Attachments	None
Author	Lizzie Lockett CEO <a href="mailto:l.lockett@rcvs.org.uk">l.lockett@rcvs.org.uk</a> 0207 202 0725

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

## Lay members of Council – reappointment process

### Background

1. The Legislative Reform Order on the governance of the RCVS that was laid in May 2018 allowed for six lay members to be appointed to RCVS Council. The lay members were appointed by an independent panel following a recruitment exercise, and recommendations made to Council for ratification.
2. As with elected Council members and those appointed by other means, the appointed lay members are eligible to serve three terms. They may be reappointed at the discretion of Council. Reappointment is not automatic.
3. Instead of all six being asked to serve the usual four-year term, three were asked to serve an initial three-year term, to avoid the risk of all six leaving at the same time and forming a cliff-edge of corporate knowledge. Those first three - Mark Castle, Linda Ford and Judith Worthington – were reappointed for a further (four-year) term in January 2021, effective July 2021.
4. In January 2021, Council was asked to consider whether the mix of skills that the lay membership currently had remained relevant for Council going forward. They reviewed the candidate brief used in 2018 for the original appointment process, which had specified a need for expertise in governance, strategy, policy development, risk management and financial controls. It was agreed that the skills mix required remained largely the same and the three were reappointed. However, two issues arose:
  - a. It was felt by some that having governance-oriented lay members on Council did not entirely fill a required need, that of having a greater voice for users of veterinary services within the College's framework. This issue will be addressed in a separate paper coming before Council at its January 2022 meeting.
  - b. Although the outcome was right in terms of the reappointment of the three individuals, the process was not considered to be transparent or robust enough, and it was recommended that the issue be revisited – this is the issue that this paper addresses.
5. At this point it may be worth reminding Council of the different types of member and their appointment/reappointment process:
  - a. 13 elected veterinary surgeons – can stand for a maximum of three four-year terms and are elected by the membership at large.
  - b. Three members appointed by the Veterinary Schools Council – able to stand for three four-year terms and are subject to an election process within the Veterinary Schools Council.
  - c. Two members appointed from within the membership of the Veterinary Nurses Council. These members are allowed to stand for three four-year terms, although it is to be noted that as membership of VN Council is for three three-year terms, they are unlikely to be on RCVS Council for the full 12-year term. VNC itself includes lay members, elected VNs and appointed VNs (also members appointed from RCVS Council). It traditionally includes the VN Council Chair but this is not a rule.
  - d. The UK CVO is an observing member of Council, term relating to role.

6. Although the reappointment process followed in January 2021 was not seen as robust enough, it would also seem unfair if the second half of the 2018 intake (Claire McLaughlan, Tim Walker and Derek Bray) were treated significantly differently from their peer group. The recommendation is therefore that some modest changes are made for this 2022 decision, with further changes for the next round, ie 2025.

### Proposal for March 2022 process

7. Proposed changes for 2022 decision – this would take place at the March 2022 meeting of Council, thus allowing time to recruit new members if necessary (all three lay members have indicated that they are willing to be reappointed if Council wishes it).
8. It is recommended that each of the relevant Committee Chairs (and principle subcommittees or other groups, if appropriate), plus the Chair of Council (the President), is asked to summarise briefly the impact of each of the lay members on their group, under the following headings:
  - a. Relevance and impact of contributions
  - b. Attendance
  - c. Contribution to culture – for example, abiding by College values and the Code of Conduct for Council and Committee members
9. These summaries would be shared with the lay members for any comments they would wish to add, and provided to the Officer Team, who would make recommendations to Council for ratification.
10. The lay member would also be asked to sign a disclosure statement to say that they do not know of any reason why they would not be appropriate to be reappointed – there may be other requirements regarding the Code of Conduct for Council/Committee members that comes out of the ongoing Culture project work.
11. The lay members in question would be asked to leave the meeting for the relevant agenda item at the March 2022 meeting.

### Proposal for 2025 process

12. Given there will be more time for change prior to the next round of reappointments, and also that all six lay members would be subject to the same process (albeit in two phases), the following is recommended:
  - a. In September of 2024, Council and the Senior Team to consider what skills mix is required from the lay membership for the forthcoming period of time (this should coincide with the finalisation of the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan).
  - b. New lay member job specs to be written if appropriate.
  - c. The three lay members up for reappointment in 2025 to be asked to state their experience/skills against any modified job spec and outline why they feel they should be reappointed (if they wish to be).
  - d. The same headings as outlined at par 8 above to be addressed and impact summaries produced by appropriate chairs.

- e. The lay members' statements and the impact summaries to be given to an independent panel for consideration, with recommendations to be made to Council for ratification in January 2025.
  - f. It is envisaged that the independent panel would include a veterinary surgeon, a lay person and a veterinary nurse.
  - g. If some of the existing lay members do not wish to be reappointed, or if Council feels that new members are required, then the same appointment panel would conduct an external appointment process (using a recruitment agency, as previously), bringing names to Council for ratification at its June meeting.
13. It is also worth noting that, just as we add veterinary expertise to committees where there may be a gap within the Council skill-set, there is nothing to stop additional lay members being appointed to committees, working groups, subcommittees etc, where appropriate and to bring in specific expertise, for example, digital, diversity and inclusion etc.

#### **Decision required**

14. Recommendations for auditing the skills of Council members, and how contributions may be appraised, will be made as part of the Culture project, but from a timing perspective it is important that a decision about the lay member process is made at this point, otherwise there would not be time to appoint additional lay members in time for RCVS Day in July, if required.
15. Council is asked to consider the proposal outlined above and agree whether or not it is fit for purpose. NB as this conversation is about process rather than individuals, the lay members are not required to step out of the meeting at this point and their contributions to the debate will be very valuable, accepting there may be some conflict of interest.
16. If Council is happy with the above recommendations, a more detailed policy for the 2025 process will be drafted for approval at a future meeting.

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	RCVS Council
Date	20 January 2022
Title	Public involvement with RCVS activities
Summary	This paper asks Council to consider proposals for greater involvement of the public with RCVS activities. This is at principles level; more detailed policies would be drawn up in due course.
Decisions required	Are the proposals appropriate? Discussion is invited and modifications can be made.
Attachments	None
Author	Lizzie Lockett CEO <a href="mailto:l.lockett@rcvs.org.uk">l.lockett@rcvs.org.uk</a> 0207 202 0725

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

## Involvement of the public in RCVS activities

### Background

1. For some time there has been recognition that although the College works in the public interest, public involvement with RCVS activities could be improved. In the past we have had animal owners/farmers specifically on Council as either Privy Council appointees or as one of the veterinary school appointees. This changed with the governance Legislation Reform Order in 2018, when more governance-oriented lay people were appointed. This was an appropriate move as the role of Council is to provide strategic oversight, but there remain gaps in input and dialogue with the public.
2. Therefore, under the 'Clarity' stream in the strategic plan, we aim to: "Build a closer relationship between the College, the professions and the public by continuing our outreach programme. Review how we gain input from stakeholders at all levels, including the development of an improved process for seeking input from members of the public." This work aims to bring the voices of animal owners and other users of veterinary services, and the public, more widely, into our process as appropriate, alongside the work of Council.
3. While we have sustained, regular and productive engagement with veterinary stakeholder organisations, it is not so easy with the animal-owning public, as there are not generalist animal owner groups. There are specific organisations that represent dog and cat breeders, and the equine and farming industries, and charities such as Blue Cross, the PDSA and RSPCA have a strong consumer focus, but nothing more over-arching. We do maintain contacts with those organisations that are available via consultations, stakeholder meetings and other activities.
4. There are several areas where public engagement is appropriate:
  - a. In the development and improvement of public-facing services, such as complaints-handling, checking the Register, Find a Vet etc.
    - i. This is currently done via gathering feedback from service users and more general market research and we are working to improve our customer service levels, customer promise and ways of recording and managing complaints about our service via the work of the Head of Engagement and Insight.
  - b. To understand the broader reputation of the College and the veterinary profession.
    - i. This is currently handled via market research, for example, our regular 'trust' surveys.
  - c. In the development of policy.
    - i. All of our consultations are open to the public to respond but we do not support their involvement in any active way, for example, running roadshows or facilitated discussion groups, or explaining technical aspects. Consequently, those who do respond tend to be those with particular issues, for example, groups of unhappy complainants. We have in the past had specific focus groups or market research exercises, for example, around the Practice Standards Scheme.
  - d. Engagement with the College and its activities on a general level.



- i. This is done via the website, appropriate media, and outreach at events such as Countryfile, the Royal Highland Show, Royal Welsh Show etc. More can be done and it is largely a question of resources – financial and human – to expand the programme (Covid allowing).
- e. Within the governance process.
  - i. We currently have lay members within Council to bring governance expertise. We do not have any individual users of veterinary services on Council but, as discussed at previous meetings, this is felt to be satisfactory as the role of Council is for strategic oversight, in addition it would not be appropriate if any Council member felt they were there to represent a particular constituency.
- f. In deciding what issues should come to the College for consideration – eg future policy areas, development of the strategic plan.
  - i. We do not currently have any public engagement at this stage, a significant omission.
- g. As a sounding board for communications messaging, to ‘sanity check’ that what we think we are saying is what is being heard.
  - i. We do not currently have a formal method for achieving this, although testing has been carried out via market research companies for significant marketing campaigns and website developments in the past.

### What do others do?

5. Healthcare regulators have patient groups to help inform policy and service improvement, and other regulators have service-user groups. Obviously communication with patients is a little harder in the veterinary profession, but there is clearly scope to improve the way we engage with animal owners, other users of veterinary services and the public at large.
6. We have carried out some research into how other regulators in the UK handle the issue and also how veterinary regulators overseas bring public opinion into their processes. There are no clear templates for us to follow and most of the international regulators were keen to see what model we developed. No organisation contacted felt they had got the matter of public engagement quite right as yet.
7. Some of the ‘lessons learned’ that came from this research include:
  - a. Give any ‘standing’ groups a specific purpose and an end-point
  - b. Ensure that they can be kept engaged
  - c. Refresh regularly so that they do not become too close to activities and no longer present a fresh perspective
  - d. Financially incentivise attendance/activity and not in a tokenistic way
  - e. Give clear expectations to those members of the public involved in terms of skills required and time commitment
  - f. Maintain regular communications with any ‘standing’ group members

- g. Have clarity of purpose ie these will not be opportunities for members of the public with a particular axe to grind to lobby us – this is a collaborative process for continued quality improvement
- h. Start small and build – it should be an iterative process of review and quality improvement

### Proposal

- 8. Although it may be tempting just to set up a standing group of members of the public to ‘tick a box’, our desire to engage is genuine and the complex needs outlined at par 4 above are not likely to be effectively met by a one-size-fits-all solution.
- 9. It is proposed, therefore, that we continue with the diverse activities outlined above, and, in addition, work to address the most significant current gaps, ie:
  - a. More active engagement with the public as part of our consultations on proposals for change
  - b. More active engagement with the public on our strategic focus and what projects we consider in the future
  - c. A sounding board for messaging to ensure what we want to say is clearly understood

### **More active engagement with the public as part of our consultations on proposals for change**

- 10. It is proposed that we work on a project-by-project basis to better engage with relevant public audiences depending on the topic under consideration, and make a firm commitment to ensure the public are more actively consulted and encouraged to engage. During 2022 budget will be sought for this from the Discretionary Fund. It will be written into the budget for 2023. Some practices falling under the Practice Standards Scheme have a responsibility to gather feedback from their clients so it may be possible to utilise this function, too, with practices’ co-operation.

### **More active engagement with the public on our strategic focus and what projects we consider in the future**

- 11. It is proposed that we set up a Public Advisory Group (PAG), with representatives of the animal owner and veterinary-services-using community, to horizon scan for issues of concern so that these can be added to the committee/Council agenda where appropriate. (This kind of work is done within the professions via Vet Futures, regular meetings with vet and nurses, surveys and other market research.)
- 12. This group would be particularly helpful as we develop the next strategic plan – a process that is likely to start towards the end of 2023 and run through 2024 – and the PAG will be asked to contribute at various stages during the process until the plan is finalised to ensure the voice and views of the public are heard and recognised.
- 13. It may be appropriate for meetings of the group to be facilitated by an external specialist.

### **A sounding board for messaging to ensure what we want to say is clearly understood**

- 14. It is recommended that this is also managed by the Public Advisory Group, potentially with some additional individuals depending on the subject under review. Practices could be encouraged to recommend clients who may be useful for this more ad hoc work.

## Governance

15. It is proposed that the detailed plans for how the PAG would be recruited and managed is approved by the Officer Team, as that group, according to the current delegation scheme, has a focus on 'external meetings... communications and stakeholder relationships'. Focus groups and consultation exercises on specific projects would be worked on with the Communications Dept and the relevant committee.
16. Resource implications for these proposals would be proposed to Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) for its approval. Members of focus groups are generally incentivised to attend via the agency recruiting them, the agency would also ensure that the composition of any group is appropriate for the specific tasks in hand. Meanwhile, it is proposed that members of the PAG are paid a loss of earnings allowance in line with other individuals working on College business and that they are selected against a specification, for a set number of meetings per year and a fixed term, using an external recruitment agency.
17. It is to be stressed that none of the groups outlined above would be in a position to decide policy or strategy – that would always be reserved to Council and any groups to which it delegates responsibility.

## Decision required

18. Council is asked to consider the framework proposal outlined above and agree that a more detailed approach is developed with the Officer Team, and subject to FRC sign off from a resourcing perspective.
19. If the broad proposals are accepted, a policy for public engagement will be drawn up that summarises our overall approach (including what is currently done) and also includes principles for engagement.

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Council
Date	20 January 2022
Title	Advancement of the Professions Committee Report 16 Nov 2021.
Summary	<p>To note the attached minutes of the meeting held on 16 Nov 2021.</p> <p>In particular, to note the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Committee was updated on the progress of the Workforce Summit event research outcomes.</li> <li>• The Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) RCVS/Veterinary Schools Council (VSC) Student Support Working Group had completed its work, and would present its report at the next Committee meeting.</li> </ul>
Decisions required	None
Attachments	Classified appendix ( <b>confidential</b> )
Author	Ceri Chick Secretary APC c.chick@rcvs.org.uk / 0207 856 1034

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified Appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1</b>

**<sup>1</sup>Classifications explained**

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

**<sup>2</sup>Classification rationales**

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

## Minutes of the Advancement of the Professions Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 16 November 2021 at 2pm via Microsoft Teams.

<b>Members:</b>	Ms A Boag	Chair, Board of Trustees for RCVS Knowledge
	Dr N Connell	Chair, Diversity and Inclusion Group
	Prof S Dawson*	Chair, Mind Matters Initiative
	Dr J Dyer	Council member
	Dr M Gardiner	Council member, Deputy Lead for Global Development
	Dr M Greene (Chair)	Senior Vice-President, Council member
	Professor J Innes	Chair, RCVS Fellowship Board
	Ms L Lockett	Chief Executive Officer
	Dr S Paterson	Chair, Environment and Sustainability Working Group
	Mr M Rendle	VN Futures Project Board liaison point
	Dr C Tufnell	Innovation and Global Lead
	Mr T Walker	Lay Council Member
	Dr C Whiting	Council Member, Deputy Lead for Innovation
<b>In attendance:</b>	Ms C Chick	Senior Leadership Officer
	Miss G Gill	Leadership and Inclusion Manager
	Mrs A Belcher	Director for Advancement of the Professions
	Miss S Rogers	ViVet Manager
	Miss A Hanson	Mind Matters Initiative Officer
	Mr I Holloway	Director of Communications
	Miss J Macdonald	Vet Nurse Futures Project Manager
	Mr B Myring	Policy and Public Affairs Manager
	Miss R Greaves	Policy and Public Affairs Officer
	Mr R Harris	Managing Director, Customer Faithful (for agenda item 4 only)
	Prof R Pettitt	Chair, RCVS Veterinary Schools Council BAME Working Group (for agenda item 6 only)

### Welcome and apologies for absence

1. The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting of the APC and noted that the meeting would be recorded for minuting purposes.
2. Apologies were received from Prof Susan Dawson.

### Declarations of Interest

3. There were no new declarations of interest from members of the Committee.

### Minutes of the last meeting held on 14 September 2021

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

### Matters Arising

5. No new matters were discussed.

### Updates from APC workstreams

6. The responsible Committee members or the relevant staff lead provided an update on each of the eight workstreams within the scope of the APC; this reflected the contents of the paper (APC November 21 AI01).
7. The Committee considered these updates, as well as other specific matters raised that were brought to it for discussion and, in some cases, decision. These are highlighted below, in addition to the main questions and comments prompted by each update.

### Diversity and Inclusion Working Group

8. The Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIG) was pleased to welcome British Veterinary Chronic Illness Support and Gurpreet Gill (RCVS Leadership and Inclusion Manager) to the group.
9. It was noted that the RCVS / Veterinary Schools Council BAME Student Support Working Group had finished its work and was in the process of completing the report on Religious Clothing, which would be presented to the Committee at its next meeting. This would be discussed further in agenda item 6 (APC Nov21 AI 06).
10. The Group was planning to create synergy with the Leadership workstream to update the Leadership showcase, launched in 2019, to include a more diverse range of leadership role models within the professions.

11. A survey on chronic ill-health would be released, to gather more detailed information on the challenges that those in the professions with chronic conditions face, and how the College could work with them to overcome these hurdles. The Group would also be discussing further topics including inclusive recruitment and limited licensure.

### Fellowship

12. The main activity carried out by the Fellowship since the previous Committee meeting had been Fellowship Week. This event saw online content being released over a week spanning 30 September to 7 October 2021. The week included six "Fellows of the Future" competition entries and three Fellows in Focus presentations. The week culminated with a virtual Fellowship evening welcoming all new Fellows to the Fellowship, and a presentation from Keynote Speaker, Professor Tim Spector. All content and live stream of the evening ceremony is viewable on the website. The Fellowship Board Chair thanked all members of the College who were involved in the creation of the event.
13. It was noted that hosting the event online had increased the event's reach to the public and the profession, allowing a greater number of viewers to engage with the event.
14. The Fellowship had implemented the changes to the application process that had been reviewed and agreed upon at the previous Committee meeting. Changes were clearly marked on the website and reminders would be sent in any Fellowship communications.
15. The Fellowship Board had been working with the College legal team to ensure that all processes and governance were in line with College standards and regulations.
16. The Fellowship communications platform "Discourse" was due to be launched to the Fellowship before the next Committee meeting. This would create a community of Fellows to encourage discussion and debate to give life to the Fellowship. A newsletter would also be created by the end of the year to update the Fellowship on any upcoming events and important information.
17. The Fellowship Science Advisory Panel had been discussing two main topic streams, Quality of Life and Net Zero Surgery. Work was due to commence on these research topics, with activity increasing in 2022. It was highlighted that the Science Advisory Panel had an open dialogue with RCVS Knowledge and other key organisations to ensure that the work did not overlap with current activities.
18. The Committee discussed the idea of creating a nominations system for receiving Fellowship applications, as the current process consisted solely of self-nominated applications. The Fellowship Chair highlighted that this was an ongoing topic of discussion within the Fellowship Board. To avoid a possible restriction on diversity, it was felt that a fully self-nomination system may not be the best option for the Fellowship, therefore a hybrid system may be considered.

### Global Strategy

19. The Policy and Public Affairs team had examined the results of the College's overseas membership, which was carried out by Mo Gannon & Associates Ltd on behalf of the RCVS in



2019. The research identified some areas associated with engagement with overseas members that could be improved. Desktop research was being carried out to discover how other Royal Colleges and Regulators remedy these issues in their work with overseas members. The team would put together a range of options for the Committee to discuss in the coming months.

20. A follow-up event to the RCVS Workforce Summit, being held on 30 November 2021, would be organised with the International Veterinary Regulators Network, to communicate the findings and outputs from the Summit and to get a sense of whether overseas regulators were facing similar issues and how ideas may be pooled.
21. The Practice Standards Scheme (PSS) team had postponed commencing work on the “Global PSS” project due to the immediate need to prioritise existing projects, including the sustainability work with the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare. There was still the intention to create a working party specifically to focus on the Global PSS project, which would likely commence during 2022.

#### Innovation

22. The workstream was preparing for the Workforce Summit, being held on 30 November 2021.
23. Invites for the event had been sent to key stakeholders within the professions, including government and representative bodies, major employers, veterinary schools, and veterinary professionals from independent and corporate practices. At the time of the meeting, around 73 delegates had registered to attend, with more expected to register before the event.
24. The Summit would explore what a better future could look like for the professions, addressing the challenges within recruitment, retention and return.
25. This would be further discussed in agenda item 4 (APC Nov21 AI04).

#### Leadership

26. The Leadership Library was being developed as a permanent bank of curated resources that would be hosted online. This would grow and evolve with leadership topics that reflect current issues relevant to the veterinary professions. The content would be free from reputable sources externally and internally to the College with subject matter experts.
27. The Library would include a variety of different learning formats, beginning with the following topics:
  - a) Inclusive Leadership
  - b) Delegation Skills
  - c) Difficult Conversations
  - d) Carer Planning and Networking
  - e) Building and Leading a Practice Team
  - f) When to Lead and When to Follow

## g) Reflections on Leading through Covid or Crisis

28. There was the intention to use this opportunity to synergise with RCVS Knowledge to signpost resources on Leadership and Culture Change and Quality Improvement. The Library was due to launch before the end of 2021.
29. The workstream would be conducting a review, in conjunction with the Diversity and Inclusion Group, of the Leadership role models initiative. Instead of updating the existing profiles and presenting role models in the same format, this was an opportunity to re-evaluate and consider a different, wider-reaching approach.
30. Further information is included in the confidential annex, paragraph 6.

#### Mind Matters Initiative

31. The Mind Matters Initiative had produced a variety of work, which the Committee was encouraged to share on social media.
32. One main activity being carried out was a collaboration with the British Veterinary Nursing Association (BVNA), which stemmed from the findings following the Student Vet Nurse (SVN) Wellbeing Survey to help inform the Initiative's future work within the veterinary nursing profession. MMI was collaborating with the BVNA to address the concerns surrounding incivility and bullying raised in the survey. The two organisations were looking to run active bystander training throughout 2022, create resources and a targeted social media campaign to address bullying, incivility and discrimination across the veterinary professions.
33. The Committee was encouraged to use and spread the word around the MMI Kite app, which had received 1,200 registered users.
34. The new round of campfires had been launched with evenings focusing on Combatting Climate Change Anxiety, Men's Mental Health, and Working Through Winter. The Committee was asked to encourage their male colleagues to engage with and attend the event, to increase male representation.
35. The next key activity being carried out by the workstream was the MMI Mental Health Research Symposium, which would be held online on 24 November 2021. All speakers had been confirmed and the event was open for registrations.

#### RCVS Knowledge

36. RCVS Knowledge had opened nominations for the Plowright Prize, which offered £75,000 to recognise an individual working in Europe or the Commonwealth who had made a significant impact on the control, management and eradication of infectious diseases of animals. The Committee was encouraged to spread the word and to encourage colleagues working in this area to be nominated for this prize.

37. The data from the RCVS Knowledge small animal neutering audit, which showed an increase in submissions of 45% compared to 2020, had been published.
38. It was noted that the nominations period for the 2022 Knowledge Awards was open, and the Committee was encouraged to spread the word around applications, the information for which could be found on the RCVS Knowledge website.

### Sustainability

39. The Sustainability workstream presented the Committee with a paper that reviewed the work of the Environment and Sustainability Working Party, which had concluded at the beginning of October 2021.
40. The Committee's lead for Sustainability, Dr S Paterson, thanked the group for their efforts and was grateful for the support the workstream had received.
41. A group focusing on incorporating sustainability into the PSS had met to discuss a project plan, and work with the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare.
42. The Committee approved the decisions specified in the Final Report of the Environment and Sustainability Working Party. These decisions were:
  - a) Approval of the internal sustainability policy; and to confirm that ToR 1 had been met through the Green Team taking forward this work.
  - b) To confirm that ToR 2 had been met through the PSS team taking forward external policy.
  - c) To confirm that ToR 2 and 3 had been met through pursuing the 'RCVS Academy' as a means to engage the professions about sustainability and for APC to dedicate time at least once per year to the sustainability agenda.

### VN Futures

43. It was noted that the VN Futures (VNF) Interim Report had been completed and published in September 2021.
44. An illustrator had been commissioned to create animated recruitment videos; one aimed at primary school children and the other aimed at secondary school-aged children.
45. The VNF was collaborating with the "Vet-in-a-box" initiative, led by Liverpool vet Hannah Hodgkiss-Geer, to create a careers resource box through Loughborough's 'subject in a box' project.

46. Two discussion sessions had been held at BVNA Congress, which had received encouraging attendance and engagement. An introductory talk for the MMI/VNF Student Veterinary Nurse Wellbeing discussion was delivered at Congress, which was also well attended and yielded useful outcomes.

### Primary Care Project

47. Mr R Harris was welcomed to the meeting to provide the Committee with an update on the RCVS Workforce Summit.
48. It was noted that a few parallel workstreams were running in the preparation for this event, including desk-based research analysing the data held by the College and other organisations, such as the major employers, in order to equip those attending the Summit with the latest information on the state of affairs within the professions. The information would also be distributed more widely following the Summit.
49. Organisations had also been approached to provide posters on their activities toward the recruitment, retention and return plan, although none had been forthcoming to-date.
50. Customer Faithful had been contacted to research the views of the professions towards recruitment, retention and return, to support the Summit and to understand their experiences on the subject. A series of online insight groups had been created, which were split broadly by job role and career status. These consisted of the following groups of people:
  - a) Out of Practice
  - b) Considering Leaving
  - c) In a Corporate Practice
  - d) In an Independent Practice
  - e) Not Full-Time in Practice
  - f) Vet Nurses
51. In addition to the focus groups, one-to-one interviews were conducted, with an overall number of 43 participants involved in the research.
52. The results showed that the ambition to become a vet had not fully changed. Upbringing and education remained the vocational drivers. The romantic image was fading, however, the passion for animal care continued. The issue from this seemed to be unrealistic expectation setting.
53. The results also showed that there was a widespread view amongst veterinary professionals that the veterinary schools focus on clinical learning and under-recognised the importance of people skills, both in recruitment into veterinary school with aptitude and in the work they would ultimately do as a vet. As a result, students graduate with technical knowledge but lack the coping skills to deal with the mental stress of high caseloads, demanding clients and understaffed practices. With fewer applicants, creating a balanced practice team would be

difficult, which leads to the employee experience being less appealing than anticipated. Events such as Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic had also impacted this issue.

54. It was noted that workplace culture and a poor work-life balance were the two most-cited factors for vets and nurses actively seeking ways to limit their exposure to full-time practice. This issue impacted a wide range of veterinary professionals in different ways, including switching to part-time, locum work, taking career breaks, leaving for non-clinical roles, or leaving the professions.
55. It was stressed that veterinary nursing was an especially at-risk-of-attribution role. Low pay, lack of career growth and limited support were major factors towards an ethos of “move on or burn out”.
56. In conclusion, the results showed that there was no single measure that would fix recruitment and retention, however, a series of coordinated actions to address these issues could help different cohorts at different life stages to ease the crisis in the professions.

### Committee Review

57. The Committee was presented with a diagram displaying the reporting Committees to the APC, for its review.
58. The Committee agreed that a more in-depth discussion on the review of the Committee’s reporting bodies would be carried out at its next meeting.

### Outputs from BAME VSC Working Group

59. Professor R. Pettitt was welcomed to the meeting to provide the Committee with an update on the RCVS/VSC BAME Student Support Working Group’s activities.
60. It was noted that its report on Religious Clothing had been delayed due to unforeseen circumstances, but would be presented to the Committee at its next meeting in 2022.
61. The Committee was reminded that the group was founded following a College-organised roundtable to canvas BAME students and veterinary surgeons, the outcome of which was that there were clear and identifiable gaps in services and support. Three notable gaps were; support for students on Extra-Mural Studies (EMS) placements, role models in the veterinary profession, and clear reporting structures for discrimination. An additional element was added later: support and guidance for the use of religious clothing in practice.
62. It was noted that the purpose of the religious clothing document was to provide a generic wording that any individual group could take for their use. Ideally, every UK-based veterinary school would have a document based on this guidance, as would veterinary practices.
63. The Committee thanked Professor Pettitt for his update and looked forward to reading the completed Working Group report.

### **1 CPD App**

64. This information is in the classified appendix in paragraphs 1-5.

### **Any other business**

65. No other business was discussed.

### **Date of next meeting**

66. The Chair closed the meeting noting the next meeting would be in the afternoon of 8 February 2022, in-person, Covid-restrictions allowing.

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Council
Date	20 January 2022
Title	Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) Minutes
Summary	Minutes of the ARC meeting held on 18 November 2021
Decisions required	None
Attachments	<b>Classified appendix</b>
Author	Alan Quinn-Byrne Governance Officer/Secretary a.quinn-byrne@rcvs.org.uk / T 020 7227 3505

<b>Classifications</b>		
Document	Classification <sup>1</sup>	Rationales <sup>2</sup>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3, 4</b>

<b><sup>1</sup>Classifications explained</b>	
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**<sup>2</sup>Classification rationales**

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



## Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) held online via Microsoft Teams on 18 November 2021

### Members:

Ms J Shardlow	Lay member, Chair
Prof D Bray	Lay member of RCVS Council
Mr V Olowe	Lay member
Mr K Gill	Lay member
Dr M M S Gardiner	Council Member

### In attendance:

Dr N T Connell	Treasurer
Ms L Lockett	CEO
Ms C McCann	Director of Operations (DoOps)
Ms K Williams	Education Quality Improvement Manager
Mr R Burley	Chief Technology Officer (CTO)
Ms A Belcher	Director of Advancement of the Professions (DoAP)
Mr A Quinn-Byrne	Secretary to ARC / Governance Officer

### Apologies for absence and Welcome

1. There were no apologies for absence.

### Declarations of interest

2. There were no new declarations of interest.

### Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 16 September 2021

3. The Action List was to be updated.

**Action: Secretary**

### CEO Update

4. The CEO provided an oral update, and the following points were noted:

Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraph 1.

## Corporate Risk Register

5. The Committee praised the work that had gone into the risk register and made the following points:
6. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 2-7.
7. It was requested that the font size be increased on the risk register.

## Audit Planning

8. A Director from Crowe LLP, Mr Dipesh Chhatralia was in attendance for the Audit and Risk Committee meeting to discuss the plan for the annual audit.
9. The Audit Planning Report had been circulated to the Committee and Mr Chhatralia highlighted the key points coming up in the planning process.
10. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 8-15.
11. The Committee accepted the approach proposed within the Audit Planning Report.

## Risk Management Policy

12. The Risk Management Policy was presented to the Committee.
13. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 16-17
14. The Committee approved the policy, the next step would be to present it to Council for full approval on risk management.

## Advancement of the Professions Risk Register

15. The Director of the Advancement of the Professions (DoAP) presented the departmental risk register to the Committee.
16. The Committee praised the work that had gone into the presentation and to the risk register.
17. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 18-21.
18. The Committee was pleased with the work of the Advancement of the Professions Department and thanked the Director and her team for their hard work on the register.

## Data Sharing Paper / Risk Register

19. The Chief Technology Officer (CTO) presented a risk register on data sharing to the Committee. This register highlighted the key risks involved in data sharing coupled with the relevant risk scores and mitigations.
20. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 22-23.
21. The Committee was impressed with the systems in place and thanked the CTO for the inclusion of additional details in the risk register.

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

22. The Education Quality Improvement Manager presented the ENQA update to the Committee.
23. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 24-26.
24. The Committee praised the work that had gone into this process. It was requested by the Committee that the workplan be noted at the next ARC meeting in February 2022.

## Any other business

25. A Vice-Chair must be chosen for the Committee. It was noted that if anyone on the Committee was interested in the position to let the Secretary know and a vote would be had prior to the scheduled ARC meeting in February.

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	RCVS Council
Date	20 January 2022
Title	Education Committee Minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2021
Summary	Council to note Education Committee Minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2021
Decisions required	To note
Attachments	Classified appendix ( <b>confidential</b> )
Author	Britta Crawford <a href="mailto:b.crawford@rcvs.org.uk">b.crawford@rcvs.org.uk</a> / 020 7202 0777

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1</b>

## Education Committee

### Minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2021

<b>Members:</b>	Dr Niall Connell		
	Ms Linda Ford	-	Lay member
	*Professor Tim Parkin		
	Mrs Susan Howarth		
	Dr Susan (Sue) Paterson	-	Chair
	Professor Chris Proudman		
	Professor Stuart Reid		
	Professor Susan Rhind		
	Dr Colin Whiting		
	*Ms Anna Bradbury	-	Student representative
Ms Kate Dakin	-	Student representative	
<b>By invitation:</b>	Dr Melissa Donald	-	CertAVP Subcommittee Chair
	Mr Danny Chambers	-	Adv Practitioner Panel Chair
	Dr Joanne Dyer	-	PQSC Chair
	Dr Mandisa Greene	-	VetGDP subcommittee Chair
	*Professor Nigel Gibbens	-	Chair of Accreditation Review Group
<b>In attendance:</b>	Mr Duncan Ash	-	Senior Education Officer
	Dr Jude Bradbury	-	Examinations Manager
	Dr Linda Prescott-Clements	-	Director of Education
	Mrs Britta Crawford	-	Senior Education Officer
	Mr Jordan Nicholls	-	Lead for Undergraduate Education
	Ms Beckie Smith	-	Education Assistant
	Ms Abigail Sims	-	Education Assistant
	Ms Jenny Soreskog-Turp	-	Lead for Postgraduate Education
	Mr Kieran Thakrar	-	Education Assistant
	Mrs Kirsty Williams	-	Quality Assurance Manager
	Ms Lizzie Lockett	-	CEO
	Dr Kate Richards	-	Officer Team Observer

### Apologies for absence and welcome

1. Apologies were sent from Tim Parkin, Chris Proudman, Anna Bradbury and Nigel Gibbens.

### Declarations of interest

2. There were no declarations of interest.

**Minutes**

3. The minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

**Matters arising**

4. The Committee heard that the actions from the minutes had been completed or were included in the agenda.
5. There was a question raised about whether or not Education Committee could reverse any of the reductions to the temporary EMS requirements. The question was specifically relating to the recent Taskforce decision to reduce the class of 2023's clinical EMS requirement to 13 weeks, in that given this decision was taken nearly two years before the students would be graduating, there may be a chance that students could achieve more EMS weeks in that time. It was also reported anecdotally that some students were being questioned by their peers as to why they were doing more than the reduced requirement.
6. It was clarified that these requirements had been communicated as a minimum requirement, and RCVS had been widely encouraging students to do more EMS if they could once they had met the reduced requirement. There were also other anecdotal reports that students were happy to do more EMS, only some were finding it difficult due to the backlog of placements caused by the pandemic.
7. It was agreed that any previous reductions to the requirements would not be reversed, or any current temporary requirements increased, as this would be unfair on the students.

**Education Department update**

8. The Director of Education, Dr Linda Prescott-Clements, gave an oral update on the work of the Education Department. The Committee heard that the department was running lunch time and evening drop-in sessions via zoom for graduates and advisers with questions about the VetGDP. These sessions had been variable in terms of participation, but the participants in the most recent session had been fully engaged and it was a useful event.
9. The department attended the virtual EAEVE general assembly and there had been an informative discussion on how different establishments had dealt with the impact of Covid-19 and the similarities of experiences. EAEVE would also be looking at their accreditation standard operating procedures next year.
10. The new standards policy had been agreed at Council last week with a little more work to do to make sure that everything is operational in time for implementation. There will also be a recruitment drive for new accreditation panel members and a programme of training will be developed. The department were asked to make sure references to health and safety requirements in the EMS policy encompassed international placements as well as UK-based ones

and that correct references were made to Scottish agencies where appropriate. It was also suggested that the term 'exotics' was checked to see if it was the most appropriate terminology.

11. The CPD administration fee approved at the previous Education Committee meeting will be discussed at Finance and Resource Committee at their first meeting in the next year.
12. The Committee noted that Dr Joanne Ireland had received her Fellowship for the thesis "*Randomised controlled trial of Clostridium botulinum type C vaccination for the prevention of Equine Grass Sickness.*"

### **Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee (PQSC)**

#### ***Report of the sub-committee held on 11 October 2021.***

13. Minutes from the PQSC meeting held on 11 October 2021 were received and noted. Two items were highlighted which did not form part of the Education Committee agenda were the substantive change to the programme delivered by St George's University (SGU) and the guidance regarding the teaching of core UK species on overseas programmes.

#### ***Massey Visitation and Sydney Visitation***

14. See Appendix 1

### **EMS**

#### ***Stakeholder Event***

15. It was noted that a stakeholder event would be taking place on 22 November to consider the future implementation of EMS. Up to 80 different stakeholders would be attending with representation from vet students; new graduates; all UK vet schools; major employers; vet societies; along with RCVS Committee representation, including some members of Education Committee.
16. It was explained that the aim of the day was to look to the future and consider new possible ways of delivering EMS, noting that there are challenges with the current system and it is likely that in future there will be increased demand as a result of increasing student numbers, alongside a threat of reduced availability of placements following the pandemic and other workplace priorities. A report and feedback from the event would be put to Education Committee at its next meeting.

#### ***Day 1 Competences***

17. The Veterinary Nursing (VN) Day One Competences, Skills and Professional Behaviours for Veterinary Nurse (D1C's) and the Veterinary Surgery Day One Competences (D1Cs) are generally drafted to be in alignment. The VN D1Cs had recently been reviewed by the Mind Matters team at RCVS, and they had made an update to the competence around situational

awareness. As such, it was then also recommended to review the corresponding veterinary D1C on situational awareness.

18. Education Committee was asked to consider that this D1C (number 9) was updated from:

“Demonstrate situational awareness through navigating and responding to the economic and emotional context in which the veterinary surgeon operates.”, to:

“Demonstrate situational awareness through navigating, responding and reflecting on the economic and emotional context in which the veterinary surgeon operates.”

19. Education Committee agreed to approve the update.

## **Statutory Membership Exam (SME)**

### ***SME Guidance***

20. The committee was asked to review the SME Guidance proposed for 2022 which included new sections on support for refugees and the wearing of religious items during examinations. It was noted that additional benefits were now available to refugees that were not present when the document was drafted. The following benefits were recommended to be added to the guidance:

- Financial support for English language testing
- Financial support for the SME fee
- Free membership to various veterinary professional organisations
  - British Cattle Veterinary Association
  - British Equine Veterinary Association
  - British Small Animal Veterinary Association
  - British Veterinary Association
  - RCVS Knowledge
  - Veterinary Management Group

21. It was noted that section 6.5 of the guidance did not account for the changes made regarding the wearing of religious, cultural or medical items now included in section 6.8.4. The committee requested alterations to be made to ensure there was consensus throughout the document.

22. A query was raised regarding exam length for section 6.7.1. See Appendix 1.

23. The committee approved the SME Guidance 2022 for publication subject to the aforementioned alterations.

### ***Veterinary Council of Ireland (VCI) proposal update***

24. The VCI has asked the RCVS if their Statutory Membership Examination candidates could take the RCVS written papers. This would typically involve the addition of 4-10 candidates per year. The VCI will continue to run their own practical component of the examination. The committee



were asked to review the proposal outlining the provision and costings between the RCVS and VCI for this purpose.

25. A query was raised as to whether this model could be used for other countries to enable mutual recognition. The RCVS advised that valid practical examinations would also be required in that country making things more challenging although not impossible.
26. The committee approved the proposal for implementation.

#### ***Recognition of EAEVE accredited programmes (policy on back dating)***

27. The Committee heard that Council had agreed that, when considering applications for registration from EU graduates from EAEVE accredited vet schools, the RCVS would no longer follow EAEVE's policy of backdating an establishments accreditation status by two years when they had been awarded 'non-accreditation' status and had subsequently had a successful revisit two years later. Moving forward, the RCVS would keep their own records and honour the accreditation from the date of award. The Committee was reassured that very few people would be affected.

#### **Veterinary Graduate Development Programme (VetGDP)**

##### ***Update***

28. The committee received and noted an update on the work of the VetGDP including engagement statistics. The Education department and Communications team were praised for their effective collaboration to engage the profession with the programme.

##### ***Minutes from the VetGDP subcommittee held on 30 September 2021***

29. The Chair of the VetGDP subcommittee gave an overview of discussions of the first meeting of the subcommittee. The Committee noted that the VetGDP subcommittee had agreed that applications for exemptions for the VetGDP should come to the subcommittee with a recommendation for action from the Education Department. The subcommittee had also considered proposed changes and additions to EPAs and agreed a direction of travel for the peer review of the e-portfolios. The chair thanked the Education Department for their hard work and the phenomenal gains made in a short period of time.

##### ***QA/Referral Process***

30. Education Committee received a proposal for the referral process for those stakeholders – graduates, VetGDP Adviser and Appointed Senior Veterinary Surgeons – who are not engaging appropriately with the VetGDP programme. The proposal is aligned to the current CPD referral process and is cognisant of the need to fully investigate the situation with all parties and assess where support can be given, before referring to the Professional Conduct department. The committee agreed the proposal.

##### **EMS**

31. As part of the on-going three-monthly reviews of the temporary EMS requirement, Education Committee was asked to consider EMS completion data submitted from schools in November, in addition to the current landscape around placement availability, and given three possible options forward. One option was to make no further amendments to policy at this time, with a further review at the February meeting of Education Committee, the second was to make no further amendments at this time with a further review at Education Committee in May, and a third option of reducing the clinical EMS requirement for Year 3 (class of 2024) but a further three weeks.
32. The situation was discussed in detail, and it was agreed to go with option A – ‘no further amendments to be made at this time’ with a further review at the February meeting of Education Committee. It was felt that, based on the completion data provided by each vet school, all cohorts were either on track to meet their requirements, or had just commenced the programme, and therefore no immediate change in the requirements was necessary. The decision would be communicated to students via a letter from the president which would be circulated to the Heads of Schools for onward distribution.
33. The letter from the president would also let students know that the reviews were ongoing, and could emphasise that despite the reductions made to the EMS requirement, students should be encouraged to carry out as many EMS weeks as they could, even if they have already reached a requirement that may have been reduced.

#### **Review of temporary amendments to education policy made during the Covid-19 pandemic**

34. With Council agreeing that Covid-19 related business be handed back to parent committees, Education Committee was asked to revisit the temporary amendments to policy which had been made during the pandemic and decide on whether any could revert to pre-pandemic requirements, or whether any were required to remain in place.

#### ***Temporary EMS policy***

35. Following discussion, it was agreed that the EMS policy should revert to pre-pandemic AHEMS requirements for new students starting in 2021 going forward, as well pre-pandemic clinical EMS requirements for year 3 cohorts (class of 2024), and that the situation would continue to be monitored so that timely adjustments could be made if necessary in future. It was clarified that all currently agreed reductions would remain in place.

#### ***Virtual abattoir resources***

36. With most pandemic-related restrictions being removed around the country, it was asked whether the temporary agreement to allow virtual abattoir resources in place of an in-person experience was still necessary.
37. Members commented that the pandemic was not over yet and that some schools appeared to still be having difficulties in accessing abattoir placements for students, particularly in Scotland.

38. It was agreed to keep this temporary amendment in place for the time being and to monitor again at the next meeting. It was also considered whether RCVS could assist schools by contacting the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) to encourage more abattoirs to open their doors to student teaching.

**ACTION: RCVS to explore communications with the FSA and FSS**

***Temporary amendment to accreditation standards***

39. It was agreed that the temporary policy put in place regarding PSS accreditation and accreditation standard 3.7 would be reverted to pre-pandemic requirements, following the recommencement of in-person PSS accreditation visits.

**Action: Education Department to communicate the decision to the schools**

***Temporary extension of accreditation periods***

40. It was agreed that the temporary extending of accreditation periods was no longer necessary as face-to-face visitations had recommenced, and processes were in place to host accreditation visits virtually if required. This temporary amendment would therefore be removed.

***Requirements for online/remote assessments of veterinary and veterinary nurse students***

41. In order to ensure the reliability and integrity of assessments, a policy had been drafted and approved by the Covid Taskforce, for vet schools and providers for VN education, describing the requirements they need to have in place to ensure the reliability and integrity of remote assessments, and that student achievement remained in line with RCVS standards.
42. Some committee members commented that this policy should be kept under review, in order to protect the mental health of students required to undertake proctored online assessments, and it was agreed to seek the views of the Association of Veterinary Students (AVS) at their next meeting with RCVS in January.

***Secretaries note: This will be raised, however RCVS policy does not insist that proctoring is in place.***

43. Since most vet schools had now indicated that some form of blended approach to learning would be used permanently, moving forward, others felt that this policy should be retained and applied wherever remote or online assessment of students was used.
44. It was agreed to keep the policy in place for now and review again at the next meeting.

**ACTION: RCVS to discuss policy with AVS at next meeting.**

***Vet school quarterly Covid-19 plans (temporary amendments to programmes)***

45. Whilst initial discussion favoured ending the quarterly updates from Schools now that most pandemic restrictions had lifted, it was commented that the UK was entering a turbulent period

over the winter and that it would be wise to keep these updates ongoing, and it was agreed to keep requesting until at least the end of the current academic year.

### ***Statutory Membership Examination (SME)***

46. Candidates entering the SME had previously been required to pass an English language test before being allowed to sit the written component of the examination. With English language testing availability severely limited for long periods of 2020, candidates for the 2021 diet had been offered the opportunity to enter the exam without taking the IELTS or OET.
47. Candidates who went on to pass the 2021 exam were required to provide valid IELTS/OET test results no later than one year after receiving their exam results.
48. Education Committee was asked to consider whether this policy should remain going forward. It was highlighted that more candidates had entered the examination this year, and that the pass rate had dropped, with English language competence being one of the factors affecting this.
49. With this in mind, members felt that it was unfair to allow a candidate to pay for and undertake an exam where they would be unlikely to pass without sufficient English language comprehension. Therefore, it was agreed that the temporary policy would revert to the original of requiring a successful English language test result before being permitted to sit the examination.

**ACTION: Amend the Stat exam policy in re the English language and notify potential candidates**

### **Review of subcommittees and working parties which report to Education Committee**

50. The Committee received a paper detailing the Terms of Reference (ToR) and membership for each of the subcommittee reporting to Education Committee. The committee agreed to the updates proposed, specifically for the PQSC ToR to remove references to the EMS Coordinators Liaison Group and for the CertAVP ToR, to be updated to reflect current RCVS committee structures. The committee asked that all subcommittee documents were standardised to include consistency of membership; meeting frequency and number of members present needed to be quorate.

**ACTION: Documents to be updated and brought back to Education Committee for review**

### **Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice (CertAVP)**

#### ***Synoptic Exams Review***

51. The committee received and noted the Synoptic Examinations Review Report. The committee heard that the review was undertaken to ensure that the exam was consistent and valid. The review found that there were some differences in guidance and format, but that the main difference was in the marking scheme. It was suggested that we share this review with the providers and work with them to update the exam in order to ensure that all providers are assessing the same knowledge and skills.

52. There was some discussion about whether the objective was to standardise the approach to learning and teaching as there are benefits to having different formats for candidates to choose from. The committee was reassured that the standardisation didn't mean that all providers needed to provide the same format of teaching but that it is important to ensure that the standards to which the candidates are being assessed are consistent.
53. The committee agreed with the suggestions to clarify any anomalies in the running of the examination and to work with the providers to update the synoptic examination and guidance

## **PDP**

### ***Annual Statistics***

54. The PDP Annual Statistics Paper was noted and the committee was presented with highlights from the report. There was a question about the annual cohort chase and why some graduates were removed from the PDP and it was explained that this was due to a variety of reasons such as a career change or the graduate moving overseas. Two of the current deans will step down from next year but the committee was reassured that the other deans have agreed to support the graduates affected.

### **RCVS Review of Vet School Covid-19 plans**

55. The Committee noted the plans which had been previously reviewed by PQSC.

### **Advanced Practitioner Status**

#### ***List of approved Advanced Practitioners***

56. The list of approved Advanced Practitioners was noted.

#### ***Advanced Practitioner (AP) Evaluation***

57. In the last meeting Education Committee agreed to form two Task and Finish groups, one to clarify what it meant to be an Advanced Practitioner and another to explore career pathways. The committee was presented with the terms of reference for the first group to clarify what it means to be an AP and when that work has been completed the next task group will be set up.
58. A Project plan for next phase of the AP review will be presented to Education Committee at the next meeting which will include a timeline for the task and finish groups.

**ACTION: AP Review Project Plan to be presented to EC in February**

59. The committee agreed the terms of reference and the composition of the Task and Finish groups

### **Fellowship subcommittee**

60. The minutes from the Fellowship Sub-Committee meeting held on 8 September 2021 were received and noted.

61. I was also noted that there were 4 final candidates who remained enrolled on the Diploma of Fellowship by Thesis, and that their deadline for submission was August 2022.

### **Risk Register**

62. The committee reviewed the reports and based on the discussions at the meeting thought it would be useful to add a risk around Liverpool as the main provider of the CertAVP synoptic exam.

**Action: Education Department to update Risk register**

### **Any other business**

### ***EMS Communications***

63. Further to the earlier agreement to write to vet students about the temporary EMS policy review and how the required weeks were a minimum and more weeks should be encouraged if possible, it was also suggested that RCVS communicate with providers with the aim of encouraging them to take on more students. However, it was agreed to wait at this stage as there would be communications going to the profession about EMS following the up-coming event, and instead the message could be tied into those communications.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

8 February 2022

Britta Crawford

November 2021

[b.crawford@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:b.crawford@rcvs.org.uk)

<b>Summary</b>		
Meeting	Council	
Date	20 January 2022	
Title	Minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee (FRC)	
Summary	Minutes of the FRC held on 18 November 2021	
Decisions required	None	
Attachments	<b>Classified Appendix</b>	
Author	Alan Quinn-Byrne Governance Officer/Secretary a.quinn-byrne@rcvs.org.uk / T 020 7227 3505	
<b>Classifications</b>		
Document	Classification <sup>1</sup>	Rationales <sup>2</sup>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3, 4</b>

### **<sup>1</sup>Classifications explained**

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

**<sup>2</sup>Classification rationales**

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



## Minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) meeting held online via Microsoft Teams on Thursday, 18 November 2021.

### Members:

Dr N T Connell	Chair / RCVS Treasurer
Dr S Paterson	Representative from Education Committee
*Dr M O Greene	Representative from Advancement of Professions Committee
Ms J S M Worthington	Lay Member RCVS Council
Ms C-L McLaughlan	Representative from Standards Committee
Mr M E Rendle	RCVS Council / Veterinary Nurses Council Chair
Dr M A Donald	Representative from PIC/DC Liaison Committee
Mr T J Walker	Lay Member RCVS Council
Ms J Davidson	Representative from Veterinary Nurses' Council
*Professor S A May	Elected member RCVS Council

\*Denotes absent.

### 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 / Governance Officer
Ms J Delaloye	Head of Finance
Ms J Ayers	RCVS Academy Manager
Mr R Burley	Chief Technology Officer (CTO)
Mr M Turner	Investment Portfolio Manager, Investec

### Apologies for absence

1. Apologies were received from Professor May and Dr Greene.

### Declarations of interest

2. There were no new declarations of interest.

### Minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2021

3. Secretary to put in afternote that Director of Operations and Chair of FRC did meet with Investec for discussion on investment portfolio.

**Action: Secretary**

4. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraph 1.
5. It was agreed that the minutes were a true reflection of the meeting.

### Presentation from Investec

6. The Investment Portfolio Manager presented the latest RCVS investment update to the Committee.
7. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 2-4.

### RCVS Digital Plan

8. The CTO presented the RCVS Digital Plan 2021-2024 to the Committee for review and approval.
9. The paper outlined the strategic objectives of the Digital Team and reflected on work that had already been accomplished.
10. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 5-11

### Update from Director of Operations

11. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 12-16
12. The Committee praised the work of the Operations, Finance, and Facilities Teams as workload had increased and there were a lot of items being managed.

### Report of Committees

13. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraph 17.
14. There were no further points raised to the FRC from the other Committees.

### Corporate Risk Register

15. The revised Corporate Risk Register was presented to the Committee.
16. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 18 -21.

## Management Accounts

17. The Management Accounts for the nine months to 30 September 2021 had been circulated to the Committee. Key points were as follows:
18. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 22-28
19. The Committee was pleased with the management account update.

## RCVS Academy Plan

20. The RCVS Academy Manager presented the Academy Plan to inform the Committee as to the trajectory and upcoming work of the RCVS Academy.
21. The concept of the Academy had been approved as part of the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan. Its work would encompass many departments and several committees, dependent on the content under development at any given time. However, overarching governance was sought via the Finance and Resource Committee, therefore the Committee was asked for approval of the general direction of travel.
22. The strategy was comprehensibly outlined and the Committee praised the plan and gave it full support.

## Changes to cheque procedures

23. RCVS currently accepted several methods of payments for fees and invoices. However, processing cheques was problematic, and it was proposed RCVS no longer accepted cheques, Postal Orders or Payable Orders as methods of payment.
24. After confirmation that the impact would be minimal, the Committee agreed the proposal, and that this would commence from 1 January 2022.

## Any other business

25. There was no other business to report.

## Date of next meeting

26. The date of the next meeting is Thursday, 10 February 2022.

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Council
Date	20 January 2022
Title	Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2021
Summary	Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2021
Decisions required	To note the minutes.
Attachments	None
Author	Alan Quinn-Byrne Secretary ARC/Governance Officer 0207 227 3505 / <a href="mailto:a.quinn-byrne@rcvs.org.uk">a.quinn-byrne@rcvs.org.uk</a>

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

**<sup>1</sup>Classifications explained**

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**<sup>2</sup>Classification rationales**

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

## Minutes of the Registration Committee meeting held on 17 November 2021 at Belgravia House, 62-62 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF

### Members:

Dr M A Donald	Chair
Mrs B S Andrews-Jones	
Dr N T Connell	Treasurer
Ms L Ford	
Dr M O Green	
*Professor C J Proudman	
Dr K A Richards	President
*Dr N C Smith	

### In attendance:

Ms E C Ferguson	Registrar
Ms L Lockett	CEO
Ms C L McCann	Director of Operations
Mr A Quinn-Byrne	Secretary to ARC / Governance Officer

\*Not in attendance – apologies received

### Apologies for absence

1. Apologies for absence were received from Professor Proudman and Dr Smith.

### Declarations of interest

2. There were no new declarations of interest.

### Minutes of Meeting held on 15 September 2021

3. The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

### Temporary Registration

4. At its last meeting the Committee asked for further information about the categories of Temporary Registration and requirements imposed for each, including English language. This was set out in the paper before the Committee for consideration.

5. It was queried why there were members on the Temporary Register for a long time. It was confirmed that this had been reviewed, and agreed, by Council in November 2018 that Temporary Registrants already on the list would remain under their current terms as agreed by the College as the number on for an extended period of time were relatively low (exact numbers could be provided to the Committee if it wished); thereafter any new applications received would follow the amended regulations as agreed at that time. The amended regulations came into force on 1 January 2019 and included that a maximum term of five years' would generally apply.
6. It was noted that legislation had not included wording on any time limitation, so there was still the possibility to apply beyond the stated maximum five-year term, and it was confirmed that each application was considered on a case-by-case basis.
7. It was noted that the Temporary Register provided the mechanism for people to come to sit educational courses in the UK on a short-term, non-permanent, basis without requiring full registration. Once their course of study had finished, they would then come off the Temporary Register.
8. It was highlighted that there appeared to be a level of inconsistency in relation to the English language requirements across the board and noted that some courses could be six months to a year in length and to have a requirement for individuals to pay for an expensive language test when they were engaging in academic placement. This may be disproportionate and could continue to hamper the drive to attract international students and professionals from overseas.
9. Furthermore, within the temporary registration application form, it did not provide a declaration from the supervising vet around language, and they were satisfied that language levels of the candidates were suitable for the role envisaged; It was also felt there could be greater clarity on the level of supervision being provided to the individual on the Temporary Register. It was suggested therefore that the onus should be placed on the supervisor to review the English language capabilities of the Temporary Registrant and confirm it in a stronger declaration.
10. It was confirmed that both the temporary registration form and supervisor guidance will be reviewed, and recommendations made to the Committee at its next meeting.

**Action: Registrar and Governance Officer to review Temporary Registration Application form and supervisor guidance.**

### Improving engagement with vet and vet nurse students

11. The paper before the Committee proposed a more formal relationship with veterinary students and student veterinary nurses (SVNs) by establishing a 'student status' in the College database, to facilitate improved communications and build positive engagement with them from an early stage.

12. It was questioned whether the College should enable Vet students/SVNs to have access to the 'MyAccount' area on its database (iMIS) by establishing a new 'student status', to help build its student engagement activities.
13. The Committee was overall supportive of this initiative and felt it was a positive step to enhance student engagement and participation across all levels of the RCVS from regulation to the Mind Matters Initiative.
14. The Communications Department provided further assurance to the Committee that one of the biggest concerns was the transfer of data or General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) concerns of managing and controlling the data. It was confirmed that a managed consent model giving the students control over their email preferences would be implemented and the College's privacy policy would be updated to reflect that. Students would also be provided with information on links to the RCVS privacy policy and the security of their data.
15. There would also be a managed communication campaign with Vet Schools to inform them of this new development in communication with students.
16. The Committee agreed the proposals.

## Registration Statistics Report

17. The Committee was provided with an overview of key statistics with commentary on trends or points of interest.
18. Work undertaken on the Report was praised, and it was noted that it was quite useful to have an update on live statistics.
19. The following amendments were suggested regarding the presentation of the data:
  - Split the data so there was information on geographical location.
  - Display removals data, although it was noted that there were restrictions to exactly how granular this could be.
  - Include the number of years practising or since graduation.
  - Review the format so that comparison tables were beside each other.
  - Include one year *plus* one quarter after so it provided a wider data overview.
20. The Head of Insight and Engagement confirmed that the recommendations would be taken on board for the presentation at the next Committee meeting in February 2022.



## Any Other Business

21. It was confirmed that there were three temporary registration applications to vote on via Boardpacks.

## Date of Next Meeting

22. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 9 February 2022 in the afternoon. This would be in person subject to government restrictions in force at that time.

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Council
Date	20 January 2022
Title	Standards Committee Minutes
Summary	<p>Minutes of Standards Committee held remotely on Wednesday, 25 August 2021, at 10am.</p> <p>The Committee's attention is drawn to paragraphs 1 – 7 in the classified appendix.</p>
Decisions required	None
Attachments	Classified appendix ( <b>confidential</b> )
Author	Beth Jinks Standards and Advice Lead <a href="mailto:b.jinks@rcvs.org.uk">b.jinks@rcvs.org.uk</a>

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3</b>

**1 Classifications explained**

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Private	The paper includes personal data which should not be disclosed at any time or for any reason, unless the data subject has agreed otherwise. The Chair may, however, indicate after discussion that there are general issues which can be disclosed, for example in reports to committees and Council.

**2 Classification rationales**

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

## Minutes of the Standards Committee held remotely on Wednesday, 25 August 2021, at 10 am

**Members:** Dr L Allum  
Ms B Andrews-Jones  
Miss L Belton  
Mr M Castle  
Dr D Chambers  
Dr M A Donald Chair  
Dr M Gardiner  
Ms C-L McLaughlan  
Prof T Parkin  
Mrs C Roberts

**In attendance:** Ms E C Ferguson Registrar  
Ms G Kingswell Head of Legal Services (Standards)  
Ms B Jinks Standards and Advisory Lead  
Mx K Richardson Senior Standards and Advice Officer

### AI 1 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

1. The Chair welcomed the Senior Vice President and the CEO to the meeting as observers. No apologies were received.
2. There were no new conflicts of interests declared.

### AI 2 Under Care/OOH preliminary discussion – Confidential

3. The minutes of this agenda item can be found at paragraphs 1-4 of the classified appendix.

### AI 3 Any other business

4. The minutes of this agenda item can be found at paragraphs 5-7 of the classified appendix.

### Date of next meeting

5. The next meeting of the Standards Committee will be 13 September 2021.

## Table of actions

Paragraph(s)	Action	Assigned to
	See classified appendix.	

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Council
Date	20 January 2022
Title	Standards Committee Minutes
Summary	<p>Minutes of Standards Committee held remotely on Monday, 13 September 2021, at 10am. In particular, the Committee is to note:</p> <p>a. GEFS review update</p> <p>The Committee was provided with an update on the scheme, as follows: the review is now underway and the APHA are conducting interviews with relevant stakeholders to get feedback on their experiences with the scheme to date. The RCVS has also provided feedback. Further information will be provided to the Committee at its next meeting.</p> <p>b. Pet importation consultation</p> <p>The Committee was advised that the government has recently introduced the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) bill in Parliament. This Bill intends to give powers to Defra to create regulations which would restrict the commercial and non-commercial importation of an animal in order to preserve and promote welfare. These regulations would apply to a dog, cat or ferret that is below a certain age, had been mutilated, or is more than a specific number of days pregnant. The Committee was asked to provide their views on this consultation via email after the meeting.</p> <p>The Committee's attention is drawn to paragraphs 1 – 36 in the classified appendix.</p>
Decisions required	None
Attachments	Classified appendix ( <b>confidential</b> )
Author	Stephanie Bruce-Smith Senior Standards and Advice Officer <a href="mailto:s.bruce-smith@rcvs.org.uk">s.bruce-smith@rcvs.org.uk</a> / 0207 202 0754

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3</b>

<b><sup>1</sup>Classifications explained</b>	
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<b><sup>2</sup>Classification rationales</b>	
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Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. To protect information which may contain personal data, special category data, and/or criminal offence data, as listed under the General Data Protection Regulation</li> </ol>

## Minutes of the Standards Committee Meeting held remotely on Monday, 13 September 2021, at 10am

**Members:**

Dr M A Donald	Chair
Dr L Allum	
Ms B Andrews-Jones	
Miss L Belton	Vice Chair
Mr M Castle	
Dr D Chambers	
Dr M Gardiner	
Ms C-L McLaughlan	
Prof T Parkin	
Mrs C Roberts	

**In attendance:**

Ms E C Ferguson	Registrar
Ms L Lockett	CEO
Ms G Kingswell	Head of Legal Services (Standards)
Ms B Jinks	Standards and Advisory Lead
Mx K Richardson	Senior Standards and Advice Officer/Solicitor
Ms S Bruce-Smith	Senior Standards and Advice Officer
Mrs L Price	Head of Legal Services (Practice Standards)

*Present for AI 5(b) only*

### AI 1 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

1. The Chair welcomed the CEO to the meeting as an observer. Apologies were received from Mandisa Greene.
2. Mr Castle declared an interest in relation to AI 4(d) as he has recently imported a dog. Dr Chambers declared an interest in relation to AI 4(a) as he is associated with brands promoting arthritis prevention.

### AI 1 Minutes of the meetings held on 10 May, 16 July and 4 August - Confidential

3. It was agreed that the minutes of the previous meetings are accurate.
4. Confidential information related to the action items is available in the classified appendix at paragraph 1.



## AI 2 Standards and Advice Update

5. An update was provided regarding AI 3(c) from the May meeting, where it was raised that if pharmacists are required to follow any written instructions on a prescription, then wording that requires that pharmacists see and scan in the original prescription before dispensing against it could be added by veterinary surgeons to written prescriptions. The RCVS contacted the GPhS and RPS and in summary, there is no explicit obligation for pharmacists to follow any additional instructions provided by a vet on a prescription, but both organisations felt that there would be an implied obligation to comply with written instructions on a prescription.
6. It was noted that the VMD advise that in order to prevent prescription fraud, vets should use only the prescription template offered by the BVA to their members or other reputable organisations. Additionally, if suppliers dispense against faxed or emailed prescriptions, they should ask for the original prescription.
7. It was suggested that the RCVS could work with the BVA to draft an agreed template prescription that would be available to all MRCVS (i.e. not just those registered with the BVA), with the support of the GPhS and RPS. It was agreed that the Standards and Advice team would explore this with the BVA.

**Action: Standards and Advice Team**

8. It was further advised that while the GPhS and RPS link to the VMD guidance, the organisations have limited guidance for their members regarding fraudulent veterinary prescriptions. It was suggested that the RCVS should explore working with them to strengthen this guidance, and that a joint statement about this project should go out to the profession.

**Action: Standards and Advice Team**

9. It was suggested that as most prescriptions are emailed rather than written, a discretionary funding project could be set up to create an online database for prescription tracking. It was noted that this would be a significant task and will be revisited at a later date.
10. It was noted that the Standards and Advice team had taken a total of 1710 emails and 1756 phone calls so far in 2021, which was a 29% increase in emails from the same timeframe in 2019 (2020 was an anomaly due to Covid-19). It was explained that the majority of queries no longer relate to Covid-19.
11. An update was provided on the rewrite of Chapter 25 of the supporting guidance relating to Recognised Veterinary Practice. The FAQ and new chapter have been drafted and have been reviewed by external vets whose comments will be considered before bringing the new drafts back to the wider working group. The Standards and Advisory Lead reminded the Committee that the review will focus on:
  - a) when a vet can develop/improve/push a procedure for an animal (i.e. for one animal in front of them)

- b) when this becomes clinical veterinary research, and the additional considerations – for example RVP becomes CVR when the intention is to compare results/research design instead of treating one animal.
12. It was noted that the Standards and Advice team have worked with other departments in the College to produce remote content for the Introduction to UK Veterinary Professions course, with Mx Richardson filming a webinar for the course in 2020 and both Mx Richardson and Ms Bruce-Smith participating in the evening course Q&A sessions.
  13. It was advised that Standards and Advice team would be returning to the office on Tuesdays going forward and that further resourcing for the team was being discussed.

### Matters for discussion

#### AI 3(a) Under care - Confidential

14. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 2 - 8.

#### AI 3(b) GEFS review update

15. The Registrar reminded the Committee of the Groupage Export Facilitation Scheme (GEFS), which was presented to this Committee and RCVS Council in 2020. At that time, Council had agreed to support GEFS on a pragmatic basis but requested a review within 12 months at the end of 2021.
16. The review is now underway and the APHA are conducting interviews with relevant stakeholders to get feedback on their experiences with the scheme to date. The RCVS has also provided feedback. Further information will be provided to the Committee at its next meeting.

### Matters for decision

#### AI 4(a) Endorsements - Confidential

17. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 9 - 12.

#### AI 4(b) PSS appeals - Confidential

18. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 13 – 17.

#### AI 4 (c) Conscientious objection - Confidential

19. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 18 – 21.

#### AI 4(d) Pet importation consultation

20. The Committee was advised that the government has recently introduced the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) bill in Parliament. This Bill intends to give powers to Defra to create regulations which would restrict the commercial and non-commercial importation of an animal in order to preserve and promote welfare. These regulations would apply to a dog, cat or ferret that is below a certain age, had been mutilated, or is more than a specific number of days pregnant.

21. It was agreed that the Committee members would give their views on the consultation via email.

#### AI 4(e) Vet-AI proposal – Confidential

22. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 22 – 27.

#### AI 5(a) Disciplinary Committee report

23. The report was noted.

#### AI 5(b) Practice Standards Scheme report

24. The report was noted.

#### AI 6(a) Recognised Veterinary practice Subcommittee report - Confidential

25. The report was noted.

#### AI 6(b) Ethics Review Panel report - Confidential

26. The report was noted.

#### AI 6(c) Certification Subcommittee report - Confidential

27. The report was noted.

### AI 6(d) Riding Establishments Subcommittee report

28. The report was noted and it was decided that the 'Confidential' classification of the report should be removed and future reports be 'unclassified' unless confidential information is included.

### 7(a) Risk and equality

29. The report was noted.

### AI 8 Any other business

#### E-certification for exports - Confidential

30. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraph 28.

#### Vet-Techs - Confidential

31. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 29 – 30.

### Date of next meeting

32. The date of the next meeting is 26 October 2021 and the meeting will be held remotely.

### Table of actions

Paragraph(s)	Action	Assigned to
7	Work with the BVA to draft an agreed template prescription that would be available to all MRCVS, with the support of the GPhS and RPS.	<b>Standards and Advice Team</b>
8	Work with the GPhS and RPS to strengthen their guidance, and draft a joint statement about the project to go out to the profession.	<b>Standards and Advice Team</b>

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Council
Date	20 January 2022
Title	Standards Committee Minutes
Summary	<p>Minutes of Standards Committee held remotely on Tuesday, 26 October 2021, at 10am</p> <p>The Committee's attention is drawn to paragraphs 1 – 16 in the classified appendix.</p>
Decisions required	None
Attachments	Classified appendix ( <b>confidential</b> )
Author	Beth Jinks Standards and Advisory Lead <a href="mailto:b.jinks@rcvs.org.uk">b.jinks@rcvs.org.uk</a>

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3</b>

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

## Minutes of the Standards Committee Meeting held remotely on Tuesday, 26 October 2021, at 10am

<b>Members:</b>	Dr M A Donald	Chair
	Dr L Allum	
	Ms B Andrews-Jones	
	Miss L Belton	Vice Chair
	Mr M Castle	
	Dr D Chambers	
	Dr M Gardiner	
	Ms C-L McLaughlan	
	Prof T Parkin	
	Mrs C Roberts	
<b>In attendance:</b>	Ms E C Ferguson	Registrar
	D M Greene	Senior Vice President
	Ms L Lockett	CEO
	Ms G Kingswell	Head of Legal Services (Standards)
	Ms B Jinks	Standards and Advisory Lead
	Ms S Bruce-Smith	Senior Standards and Advice Officer
	Agenda item 2(c):	
	Mr B Myring	Policy and Public Affairs Manager
	Mr A Day	GEFS Policy lead, Defra
	Dr A Ridge	Veterinary advisor, Defra
	Agenda item 2(d)	
	Mrs S Hampson	Director, LLM Vets
	Miss S Wilson	BCVA board member
	Mr J Reader	Director, Synergy Farm Health
	Ms L Ford	RCVS Council/Chair Vet Tech Working Party
	Miss H Batty	Director, LLM Vets
	Mr M Hosegood	VDS
	Ms N Parker	Vet Tech, LLM Vets

### AI 1 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

1. The Chair welcomed the CEO and Senior Vice President to the meeting as observers. Apologies were received from Miss L Belton, and Mrs C Roberts.

**AI 2(a) Remote prescribing – confidential**

2. Please see paragraphs 1-3 in the classified appendix.

**AI 2(b) Homeopathy – confidential**

3. Please see paragraphs 4-6 in the classified appendix.

**AI 2(c) GEFS – confidential**

4. Please see paragraphs 7-11 in the classified appendix.

**AI 2(d) Veterinary Technicians ('vet techs') – confidential**

5. Please see paragraphs 12-16 in the classified appendix.

**AI 3 Any other business**

6. None.

**Table of actions**

<b>Paragraph(s)</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Assigned to</b>
	See classified appendix	



<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Council
Date	20 January 2022
Title	Standards Committee Minutes
Summary	<p>Minutes of Standards Committee held remotely on Monday, 15 November 2021, at 10am</p> <p>The Committee's attention is drawn to paragraphs 1 – 20 in the classified appendix.</p>
Decisions required	None.
Attachments	Classified appendix ( <b>confidential</b> )
Author	<p>Ky Richardson</p> <p>Senior Standards and Advice Officer/Solicitor</p> <p>k.richardson@rcvs.org.uk</p>

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Minutes	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3</b>

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

## Minutes of the Standards Committee Meeting held remotely on Monday, 15 November 2021, at 10am

<b>Members:</b>	Dr M A Donald	Chair
	Dr L Allum	
	Ms B Andrews-Jones	
	Miss L Belton	Vice Chair
	Mr M Castle	
	Dr D Chambers	
	Dr M Gardiner	
	Ms C-L McLaughlan	
	Prof T Parkin	
	Mrs C Roberts	
<b>In attendance:</b>	Ms E C Ferguson	Registrar
	Ms L Lockett	CEO
	Dr M Greene	Senior Vice President
	Ms G Kingswell	Head of Legal Services (Standards)
	Ms B Jinks	Standards and Advisory Lead
	Mx K Richardson	Senior Standards and Advice Officer/Solicitor
	Ms S Bruce-Smith	Senior Standards and Advice Officer
	Ms L Hall	People Director (observing only)
	Ms S Way	People Manager (observing only)
	Ms P Mosedale	QI Clinical Lead RCVS Knowledge <i>Present for AI 3(a) only</i>
	Mr C Gush	Executive Director of RCVS Knowledge <i>Present for AI 3(a) only</i>

### AI 1 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

1. The Chair welcomed the CEO and Senior Vice President to the meeting as observers.
2. No apologies or declarations of interest were received.

### AI 1 Minutes of the meetings held on 25 August, 13 September, and 26 October 2021 – Confidential

3. It was agreed that the minutes of the previous meetings are accurate.
4. Confidential information relating to the action items is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 1 and 2.

### AI 2 Standards and Advice Update

5. It was noted that the total advice cases for 2021, so far, was around 4,200 which included email and telephone advice queries. The largest number of queries related to veterinary medicines,

totalling 527 advice files, which includes queries in relation to under care. Advertising and publicity was the next highest totalling 390 queries, which includes queries in relation to endorsement, use of the specialist title, and letters of non-objection. There have been 380 queries in relation to the coronavirus and 371 queries relating to breaching client confidentiality.

6. It was noted that the Standards and Advice Team are currently recruiting for another officer and a number of interviews are taking place later this week.

## Matters for discussion

### AI 3(a) QI (RCVSK)

*P Mosedale and C Gush joined the meeting*

7. Chris Gush delivered a presentation setting out a brief overview of RCVS Knowledge and the main resources that are available to the professions, specifically in relation to quality improvement and the most up to date evidence available to support decisions.
8. Pam Mosedale delivered a presentation in relation to quality improvement and the barriers the profession are facing in this area and the resources available, including free CPD and other resources available on the RCVS Knowledge website.
9. It was agreed that Chris Gush would carry out some stakeholder engagement leading on from the RAND research and come back to the Committee with the results.

**Action: RCVS Knowledge to report results to the Committee.**

*P Mosedale and C Gush left the meeting*

## Matters for decision

### AI 4(a) Review of Under Care and 24/7 emergency cover – Confidential

10. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 3 to 21.

### AI 4(b) Review of endorsements – Confidential

11. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 22 to 26.

### AI 4 (c) Adverse events guidance

12. The Committee considered the amendments to the guidance and unanimously approved the changes.

**Action: Standards and Advice Team to publish guidance.**

### AI 4(d) Support attestations by TRNOVs (Temporary Registered Novice OVs)

13. To be considered at an extra meeting of this Committee in December 2021.

#### AI 5(a) Disciplinary Committee report

14. Nothing to report.

#### AI 5(b) Practice Standards Scheme report

15. Nothing to report.

#### AI 5(c) Riding Establishments Subcommittee Report

16. The report was noted.

#### AI 6(a) Recognised Veterinary practice Subcommittee report - Confidential

17. The report was noted.

#### AI 6(b) Ethics Review Panel report - Confidential

18. The report was noted.

#### AI 6(c) Certification Subcommittee report - Confidential

19. The report was noted.

#### AI 7 Risk and equality

20. The report was noted

21. Committee agreed that once the review of endorsements was complete, an addition to the risk register reflecting any changes should be considered

#### AI 8 Any other business and date of next meeting

##### Alpacas

22. The Committee was updated in relation to a query that was received about what procedures can be undertaken on alpacas by laypeople. It has been reported that lay husbandry contractors and shearers are carrying out incisor trimming and vaccinations (which are both considered to be acts of veterinary surgery) and are working "for reward" and thus do not benefit from the farmer exemption. In any event, the Standards and Advice Team have advised a number of enquirers that incisor trimming amounts to more than minor surgery and so cannot be delegated by a veterinary surgeon to any person. The Committee was informed that the Standards and Advice

Team are working on insight to the professions in relation to delegation in this regard, as well as delegation more broadly, via the RCVS Academy platform.

#### Ratification of minutes

23. It was noted that there had been some delay in Council receiving the minutes of the extra Standards Committee meetings that had taken place since the previous Council meeting (the reason being that usual practice is to ratify them at the scheduled meetings). In order to avoid this situation going forward, the Committee agreed to ratify future minutes via email or at extra meetings.

#### Date of next meeting

24. The date of the next meeting will be scheduled for December and the February meeting will be face to face.

#### Table of actions

<b>Paragraph(s)</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Assigned to</b>
9	<b>Engage with stakeholders and report results to the Committee.</b>	<b>RCVS Knowledge</b>
12	<b>New guidance regarding adverse events to be published</b>	<b>Standards and Advice Team</b>

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Council
Date	20 January 2022
Title	Standards Committee Minutes
Summary	<p>Minutes of Standards Committee held remotely on Wednesday 15 December 2021, at 2pm. In particular, the Committee is to note:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. Remote prescribing</p> <p>The Committee discussed the worsening situation with Covid 19, and agreed to reintroduce the temporary guidance allowing remote prescribing and will review this again at its February 2022 meeting</p> <p>The Committee's attention is drawn to paragraphs 1 – 18 in the classified appendix.</p>
Decisions required	None
Attachments	Classified appendix ( <b>confidential</b> )  Annex A: Presentation by FSA ( <b>confidential</b> )
Author	Beth Jinks  Standards and Advisory Lead  <a href="mailto:b.jinks@rcvs.org.uk">b.jinks@rcvs.org.uk</a>

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 2, 3</b>
Annex A	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>3</b>

**1Classifications explained**

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**2Classification rationales**

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



## Minutes of the Standards Committee Meeting held remotely on Wednesday 15 December 2021, at 2pm

<b>Members:</b>	Dr M A Donald	Chair
	Dr L Allum	
	Ms B Andrews-Jones	
	Miss L Belton	Vice Chair
	Mr M Castle	
	Dr D Chambers	
	Dr M Gardiner	
	Ms C-L McLaughlan	
	Prof T Parkin	
	Mrs C Roberts	
<b>In attendance:</b>	Ms E C Ferguson	Registrar
	Dr M Greene	Senior Vice President
	Ms L Lockett	CEO
	Ms G Kingswell	Head of Legal Services (Standards)
	Ms B Jinks	Standards and Advisory Lead
	Mx K Richardson	Senior Standards and Advice Officer/Solicitor
	Ms K Bowles	Standards and Advice Officer
	Dr J Clark	Food Standards Agency ( <i>AI 2(a) only</i> )
	Mr E Vega	Food Standards Agency ( <i>AI 2(a) only</i> )
	Mr C Jones	Food Standards Agency ( <i>AI 2(a) only</i> )
	Ms H Isaac	Food Standards Agency ( <i>AI 2(a) only</i> )
	Mr A Day	Defra ( <i>AI 2(a) only</i> )

### AI 1 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

1. The Chair welcomed the CEO and Senior Vice President to the meeting as observers.
2. Apologies were received from Ms Andrews-Jones and Dr Chambers and there were no new declarations of interest.

### AI 2(a) Temporary Registration of Official Veterinarians – confidential

3. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 1 to 7.

## AI 2(b) Under Care – confidential

4. Confidential information is available in the classified appendix at paragraphs 8 to 17.

## AI 3 Any other business

### *Remote prescribing*

5. The Committee discussed the worsening situation with Covid-19, largely due to the new Omicron variant, including reports of increased enquiries in practice for telephone consultations. The Committee was informed that the Advice Team have also been receiving requests to re-introduce the remote prescribing dispensation, and that the PDSA have written to the College asking the same.
6. The Committee discussed the issues and agreed that if the dispensation were to be introduced, it would be on the basis of increased workforce pressure due to increasing numbers of infection and the associated isolation requirements for those who have tested positive or have close contact with someone who has.
7. The Committee agreed to reintroduce the temporary guidance allowing remote prescribing and will review this again at its February 2022 meeting.

**Action: Head of Legal Services (Standards)**

### Table of actions

7	Draft and publish re-introduction of dispensation for remote prescribing to the profession.	Head of Legal Services (Standards)
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<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Council
Date	20 January 2022
Title	Veterinary Nurses Council Report to Council
Summary	To note the minutes of the meeting of Veterinary Nurses Council (VNC) held on 17 November 2021.
Decisions required	None
Attachments	Classified appendix ( <b>confidential</b> )
Author	Annette Amato Committee Secretary a.amato@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0713

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1,2,3,4</b>

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## Veterinary Nurses Council

### Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 17 November 2021

<b>Members:</b>	Mrs Belinda Andrews-Jones	-	Vice-Chair
	Miss Alison Carr		
	Dr Niall Connell	-	Officer Team observer (non-voting)
	Ms Elizabeth Cox		
	Miss Jane Davidson		
	^ Mr Dominic Dyer		
	* Ms Sarah Fox		
	Mrs Susan Howarth		
	* Mrs Katherine Kissick		
	* Mrs Donna Lewis		
	Dr Susan Paterson		
	Mr Matthew Rendle	-	Chair
	Dr Katherine Richards		
	Ms Stephanie Richardson		
	Mrs Claire Roberts		

\*Denotes absent

^Denotes remote participant

<b>In attendance:</b>	Mrs Annette Amato	-	Committee Secretary
	Mrs Jennifer Ayers	-	RCVS Academy Manager
<b>In person</b>	Mrs Julie Dugmore	-	Director of Veterinary Nursing
	Ms Eleanor Ferguson	-	Registrar
	Mrs Victoria Hedges	-	Examinations Manager
	Ms Lizzie Lockett	-	Chief Executive
	Mr Ben Myring	-	Policy and Public Affairs Manager
	Mrs Jenny Soreskog-Turp	-	Lead for Postgraduate Education
<b>Remote:</b>	Mr Luke Bishop	-	Media and Publications Manager
	<i>Caitlin Francis</i>	-	<i>VN online</i>
	<i>Rachael Buzzel</i>	-	<i>VN Times</i>

### Apologies for absence

1. Apologies for absence were received from Sarah Fox, Katherine Kissick and Donna Lewis.

### Declarations of interest

2. There were no new declarations of interest.

### Obituaries

3. No written obituaries had been received. Council observed a minute's silence for all members of the professions who had passed away since the last meeting.

### Minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2021

4. The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2021 were approved as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of Dr Susan Paterson in the list of attendees, and the correction of a typographical error in para 25 line 2 (correction of 20201 to 2021).

### Matters arising

5. There were no matters arising on the previous Minutes.

### CEO update

6. The CEO presented an oral update on a number of operational matters and recent activities.
7. A Workforce Summit was due to take place on 30 November, using independent facilitators, focusing on the veterinary and veterinary nursing professions, under the auspices of the ViVet project. This would include representatives from associations, employers, government and veterinary education and information from a series of online insight groups would also be fed in. A meeting about extra-mural studies (EMS) was being held the previous week and this would also feed into the Summit. It was hoped this would be followed by a cross-professions set of actions.
8. The work around the Legislation Working Party proposals approved by RCVS Council at its June meeting was continuing. Further information would be provided as part of the Policy and Public Affairs update later in the meeting.
9. The Chief Technical Officer would be leaving the College in January, and this may have an impact on some of the ongoing development projects. Jennifer Ayers RVN had joined the College as RCVS Academy Manager in July, to support veterinary nurses and veterinary surgeons to develop their professional skills.
10. The third survey of EU graduates working in the UK was coming to an end and the results would be published in early 2022.
11. An online Mind Matters symposium would take place the following week. The Mind Matters Kite app had been launched in September and was available in the app store.
12. The new People Plan for College staff had just been launched, with a focus on equality, diversity and inclusion. The Council Culture project had set up a series of working groups that would report to the March RCVS Council meeting. The Chair and Vice-Chair of VNC were included in the

discussions as members of RCVS Council. A draft of the report would be provided to VN Council in February.

13. The Chair thanked the CEO for arranging the Workforce Summit so quickly.

### **Veterinary Nurse Education Committee (VNEC)**

14. Susan Howarth, Chair of the VNEC, presented the minutes of the meeting of the VNEC held on 13 October, and drew attention to the following points:
15. The Director of Veterinary Nursing had reported progress on the review of Day One Competences, Day One Skills and Professional Behaviours, and intended that a final paper would be submitted to VN Council at its meeting in February 2022.
16. A new online system for student enrolments was due to be implemented in January 2022. Information sessions for centres had taken place, along with the development of a handbook to support the process. Student enrolments were being processed in a timely manner.
17. Registration applications from students who had completed their registrable qualification but had been unable to complete the 1,800 required clinical practice training hours due to the effect of the Covid pandemic, were being looked at on a case-by-case basis according to the agreed temporary guidance. In response to a query, the Director of Veterinary Nursing confirmed that to date a total of 38 such applications had been considered. Two applicants had been required to provide further evidence of competence before registration. It was also confirmed that all institutions were aware of the process.
18. The Committee had held an in-depth discussion on a paper setting out the issues faced by Accredited Education Institutions (AEIs) with small cohorts, in relation to determining the validity and reliability of examinations, and had considered whether minimum cohort numbers should be required. The Committee had considered the positive and negative aspects of low cohort sizes and agreed that small cohort numbers did not necessarily lead to lower quality. It had been agreed that there should be no requirement for a minimum cohort number. It was, however, important that AEIs should be able to demonstrate how they intended to meet the Standards at a very early stage, and additional guidance would be provided.
19. The Committee had agreed minor programme changes to two accredited qualifications and had approved an additional accreditation visitor for the panel for Higher Education accreditations.
20. The Committee had been provided with full reports on action plan monitoring and quality assurance activities for a number of Accredited Education Institutions.

### **Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

21. The Lead for Postgraduate Education presented the detailed report of the audit of RVN CPD for 2021, which had been the first audit of CPD since the change to an annual requirement of 15 hours. The response rate had been 91%, with an overall compliance rate of 92% which was considerably higher than in the previous audit (72% in 2019). The main reasons for non-

compliance had been family commitments, and, for the first time, parental leave had not been cited as the main reason for non-compliance. There continued to be uncertainty in the profession as to how the CPD target could be achieved and a series of workshops and webinar recordings were being carried out to provide guidance on what constitutes CPD, and use of the 1CPD app.

22. Council was impressed and pleased to see both the high level of compliance with the CPD requirements, and also the high proportion of RVNs (96%) using 1CPD to record their CPD. It was suggested that the use of 1CPD made both recording and compliance easier. It was agreed that the positive outcome of the audit and high compliance, together with the high use of 1CPD, should be published as a positive news story.
23. The Chair commented on the significant level of support and contact provided to those who were non-compliant.
24. There was some discussion regarding the slightly lower levels of compliance in the older age groups and speculation as to possible reasons, and a general discussion on what constitutes CPD. It was confirmed that CPD should be relevant to the nurse's job role and need not necessarily be clinical, although some employers may have their own requirements. It was hoped that the guidance provided through the webinars and workshops would help.

## Reports from RCVS Committees

### Registered Veterinary Nurse Preliminary Investigation Committee (RVN PIC)

25. Council noted the report of the work of the RVN PIC since September 2021.

### Standards Committee

25. Claire Roberts provided a brief update on unclassified items from the Standards Committee meeting held on 15 November. The Registrar confirmed that much of the recent work carried out by the Standards Committee has been developmental and would lead to provision of full reports in due course.

### RVN Disciplinary Committee

26. The report from the Disciplinary hearing in June 2021 was noted.

### Policy and Public Affairs update

27. The Policy and Public Affairs Manager provided a brief update.
28. Meetings had taken place to discuss the Legislation Working Party recommendations with the Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO), the devolved CVOs and the veterinary representatives in Parliament, who had been supportive and provided good advice. The next step would be to set up meetings with Council members and their MPs followed by meetings in parliament.



29. The Environment and Sustainability Working Party had now completed its work and this had been signed off by the Advancement of the Professions Committee. Internally, the environment and sustainability policy was being taken forward by the Green Team and the RCVS was also seeking accreditation under the Investors in the Environment (IiE) scheme. The Practice Standards team was looking at embedding environment and sustainability policies within the Practice Standards Scheme. RCVS Council had agreed an ethical investment policy, which included divestment from fossil fuels. It was commented by members that this decision had been very positively received within the professions.

### **Communications report**

30. The Media and Publications Manager provided an overview of recent VN-related activities in the Comms Department.
31. The Veterinary Nurse Day One Competences, Skills and Professional Behaviours consultation had been launched the previous week, and would be promoted using graphics, social media and articles.
32. The majority of the activities to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of the veterinary nursing profession had now taken place. Work was currently being carried out on the design and production of the e-book. The Chair added that he and the Director of Veterinary Nursing were working on plans for a live event in 2022 to mark the Diamond Jubilee.
33. The Comms team was working with the VN Futures Co-ordinator on the re-launch of the School Ambassadors programme, which had been paused during the Covid pandemic, including the development of new resources. The Chair added that some excellent animations had been developed for schools.
34. Members of the VN Team had been in attendance at the London Vet Show and the Emergency and Critical Care Congress to deal with VN-related queries. The student veterinary nurse wellbeing discussion forum had taken place on 3 November, and a report would be put together over the coming months.
35. The Veterinary Nurses Evening held remotely on 21 October had been well attended with over 100 live attendees and a further 76 watching the recording of the event online.
36. Upcoming events included the Mind Matters Research Symposium and the Workforce Summit. The President had been carrying out a number of media engagements on the subject of the workforce.

### **Any other business (unclassified)**

37. The Registrar reported that recruitment for one member each for the VN Preliminary Investigation and Disciplinary Committees was due to take place, using external consultants, and the College was keen to encourage RVNs to apply. Council was asked to consider how nurses could be encouraged to apply for these very important roles. The volume of cases considered is not high.

38. The Chair asked Council members to encourage as many people as possible to complete the Day One Competences, Skills and Professional Behaviours consultation survey. The Director of Communications reported that there had been a strong start, with 319 responses to date.

**Date of next meeting**

39. Wednesday 9 February 2022, due to be held at the RCVS.

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Council
Date	Thursday, 20 January 2022
Title	Minutes from Preliminary Investigation Committee and Disciplinary Committee Liaison Committee meeting of Thursday, 25 November 2021
Decisions required	None
Attachments	Classified appendix ( <b>confidential</b> )
Author	Hannah Alderton Secretary, PIC DC LC 020 7856 1033 <a href="mailto:h.alderton@rcvs.org.uk">h.alderton@rcvs.org.uk</a>

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>1, 3</b>

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## Minutes of the Preliminary Investigation Committee / Disciplinary Committee Liaison Committee meeting held on Thursday, 25 November 2021

<b>Members:</b>	Mr I Arundale	Chair, Disciplinary Committee (DC)
	Dr N T Connell	Member of Council / Treasurer
	Dr M A Donald	Member of Council / Chair, Standards Committee (SC)
	Mrs S K Edwards	Chair, RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee (RVN PIC)
	Dr K A Richards	Member of Council / President (Chair)
	Dr N C Smith*	Member of Council
	Dr B P Viner	Chair, Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) (Vice-Chair)
	Dr C M Whiting	Member of Council
	Ms J S M Worthington	Member of Council

<b>In attendance:</b>	Miss H Alderton	Secretary
	Ms G Crossley	Head of Professional Conduct
	Ms E C Ferguson	Registrar / Director of Legal Services
	Ms L Lockett	CEO

\*Denotes absent

### Apologies for absence

1. Apologies for absence were received from Dr Smith.

### Declarations of interest

2. It was stated that there were no new declarations of interest.

### Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 23 September 2021

3. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

### Updates – general

4. The Registrar updated the Committee that nothing further had occurred regarding Mr Dobson. There had been no further contact from Mr Dobson or the Privy Council.
5. This information can be found at paragraph 1 of the confidential appendix.

6. It was confirmed that the Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) and the DC audits had started and would be reported to the Committee in the new year.
7. The Legislation Working Party documentation changes had recently been approved by Council and the Committee was informed of the next steps. External solicitors were checking the approved documents to ensure that they were all in order. Recruitment of members for the new PIC and the 'Charter Case Committee' would begin and be carried out through an external consultant. Discussions had taken place about producing a more detailed explanation of the expectations for the new PIC members, which would be in place for the recruitment process. Changes to the website to communicate the new processes were being looked at and it had been identified that there would need to be minor changes to the ProfCon system, which work had already been completed.
8. There were no questions with regards to the update and the Registrar was thanked.

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

9. The Head of Professional Conduct outlined that the Stage 1 KPIs were marginally better than the previous meeting, but that there were two new case managers starting imminently and a further three starting in the new year. The new DC Solicitor had started and was settling in well. Unconscious bias training had taken place for the PIC and more training was due to take place in February 2022.
10. The Committee agreed that it was positive to have so many people joining and that the KPIs were heading in the right direction.
11. It was asked whether there was an expectation in March 2022, as the College was moving out of Belgravia House, for the Professional Conduct Department to go entirely virtual. It was explained that staff members would be based at their homes, as the majority already were, but there would be rented office space for the department to meet and work on a regular basis.
12. The Committee wished to communicate their thanks and support to the department for their hard work.

### Disciplinary Committee Report

13. There had been no DC hearings since the previous meeting.
14. The fact that Ian Arundale (DC Chair) and Martin Whiting (DC Vice-Chair) would be coming off the Committee in June 2022 was brought to the Committee's attention and recruitment of the positions would begin next year.

## Veterinary Client Mediation Service (VCMS) feedback

15. The papers reflected business as usual since the previous report, the numbers shown were consistent with what had been previously reported. It was highlighted that the number of inquiries remained high and was not dropping down to the pre-Covid level. This mirrored the number coming through to the RCVS.
16. The paper mentioned that the majority of complainants were seeking financial resolution and it was asked whether that was correct as that was not the experience of the Committee member. It was explained that many people began in that frame of mind and that the VCMS then discussed realistic expectations with them.
17. The report was commented to be much easier to read and the graphs were much clearer and more concise.

## Feedback to Standards Committee v.v. Liaison Committee Annual DC Statistic Report

18. It was confirmed that there was nothing to feedback.

## Risk Register, equality, and diversity

19. Communication regarding Mr Elefterescu was asked to be added.

## Any other business

20. It was asked how the RCVS dealt with the potential mental health side effects, specifically the risk of suicide, in relation to long-running complaints. It was acknowledged that the complaint process had a big impact on those involved.
21. It was explained that personal health information of individuals was confidential and could not be shared with the Committee, and that suicide was often multifaceted, so speculation on cause was not helpful. In extremis, If the Veterinary Defence Society notified the College of specific mental health issues, with the agreement of the individual, the process might be expedited; individuals were signposted to Vetlife, and the ProfCon Investigation Support service, run via VetSupport. Also the wording of the letters sent from the ProfCon department had been reviewed to be more compassionate
22. It was highlighted that the College was very aware of the impact that the complaint process potentially had on members of the profession and did everything that it could to put helpful measures in place. An audit had taken place on the mental health of vets going through the process and changes had been made because of that, including the abovementioned setting up of the new support service and the review of letters.

## Date of next meeting

23. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday, 17 February 2022 at 10:00 am. It was confirmed that the meeting would be virtual.



<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Council
Date	20 January 2022
Title	Preliminary Investigation Committee Report to Council
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 RCVS.
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Authors	<p>Chris Murdoch Senior Case Manager <a href="mailto:c.murdoch@rcvs.org.uk">c.murdoch@rcvs.org.uk</a></p> <p>Gemma Crossley Head of Professional Conduct <a href="mailto:g.crossley@rcvs.org.uk">g.crossley@rcvs.org.uk</a></p>

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

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## Preliminary Investigation Committee

### Report to Council 20 January 2022

#### Introduction

1. This report provides information about the activities of the Preliminary Investigation Committee from November 2021 to January 2022 (10 January 2022 being the date of writing the report).
2. Since the last Report to Council (which gave information to 1 November 2021), there have been four Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) meetings: 10 November, 1 December, 15 December and 5 January.

#### New cases considered by the PIC

3. The total number of new cases considered by the Committee at the four meetings referred to above is 16. Of the 16 new cases considered:
  - 8 were concluded at first consideration by the Committee. Of these:
    - 5 cases were closed with no further action, and
    - 3 cases were referred to DC.
  - 8 were referred for further investigation, that is, further enquiries, visits and/or preliminary expert reports.
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 38 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 two 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 November 2021 to 10 January 2022,

- the number of matters registered as Enquiries was 566, and
- the number of formal Concerns registered in the same period was 91.

10. The table below shows the categories of matters registered as Concerns between 1 November 2021 and 10 January 2022.

**Concerns registered between 1 November 2021 and 10 January 2022**

<b>Description of Category</b>	<b>Number of Cases</b>
- Advertising and publicity	0
- Certification	0
- Client confidentiality	0
- Clinical and client records	0
- Clinical governance	1
- Communication and consent	4
- Communication between professional colleagues	0
- Conviction/notifiable occupation notification	0
- CPD compliance	8
- Delegation to veterinary nurses	0
- Equine pre-purchase examinations	1
- Euthanasia of animals	0
- Giving evidence for court	0
- Health case ( <i>potential</i> )	0
- Microchipping	0
- Miscellaneous	4
- Practice information, fees & animal insurance	0
- Referrals and second opinions	0
- Registration investigation	0
- Restoration application	0
- Social media and networking forums	0
- Treatment of animals by unqualified persons	0
- Use of samples, images, post-mortems and disposal	0
- Veterinary care	70
- Veterinary medicines	1
- Veterinary teams and leaders	0
- Whistle-blowing	0
- 24-hour emergency first aid and pain relief	2
- Unassigned	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>

*Data source – Profcon computer system concerns data.*

### Referral to Disciplinary Committee

11. In the period 1 November 2021 to 10 January 2022, the Committee has referred 4 cases involving 4 veterinary surgeons to the Disciplinary Committee.

### Veterinary Investigators

12. The Chief Investigator has undertaken one visit since the last report. This was to serve disciplinary papers on a veterinary surgeon who had failed to respond to written correspondence sent in the post.

### Concerns procedure

13. At Stage 1 of the process, the aim is for the Case Examiner Group to decide 90% of cases within four months of registration of complaint (the Stage 1 KPI). In the two months since the last Report to Council the KPI has been met in 76% and 66% of cases respectively. As explained in the last report, we are currently implementing a number of measures to improve these, but they have yet to fully take effect, while the number of cases remains high. As reported previously, several Case Managers left over a period of months, meaning that cases had to be reallocated between a smaller team, and resulting in extra pressure on those who remain. We have recruited more Case Managers, with two starting at the end of November and a further three starting at the beginning of January. We anticipate that this increase in staff numbers will help significantly, however, the new members of staff are understandably still learning the ropes and so it is very early days for them and for their impact to be felt. Two members of the administrative team left at the end of last year and have been replaced and while they are settling in well, this has again led to some unavoidable disruption. In addition to this, both Christmas and Covid have meant that we have had staff absences that have created additional pressures within the team. As always, we are working very hard within the department to assist new and existing staff members by means of training, supporting and helping out wherever and however possible.
14. The Stage 2 KPI is now for the PIC to reach a decision on simple cases before it within seven 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 November 2021 to 10 January 2022, the PIC reached a decision (to close, hold open or refer to DC) within the relevant KPI in 3 out of 7 simple cases.
16. 9 complex cases were decided, of which 6 met the 12-month KPI. As the number of cases involved during this time period is small, percentages are less meaningful than sometimes. In accordance with normal practice, these cases (and KPI's in general) will be reported and discussed in detail at the PIC/DC Liaison Committee meeting.

### Operational matters

17. As explained above, we have been very busy with welcoming new staff members and supporting existing ones with their workloads to try to ensure that cases are dealt with thoroughly and expeditiously. While the figures are not where we would wish them to be, we are optimistic that the new staff members will help us to improve these in the months to come.

18. While PIC met in person in November, the Government guidance that everyone should work from home where possible meant that the plan to return to in-person meetings once a month has been temporarily shelved. This will be reviewed in light of changing guidance, however, the Committee continues to work effectively on remote platforms. Training is in the process of being arranged in February for all PIC and staff members.

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Council
Date	20 January 2022
Title	RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee Report to Council
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 <a href="mailto:s.neary@rcvs.org.uk">s.neary@rcvs.org.uk</a> / 020 7202 0730</p> <p>Gemma Crossley Head of Professional Conduct <a href="mailto:g.crossley@rcvs.org.uk">g.crossley@rcvs.org.uk</a> / 020 7202 0740</p>

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

**<sup>1</sup>Classifications explained**

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

**<sup>2</sup>Classification rationales**

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



# Registered Veterinary Nurses Preliminary Investigation Committee

## Report to Council

### Introduction

1. Since the last Report to Council, there has been one meeting of the RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee, which took place on 14 December 2021. The next scheduled meeting is on 11 January 2022.

### RVN Concerns received / registered

2. In the period 3 November 2021 to 10 January, there were four new Concerns relating to RVNs. Of these four new Concerns:
  - All are currently under investigation by the Case Examiner Group (a veterinary nurse and lay member on RVN PIC and a Case Manager).

### RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee

3. There has been one new case considered by the RVN PIC between 3 November 2021 and 10 January 2022. This case was closed with no further action.

### Ongoing Investigations

4. Two concerns are currently under investigation and will be returned to the RVN PIC for a decision in due course.

### Health Concerns

5. One RVN is currently being managed in the context of the RCVS Health Protocol.

### Performance Concerns

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

### Referral to Disciplinary Committee

7. Since the last report, no cases have been referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee.

### Operational matters

8. The RVN PIC continue to meet remotely in accordance with the government guidance. A training day for the RVN and Vet PIC members has been provisionally arranged to take place on 15 February 2022.

<b>Summary</b>	
Meeting	Council
Date	20 January 2022
Title	Disciplinary Committee Report
Summary	Update of Disciplinary Committee since the last Council meeting held on 11 November 2021
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Author	Gary Hall Clerk to the Disciplinary Committee Tel: 020 7202 0729 Email: g.hall@rcvs.org.uk

<b>Classifications</b>		
<b>Document</b>	<b>Classification<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rationales<sup>2</sup></b>
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

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## Report of Disciplinary Committee hearings since the last Council meeting on 11 November 2021

### Background

1. Since the last update to Council, the Disciplinary Committee ('the Committee') have met on one occasion. The RVN Committee have met once.

### Hearings

#### Gary Samuel

2. The Disciplinary Committee met for a restoration hearing of Gary Samuel on 16-17 December 2021.
3. In July 2018 Mr Samuel was removed from the Register following convictions for causing unnecessary suffering to protected animals and failing to ensure the animals had a suitable environment in which to live. He was sentenced to 12 weeks imprisonment and suspended for 12 months on condition that he completed 150 hours of unpaid work and paid a fine of £100. He was also ordered to pay costs of £500 and a victim surcharge of £80. He was subject to a disqualification order in relation to keeping animals. The length of that order was adjusted on appeal, from an indefinite order to an order for three years, which took effect on 4 April 2018.
4. Mr Samuel provided both oral and written submissions for the Committee as well as a bundle which also contained a petition signed by approximately 100 people comprising former clients and friends in support of his application.
5. The original Disciplinary Committee found that all the matters alleged proved and determined that the convictions rendered Dr Samuel unfit to practise veterinary surgery. It was directed that his name should be removed from the Register. In its decision on sanction, that Committee noted the following aggravating factors:
  - actual injury to an animal
  - risk of injury to an animal
  - misconduct repeated over a period of time
  - no insight
  - the animal cruelty took place within Dr Samuel's veterinary practice and home
6. The original Disciplinary Committee noted the following mitigating factors:
  - Dr Samuel had no previous disciplinary findings against him
  - He had been a registered vet since July 1999
7. The Committee was satisfied that the behaviour found proved in this case was serious. The Committee was not satisfied on the evidence before it that Dr Samuel had insight into the serious nature of what he had done, particularly where he continued to deny responsibility in his recent email to the College and felt that he posed a risk to animals in the future. Although the Committee accepted that the offending arose out of a domestic arrangement, they were concerned that Dr

Samuel maintained that he lacked any responsibility for the offending and that he had allowed animals to suffer when they lived under the roof of his veterinary practice and home.

8. The original Disciplinary Committee noted that the concept of fitness to practise involves three elements: the protection of animals, maintenance of public confidence in the profession and the declaration of standards of conduct for the membership of the profession. Furthermore, they were not satisfied that a suspension order would maintain public confidence in the profession or uphold proper standards of conduct for the profession. The Committee therefore decided that the behaviour found proved was fundamentally incompatible with being a Veterinary Surgeon because in this case there had been a serious departure from standards as set out in the RCVS Code of Conduct. There had been serious harm caused to a number of animals and a risk of serious harm to more. Whilst the Committee accepted that the situation arose due to a domestic arrangement it was not persuaded that this was a sufficient mitigating factor to allow Dr Samuel to remain on the register. His omission to act at that time was fundamentally incompatible with a core tenet of the veterinary profession, to protect the health and welfare of animals.
9. Dr Samuel has fully accepted the original DC's decision. He did not in any way seek to challenge or go behind the findings of the DC of 11 July 2018. His answers in evidence were consistent in that he accepted the findings. They found his vocabulary may not be as sophisticated as one might expect, but the key expression was acceptance of selfishness. He spoke of making an error, but was not seeking to downplay his conduct.
10. Dr Samuel accepted the seriousness of the findings that the harm inflicted on the animals in 2015 was not deliberate, but it was inflicted through the wholesale lack of care within his premises.
11. The Committee considered the factors set out in the Disciplinary Committee's Procedure Guidance in exercising its judgement and in deciding if Dr Samuel was fit to be restored to the Register, namely:
  - a. Acceptance by the Applicant veterinary surgeon of the findings of the Committee at the original inquiry hearing;
  - b. The seriousness of those findings;
  - c. The protection of the public;
  - d. The future of the welfare of animals in the event of the Applicant veterinary surgeon being permitted to have his or her name restored to the Register;
  - e. The length of time off the Register;
  - f. The Applicant veterinary surgeons's conduct since removal from the Register;
  - g. Efforts by the Applicant veterinary surgeon to keep up to date in terms of Knowledge, skills and developments in practice, since removal from the Register (accepting that he or she must not practise as a veterinary surgeon);
  - h. The impact on the Applicant veterinary surgeon of having his or her name removed from the Register; and
  - i. The public support for the applicant veterinary surgeon.
12. In addition, the Committee considered there would be a real and continuing risk to the reputation of the profession and to the public confidence in the profession if Dr Samuel were restored to the

Register. They felt that conduct of this kind was of particularly egregious nature for a member of this profession. Regardless of the approach taken by the criminal courts by way of punishment, the statutory Regulator continues to be responsible for public confidence in the profession and are confident, when bringing their animals to veterinary practices for treatment and care, that they will be treated and looked after properly. The Committee was firmly of the view that if a veterinary surgeon who has committed such serious offences with regards to multiple animals, was liable to be seriously undermined. They felt that Dr Samuel's omission to act at that time was fundamentally incompatible with core tenet of the veterinary profession to protect the health and welfare of animals.

13. For a veterinary surgeon, conduct involving neglect of animals is at the highest end of the spectrum of serious professional misconduct. The Committee considered Dr Samuel continued to represent a risk to animal welfare and thus allowing him to be restored to the Register would seriously undermine public confidence in the profession. For all these reasons the application to restore Dr Samuel to the Register is refused.
14. The complete decision can be found here: [Samuel, Gary James Cassius, Decision of the Disciplinary Committee - Professionals \(rcvs.org.uk\)](#)

#### Upcoming DC's

15. There are three inquiries which have been listed for the Disciplinary Committee;
  - 10 - 28 January 2022
  - 31 January – 8 February 2022
  - 24 March – 1 April 2022