

University of London, Royal Veterinary College
Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing
Accreditation

July 2022

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

Contents

List of Panel Members.....	1
Summary of the Panel's findings.....	2
Standard 1 – Curricula and assessment	4
Standard 2 – Educators and assessors	9
Standard 3 – Sustainability.....	11

List of Panel Members

Emma Anscombe-Skirrow RVN, Educator Representative

Shirley Gibbins RVN, RCVS Qualifications Manager (Chair)

Key Staff met

Adrian Boswood MRCVS – Vice Principal Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Veronica Brewster – Educational Development Manager

Hayley Carne RVN – CertAVN Lecturer

Dan Chan MRCVS – Head of Faculty/Department

Sarah Channon – Chair of Teaching Quality Committee

Niamh Clancy RVN – Deputy Course Director

Sarah Foster – Head of Marketing and Communications

Barbara Glanemann MRCVS – Module Lead

Cheryl Jackson – Academic Quality Manager

Imelda McGonnell – Vice Principal Students

Evelyn O'Byrne RVN – Deputy Course Director

Amanda Rosier – Study Skills Tutor

Steven van Winden MRCVS – Associate Dean Undergraduate Teaching and Learning

Perdi Welsh RVN – Programme Lead

Summary of the Visitors' findings

- The Royal Veterinary College (RVC) submitted an application for accreditation of an additional Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (CertAVN) designation, at both graduate and post-graduate levels. The CertAVNs are validated by the University of London, and taught and awarded by the RVC.
- A virtual accreditation event was held online on 12 July 2022 to review the following programmes:

Graduate Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing – Medical Nursing

Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing – Medical Nursing

- The Panel received a warm welcome from the staff and are grateful to all those who were responsible for preparing the event, arranging the schedule and providing supplementary information when requested. RVC was very accommodating with required agenda changes and ensured the relevant personnel were available at the required times.

The team found the following:

- RVC is to be **commended** for developing a unique focus of study for a CertAVN designation, utilising an innovative assessment methodology which could encourage publication opportunities for students, which in turn may reflect the advancement of the veterinary nursing profession.
- RVC is to be **commended** for its utilisation of subject matter experts and allowing students the opportunity to work alongside these experts in an on-campus clinical facility.
- RVC is to be **commended** for the exceptional feedback provided by students on the existing pathways, demonstrating outstanding student satisfaction.
- RVC is to be **commended** for the standard of its online learning platform, which is of particular value to this blended type of provision.
- Areas for further review included ensuring RCVS Registered professionals comply with all CPD requirements.

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

Awarding University or Organisation and details of the proposed qualification.

Requirements	Details
Name and address of organisation awarding the Certificate	<p>University of London Senate House Malet Street London WC1E 7HU</p> <p>Royal Veterinary College Hawkshead Lane North Mymms Hatfield Hertfordshire AL9 7TA</p>
Name of Principal or Chief Executive Officer	Professor Wendy Thomson CBE / Professor Stuart W J Reid
Name of Programme Lead	Perdi Welsh RVN
Proposed programme(s) title:	<p>Graduate Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing – Medical Nursing</p> <p>Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing – Medical Nursing</p>
Address and contact details of proposed site/s for delivery of Certificate	<p>Hawkshead Lane North Mymms Hatfield Hertfordshire AL9 7TA</p>
Pattern of delivery	Part-time blended learning (predominantly online delivery with compulsory and optional attendance). One academic year part-time (after successful completion of Bridging module)
Intakes and student numbers	One intake per year, maximum 40 CertAVN students inclusive of all designation pathways.

Standard 1 – Curricula and assessment

Curricula and assessments are designed, developed, delivered and evaluated to ensure candidates achieve the RCVS Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing.

Standard met		
Accredited Education Institutions must ensure:		
Requirements	Met	Not Met
<p>Curricula to remain relevant in respect of contemporary veterinary nursing.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i></p> <p><i>2019 IES/RCVS Survey of the Veterinary Nursing Profession</i></p> <p><i>RCVS Framework for Post Registration Qualifications for Veterinary Nurses</i></p> <p><i>RVC Market Research for Grad Cert and PG Cert AVN</i></p> <p><i>RVC Student Satisfaction Survey Results- Grad Dip VN Medical Nursing 2013-2017 and Cert AVN Termly Surveys</i></p> <p><i>RVN Grad Dip VN Retention Rates 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21</i></p> <p><i>Programme Specification- Grad Cert AVN & PG Cert AVN 2023 intake</i></p> <p><i>Medical Nursing Pathway Overview</i></p> <p><i>Mapping of Module and Programme Learning Outcomes as an example of what it will look like for the Medical Nursing designation pathway</i></p> <p><i>Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies (FHEQ)</i></p> <p><i>Learn link to FAVNP for example of curricula and content</i></p> <p><i>Learn link to ECC Unit 1 for example of curricula and content</i></p> <p><i>Feedback and actions from the RCVS Accreditation visit in September 2020</i></p> <p><i>Excerpt of Course Management Committee minutes regarding the introduction of the Medical Nursing designation pathway</i></p> <p>The curricula proposed for the programme are relevant in respect of contemporary veterinary nursing, and the focus of the course is appropriate.</p>	✓	
<p>Curricula and assessment weigh theory and practice learning appropriately to the programme.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i></p> <p><i>Programme Specification- Grad Cert AVN & PG Cert AVN 2023 intake</i></p> <p><i>Medical Nursing Pathway Overview</i></p> <p><i>Higher Education Credit Framework for England: Advice on Academic Credit</i></p> <p><i>Cert AVN Central Handbook</i></p> <p><i>Assessment overview- integrative assessment</i></p> <p><i>Cert AVN Central Assessment handbook</i></p> <p><i>Assessment and Award Regulations Part 3: Module Assessment Weightings (breakdown of the module assessments and how they are weighted) for 2023 intake</i></p>	✓	

<p>The learning objectives are generally appropriate to the level and content, although a handful would benefit from reconsideration with a focus on the stretch and challenge to ensure the course goes above and beyond the licence to practise requirements. It is also suggested that the terminology utilised within the course documentation is reviewed to avoid confusion regarding learning objectives versus learning outcomes.</p> <p>Student feedback from other Cert AVN qualifications for the shared modules suggests that overall students are satisfied with the structure of curricula and assessments.</p>		
<p>A range of appropriate assessments are delivered, ensuring the intended learning outcomes are fully and suitably assessed.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i></p> <p><i>Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies (FHEQ)</i></p> <p><i>Feedback and actions from the RCVS Accreditation visit in September 2020</i></p> <p><i>Cert AVN Central Assessment handbook</i></p> <p><i>Overview of assessment activities</i></p> <p><i>Timeline of assessment activities</i></p> <p><i>Cert AVN Central Assessment Handbook, page to show Level 6 Written Assignment Criteria</i></p> <p><i>Cert AVN Central Assessment Handbook to show Level 7 Written Assignment Criteria</i></p> <p><i>Cert AVN Central Assessment Handbook to show how assessment activities align to QAA and RCVS level 6 and level 7 learning outcomes</i></p> <p><i>Examples of formative assessment activities for Unit 1 ECC</i></p> <p><i>Marking schemes</i></p> <p><i>RCVS Quality Improvement activities such as Clinical Audit and Knowledge Summaries</i></p> <p><i>RCVS Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Nurses</i></p> <p><i>Examples of student summative submissions- level 6 Framework and Level 7 Unit 1 and 2</i></p> <p><i>Assessment and Award Regulations for 2023 intake</i></p> <p>The existing CertAVN designations are utilising an appropriate and innovative assessment approach, which will be of value to the students in the future; this approach will also be used for the Medical Nursing pathway.</p> <p>The RVC Panel clarified that the supervisor assessment must be completed, but is not graded, and following discussion of the role of the supervisor, there is no pre-requisite level or qualification required for the supervisor, however, they must be involved in the audit meeting led by the student. This approach should allow for further development of both confidence and competence by the student, without increasing the assessment burden.</p>	✓	

<p>Curricula are developed and evaluated by suitably experienced and qualified educators and/or practitioners who are accountable for ensuring the curriculum incorporates relevant programme outcomes.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> Academic Committee Handbook Guidelines for Periodic Review</p> <p>Staff lists and CVs demonstrate the highly suitable educators involved in the development of the course. External Advisors are regularly utilised and contribute to periodic course reviews. External Examiner (EE) comments are not yet available as the course has not yet recruited and the existing programmes have not completed their first year.</p> <p>The online learning platform (Learn) shows excellent use of a variety of online tools, which are to be highly commended. The methods of engaging learners in the curricula, and the excellent signposting of the unit objectives ensure the curriculum incorporates the programme outcomes.</p>	✓	
<p>Curricula are structured and sequenced to enable students to manage their theory and practice learning experience effectively.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Learn link to FAVNP for example of curricula and content</i> <i>Pre-requisite Bridging Module- Contemporary Study Skills</i> <i>CertAVN AdVaNce</i> <i>Course Timetable</i> <i>Study Skills</i></p> <p>The bridging and core modules ensure that students are given a relevant introduction to the programme. These modules are shared with the already accredited programmes and ensure consistency between each of them. Feedback from students for these two modules is excellent, for which the programme team are to be commended.</p>	✓	
<p>Moderation processes are in place.</p> <p>RVC already delivers two accredited CertAVN designations. VNEC invited the further development of this particular designation, having already confirmed compliance with this requirement.</p>	✓	
<p>Assessment and moderation is fair, reliable and valid.</p> <p>RVC already delivers two accredited CertAVN designations. VNEC invited the further development of this particular designation, having already confirmed compliance with this requirement.</p>	✓	

<p>Adjustments are provided in accordance with relevant equalities and human rights legislation for all assessments.</p> <p>RVC already delivers two accredited CertAVN designations. VNEC invited the further development of this particular designation, having already confirmed compliance with this requirement.</p>	✓	
<p>The required facilities and resources are in place for the delivery and assessment of the curricula.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Learn link to FAVNP for example of curricula and content</i> <i>Learn link to ECC Unit 1 for example of curricula and content</i> <i>Study Skills</i> <i>Student support areas- Student Hub: Resources and Support e.g. Advice Centre, Study Skills, Library, Careers</i> <i>Staff List</i> <i>Job description and person spec for year long job secondment for medical nursing July 2023</i></p> <p>The option of spending time with different departments at the hospital is an excellent opportunity for students. This sets the RVC courses apart from others and should allow for a valuable learning experience for those completing the programme.</p>	✓	
<p>Curricula and assessments are reviewed by an External Examiner who has sufficient standing, credibility and a breadth of experience within the discipline.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Grad Cert and PG Cert AVN External Examiners CVs</i> <i>Grad Cert and PG Cert AVN External Examiner appointment forms with criteria for appointment</i> <i>Grad Cert and PG Cert AVN External Examiner appointment letters</i></p> <p>At least one EE is appointed for all programmes delivered at the RVC, with two EEs appointed for the veterinary nursing programmes. At present, one of the EEs is not an expert in the veterinary industry, however, their breadth of knowledge and experience in a related health field provides valuable feedback and programme development opportunities, which allows this requirement to be met. Nevertheless, this approach is not fully reflected within the RVC External Examiner policy, which states that the EE should 'normally' be competent in the field covered by the course. It is suggested that RVC updates the relevant policy to ensure there is clarity on the procedure to be followed.</p>	✓	

Conclusion:

The evidence provided demonstrates that the proposed programme has been designed and developed by suitably qualified members of the profession and will be delivered and evaluated appropriately. The proposed curriculum is focused on topics that are relevant to veterinary nurses who wish to focus on medical nursing. The assessment approach is innovative and relevant to the profession and will give students opportunities for publication. The modules shared with other already accredited programmes will ensure consistency between programmes and will ensure students are provided with the suitable tools to be successful.

This Standard has been fully met with no actions to be addressed.

Suggestions:

- a. Consider amendments to the learning objectives, demonstrating the stretch and challenge above and beyond the Licence to Practise requirements, ensuring terminology is consistent across documentation.
- b. Review EE policy to demonstrate that one EE should be a subject matter expert.

Actions:

None

Standard 2 – Educators and assessors

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

Standard met		
Accredited Education Institutions must ensure educators and assessors:		
Requirements	Met	Not Met
<p>Are appropriately qualified and experienced and always act as professional role models.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>Job description and person spec for yearlong job secondment for medical nursing July 2023</i> <i>Curricula Vitae for Educators and Assessors</i> <i>CPD Records for Educators and Assessors</i> <i>List of Educators and Assessors - Staff List</i> <i>Procedure, Criteria and Nomination Form for appointing Curriculum Managers</i></p> <p>The personnel allocated to the development, delivery and assessment are clearly well qualified and experienced, however, the CPD records provided did not include reflective commentary. Reflection upon professional development is now a mandatory requirement of all RCVS Registered professionals. This must be addressed in order to demonstrate compliance.</p>		✓
<p>Receive relevant induction, ongoing support, education and training.</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>CertAVN Staff Central</i> <i>Staff Hub: Resources and Support</i> <i>RVC PGCertVetEd</i> <i>RVC INSET days</i> <i>RVC Staff Training and Development - Policy and Procedures</i> <i>Teaching Fellow Matrix</i> <i>Teaching Fellow Probation form</i> <i>Teaching Fellow Discretionary Objectives form</i> <i>Senior Teaching Fellow form</i> <i>Principal Teaching Fellow form</i> <i>CertAVN team professional development requirements</i> <i>Academic Career Profile Framework</i> <i>Senior Academic Promotion</i> <i>Exemplar of RVC Training email to all personnel</i></p>	✓	

<p>The development and support of RVC personnel was clearly demonstrated within the documentation submitted. Additionally, the RVC Panel confirmed that the secondment position would be fully supported and the individual upskilled to further develop their teaching capabilities.</p>		
<p>Have supported time and resources to enable them to fulfil their roles in addition to other professional responsibilities.</p> <p>RVC already delivers two accredited CertAVN designations. VNEC invited the further development of this particular designation, having already confirmed compliance with this requirement.</p>	✓	
<p>Receive and act up on constructive feedback from students and the people they engage with to enhance the effectiveness of their teaching, supervision and assessment.</p> <p>RVC already delivers two accredited CertAVN designations. VNEC invited the further development of this particular designation, having already confirmed compliance with this requirement.</p>	✓	
<p>Appropriately share and use evidence to make decisions on student assessment and progression.</p> <p>RVC already delivers two accredited CertAVN designations. VNEC invited the further development of this particular designation, having already confirmed compliance with this requirement.</p>	✓	
<p>Conclusion:</p> <p>The majority of this Standard was met prior to the accreditation event, based upon VNEC's previous review of compliance for CertAVN programmes at the RVC. Whilst there is one action to be addressed, this is the only area of non-compliance identified by the RCVS Panel and should be easily addressed by RVC personnel.</p> <p>It was very apparent that the personnel involved in the development, delivery and assessment of the CertAVN programmes are suitably qualified and experienced who can share their expertise with future students.</p> <p>This Standard is met.</p>		
<p>Suggestions: None</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>a. Provide updated CPD records to include reflective comments.</p>		

Standard 3 – Sustainability

Provide strong evidence of an adequate and sustainable market for the proposed qualification backed up by sound research based evidence.

Standard met		
Accredited Education Institutions must:		
Requirements	Met	Not Met
<p>Provide evidence that there is adequate market demand for the proposed qualification(s).</p> <p><i>Evidence reviewed:</i> <i>VN futures, interim report 2021</i> <i>Vet Futures – taking charge of our future” A vision for the veterinary profession</i> <i>2014 RCVS Survey of the Veterinary Nurse Profession</i> <i>2010 RCVS Survey of the Veterinary Nurse Profession</i> <i>2019 IES/RCVS Survey of the Veterinary Nursing Profession</i> <i>Graduate Diploma in Professional and Clinical Veterinary Nursing Awards 2009/10</i> <i>2020/21 RCVS Framework for Post Registration Qualifications for Veterinary Nurses</i> <i>RVC Snap Survey 2021</i></p> <p>The evidence clearly detailed the industry desire for the proposed focused area of study. Additionally, the RVC panel confirmed that any additional resourcing would be carefully considered, should the programmes recruit more than the target numbers.</p>	✓	
<p>Clearly report finances and budget specific to the qualification leading to award of the RCVS Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing.</p> <p>RVC already delivers two accredited CertAVN designations. VNEC invited the further development of this particular designation, having already confirmed compliance with this requirement.</p>	✓	
<p>Proactively identify and act on areas for improvement, regularly measuring programme performance and outcomes.</p> <p>RVC already delivers two accredited CertAVN designations. VNEC invited the further development of this particular designation, having already confirmed compliance with this requirement.</p>	✓	

Conclusion:

This Standard is fully met with no actions or suggestions; the primary consideration for this specific application was with regard to the market demand for the medical nursing focused area of study which was well demonstrated.

Suggestions:

None

Actions:

None