

Veterinary Nurses Council

Wednesday 10 February 2021 at 10.30am to be held remotely by Microsoft Teams

Agenda	Classification ¹	Rationale ²
1. Apologies for absence	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
2. Declarations of interest	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
3. Obituaries	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
4. Minutes of meeting held on 9 September 2020		
i. Unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
ii. Classified appendix	Confidential	1,2,3,4
5. Matters arising	Oral report	n/a
6. CEO update	Unclassified	n/a
Matters for decision by VN Council and reports from Committees (unclassified items)		
7. VN Education Committee		
07.01 Minutes of meeting held on 13 October 2020		
i. Unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
ii. Classified appendix	Confidential	2,3
07.02 Minutes of meeting held on 13 January 2021		
i. Unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
ii. Classified appendix	Confidential	2,3
8. Continuing Professional Development (CPD)		
Update from the CPD Compliance Panel	Unclassified	n/a

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| 9. | Reports from RCVS Committees | | |
| | 09.01 VN Preliminary Investigation Committee | Unclassified | n/a |
| | 09.02 RVN Disciplinary Committee | Unclassified | n/a |
| | 09.03 Standards Committee | Oral report | n/a |
| | 09.04 Practice Standards | Oral report | n/a |
| 10. | Policy and Public Affairs update | Oral report | n/a |
| 11. | VN Register report
Registrations, removals and student enrolments | Unclassified | n/a |
| 12. | Communications report | Oral report | n/a |
| 13. | Any other business | | |
| 14. | Date of next meeting
Wednesday 12 May 2021 at 10.30am | | |

Confidential and private items (closed session)

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| 15. | VN Education Committee confidential items | | |
| | 15.01 Confidential items from meeting of 13 October 2020
(see item 07.01 classified appendix) | Confidential | 2,3 |
| | 15.02 Confidential items from meeting of 13 January 2021
(see item 07.02 classified appendix) | Confidential | 2,3 |
| | 15.03 Covid19 programme changes update | Confidential | 1,4 |
| | 15.04 TP placement availability review | Confidential | 1,4 |
| 16. | Veterinary Nurse Patient Based Assessment (VN-PBA) | Confidential | 1,2,3,5 |

17.	Continuing Professional Development Responsibilities of the CPD Committees	Confidential	1
18.	Standards Review	Confidential	1,4
19.	How the findings of the RCVS Survey of the Veterinary Nursing Profession inform VN Council and its initiatives	Confidential	1
20.	Risk Register	Confidential	4
21.	RCVS Honours and Awards	Confidential Private	1,5
22.	VN Council election 2021	Oral report	
23.	Items for RCVS Committees	Oral report	

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Secretary, VN Council
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¹Classifications 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.

²Classification rationales

Confidential	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation3. To protect commercially sensitive information4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none">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

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	10 February 2021
Title	Minutes of meeting of VN Council held on 9 September 2020
Summary	Minutes of the meeting of Veterinary Nurses Council (VNC) held on 9 September 2020
Decisions required	None
Attachments	Classified appendix
Author	Annette Amato Committee Secretary a.amato@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0713

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	Confidential	1,2,3,4

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Veterinary Nurses Council

Minutes of the meeting held remotely via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday 9 September 2020

Members:	Mrs Belinda Andrews-Jones	-	Vice-Chair
	Miss Alison Carr		
	Ms Elizabeth Cox		
	* Miss Jane Davidson		
	Mr Dominic Dyer		
	Dr Joanna Dyer		
	Ms Sarah Fox		
	Mrs Susan Howarth		
	Mrs Andrea Jeffery		
	* Mrs Katherine Kissick		
	Mr Matthew Rendle	-	Chair
	Dr Katherine Richards		
	Ms Stephanie Richardson		
	Mrs Claire Roberts		
	*absent		
In attendance:	Mrs Annette Amato	-	Committee Secretary
	Miss Chloe Baxter	-	Comms Event Officer
	Mrs Julie Dugmore	-	Director of Veterinary Nursing
	Ms Eleanor Ferguson	-	Registrar
	Miss Shirley Gibbins	-	Qualifications Manager
	Mrs Victoria Hedges	-	Examinations Manager
	Ms Lizzie Lockett	-	Chief Executive
	Mrs Jenny Soreskog Turp	-	Lead for Postgraduate Education
Guests:	Ms Kathryn Clark	-	Veterinary Record
	Mrs Suzanne Edwards	-	Chair, Registered Veterinary Nurse Preliminary Investigation Committee

Apologies and welcome

1. Apologies for absence were received from Jane Davidson and Katherine Kissick. The Chair welcomed four new members of Council; Claire Roberts (elected veterinary nurse member), Sarah Fox and Stephanie Richardson (appointed lay members) and Kate Richards (appointed veterinary surgeon).

Declarations of interest

2. There were no new declarations of interest.

Obituaries

3. No written obituaries had been received. Council was encouraged to have a moment of quiet reflection for all members who had passed since the last meeting, and for all members of the veterinary, medical, and other professions, who were facing untold difficulties during the current pandemic.

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 May 2020

4. The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 May 2020 were accepted as a correct record.

Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2020

5. The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2020 were accepted as a correct record.

Matters arising

6. There were no matters arising from the minutes of the two previous meetings.

CEO update

7. Council noted the CEO's update report, which provided a summary of activity against the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan.
8. Since the paper had been put together the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) informal two-year visit had taken place. The team had been very complimentary about the agility and speed with which the RCVS team had made changes in meeting the recommendations identified at the original accreditation.
9. It was confirmed that the draft consultation document produced by the Legislation Working Party would be provided for VN Council to see, possibly between meetings due to the timing.

VN Education Committee (VNEC)

10. Susan Howarth, Chair of the VNEC, presented the report of the meeting held on 29 July 2020, and highlighted the following points:
11. The Committee had welcomed Sarah Fox, one of the new lay members on Council, as a member of the Committee.
12. The VN department had appointed a new enrolments officer, Jasmine Curtis RVN.

13. The Committee had noted from a recent survey conducted by the RCVS covering Covid-19 related issues in practice, that 39% of responding practices had cancelled student placements. The VNEC would try to monitor this situation in the coming months. It was not yet known how the student enrolment numbers would be affected. The Director of Veterinary Nursing added that a Covid-19 report form had been sent to all universities and colleges to complete, and information had been requested around student numbers. This information was currently being collated.
14. In response to a query regarding potential difficulties in completion of the required 1,800 hours' training in practice during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Director of Veterinary Nursing confirmed that this had already been addressed and a procedure was in place to consider situations where a student had been able to complete the Day One Skills in less than 1,800 hours, on an individual case-by-case basis.
15. Following the development of the Patient-Based Assessment (PBA) by the OSCE taskforce, information sessions and examiner training had been conducted by the Examinations Manager and the Qualifications Manager, and the process was now well under way. The number of students undergoing the PBA was not yet known. It was understood that, at present, City & Guilds was the only organisation intending to deliver the PBA.
16. There had been no new accreditations or changes to accreditation status. A number of updates had been provided on action plans. There were likely to be some additional programme changes and adjustments to take account of the Covid-19 requirements, and the department was gathering information from the colleges using the proforma which had been approved by the Committee. The department's auditing activities would be adapted to fit in with the amended risk banding associated with the Covid-19 changes and challenges.
17. Although some new accreditation visitors had been recruited, there was still a shortage of employer visitors.
18. In response to a query as to whether the membership of the Committee includes appropriate representation from all sectors of veterinary nurse education, the Director of Veterinary Nursing confirmed that it had been agreed that the terms of reference and membership of the committee would be reviewed. This had been overtaken by the current situation, but the review would take place to ensure that all aspects of veterinary nurse education were included.

CPD Referral Group

19. The Lead for Postgraduate Education introduced the main points from the minutes of the CPD Referral Group's meeting on 5 August 2020, which included the following recommendations:
 - a) To permit a process for exemptions from the use of the 1CPD platform, for the small minority who may have a valid reason for being unable to do so.
 - b) Not to allow third-party access to 1CPD (to be reviewed in 2022 again).
 - c) To allow the CPD Referral Group the option of appointing a CPD coach for referred cases.
 - d) To approve the updated terms of reference.

- e) To appoint a further veterinary nurse to join the group.
 - f) To approve the change of name to 'CPD Compliance Panel'.
20. In relation to reasons for exemptions from the use of 1CPD, it was confirmed that there was not currently a list of exemptions. The group will work with the Comms department to discover the most common issues, but it is vital that there are only very few exemptions in order for the system to work properly.
 21. Regarding third-party access to 1CPD, it was clarified that this was in relation to requests from other organisations, CPD providers and Royal Colleges to allow the transfer of data recorded on the 1CPD system to take place automatically to another system, or for individuals to import CPD recorded on another system into 1CPD, to avoid duplication of records. The reason for the recommendation to defer consideration of this point until 2022 was due to the significant resources which would be needed to build and maintain the functionality.
 22. The updates to the membership and terms of reference of the group, and the change of name, were intended to clearly reflect the purpose of the group and to ensure that the group is not duplicating the work of other groups within the College.
 23. One member expressed concern that consideration of third-party access to 1CPD would be deferred until 2022, as some large employer organisations would wish to access records to ensure compliance and assist their employees in CPD planning. It was clarified that the issue was not related to sharing a CPD record with employers and others, which would certainly involve GDPR issues. It was pointed out that it was currently possible for members to export their records from 1CPD as a pdf or spreadsheet. The question of employer access to employee data was not in the current agreement signed by all members, and completion of CPD was ultimately the responsibility of the individual.
 24. After the discussion and clarification provided, Council agreed to accept all the recommendations set out in the paper. The Chair and Director of Veterinary Nursing would provide details of the second nurse member selected to join the Referral Group.

Action: Chair and Director of Veterinary Nursing

International Qualifications

25. **Annual update report.** The Examinations Manager presented the annual report summarising the applications for registration from nurses educated outside the UK, covering the period between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020, and drew attention to the fact that the number of applications and resulting registrations had fallen again, with the peak of new applications and registrations in 2016-2017.
26. Applications from nurses educated in the EU have remained stable but there has been a reduction in the number of applications from outside the EU. At the end of the reporting period there were 22 partial / incomplete applications, which is high in comparison to previous years. This is likely to be an effect of Covid-19, where applicants changed plans due to travel restrictions and the lack of employment opportunities.

27. As of 31 March, 473 current RVNs were educated outside the UK, which represents 2.6% of all RVNs registered at that date. The majority of overseas educated RVNs settle in the UK and remain on the Register.
28. Concern was expressed that it was still apparent that some applicants provided information which included details of procedures they had undertaken while working in the UK, which they were not legally permitted to undertake, and there seemed to be confusion about what was legally permitted. These individuals were required to complete an assignment covering the role of the veterinary team and UK legislation before entering the Register, and the employer was reminded of the legislation around delegation to people who were neither students nor registered veterinary nurses.
29. **Overseas registration application change.** The Examinations Manager explained that overseas applicants were required to demonstrate that their qualifications align with the RCVS Day One Skills (DOS) and Day One Competences (DOC), and to provide a copy of their syllabus mapped to the DOC. These are assessed by the equivalency officer and a decision made as to whether the applicant could enter the Register directly, or if they needed to complete further adaptation in the form of an examination or other assessment.
30. The RCVS maintains a list of qualifications for which VN Council had agreed applicants are no longer required to provide the mapped syllabus, as the details have been assessed for a number of applicants over a period of time, all with a positive outcome. This included holders of ACOVENE (Accreditation Committee for Veterinary Nurse Education) accredited qualifications. Such applicants were still required to provide details of their experience and evidence that they hold the qualification, and applications could still be rejected, but the required documentation was reduced.
31. Council was asked to consider adding the veterinary nursing degree awarded by Castelo Branco University of Applied Sciences to its approved list. Within the last three years there had been seven applications from holders of this qualification, all of which had been accepted by the equivalency officer for admission to the Register without further assessment. In earlier years, four applications were received and the applicants were able to register without further assessment. It was agreed, after clarification of certain points, that the veterinary nursing degree awarded by Castelo Branco University of Applied Sciences should be added to the approved list.
32. It was confirmed that if a qualification on the approved list was reviewed and changed, the RCVS requests the applicants who completed the revised qualification to submit the syllabus, and this will be assessed. Once a number of applications with the revised qualification have been received and assessed, VN Council will be requested to add the revised qualification to the list of accepted qualifications.
33. A member asked whether the RCVS encouraged institutions across Europe to apply for ACOVENE accreditation, in order to bypass this process. It was noted that it would be a matter for individual institutions to decide, and it was not thought likely that they would take this route solely to ensure that their graduates could enter the UK Register without further requirements.

34. It was confirmed that a paper had already been considered by VN Council at a previous meeting, covering the implications for veterinary nurses with EU qualifications after Brexit. This would come back to Council when the outcome of the Brexit negotiations is clear.
35. The Director of Veterinary Nursing reassured Council that should ACOVENE make any changes to its dossier of competences, which is mapped to the RCVS DOS and DOC, this would be brought back to VN Council for review. ACOVENE was due to undertake a review of its documentation and would be mindful of the requirements for UK registration.
36. **Report on temporary student enrolments.** Council noted a paper setting out information on the number of temporary enrolments from student nurses educated outside the UK, working or on placement for a short period in the UK as part of their training.

Reports from RCVS Committees

Registered Veterinary Nurse Preliminary Investigation Committee (RVN PIC)

37. The Chair of the VN PIC, Suzanne Edwards, joined the meeting to present the annual report of the Committee, which had been circulated with the agenda, and responded to a query. The report was noted.

Standards Committee

38. Claire Roberts provided a brief update from the Standards Committee meeting held on 7 September.
39. The Committee had reviewed and approved, with some small changes, amendments to the supporting guidance following changes to legislation on compulsory microchipping of equines throughout the UK, and had agreed that the guidance on microchipping would be split into two chapters, one to cover equines and one to cover small animals.
40. The Committee had also reviewed the supporting guidance setting out the RCVS health protocols, with amendments made to ensure that the guidance is easily understood by the profession and serves its purpose as supportive guidance. The substance of the guidance had not changed, and had taken on board comments from Vetlife, the VDS and Pix Health sub groups.

Communications report

41. The Comms Event Officer reported on a number of recent and forthcoming activities.
42. The Introduction to the UK Veterinary Professions course had been launched earlier in the week. This was aimed at overseas vets and veterinary nurses intending to work in the UK. There had been 290 registrations overall, including over 30 veterinary nurses.
43. Veterinary Nurses Day, which had originally been postponed from May to October, had

unfortunately been cancelled. There would now be virtual events on the evenings of 20 and 21 October to celebrate the achievements of newly registered RVNs and those who have gained their Advanced Diplomas.

44. A virtual Fellowship evening was due to take place on the evening of 1 October. All Fellows and members of the veterinary and VN professions would be invited by email. The Honours and Awards evening would be taking place on 10 September, with a total of 17 awards being presented. In addition, the launch of two new awards would be formally announced.
45. Council members were asked to spread the word about the Golden Jubilee Award and to encourage VNs to nominate peers and colleagues for any of the other awards, during the forthcoming awards nomination period.
46. The Comms team would be in discussion with the Chair about more direct channels of communication with VNs in practice in the future, including suggestions for webinars. The team would be producing a welcome video for veterinary students for freshers' week, involving the President and VNC Chair, and this would also be provided to the VN students at Bristol and the Royal Veterinary College (RVC). It was agreed that a similar presentation would be useful, tailored for new VN students, to be made available to universities and awarding organisations to use part of their student inductions.
47. The first *VN Futures e-newsletter* would be issued shortly, to help flag up the content for the new website.
48. The Chair added that the letter which is sent to newly registered veterinary nurses to welcome them to the profession will now include a dedicated email address to enable RVNs to communicate with the Chair of VN Council directly. He thanked the Comms team for their guidance and assistance.

Any other business

49. The Qualifications Manager made a plea to members to pass on suggestions for suitable accreditation visitors, especially from the employment sector.
50. A positive comment was made on the employment of a veterinary nurse to join the VN team as enrolments officer, and it was suggested that this would also be useful in communications showing the diversity of career opportunities available to VNs.

Date of next meeting

51. Wednesday 11 November 2020 at 10.30am

Summary	
Meeting	RCVS Council Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	21 January 2021 10 February 2021
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

Classifications		
Document	Classification	Rationales
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. It is to be noted that this is a five-year plan, so in some areas activity remains to be started. At its meeting in July, 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 the Strategic Plan, the following items are for note since the November Council meeting:
 - a. We launched a campaign to recruit mentors for the new VetGDP and have held a series of online meetings with veterinary students
 - b. We launched new online mental health awareness courses under the Mind Matters Initiative (MMI)
 - c. We published the fifth survey on the impact of Coronavirus on veterinary practices
 - d. We released new guidance on delegating veterinary work to musculoskeletal therapists
 - e. We formed new working parties on vet techs and sustainability
 - f. We held online guidance sessions for those recording CPD on our 1CPD platform
 - g. We launched a survey, jointly with the Veterinary Schools Council, to look at the impact of Covid-19 on recent graduates
 - h. We reaffirmed mutual recognition of veterinary degrees with the Veterinary Council of Ireland post-transition period
 - i. We sought volunteers for an MMI-funded research project with King's College London on the impact of moral injury on the veterinary team
 - j. We made our annual President's Christmas donation to a cat-rehoming and an educational charity
 - k. We opened the nomination period for 2021 Councils elections
 - l. Appointed a new Director of Advancement of the Professions (DAP), Angharad Belcher
4. Meanwhile, the Covid-19 Taskforce continues to meet on a regular basis and the minutes from the meetings are now forwarded to Council with, since October 2020, Council having a two-day period during which to object to any Taskforce decisions.

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"> LWP reported to Council in June 2020; Council agreed to consult on proposals, consultation opened 5 November 2020 Accreditation Working Party has reported and aims to publish review of evidence that informed the new risk-based, outcomes-focused approach in 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LWP consultation period extended to 23 April 2021 due to impact of Covid Following introduction of new VN accreditation standards in January 2020, we are completing a small-scale review to ensure they are outcomes-focused and to remove any duplication
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 regulation of the wider veterinary team and the environment in which they work.	APC/ LWP/ PICDCL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing work with ViVet Regulation of practices falls part of A1 above Review of concerns/disciplinary processes consultation alongside LWP – see A1 above A lot of focus on ‘what matters to our stakeholders’ has been carried out during pandemic work Stakeholder event took place online on 23 October 2020 to discuss current consultations and impact of Brexit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of ViVet project will take place now new DAP in post Regulation of wider vet team ongoing with launch of new working group on vet techs Horizon-scanning process to take place for Vet Futures #2 and VN Futures #2– inc impact of Covid-19
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"> Some work on this had started pre-Covid and will be revisited once resources allow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review resources post-LWP consultation decisions/Under care/out of hours (UCOOH) review

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
<p>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.</p>	<p>APC/ FVE/ Brexit T/F</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending Future Veterinary Capability and Capacity Project • Ongoing work via Advancement of the Professions Committee to consider global offering • Building relationships via MMI International, with first international roundtable on mental health planned • Continuing to play a role in the International Veterinary Regulators Network and involved with planning committee for June 2021 event • Continuing to play a role in the Global Veterinary Innovation Network • Meeting of Brexit Taskforce took place in December 2020 • Continuing to work with International Accreditation Working Party to harmonise standards – currently considering protocols for virtual accreditations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop actions from o/s member research • Work ongoing to develop more permanent solution to loss of mutual recognition of professional qualifications • Run third EU graduates survey ref impact of Brexit • Continue to play strong role at the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) – reschedule London GA for summer 2021 depending on Covid situation
<p>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.</p>	<p>APC/ Comms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder research published January 2020 • Feedback from practices sought as part of regular Covid-19 surveys • Much of our face-to-face public outreach on hold due to Covid • Stakeholder event held in October 2020 • Establishing new role in Communications team to support student and new graduate engagement with the College • New role of Head of Insight and Engagement established to support this work and also A6 below 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review all recent research for insight and actions • Set up animal owner engagement group

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
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"> • Prototype of sharing mechanism for core data ready for review • FAQ on Covid have been well received, along with those for CPD, LWP, Practice Standards and VetGDP • Paper on data-sharing went to November 2020 meeting of Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) – policy needs further refining • New role of Head of Insight and Engagement established to support this work • New Research Officer hired to support this work and a broad range of other research across the organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine and agree data-sharing policy and return to FRC • Review data-sharing prototype and launch • Develop dashboard on key metrics • Develop approach for mining concerns and complaints data for content for Academy
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.	Ed Cttee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched Day One Competences 2/7/20 • VN Standards reviewed and published • WG looking at Accreditation Standards • AP and CertAVP surveys completed • Hosted virtual International Accreditors Working Group (IAWG) in June 2020 – • The VN Qualifications Team is in regular contact with HEIs and Colleges to provide support and understand Covid-related challenges and changes to provision • Education Team in regular contact with Veterinary Schools Council to mitigate impact of Covid on veterinary undergraduate education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AP and CertAVP survey reports coming to Education Committee and planning focus groups to inform next steps • Publish findings of Accreditation WG • Take forward work of IAWG - hoping to host in-person event in June 2021 • Visitation team – training and structure to be reviewed – recommendations from Education Committee to come to Council in March 2021, together with methodology behind new standards
8. Ensure clarity of appeal across all the areas where we make decisions, modernising where appropriate; where appeal is not available, clearly justify why not.	Legal services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fellowship Board has reviewed Fellowship appeals process and some changes will be made 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit current processes; review best practice

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"> New Head of Insight and Engagement will help ensure consistency across the organisation in terms of how we communicate with members of the professions and the public All RCVS websites were compliant with key requirements of new Accessibility Regulations by September 2020 deadline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review data/identify training priorities Review public- and profession-facing documentation for 'Plain English' Publish regular data on meeting our KPIs Develop online version of Regional Question Times to take questions from members Tie-in with stakeholder mapping (A5, above) Review of key web content underway, including conversion of all PDF documents to web pages where possible to ensure improved accessibility 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
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"> Data from Survey of Professions Peakon staff engagement tool gives 'real time' view on how staff are feeling Launched e-cards to celebrate staff members who meet our values Created 'Opportunities Group' of mid-career staff to help understand where support may be needed, particularly for new managers Have rolled out Diversity & Inclusion training for all staff MH for Managers training taken place Support sessions ref virtual working for staff have taken place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch buddying system for those going through complaints process, with background from Open Minds report Review data and identify priorities for staff training and review of materials Review discussions data from Peakon and other staff meetings for training gaps Encourage and support managers in acting on findings/comments from Peakon tool Supervision / support for those taking stressful calls – meeting early January Virtual staff away day postponed from 2020 and will take place in spring 2021 Resilience training for staff to take place

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"> Nearly ready to launch buddying scheme for those going through ProfCon process with external provider – have been some delays due to resourcing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up client group – see A5 above Package of modernising proposals is due for consultation – see A2 above Review how we gather data, moving to a 'live' feedback model – consult with consumer organisations
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"> Idea well supported, with many groups asking for content - key will be getting the right structure in place and prioritising Ideas for content have been listed VetGDP Advisor Training under development, will be hosted on Academy when that is ready (temporarily via RCVS Knowledge Moodle platform) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a huge piece of work and needs planning in terms of delivery structure Team to support needs to be developed, will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IT/digital framework Overall project management Content leads Learning specialists Communications input User groups for trial and feedback Users for ongoing moderation and review Develop initial list of modules How to link to 1 CPD? Developing a parallel (linked?) approach for staff training and development Resourcing for this needs to be considered, it has been pushed back due to Covid and Brexit priorities
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 www.vetmindmatters.org), 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"> MMI has been adapting to the Covid world with online tools and Covid-specific advice and guidance See vetmindmatters.org for specific activities under Mind Matters of which there has been many 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide support during pandemic – we asked specific question during Covid survey number five and are developing interventions to respond Link up with Diversity and Inclusion agenda both internally and externally Student VN mental health support roundtable planned for early 2021

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
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"> • Launch of 1CPD app in January 2020 (with further updates) to enable reflective learning – recent webinars (winter 2020-1) to support this • Support of RCVSK QI work ongoing, including podcasts etc • Addressed via Edward Jenner Leadership MOOC modules • The new VetGDP will help promote and develop a learning culture for new graduates, implemented via the VetGDP advisers and evaluated via our QA process – campaign to recruit advisers launched in November 2020 and currently 800 registrations; virtual meetings ongoing with students • Communications campaign regarding reflective approach ongoing, running from launch of 1CPD to direct email communications campaigns, including suite of videos, social media campaigns and media coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop speaker opportunities on learning culture – eg World Small Animal Veterinary Association (delayed to 2020) • Continue to deliver communications campaign and support members of the profession in completing 1CPD

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DIG finalising strategic plan See B5 for MMI progress See B6 for learning culture Leadership – strategic plan in place but requires review Innovation – strategic plan in place but requires review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New DAP in post so work in all of these areas will be reviewed Working Group on Sustainability, under chair of Sue Paterson, first meeting 11/1/21 Continue development of Edward Jenner – meeting set January Develop Innovation Challenge Prize to aid post-Covid / post-Brexit recovery?
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-clinical skills have been highlighted as part of the Graduate Outcomes review and now reflected in Day One Competences The benefits of an ‘all-round’ approach to work/life have been focused on via MMI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on non-clinical skills of general practice (ie human factors) – initial APC-led project needs review in light of Covid Develop materials for Academy Honours and Awards currently open for nomination, including two new awards: the RCVS Compassion Award, the RCVS Student Community Award Wider cultural project to celebrate history and development of modern veterinary practice – tie in with new building?
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"> 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 Initial conversations with MMI re a return-to-work network founded on issue of insurance, needs picking up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need research ref workforce gap and with leavers/returners– new Research Officer in post will support this Wider use of new VetGDP for those returning to practice after five years or more will support this, including student mentors Re-recruitment fair? Materials for the Academy Review our policies to ensure return to work is as accessible as possible Will be reviewing Period of Supervised Practice for RVNs during 2021

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
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"> Review has started ref AP and CertAVP for vets - surveys completed and findings reported to Education Committee. Now organising focus groups with stakeholders to identify best approach and next steps Advanced qualifications framework for VNs published and we now have three HEIs accredited with a further two accreditations booked. A range of focused qualifications are now available (for example, anaesthesia, oncology, emergency and critical care and quality improvement) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish recommendations on vet quals/status VN career progression linked to LWP Review development routes for general practitioners
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"> Meet the RCVS Days, stakeholder days etc on hold due to Covid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with Veterinary Policy Research Foundation on joint EMS opportunities on veterinary policy Develop modules for Academy eg virtual hearing? Some kind of gamification of this? Lunch and learns with practices – remotely?
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"> We have approval of the small bursaries pot – for individuals' personal development that aligns to strategic plan – not yet launched due to Covid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do we better understand the questions that are on professionals' minds? Need to do a risk analysis around this See C1 ref Challenge Prize Launch bursary scheme – Easter?
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"> Started process of review of structure of support for Fellowship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fellowship strategy being refreshed by the Board To be considered as part of review of APC structure
8. Review new ways of reaching consensus and driving change within our leadership and governance structure.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unconscious bias training took place after September Council meeting Culture action plan for Council approved at October meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to look at how we make virtual meetings more effective – learn from others Review CPD needs for Council members Review impact of 2018 LRO on Governance (see also D1)

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
<p>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.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversations have started to take place, agreed that we need to review research and ambitions, then develop second action plans • Evaluation of first action plans started but to be completed – interrupted by Covid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we capture what the professions have learned from Covid, and keep the good stuff? • Possible stakeholder seminar under discussion for first half of 2021

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"> We are not mandated by govt to do a review (unlike for the 2013 LRO) but it is good practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal review in 2021 and more formal five-year review in 2023 Need to scope informal review for action second half of 2021
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"> Process has started, with more transparency over ToFR, membership and composition – all now online Delegation scheme (to committee level) updated annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring together all groups into one document, with ToR, membership, quorum, etc – this is in process Improve transparency around terms of office Parent committees to review all groups and sunset where appropriate
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"> Magique risk management tool now in place for all areas, clear ownership, regularly updated Risk Workshop took place with Council in October 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold risk workshop with Senior Team to reflect on findings of Council workshop Make 'any items for the risk register' agenda items more meaningful Continue to learn from Covid experience
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"> We have gathered a list of sources of current feedback 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do gap analysis on data held Gather additional data Prioritise areas for improvement Develop QI process – Education team developing via Education QI manager and also to link to new Head of Insight and Engagement
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"> We have gathered data ref fraud prevention activities across the organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review data available and prioritise areas for improvement Focus groups of users of My Account?

Action (numbering as per full plan)	Who?	Status	Next step/due date
6. Put in a 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"> Internal Diversity and Inclusion Strategy in place - Black Lives Matters issues took recent priority Diversity and Inclusion training has taken place for all staff – two-part programme Diversity and Inclusion Group strategy includes internal and external audiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People Strategy is in draft and close to completion and to be shared with Officers shortly Refreshed internal communications strategy agreed by Senior Team January 2021
7. 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"> Current strategy is coming to an end, new one needs to be developed Covid-19 has meant work has been rather short-term of late, but the existing strategy put us in good shape to work remotely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New strategy needs to be developed
8. 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"> Estates Strategy Project Board continuing to work as per strategy and reporting to RCVS Council at each meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future building needs under review to ensure appropriate for the 'new normal'
9. 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"> Pandemic continues to mean a lot of time spent on reactive rather than proactive activities, recruitment underway to better support this activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy remains to be developed
10. 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"> New Environment & Sustainability Working Party to consider both profession-facing and internal issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment policy requires review Environmental impact of any new building will be key Covid has been positive in reducing impact of travel, both overseas and domestic

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	10 February 2021
Title	Minutes of meeting of VN Education Committee held on 14 October 2020
Summary	Minutes of the meeting of Veterinary Nurse Education Committee held on 14 October 2020
Decisions required	none
Attachments	Classified appendix
Author	Annette Amato Committee Secretary a.amato@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0713

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	Confidential	2,3

¹Classifications explained

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²Classification rationales

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Veterinary Nurse Education Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2020

Members:	Mrs Donna Cotton	-	Employer representative
	Miss Julia Cox	-	Employer representative
	* Ms Sarah Fox	-	VN Council lay member
	* Mrs Sarah Holman	-	FE veterinary nursing provider
	Mrs Susan Howarth	-	VN Council veterinary nurse (Chair)
	Miss Carla Husband	-	HE student representative
	Professor Elizabeth Mossop	-	Independent educationalist
	* Mrs Sarah Parkhouse	-	FE veterinary nursing provider
	Mrs Sarah Reynolds-Golding	-	HE veterinary nursing provider
*absent			
In attendance:	Mrs Annette Amato	-	Committee Secretary
	Mrs Julie Dugmore	-	Director of Veterinary Nursing
	Mrs Denise Chambers	-	Qualifications Officer
	Miss Shirley Gibbins	-	Qualifications Manager
	Mrs Victoria Hedges	-	Examinations Manager
	Miss Sian Tanner	-	Education Officer

Apologies for absence and welcome to new member

1. Apologies for absence were received from Sarah Fox, Sarah Holman and Sarah Parkhouse. Comments had been sent to the Chair on some of the items by absent members, and these were brought into the discussion at the relevant point.
2. The Chair welcomed Carla Husband, the new student member of the Committee.

Declarations of interest

3. Sarah Reynolds-Golding declared an interest relating to two of the agenda items – as external examiner for Coventry University and programme leader for Askham Bryan College. Susan Howarth declared an interest as programme manager for Harper Adams University, and as external examiner for the Royal Veterinary College, post-graduate Veterinary Nursing Diploma. They would not participate in the discussion or any decisions relating to the relevant items.

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee (VNEC) held on 29 July 2020

4. The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2020.

Matters arising on the Minutes	
5.	There were no specific matters arising on the previous minutes.
Veterinary Nursing update	
6.	The Director of Veterinary Nursing updated the Committee on recent developments and activities.
7.	There had been no recent staffing changes in the VN department, and the team was managing to work well remotely during the current Covid-19 crisis.
8.	The Covid-19 report forms received from the centres had indicated that the enrolment numbers for the forthcoming academic year were likely to be similar to the previous year, although there are some issues regarding employment and placement, which would be covered later in the agenda.
9.	The RCVS had created a policy and guidelines for remote online assessment which are applicable to both veterinary and veterinary nursing programmes. This has been sent directly to all Awarding Organisations (AOs), Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Centres, and is published on the RCVS website.
10.	There have been several meetings with City & Guilds regarding the Patient Based Assessment and updates have been regularly provided on the numbers undertaking this assessment. Phase 1 for the students who were due to sit the OSCE in March is almost complete and Phase 2, for those who were due to sit in June, is planned. A guidance document for students has been provided by City & Guilds. The RCVS quality assurance process, as the regulator, for the Phase 1 is shortly due to commence.
11.	There would be a meeting with LANTRA later in the week to discuss the new Welsh Apprenticeship framework.
12.	There are currently two Universities accredited for the delivery of the Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing, one university has submitted an application which will be considered by the Committee, two further universities have accreditation visits booked in the next few months, and a further university has indicated that it is likely to submit an application in 2021. The Committee was encouraged to see that the CertAVN provision is moving forward as had been hoped.
12.	The review of the Day One Competences and Day One Skills had been started at the end of 2019, but had been delayed due to the Covid-19 situation. It was hoped to resume work shortly.
13.	It was hoped that development work on veterinary nurses statuses would commence shortly, as the next stage of work following the post-registration framework, and the Director of Veterinary Nursing will be looking to appoint a small working party.
VN Licence to practise qualifications	

Re-Accreditation Action plan monitoring	
14.	Royal Veterinary College. The Committee was updated on progress with the action plan for the Royal Veterinary College.
Programme changes	
15.	University of Bristol. A number of proposed module changes had been notified by the new programme manager and a thorough review had been carried out by the Qualifications Manager and an external industry expert. It was noted that the next accreditation is due in 2022. In the meantime, the Committee agreed that in the circumstances, the proposed changes could be implemented as part of the current provision and the comments of the reviewers should be pointed out to the university.
16.	A general comment was raised on the need to communicate to institutions the importance of the external examiner as part of the quality assurance process.
17.	VetSkill. The Committee considered a request for a removal of the specified number of online learning hours, as a permanent change.
18.	It was commented that some students appear to be struggling with online learning during the current situation, in addition to extra reading and practical skills. There are a number of challenges for students learning at home, including the IT skills and equipment required, and it was acknowledged that the IT support may vary across providers. In the current situation, however, students are electing to stay at home due to government guidelines. It was also commented that the VN learning is very practical in nature, and some face-to-face delivery is essential.
19.	The Director of Veterinary Nursing pointed out that the Standards framework is clear that the RCVS does not dictate the learning or delivery style to be used by organisations. The important point to consider is the quality of the online provision. The RCVS would then be monitoring the outcomes rather than the type of provision.
20.	The Committee agreed that the change requested by VetSkill should be accepted, with a detailed plan to be submitted to show how the face to face contact hours would be replaced with interactive engaging sessions.
Quality Monitoring activities	
21.	The Committee was provided with updates on quality monitoring activities for the following HEIs and Centres:
22.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Askham Bryan College. • Central College of Animal Studies (CCOAS) • Vet Partners Liphook

23.	Covid-19 Changes. The Qualifications Manager reported that the Covid-19 Programme Review form approved at the previous meeting of the Committee had been sent to all providers for return by early September. The completed forms had been reviewed and a risk matrix had been developed. The Committee was provided with an overview of the different risk levels, the number of providers in each category, and the action to be taken. Normal auditing activity had been temporarily suspended and the adapted audit strategy based on the risk levels would be followed.
24.	It was noted that the level of engagement was generally high, and there is a variety of strategies being developed to deal with the current situation. The RCVS is also receiving feedback from the training practices and it seems that the majority of placements are currently going ahead.
25.	The Committee was assured that the changes in programmes due to Covid-19 are being audited.
26.	It was reported that a group is being set up by the corporate practices to look at how placements can be supported, going forward. The Committee would be updated at its next meeting.
Action plan monitoring quality assurance	
27.	The Committee was updated on the quality monitoring of action plans for the following HEIs and Centres:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abbeydale Vetlink • Bath College • College of Animal Welfare North London • University of Glasgow • North Highland College • Salford City College • South Gloucestershire and Stroud College • University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN) • Warwickshire Moreton Morrell • Wrexham Glyndwr University
Accreditation visitor approval	
28.	The Committee considered the completed person specification with CPD and curriculum vitae for an HE accreditation visitor and agreed that this should be approved.
External Examiner updates	
29.	The Committee noted the list of current external examiners for the licence to practise qualifications and a separate list, as agreed, for the post-registration qualifications. Changes to external examiner appointments, together with the relevant CVs and CPD information, were provided. It was confirmed that the role of the RCVS was to ensure that the external examiner appointments meet with the relevant recruitment process and criteria of the organisation. It was agreed that the recruitment process and criteria should be requested for two organisations for which these had not been provided.

Diploma in Advanced Veterinary Nursing Quality monitoring	
30.	The Committee noted the quality monitoring reports from the RCVS DipAVN External Quality Assurer, for the programmes at Harper Adams University and Myerscough College (University of Central Lancashire).
VN Pre-Registration Examination Board Terms of Reference	
31.	The Committee noted and agreed the revised Terms of Reference and Membership for the VN Pre-Registration Examination Board.
Statistical report	
32.	The Committee noted statistics on student enrolments for each academic year (1 July to 30 June) over the last five years. The annual information on student enrolments by the HE and FE routes is published in <i>RCVS Facts</i> , as well as information on new registrations by the HE and FE routes, and those educated overseas.
Items for publication	
33.	As previously agreed, relevant publications should include a reminder that the RCVS should be notified of any proposed programme and assessment changes in advance, using the Covid update forms. Also, a reminder to institutions on the importance of involvement of the external examiner in any assessment changes.
Any other business	
34.	It was suggested that in view of the change in the accreditation standards and the new report paperwork, a training event for the Committee would be very useful. It was agreed that this should be arranged.
35.	The Chair reported a comment from an absent member regarding the feedback wording used in the accreditation reports. The Director of Veterinary Nursing confirmed that this comment would be reviewed by the team, bearing in mind that there are certain requirements stipulated by ENQA regarding wording.
36.	It was suggested by a member that a list of all the various post registration qualifications available to RVNs would be useful. It was agreed that it would not be appropriate for the RCVS to provide such a list, as this may give the impression that all the listed qualifications are RCVS accredited. However, it might be appropriate for the BVNA to provide such a list, for information.
Meeting dates	
37.	The meeting dates for 2021 were confirmed as follows:

- Wednesday 13 January
- Tuesday 13 April
- Wednesday 4 August
- Wednesday 13 October

It was agreed that the January meeting, which would be held remotely, should start at 10.00am. The start time of meetings would be kept under review, depending on whether these were held virtually or at the RCVS.

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Decisions required	To approve
Attachments	Classified appendix
Author	Annette Amato Committee Secretary a.amato@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0713

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Veterinary Nurse Education Committee
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	Mrs Denise Chambers	-	Qualifications Officer
	Miss Shirley Gibbins	-	Qualifications Manager
	Mrs Victoria Hedges	-	Examinations Manager
	Miss Sian Tanner	-	Education Officer

Apologies for absence and welcome to new member

1. Apologies for absence were received from Professor Elizabeth Mossop. Comments had been sent to the Chair on one item, and were brought into the discussion at the relevant point.
2. The Chair welcomed Caroline McCormick-Clarke, the new Further Education student member of the Committee.

Declarations of interest

3. Susan Howarth declared an interest as programme manager for Harper Adams University. Sarah Reynolds-Golding declared an interest as programme leader for Askham Bryan College. They would not participate in the discussion or any decisions relating to the relevant items.

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee (VNEC) held on 14 October 2020

4.	The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2020, which had been previously circulated.
Matters arising on the Minutes	
5.	There were no specific matters arising on the previous minutes.
Veterinary Nursing update	
6.	The Director of Veterinary Nursing updated the Committee on recent developments and activities.
7.	There had been no changes in VN department staffing since the previous meeting
8.	The enrolments officer had been very efficiently processing student enrolment applications from the autumn intakes, and to date 1,285 enrolments had been processed and 120 were pending. Applications were generally being turned around within seven working days of receipt of the required documentation and fee.
9.	Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, two groups of students whose enrolments were due to expire in 2020 and had not completed, had now had their six-year enrolment period automatically extended without further fee. Consideration was being given to applying a similar extension to those students whose enrolment was due to expire from 1 January to 31 March 2021, including those who had already extended, subject to approval by the Covid taskforce.
10.	The FAQs which had been placed on the website in March 2020 relating to completion of the Day One Skills, clinical placements and the OSCEs had been regularly updated every eight weeks. These would continue to be updated throughout the pandemic. The RCVS had also supplied education providers with a temporary guidance list for both small animal and equine Day One Skills, showing where and how the skills could potentially be achieved or partially achieved in situations other than in practice. The Chair commented that this had been very useful for providers.
11.	A process had been put in place for those applying to register who had not met the 1,800 clinical hours requirement. It was envisaged that this process would not be likely to be required until the end of 2021.
12.	The most recent Covid report forms had been sent out to providers in late December, and all providers had been emailed with specific questions at the start of the week. An update would be provided later in the meeting. Universities had also been asked if they were likely to use the Patient Based Assessment (VN-PBA). An oral update on the VN-PBA would be provided later in the meeting. It was reported that any student who had needed an OSCE assessment in 2020 had been offered either the opportunity to sit the VN-PBA, or to sit an OSCE with one of the three Awarding Organisations. Some

	students had decided to defer, but it is understood that there is not a large backlog of students waiting to undertake the final assessment.
13.	It was likely that the pre-registration OSCE planned for March would be postponed until June/July.
14.	A small review of the accreditation Standards Framework was being undertaken based on stakeholder feedback to help provide clarification and remove duplication. The updated framework will be presented to VN Council at its meeting in February.
15.	The Welsh apprenticeship framework review was now complete and a letter of support provided to Lantra.
VN Licence to practise qualifications	
Accreditation / Re-accreditation action plan monitoring	
16.	Royal Veterinary College. All actions from the 2018 accreditation are now complete.
17.	Wrexham Glyndwr University. There is one outstanding action, for which an extension has been agreed due to the Covid-19 situation.
18.	University of Portsmouth. All actions from the most recent accreditation have now been met.
Changes to accreditation status	
19.	Harper Adams University. The Chair left the meeting for this item due to her conflict of interest. The Committee noted a paper requesting an accreditation extension of one year. Having reviewed the request, the Committee was in unanimous agreement that this should be extended as requested. The re-accreditation of this programme will now be due in the academic year 2021/22.
Quality Monitoring activities	
20.	The Committee was provided with updates on quality monitoring activities for the following HEIs and Centres: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hartpury University • University of Portsmouth
Covid-19 Update.	
21.	The Qualifications Manager reported that following agreement by VNEC in July, the VN department had sent the Covid-19 Programme Delivery Report to all providers delivering licence to practise veterinary nursing programmes. The responses were then

	<p>reviewed against a specific risk matrix to determine what level of additional support each provider required. A Covid-19 Programme Delivery monitoring form was sent to providers again at the start of November following the various lockdown measures taken by UK government and the devolved nations. The paper presented to the Committee had been prepared after the second lockdown. Unfortunately, compliance had decreased slightly during the second lockdown. However, on the whole, it seemed that the majority of providers were coping, with support required in some instances.</p>
22.	<p>As reported by the Director of Veterinary Nursing, temporary guidance documents had been provided to all centres showing where the Day One Skills might be met partially or fully outside practice, for both the small animal and equine standards. Centres had been very appreciative of this guidance.</p>
23.	<p>In the current lockdown, centres had been sent a set of specific questions rather than the whole report form. Over 50% of centres had responded within a few days. The full analysis is still to be completed, but it does not seem that there are significant issues, and centres are coping. The impact on placements has been quite low. Telephone support is being provided to all delivery sites.</p>
	<p>Training Practice (TP) Placement Review.</p>
24.	<p>The Qualifications Manager presented a paper setting out an analysis of the review of the numbers of students requiring placements annually and the TPs available to providers, instigated in response to potential changes to Training Practice (TP) availability due to Covid-19. Numbers of affiliated and non-affiliated TPs and numbers of placement and employed students were analysed.</p>
25.	<p>The analysis showed that overall, there are sufficient UK TP places for the number of enrolled student veterinary nurses, whether employed or requiring placement. However, the Quality Monitoring team had identified a number of providers with insufficient numbers of affiliated TPs to support the number of students enrolled onto the programme. The RCVS will be strengthening its guidance to remind providers which do not have sufficient TPs that they need to address this, and the situation will be kept under review.</p>
26.	<p>One member commented that the current difficulties faced by their organisation are due to practices being unable to compromise their bubbles to take on placement students. Additionally, stakeholders are setting rules with regard to work experience students and the length of time they can be placed, and this is starting to have an impact. The Qualifications Manager reiterated that individual providers are encouraged to contact the RCVS to discuss their difficulties and potential solutions. Placement support and provision would continue to be a large part of the auditing strategy.</p>
27.	<p>The Chair commented that it was reassuring to see the TP numbers, and that there always needs to be some flexibility in the system due to the different ways in which providers arrange their placements. Now that the data has been acquired, the risk</p>

	bandings can be reviewed in the future. It was also noted that all students are being placed and are being supported. Going forward, it was confirmed that the revised standards due to be put before VN Council in February included a requirement for discussion and agreement between providers if using another providers training practices.
	City & Guilds Patient Based Assessment (VN-PBA) update.
28.	The Examinations Manager provided a detailed oral report on the delivery and quality assurance of the VN-PBA, the final session having been delivered on 18 December 2020. It was noted that City & Guilds had kept the RCVS informed throughout, and a number of meetings have taken place. The analysis of results has been stringent and adequate quality assurance has taken place.
29.	It was noted that City & Guilds does not currently intend to deliver another phase of the PBA. A full report on the PBA will be provided at the next VNEC meeting.
Action plan monitoring	
30.	The Committee was updated on the quality monitoring of action plans for the following HEIs and Centres.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Askham Bryan College Gateshead • Bath College • College of Animal Welfare North London • Central College of Animal Studies • Warwickshire College
31.	An update was also provided on the progress with the action plan for programme changes at the University of Bristol. Details are being followed up with the university and communication is still awaited.
Accreditation visitors	
32.	There were no new visitor applications to be considered. The Qualifications Manager reported that the pool of employer visitors needs to be expanded, and urged Committee members to encourage suitable applicants to come forward.
External Examiner updates	
33.	The Committee noted the list of current external examiners for the licence to practise qualifications, together with the relevant CVs and CPD information for new examiners, and recruitment processes and employment criteria for two organisations which had been requested at the previous meeting.
Post-registration qualifications	

Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Programme changes	
34.	University of Glasgow. The Committee noted details of a minor programme wording change which had been agreed for the Postgraduate Certificate Advanced Practice in Veterinary Nursing.
Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing Quality monitoring	
35.	Harper Adams University. The Committee noted a report of a routine audit of the Harper Adams University CertAVN programmes conducted in November 2020.
Accreditation Action plan monitoring	
36.	Royal Veterinary College. An oral update was provided on the monitoring of the action plan, a meeting had taken place and good progress was being made, with only one action now outstanding.
VN Pre-Registration Examination Board	
37.	The Examinations Manager presented the minutes of the meeting of the newly formed Pre-registration Examination Board which met on 29 October 2020. The Board had been provided with reports from both the Examinations Manager and the Chief Examiner, along with the results. The Board had discussed sections of the report and signed off the examination results. In future, the Board would meet after each pre-registration examination.
Items for publication	
38.	There were no specific items, other than ongoing updates related to Covid-19, and the need for additional employer representatives on the visitor panel, where appropriate.
Any other business	
39.	It was generally agreed that in view of the number of items for discussion at each meeting, and the need to report back in a timely manner from accreditation visits, it would be preferable to increase the number of meetings each year. An additional meeting for 2021 had been inserted for June, and a sixth meeting in 2021 would be desirable. The Committee agreed that going forward, the aim should be for six meetings per year, with the majority being held remotely.
Meeting dates	
40.	The meeting dates for 2021 were confirmed as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 13 April • Friday 25 June • Wednesday 4 August

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wednesday 13 October <p>A further meeting would be arranged.</p>
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Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	10 February 2021
Title	Update from the CPD Compliance Panel
Summary	Minutes from the CPD Compliance Panel's meeting on the 14 January 2021
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Author	Jenny Soreskog-Turp Lead for Postgraduate Education j.soreskog-turp@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0701

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

¹Classifications 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.

²Classification rationales

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CPD Compliance Panel

Notes of the meeting held on 14 January 2021

Present:	Linda Ford	Chair
	Alison Carr	
	Elizabeth Cox	
	Susan Paterson	
	Claire Roberts	
	Neil Smith	
In attendance:	Julie Dugmore	Director of Veterinary Nursing
	Linda Prescott-Clements	Director of Education
	Jenny Soreskog-Turp	Lead for Postgraduate Education
	Rebecca Smith	Education Assistant
	Sandra Neary	Professional Conduct Officer

Welcome and Apologies

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that all members were present.

Declarations of interest

2. There were no new declarations of interest.

Minutes of the meeting on the 3 November 2020

3. The minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2020 were received and approved as a true and accurate record.

Matters arising

4. At the last Education Committee, it was suggested that the CPD admin fee should be discussed by the Finance and Resource Committee. A paper about the admin fee was presented to the committee in November last year. They felt that the CPD admin fee should be the same fee for both veterinary surgeons and nurses considering it would involve the same amount of work. They could not suggest an amount but advised us to review and estimate the costs involved and then suggest an amount so that it is truly a CPD admin fee to recuperate costs. Education Department will work with Finance Department to review costs involved and report back to the Compliance Panel.

Action: Education Department to review actual costs for chasing records and report back to the panel

Follow up on non-compliant veterinary surgeons

5. The group received a paper providing information about monitored cases.
6. The group agreed with the recommendations in the paper but had some additional comments and recommendations for a few cases:
 - a. The veterinary surgeon who was referred to the group in 2015 and is still non-compliant is being referred back to Professional Conduct Department after they closed the case against him in 2018. The Panel felt that he was using the flexibility of the system and wanted the Professional Conduct Department to take the history of the case into account when reviewing it.
 - b. One veterinary surgeon has been monitored since 2016 and still not sent records. She has declared some mental health issues so it was suggested that we could explore if she could get support from CPD buddy in practice or if she would give RCVS permission to have a joint meeting with her and the practice manager to try to resolve issues with CPD recording.
 - c. The veterinary surgeons who are still on the register but claim that they will come off the register in this year's annual renewal need to be reminded that it is their professional responsibility to keep up with the CPD requirement until they change their status and clearly communicate that further actions might be taken if they do not engage with the RCVS.
 - d. The veterinary surgeons who had submitted incomplete records should be reminded of their obligation to record CPD and be sent information about 1CPD with links to the webinars.
 - e. One veterinary surgeon stated that he was considering his options and it was suggested to contact him and see if he needed to speak to someone from the RCVS about options for changing his status on the register or perhaps another veterinary surgeon that could offer support for CPD.
7. All monitored cases will be reviewed by the Panel at the next meeting in May.
8. The Panel asked about the process after a case has been referred to the Professional Conduct Department. Ms Neary explained that once they have received all information in relation to the case, the veterinary surgeon or nurse will be contacted by the Chief Investigator Michael Hepper who will inform them that their case has been referred to the department and ask them to submit any records and plan to be reviewed by PIC. Depending on the information submitted, PIC will either refer it back to the Panel for monitoring, keep the case open or take it forward to DC.
9. The Panel discussed if we could contact employers of non-compliant veterinary surgeons/nurses in order to offer them further support. At the moment only the Education Department has got access to the CPD record in 1CPD as it is important that the record is personal and private to the individual. It needs to be the individual's decision to share their record with their employer. 1CPD users can share their CPD by producing a pdf report which includes a summary or an excel report

with details of notes and reflections. Later this year 1CPD will also include a compliance certificate that members can download and present to employers/clients.

New Referrals

10. The group received a paper providing information about veterinary nurses that have been referred following the CPD audit. New referrals are contacted by phone to discuss the CPD requirement and offer advice and guidance. Following the phone call, they are asked to send their CPD record and plan if they are non-compliant.
11. The Panel agreed with the recommendations in the report and would receive a follow up at their next meeting in May.

CPD Pause Report

12. The Panel received and noted the CPD pause report.
13. The Panel suggested a follow up on any applications that were rejected to review if they were non-compliant with the CPD requirement. The panel felt that it could be beneficial to include information from the survey of the professions in relation to number of furloughs.

Action: JST to update the CPD pause Report for future meetings.

14. At the moment the panel felt that the CPD pause report should be a standing item on the agenda to monitor the situation and review the policy.

Any other business

15. There was no other business.

Next Meeting

16. The next meeting is planned for 26 May 2021.

Jenny Soreskog-Turp

January 2021

j.soreskog-turp@rcvs.org.uk

Summary	
Meeting	VN Council
Date	10 February 2021
Title	RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee Chair's Report to VN 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 s.neary@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0730</p> <p>Gemma Crossley Head of Professional Conduct g.crossley@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0740</p>

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	N/A

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Registered Veterinary Nurses Preliminary Investigation Committee

Chair's Report to VN Council

Introduction

1. Since the last Report to Veterinary Nurses Council, there have been five meetings of the RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee, which took place on 1 September, 1 October, 13 October, 24 November 2020 and 12 January 2021. The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 23 February 2021.

RVN Concerns received / registered

2. Between 5 August 2020 and 22 January 2021 there were 21 new concerns received against RVNs. Of these 21 new concerns:
 - Four were closed at Stage 1 of the concerns process.
 - Fifteen are currently under investigation by the Case Examiner Group (a veterinary nurse and lay member on RVN PIC and a Case Manager).
 - Two were referred to Stage 2 of the concerns process.

RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee

3. There have been five new concerns considered by the RVN PIC between 5 August 2020 and 22 January 2021. Three cases were closed with advice issued to the RVN. A decision on two linked cases involving the same Respondent was initially adjourned pending receipt of a formal signed statement from the Complainant and then referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee.

Ongoing Investigations

4. Three concerns are currently under investigation and these 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, the RVN PIC has referred three cases to the RVN Disciplinary Committee (two cases involve the same Respondent). The hearing relating to the first case has been listed to take place between 18 and 22 January 2021.

A disciplinary hearing took place on 2 and 3 November 2020 in respect of Paul Chaney. The Veterinary Nurse Disciplinary Committee found Mr Chaney guilty of disgraceful conduct in a professional capacity in relation to all seven of the charges. The Committee directed the Registrar to remove his name from the Register. Mr Chaney did not appeal the Committee's decision and his name was removed from the register on 10 December 2020.

Training

8. Two virtual training sessions were held in November, with training being delivered by the College's lawyers via Zoom. As it can be difficult to maintain concentration for prolonged periods in this format, these were half-day sessions attended by PIC members and Profcon staff. Among the topics covered were dishonesty (including allegations of lying to the regulator), relevant recent case law, requests by PIC for further information (legitimate enquiry vs "fishing expeditions") and social media.

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	10 February 2021
Title	RVN Disciplinary Committee Report to VN Council
Summary	Update of Disciplinary Committee since the last Council meeting held on 9 September 2020
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Author	Yemisi Yusuph Clerk to the Disciplinary Committee Tel: 020 7202 0729 Email: y.yusuph@rcvs.org.uk

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	N/A

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Veterinary Nurse Disciplinary Committee Hearings since the last Council Meeting on 9 September 2020

Background

1. Since the Veterinary Nurse Council Meeting on 9 September 2020, the Veterinary Nurse Disciplinary Committee have met twice to hear an Inquiry in relation to a Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN).

Hearings

Mr Paul Chaney RVN

1. On Monday 2 November and Tuesday 3 November, the RVN Committee met to hear an Inquiry into Mr Paul Chaney. The Inquiry was in relation to the unlawful administration and possession of veterinary medicines.
2. There was a total of 7 charges against Mr Chaney. The full charges can be found here:<https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/chaney-paul-november-2020-charges/>
3. From the outset of the hearing, Mr Chaney admitted all charges against him.
4. The Committee heard that Mr Chaney's conduct in relation to the first two charges were discovered when, in July 2018, the Department for the Environment Food & Rural Affairs (Defra), accompanied by police officers, executed a warrant upon the property where Mr Chaney lived with two others for unrelated matters. However, during the course of the search, police officers found Metacam and Trazadone (both prescription-only veterinary medicines) in Mr Chaney's bedroom which did not seem to have a prescription and so Defra officers launched an investigation. During the course of this investigation, a Defra investigator was also provided with video and messages relating to charges 1 and 2 that indicated Mr Chaney had administered the medication to a dog in frustration with the animal as it was being too noisy.
5. The Committee heard that, in November 2018, Mr Chaney accepted a police caution in relation to the matters subject to charges 1, 3 and 4. Furthermore it also heard the allegation that, in relation to charges 5 and 6, Mr Chaney, following the police attending his property and finding the medicines, went on to create false records at the practice in relation to the examination of his dog in order to justify his unlawful possession of the drugs.
6. In relation to the facts of charges 1 to 6, the Committee took into account the witness statements provided to the College, as well as Mr Chaney's own admissions made prior to the hearing and so found that these were proven. In relation to charge 7, while Mr Chaney admitted that his actions were misleading, his counsel argued that it was not dishonest because there was no financial gain from his conduct. The Committee, however, did not accept this argument and found charge 7 proven.

7. The Committee then went on to consider if the charges, taken both individually and in totality, amounted to serious professional misconduct.
8. Judith Way, chairing the Committee and speaking on its behalf, said: *“The Committee had no doubt that administering a sedative to an animal that required prescription by a veterinary surgeon and then failing to record it in the clinical record with the resultant risk to the animal’s welfare due to lack of knowledge of the administration fell far below the expected standard (charges 1 and 2). The Committee also considered that possession of prescription only medicines by a registered veterinary nurse, without the sanction of law, having stolen the same from a practice also fell far below the expected standard (charges 3, 4 and 5). The Committee also considered that tampering with the clinical record for a dog, in order to create a misleading impression and in doing so dishonestly, was conduct which fell far below the expected standard. Taken as a whole, the Committee considered that Mr Chaney’s conduct had fallen far below the expected standard.*
9. Accordingly, the Committee found him guilty of serious professional misconduct in relation to all seven charges.
10. *The full decision on facts and disgraceful conduct can be found here:* <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/chaney-paul-november-2020-decision-on-facts-and-disgraceful/>
11. The Committee went on to consider the appropriate sanction to impose on Mr Chaney, taking into account the aggravating and mitigating factors.
12. In considering the aggravating factors, the Committee took into account that Mr Chaney’s conduct had presented a risk of injury to the animal and that the conduct related to charges 1, 3, 4 and 5 was pre-meditated. Furthermore, Mr Chaney’s conduct involved a breach of trust with both the practice where he was employed and the owner of the Husky, abuse of position in gaining access to and stealing medication and that, because the charges related to two separate incidents, there was a common thread in Mr Chaney disregarding rules on veterinary medicines.
13. In mitigation, the Committee considered that Mr Chaney had reflected on and gained some insight on his behaviour, and acknowledged he had made admissions at the outset of the hearing, including apologising for and showing regret about aspects of his conduct. However, the Committee did not believe he had addressed his understanding of the effect that this conduct had on the risk to animals, the standards of the profession, or the maintenance of public confidence in the profession. In mitigation the Committee also considered a number of positive character references and his previous good character.
14. In speaking about the sanction Judith Way added: *“The Committee determined that it would not be sufficient in the circumstances of the case, to satisfy the public interest to suspend the Respondent’s registration. In its view this case involved a serious departure from identified professional standards. The disregard had been deliberate, in relation to ignoring legislation in respect of prescription-only medication and dishonesty in stealing medication. There was evidence of attitudinal issues in relation to that behaviour and insufficient evidence of the development of insight. The dishonesty in relation to the clinical record relating to dog O had been an attempt to conceal earlier dishonesty relating to the theft of the medication. In administering the Butorphanol to dog L, Mr Chaney had been putting his own interests in quieting the dog ahead of the dog’s interests, which would have required checking with a*

veterinary surgeon as to appropriate steps. The Committee acknowledged that, by directing removal, there would likely be professional reputational damage to Mr Chaney and possible financial loss. However, in the view of the Committee the requirements of the public interest outweighed these factors.”

15. Accordingly, the Registrar was directed to remove Mr Chaney’s name from the Register of Veterinary Nurses.
16. *The full decision on sanction can be found here: [Chaney, Paul, November 2020, Decision on Sanction - Professionals \(rcvs.org.uk\)](#)*

Karen Tracey Hancock RVN

17. Between Monday 18 January 2021 and Thursday 21 January 2021, the RVN Disciplinary Committee met to hear the inquiry into Mrs Karen Hancock. This hearing was held remotely via Zoom.
18. The first two charges against Mrs Hancock were in relation to an injury she falsely claimed she sustained to her knee while moving a euthanised dog on 13 August 2015 that was then exacerbated while moving another dog on 29 August.
19. The third charge was in relation to the proceedings which were brought against Mrs Hancock in the County Court for damages in respect of the alleged injury referred to in charge 1:
 - (a) issued a claim notification form dated 22 January 2016 stating that you had sustained a knee injury caused by your work at the practice in August 2015;
 - (b) signed a statement dated 30 June 2017 stating that you had sustained a knee injury at work on 13 August 2015 which had then been aggravated at work on the 29 August 2015
 - (c) issued Particulars of Claim dated 13 July 2018 stating that you had sustained a knee injury caused by your work at the Practice on 13 August 2015
20. *The full charges can be found here: [Hancock, Karen Tracey, Charges - Professionals \(rcvs.org.uk\)](#)*
21. Mrs Hancock was not legally represented in this matter, nor was she present for the for the proceedings. Prior to the hearing, she had indicated via email, that she would be absent and was content for the inquiry to be conducted in her absence. She maintained communication with the Clerk throughout, and submitted some evidence that she requested that the Committee considered.
22. The Committee first had to establish whether the facts of the charges could be proved. In determining this, the Committee took into account the fact that the County Court claim which

had been made by Mrs Hancock was listed for a trial and concluded with a consent order dated 21 June 2019 which stated that the claim had been dismissed.

23. The Committee heard evidence from two eyewitnesses regarding the two alleged events that led to and exacerbated her knee injury in August 2015. After hearing from both eyewitnesses, the Committee determined that although Mrs Hancock did have an injury to her right knee, this was due to a horse-riding incident a number of years earlier and that her account of the incidents on 13 and 29 August 2015, and therefore her claims to have been caused injury by them, were false and that her conduct had been dishonest.
24. The Committee therefore found all charges against Mrs Hancock proven.
25. *The decision on the finding of facts can be found here: [Hancock, Karen Tracey, Decision on Findings of Fact - Professionals \(rcvs.org.uk\)](#)*
26. The Committee then went on to determine whether the charges proven amounted to serious professional misconduct. The Committee listened to submissions by Counsel for the RCVS, which suggested that there were a number of aggravating factors in Mrs Hancock's conduct. This included the fact that the misconduct was sustained over a long period of time, was premeditated and involved lying for financial gain.
27. *"The Committee found all of the aggravating factors set out... in this case applied to its decision on whether or not the conduct amounted to disgraceful conduct in a professional respect. Such conduct would bring the profession of veterinary nurses into disrepute and would undermine public confidence in the profession because the dishonesty was directly concerned with the respondent's work as a veterinary nurse in the veterinary practice."*
28. *"The Committee concluded that the dishonest behaviour was serious misconduct, particularly so because it took place at the respondent's workplace. It considered that honesty and trust between veterinary nurses and their employers is essential to the profession and that such conduct as set out in the charges would be considered deplorable by other members of the profession."*
29. The Committee was therefore satisfied that all four charges individually and cumulatively amounted to serious professional misconduct.
30. *The full decision on disgraceful conduct can be found here: [Hancock, Karen Tracey, Decision on Disgraceful Conduct in a Professional Respect - Professionals \(rcvs.org.uk\)](#)*
31. After finding that Mrs Hancock's actions amounted to serious professional misconduct, the Committee went on to consider the appropriate sanction to impose. They took into account the aggravating factors, including a lack of insight in that, in correspondence before the hearing,

she continued to deny the charges. In mitigation, the Committee noted that there had been a significant lapse of time and that she had a long and hitherto unblemished career.

32. In conclusion, the Committee decided that removal from the Register was the appropriate and proportionate sanction and requested Mrs Hancock be removed from the Register, particularly as dishonesty is considered 'in the top spectrum of gravity' for misconduct.
33. *The full decision on sanction can be found here: [Hancock, Karen Tracey, Decision on Sanction - Professionals \(rcvs.org.uk\)](#)*

Upcoming DCs

1. There is one case listed to be heard before the Veterinary Nurse Disciplinary Committee in March 2021.

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	10 February 2021
Title	VN Register Report
Summary	<p>This paper provides the following statistics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The number of registered veterinary nurses as at 3 February 2021, showing removals on 1 February for non-payment of the annual fee. Figures for the previous five years are also included. b. New registrations for the calendar years 2015- 2020. The figures for 2016 - 2020 also show the qualification route of the new registrants. c. New student enrolments per academic year d. Number of veterinary nurses undertaking a Period of Supervised Practice (PSP)
Decisions required	none
Attachments	none
Author	<p>Annette Amato</p> <p>Deputy Head of Veterinary Nursing</p> <p>020 7202 0713</p> <p>a.amato@rcvs.org.uk</p>

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

¹Classifications 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.

²Classification rationales

Confidential	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To allow the Committee or Council to come to a view itself, before presenting to and/or consulting with others 2. To maintain the confidence of another organisation 3. To protect commercially sensitive information 4. To maintain public confidence in and/or uphold the reputation of the veterinary professions and/or the RCVS
Private	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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

Veterinary Nurses Register

Number of registered VNs

	20/01/2016	18/01/2017	18/01/2018	24/01/2019	04/02/2020	03/02/2021
Number of Registered Veterinary Nurses	13164	14337	15449	16864	18246	18882
Number of Nurses removed for non-payment of annual fee (annually – carried out in January)	688 <i>(173 restored to register by 20/01/2016)</i>	247 <i>(17 restored to register by 18/01/2017)</i>	296 <i>(59 restored to register by 18/01/2018)</i>	450 <i>(124 restored to register by 24/01/2019)</i>	409 <i>(84 restored to register by 04/02/2020)</i>	313 <i>(32 restored to register by 04/02/2020)</i>

Number of admissions to the register (new registrants for the calendar year)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
UK Further Education qualification		719	945	1197	1081	483
UK Higher Education qualification		400	401	406	503	445
Overseas qualification		90	89	78	62	41
Total new registrations	1140	1209	1435	1681	1646	969

Student enrolments for each academic year (from 1 July to 30 June)

Student Enrolments	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020
	1630	1797	1935	1990	2109	1860

Period of Supervised Practice (PSP)

Number of nurses commencing a Period of Supervised Practice

Period of Supervised Practice commenced	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
	46	44	40	34	21