

Veterinary Nurses Council
Wednesday 21 May 2025 at 9.30am to be held remotely by Microsoft Teams

Agenda		Classification¹	Rationale²
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 26 February 2025 i. Unclassified minutes ii. Classified appendix	Unclassified Confidential	n/a 1,2,3,4
5.	Matters arising	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
6.	CEO update	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
Matters for decision by VN Council and for report (unclassified items)			
7.	VN Education Committee		
	7.01 Minutes of meeting held on 12 February 2025 i. Unclassified minutes ii. Classified appendix	Unclassified Confidential	n/a 2,3
	7.02 Minutes of meeting held on 23 April 2025 i. Unclassified minutes ii. Classified appendix	Unclassified Confidential	n/a 2,3
8.	Review of the Post-Registration Framework for Veterinary Nursing	Unclassified Classified Appendix	n/a 1,4
9.	Continuing Professional Development (CPD)		

	9.01 CPD Buddies	Unclassified	
Matters for note			
10.	Report on registration of VNs educated outside the UK	Unclassified	n/a
11.	Report on temporary student enrolments	Unclassified	n/a
12.	Reports from RCVS Committees		
	12.01 RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee Annual Report	Unclassified	n/a
	12.02 Standards Committee	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
	12.03 Advancement of the Professions Committee	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
	12.04 RVN Disciplinary Committee	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
13.	Communications report	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
14.	VN Council membership 14.01 Confirmation of membership 14.02 Thanks to retiring members	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
15.	Any other business (unclassified)	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
16.	Date of next meeting Wednesday 17 September 2025	Oral report Unclassified	n/a

Confidential and private items (closed session)			
17.	Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2025/2026	Oral report	
18.	Policy and Public Affairs update	Oral report	
19.	Continuing Professional Development (CPD)		
	19.01 Minutes of the VetGDP and CPD Compliance Subcommittee	Confidential	1,4
	19.02 Minutes of the VetGDP and CPD Engagement Group	Confidential	1,2,4
	19.03 Continuing Professional Development compliance	Confidential	1
20.	VN Education Committee (VNEC) confidential items		
	20.01 Confidential items from meeting of 12 February 2025 (see item 7.01 classified appendix)	Confidential	2,3
	20.02 Confidential items from meeting of 23 April 2025 (see item 7.02 classified appendix)	Confidential	2,3
21.	Risk Register 21.01 Update on changes since the previous meeting 21.02 Items identified from the meeting to add to Risk Register	Confidential Oral report	1,2,3,4
22.	Items for RCVS Committees	Oral report	
23.	Any other business (confidential items)	Oral report	
	Annette Amato Secretary, VN Council 0207 202 0713 / a.amato@rcvs.org.uk /		

¹Classifications explained

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²Classification rationales

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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	21 May 2025
Title	Minutes of meeting of Veterinary Nurses Council held on 26 February 2025
Summary	Minutes of meeting of Veterinary Nurses Council (VNC) held on 26 February 2025
Decisions required	To approve the unclassified minutes and classified appendix
Attachments	Classified appendix (confidential)
Author	Annette Amato Secretary a.amato@rcvs.org.uk 020 7222 0713

Classifications

Document	Classification ¹	Rationales ²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	Confidential	1,2,3,4

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Veterinary Nurses Council

Minutes of the meeting held at the Royal College of Nursing, 20 Cavendish Square, London W1G 0RN, on Wednesday 26 February 2025

Members:

Mrs Belinda Andrews-Jones	Chair
*Miss Jessica Beckett	
Miss Linda Belton	Officer Team observer (non-voting)
Mrs Anita Bickerdike	
Ms Jessica Franklin	
Ms Lisa Grainger	
Mrs Susan Howarth	Vice-Chair
Mr Tim Hutchinson	
Dr Zara Kennedy	
*Mrs Katherine Kissick	
*Mr Matthew Rendle	Vice-Chair
*Ms Stephanie Richardson	
Mr Simon Williams	
Mrs Kirsty Young	
*Denotes absent	
^Denotes remote	

In attendance:

Mrs Annette Amato	Committee Secretary
Mr Luke Bishop	Media and Publications Manager (open session only)
Dr Vicki Bolton	Research Manager (pm session only)
Mrs Julie Dugmore	Director of Veterinary Nursing
Miss Shirley Gibbins	VN Qualifications Lead
Mrs Victoria Hedges	VN Examinations Quality Lead
^Ms Lizzie Lockett	Chief Executive
Mrs Jill Macdonald	VN Futures Project Lead
Mr Ben Myring	Head of Policy, Insight, and Public Affairs
Mr Simon Wiklund	Head of Legal Services/Assistant Registrar

Guests: (open session only)

^Mr Allister Webb	Veterinary Business Development
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Apologies for absence

1. Apologies for absence had been received from Jessica Beckett, Katherine Kissick, Matthew Rendle and Stephanie Richardson.

Declarations of interest

2. Kirsty Young had been appointed as a VN validation/Accreditation Consultant by Grimsby Technical Institute. This would be notified to the committee secretary for updating on the website.

Obituaries

3. No written obituaries had been received. Council, staff and guests stood to observe a minute's silence for all members of the professions who had passed away since the last meeting.

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2024

4. The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2024 were approved as a correct record.

Matters arising

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

CEO update

6. The CEO gave a brief an oral update on recent activities.
7. The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) had recently published its working papers, and these had been looked at in detail by the RCVS working group, which included Kathy Kissick as a VN Council representative. There would be a hearing for the RCVS on 14 March, followed by a written submission to be sent to CMA by 21 March. One of the themes emerging was a suggestion to allow veterinary nurses to carry out a wider range of tasks than at present, to deliver cost-effective veterinary care. Although the RCVS was supportive of developing the veterinary nursing role, it was necessary to ensure that this was in an appropriate context, and that veterinary nurses should not just be considered a cheap resource. The CMA may not be willing to wait for the introduction of new legislation to facilitate its proposals, and the RCVS was therefore looking at actions that could be taken under current legislation, as well as proposals for the future.
8. Work on the new RCVS premises was nearing completion, and the building should be open to visitors in the summer. There were currently meetings taking place, including the Senior Team and a staff-led culture group, to ensure that all needs were met. The building was intended to be a Royal College, for use by the professions, as well as office space for staff. The current RCVS policy on working from home and flexible working would continue.
9. There had been discussions at RCVS Council in January on the proposed Strategy Plan, following which the plan had been sent to a range of stakeholder organisations for confidential review and comment. The plan had also been reviewed by the RCVS Public Advisory Group. The revised version of the plan would be put to Council in March and if accepted would then be developed for publication.

Veterinary Nurse Education Committee (VNEC)

10. Susan Howarth, Chair of the VNEC, presented the minutes of the meeting of the VNEC held on 12 December 2024 and highlighted a few key points.
11. The Apprenticeship Standards review was well underway, with key VN team members being involved in the group, to ensure adherence to the regulation requirements.
12. The Veterinary Nurses Day held in Bristol in early December had been very successful, with 126 newly registered veterinary nurses attending, as well as eight nurses who had achieved the Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (CertAVN).
13. The review of the CertAVN Standards was well underway, and the consultation would close at the end of February.
14. The Committee had been provided with many reports on quality monitoring and action plan monitoring carried out by the VN Qualifications team, and had noted a number of small programme changes.
15. Council ratified the Minutes of the VNEC held on 12 December 2024.

Accreditation Standards

16. The VNEC Chair presented a paper setting out a proposed addition to the existing Accreditation Standards for Veterinary Nursing that had been discussed at the recent VNEC meeting on 12 February 2025. The Chair explained the background to the paper. The majority of veterinary nurses joining the Register achieved their licence to practise qualification by the further education (FE) route. She outlined that there were numerous colleges (delivery sites) delivering these qualifications that were accredited by a few Awarding Organisations (AOs). In recent years there had been a significant number of FE delivery sites transferring between AOs. In some cases, the imposition of sanctions by the existing AO may have been one of the reasons for transfer, and problems may be difficult to identify before the transfer took place, leading to difficulties for AOs and students later on. The request for an additional requirement to the Standards had been initiated by the AOs.
17. The RCVS legal and governance teams had both been consulted on the proposed wording for the new requirement, which would be applicable and relevant to all Accredited Education Institutions, both further and higher education, and would be of benefit to students. VNEC had been in support of the additional standard, and the Director of Veterinary Nursing (DoVN) added that the wording had been acceptable to the FE external expert on the VNEC, who was very familiar with the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) requirements.
18. In response to queries from members regarding the provision of evidence in respect of communications, the DoVN confirmed that this would be addressed at accreditation visits and routine auditing activity would be carried out as for other standards and requirements, and any concerns raised would be brought to the attention of the VNEC.

19. At the conclusion of the discussion, Council agreed unanimously to ratify the inclusion of the following Standard into the Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training:
- 2.17 Where a delivery site chooses to transfer Accredited Education Institution (AEI), there must be effective communication between the AEIs regarding the risk status of the delivery site, to include any sanctions that may be in place, or any specific areas of concern.
- The accompanying guidance, as set out in the paper, was also approved.

Reports from RCVS Committees

Registered Veterinary Nurse Preliminary Investigation Committee (RVN PIC)

20. Council noted the report of the work of the RVN PIC since the last report in November 2024.

Advancement of the Professions Committee (APC)

21. There was no update from the APC on this occasion.

Standards Committee

22. In the absence of the VN Council representative on the Standards Committee, the update from the committee meeting on 12 February 2025 had been uploaded into the VN Council Library area in BoardEffect, for information.

VN Disciplinary Committee

23. There had been no meetings of the VN Disciplinary Committee since the last VN Council meeting.

Communications report

24. The Media and Publications Manager reported on recent veterinary nursing related activities.
25. The consultation deadline for the CertAVN Standards Framework would be Monday 3 March, and the forthcoming edition of *RCVS News* would include a final reminder for responses.
26. The next edition of the *VN Education* e-newsletter was under development, due for publication in early April. The content would include information on reasonable adjustments, which was due to be discussed later in the meeting, as well as information on the review of the Nursing Progress Log (NPL), an update on the VN Vision work and the Academy's Clinical Supervisor training course.
27. The comms team was due to be involved in several outreach events in the near future, including National Careers Week and British Science Week, where information and materials would be provided on veterinary careers. The Outreach and Engagement Manager had requested that any Council members who would be interested in supporting the outreach programme, or know of a

good role model, should get in touch, to provide blogs or videos on their career journey, as well as magazine articles and social media content.

28. The Mind Matters Initiative would be opening its second round of research grants at the beginning of March.
29. The comms team was currently preparing social media posts and interviews for the forthcoming International Women's Day on 8 March, and some posts for the end of LGBT History Month.
30. The launch of the Reasonable Adjustments campaign was imminent, the first stage of the campaign would be to raise awareness of reasonable adjustments, to encourage conversations about reasonable adjustments in veterinary workplaces, and to share resources and materials.
31. The next Veterinary Nurses Day would take place on 7 May 2024 at St George's Hall in Liverpool, and the guest speaker would be Joy Howell RVN.

VN Council election 2025

32. The Veterinary Nurses Council election period would run from mid-March to Friday 26 April. There were three candidates standing for the two places. The profession had been invited to submit questions for the candidates by the end of February, and each candidate would be invited to answer two questions of their choice, to be included with their election profiles.

VN Register report

33. Council noted a report showing statistics on the total number of registered veterinary nurses, including the number of new registrations annually for the calendar years 2019 – 2024, and removals in January 2025 for non-payment of the annual fee. Data was also provided for the number of student enrolments for the past six academic years, and the number of those enrolling for a Period of Supervised Practice, having been unregistered for a period of five years or more.

Any other business (unclassified)

34. No items were raised.

Date of next meeting

35. The next meeting of Council would be held on Wednesday 21 May 2025. This would be a remote meeting starting at 9.30am.

Summary

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Veterinary Nurse Education Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2025 held remotely via Teams

Members:	* Mrs Sarah Batt-Williams	HE veterinary nursing provider
	Mrs Donna Cotton	Employer representative
	Ms Lisa Grainger	VN Council lay member
	* Mrs Sarah Holman	FE veterinary nursing provider
	Mrs Susan Howarth	VN Council veterinary nurse (Chair)
	Ms Helen King	FE Independent regulatory expert
	Miss Georgina Larkin	Student representative – FE sector
	Miss Betsy Malamah-Thomas	Employer representative
	* Mrs Sarah Reynolds-Golding	HE independent regulatory expert
	Miss Marie Rippingale	FE veterinary nursing provider
	Miss Gemma Thirkettle	Student representative – HE sector
	Mrs Perdi Welsh	Post-registration veterinary nurse provider

*absent

In attendance:	Mrs Annette Amato	Committee Secretary
	Miss Lucy Blampied	Qualifications Officer
	Mrs Jasmine Curtis	Qualifications Assessor
	Mrs Julie Dugmore	Director of Veterinary Nursing
	Miss Shirley Gibbins	Qualifications Lead (QL)
	Mrs Sophie Geake	Qualifications Assessor
	Miss Abigayle Gomez	Senior Qualifications Officer
	Mrs Victoria Hedges	VN Examinations Quality Lead (VNEQL)
	Ms Tori Thornton	Qualifications Assessor
	Mrs Kirsty Williams	Education Quality Improvement Manager

Apologies for absence

1. Apologies for absence were received from Sarah Batt-Williams, Sarah Holman and Sarah Reynolds-Golding.

Declarations of interest

2. The following declarations of interest were made, relevant to items on the agenda:
 - Perdi Welsh and Sarah Batt-Williams – employed at Royal Veterinary College
 - Susan Howarth – employed at Harper Adams University

However, the items on these institutions included in the agenda were matters for note only.

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee (VNEC) 12 December 2024

3. The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2024 as a correct record.

Matters arising

4. There were no matters arising from the previous minutes other than those which were covered throughout the agenda.

Report from RCVS Education Committee

5. The Chair reported that at the last meeting of the RCVS Education Committee, the Director of Education had identified that there was a gap in the market for postgraduate conferences for vets. As a result, a postgraduate education symposium was being planned, to include postgraduate vets and veterinary nurses. The symposium would take place on 17 – 19 November, to coincide with the London Vet Show. Four streams were being planned:

- Graduation transition into the workforce
- Advanced training – interns and residencies
- Continuing education and CPD
- Licensure and assessment

It was hoped that the symposium would include members from Canada, the USA and Europe.

6. The Director of Veterinary Nursing (DoVN) added that the symposium would be self-funding, and the budget was currently being planned. The Director of Education had prepared an editorial for inclusion in various veterinary journals, and the Chair and DoVN would prepare a VN editorial which would also be included in the Spring edition of the *VN Education* newsletter.
7. The Committee endorsed the proposals and agreed this was an exciting development.

Operational update

8. The Director of Veterinary Nursing (DoVN) provided an update on recent activities and issues of note:
9. **Educator forums.** In 2024, the face-to-face educator forums for licence to practise and post-registration qualifications had been re-introduced and these would continue in the current year. As a result of feedback, these would take place over a longer day, with opportunities for networking. The dates planned were:
 - Tuesday 17 June 2025 – to be held at Myerscough College. Lancashire.
 - Saturday 2 November 2025 – at the new RCVS premises in Hardwick Street, London.

The DoVN and Qualifications Lead (QL) are currently working on planning the agenda items, with the theme being wellbeing and support.

10. **Applications for registration.** There had been no applications requiring consideration of reduced clinical hours from students who had completed their training, since the previous meeting of the committee.
11. **Apprenticeship Standard.** The working groups were on track with their work, and further meetings were scheduled to take place in March and April, with the intention that the Standard and the End Point Assessment (EPA) would be ready for introduction by the end of May.
12. **Veterinary Nurses Day.** The next Veterinary Nurses Day was scheduled for Wednesday 7 May, in St George's Hall, Liverpool. Invitations would be sent to newly registered Diploma (Further Education) nurses, those achieving the Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing, and those who have recently returned to the register following completion of a Period of Supervised Practice (PSP)
13. **Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (CertAVN) review.** The consultation on the CertAVN Standards was ongoing and would close at the end of February. 168 responses had been received to date. The working group would meet on 7 March to review the responses.
14. **VN Futures.** The VN Vision events had now been completed, so that the data could be analysed. The DoVN and RCVS VN Futures Lead had conducted a thematic analysis of the data and had identified five over-arching headings with key themes included. The next steps would be to prepare a report and project outcomes.

Matters for decision - Licence to practise qualifications

Re-accreditations

See confidential appendix paras. 1 - 9

University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)

15. The Committee reviewed and discussed the accreditation report and action plan and agreed to grant full accreditation for five years for the FdSc in Veterinary Nursing.

Accreditation Standards

16. The Committee was presented with a paper setting out a proposed addition to the existing Accreditation Standards. It had been noted that in recent years, there had been a significant number of Further Education (FE) delivery sites transferring between Awarding Organisations (AOs). If the delivery site was choosing to move due to the imposition of sanctions by its existing AO, the new AO currently had little or no opportunity to identify

these risks prior to approval of the delivery site. AOs had asked the RCVS to mitigate the risk.

17. It was noted that although the issue had been flagged by AOs, the situation could also arise with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The intention of the new requirement was to allow for additional safeguards when delivery sites were transferring between AEs, and ensure any issues were clearly communicated prior to approval. Advice had been sought from the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) and had been discussed with AOs, as well as the RCVS Governance Manager and the legal team.
18. The proposed addition was welcomed, and it was felt that this was a good step in protecting the learners. It was also noted that this would fall within the remit of the RCVS, to have public and patient welfare at heart. The Committee was in full agreement with the proposed additional standard which will be presented to VNC for approval.

Matters for note - Licence to practise qualifications

Academic Integrity – ENQA Working Group

19. The Education Quality Improvement Manager (EQIM) provided a link to a report produced by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) working group on academic integrity, on which she had had been a member. The working group had been established in 2020 and had invited all ENQA members to submit data and case examples, and the contributions had been collated and analysed. The report had been published in October 2024 as a resource for the ENQA community and any other interested parties, providing an overview of the research that had been carried out.
20. Following the publication of the paper, the EQIM had looked with the relevant RCVS departments at academic integrity in both the veterinary and the veterinary nursing Standards. The veterinary nursing Standards already incorporated academic integrity within the guidance, which also incorporates artificial intelligence. The veterinary education committee had decided to introduce a new standard to address this. The paper was provided to the committee for information at present.
21. The Chair agreed that the VN standards did already weave academic integrity into the Standards, and it was also noted that the wording was explicitly referenced in Standard 5.10 as a mandated expectation. The DoVN added that she would be reluctant to move to the addition of a new Standard covering this, when it was already incorporated throughout. This could be kept under review. The Committee was completely in support of this view, and felt this was a helpful approach for AEs. It was also noted that this aspect is always included in discussion at pre-accreditation support visits, particularly in relation to Standard 5.

Pre-accreditation support

22. The Qualifications Lead (QL) presented a paper setting out the current position in respect of the pre-accreditation support package for AEIs, which was now moving into a routine phase following the completion of all initial visits. Information was provided on the recent support visits which had been undertaken, and those planned for early 2025. Feedback continued to be overwhelmingly positive, and the move with current providers was now starting to be towards more tailored support. A small error in the paper included in the boardpack was reported, and the corrected version would be added to the pack after the meeting.
23. It was noted that feedback and quality assurance processes had been developed for the support visits, and these would be conducted by the EQIM moving forward.
24. A member commented that the work was a real testament to those involved, and it seemed that the visits were very positive and interactive. A suggestion was made that this approach might be shared with other bodies such as the Care Quality Commission. The QL had presented the work to a European conference in November 2024, and it had also been discussed with the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at a recent meeting.
25. The EQIM commented that she had seen a very significant difference in her observations of accreditation visits over the past five years. The support had undoubtedly been much appreciated and had helped AEIs to be well prepared, and to feel valued. Accreditation events were seen as a collaborative exercise. This was endorsed by the committee, and it was also commented that working with an approachable regulator is a very positive aspect for AEIs.
26. The DoVN added that she had carried out research before introducing the support package. As the RCVS was not the only regulator with this type of system, it may be useful to reach out to the other organisations with similar packages to see how they have evolved, and to share experiences. The DoVN was pleased to see the visits moving towards a more tailored approach.

Programme changes

See confidential appendix para. 10

27. **Royal Veterinary College (RVC).** The Committee had considered and accepted a programme change for the FdSC Veterinary Nursing.

Action plan monitoring accreditation/re-accreditation

28. Oral updates were provided on the action plan monitoring and progress for the following:
 - Aberystwyth University
 - Coventry University
 - Middlesex University
 - Ulster University

Quality Monitoring activities

29. The Committee was provided with papers detailing the quality monitoring activities, actions and risk ratings, for the following Accredited Education Institutions (AEIs):
- University of Greenwich (Plumpton College)
 - University of South Wales

See confidential appendix para. 11

Action plan quality monitoring

30. Oral updates were provided on the monitoring of action plans and future planned actions for the following AEIs:
- VetSkill Limited
 - Coventry University
 - Hartpury University
 - Harper Adams University
 - University of Bristol
 - University of Portsmouth
 - Wrexham University

VN Pre-Registration Examination Board

31. The VNEQL presented the report of the Pre-registration Examination Board which met on 6 December 2024 to consider the results of the Pre-registration theory (Multiple Choice) examination held on 15 and 20 November 2024. The minutes highlighted that the majority of candidates passed the examination at the first attempt, and re-sit candidates were generally also successful.

Items for publication

32. The next edition of *VN Education* was due to be published in April. The team was working on items for that newsletter. Information would be included on the postgraduate education symposium and there would be an article on the Mind Matters Initiative (MMI) student wellbeing work.

Any other business

See confidential appendix para. 12

Meeting dates 2025

33. The meetings dates were confirmed as follows:
- Wednesday 23 April
 - Thursday 26 June (in person, full day meeting venue to be confirmed)
 - Tuesday 19 August
 - Tuesday 21 October
 - Wednesday 17 December

Remote meetings would start at 9.30am, and the in-person meeting in June would start at 10.30am.

Summary

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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 Donna Cotton	Employer representative
	Ms Lisa Grainger	VN Council lay member
	Mrs Sarah Holman	FE veterinary nursing provider
	* Mrs Susan Howarth	VN Council veterinary nurse (Chair)
	Ms Helen King	FE Independent regulatory expert
	* Miss Georgina Larkin	Student representative – FE sector
	* Miss Betsy Malamah-Thomas	Employer representative
	Mrs Sarah Reynolds-Golding	HE independent regulatory expert (Deputy Chair)
	Miss Marie Rippingale	FE veterinary nursing provider
	Miss Gemma Thirkettle	Student representative – HE sector
	Mrs Perdi Welsh	Post-registration veterinary nurse provider

*absent

In attendance:	Mrs Annette Amato	Committee Secretary
	Miss Lucy Blampied	Qualifications Officer
	Mrs Julie Dugmore	Director of Veterinary Nursing (DoVN)
	Miss Shirley Gibbins	Qualifications Lead (QL)
	Miss Abigayle Gomez	Senior Qualifications Officer
	Mrs Victoria Hedges	VN Examinations Quality Lead (VNEQL)
	Ms Tori Thornton	Qualifications Assessor
	Mrs Kirsty Williams	Education Quality Improvement Manager

Apologies for absence

1. Apologies for absence were received from Susan Howarth, Georgina Larkin and Betsy Malamah-Thomas. The meeting was chaired by Sarah Reynolds-Golding (Deputy Chair).

Declarations of interest

2. The following members declared interests relevant to items on the agenda:
 - Central Qualifications (CQ) accreditation - Marie Rippingale (training provider for CQ qualification) Sarah Holman (former examiner and training provider for CQ) and Gemma Thirkettle (involved in review of CQ's pre-accreditation evidence).

- Royal Veterinary College (RVC) accreditation - Perdi Welsh and Sarah Batt-Williams (employed by RVC).

These members would leave the meeting for the relevant item. It was confirmed that despite the members leaving the discussion, the committee would be quorate for these items.

- University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) - Sarah Reynolds-Golding noted that she had been involved in providing consultancy to UCLan, but not related to the programme being considered on the agenda.

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee (VNEC) 12 February 2025

3. The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2025 as a correct record.

Matters arising

4. There were no matters arising from the previous minutes other than those which were covered throughout the agenda.

Operational update

5. The Director of Veterinary Nursing (DoVN) provided an update on recent activities and issues of note:

Apprenticeship Standard.

See confidential appendix para.1

6. **Veterinary Nurses Day.** The next Veterinary Nurses Day was scheduled for Wednesday 7 May, in St George's Hall, Liverpool. There had been a good response from newly registered nurses, although despite additional efforts to encourage those achieving the Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (CertAVN) to participate, so far only one CertAVN nurse had registered to attend.
7. **VN Vision.** Following completion of the VN Vision events and analysis of the data, there had been a good feedback session with Veterinary Nurses Council at its Awayday in early April. VN Council had also discussed the proposals for legislative reform, prior to discussions with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to be held in late April and early May. The DoVN and VN Futures Project Lead would be disseminating the summary results and obtaining stakeholder engagement for the first project, delivering at the Veterinary Management Group (VMG) congress later in the week, as well as delivering at a number of other congresses throughout the year. There would also be a paper prepared for publication, as well as a short report and visual presentation of the results.

8. **Reasonable adjustments.** The guidance on reasonable adjustments that had been approved by VN Council and the VN Education Committee (VNEC) had now been sent out to all training providers and was being prepared for the website by the comms team.
9. **Applications for registration.** There had been no applications requiring consideration of reduced clinical hours from students who had completed their training, since the previous meeting of the committee. This was the final year when students whose training hours may have been affected by the pandemic would be completing, and although the guidance was still in place, this would be reviewed, and probably removed, at the end of the year. Overall, there had been very few students who had been unable to complete the 1800 clinical hours.
10. **Registrar.** The new Registrar, Claire Paget, had joined the College at the end of March and the DoVN hoped to be able in due course to review the Registration Rules. This was welcomed by several members of the committee, who commented that a review of the hours from an equity perspective, in terms of access and participation, would be appropriate and would influence future curriculum design. It was reported that some students face challenges with the completion of placement hours. There was a need to determine how many clinical hours were realistically required in order to gain competence and confidence. The DoVN confirmed that this would form part of the review of the Day One Skills.
11. **Nursing Progress Log (NPL).** The review of the NPL was moving forward following many discussions, and it was hoped that the target for a launch in September 2025 was still on track.
12. A member queried whether it was possible to audit the NPL to discover how long it takes the majority of students to complete, suggesting that such data could be useful when reviewing the requirements of the registration rules.. The DoVN confirmed that the revised version of the NPL would enable students to log their clinical hours, but this did not necessarily reflect the time they were taking to complete their training. The DoVN agreed to speak to the NPL developers, to see whether it might be possible to obtain data on the length of time between the student first opening the NPL, and completion, so that some analysis could be undertaken.
13. **RCVS Academy.** The second phase of the Academy's VN Accreditation and Quality Monitoring course was now ready for launch, covering the Quality Monitoring specific elements, and the Clinical Supervisor course was under review and development. Some live sessions had been delivered to clinical supervisors, and the feedback from these sessions was informing the development. An in-person Clinical Supervisor training course had been developed following these sessions, and would be delivered in the upcoming educator forum and also at the British Veterinary Nursing Association (BVNA) congress. The VN team had also been supporting Veterinary Nursing Awareness Month, with weekly Academy Live sessions.
14. **RCVS premises.** Work was almost completed on the new RCVS premises in Hardwick Street, and it was hoped that the next meeting of the committee would take place there.

The venue would be confirmed in the next few weeks. The staff would be moving into the new building at the end of May.

15. **Educator forums.** The programme for the conference on 17 June at Myerscough College was currently being finalised, and the focus was on wellbeing and mental health. The Eventbrite booking system had now gone live. The next event was due to take place on 29 October 2025, hopefully at the new RCVS premises in Hardwick Street, London.

Report from RCVS Education Committee

16. This item was deferred to the next meeting of the committee.

Matters for decision - Licence to practise qualifications

Accreditations and Reaccreditations

17. *See confidential appendix paras. 2 - 25*

The committee reviewed and discussed reports and action plans and took the following decisions:

18. **Central Qualifications**

Full accreditation for five years for the following programmes:

- Central Qualifications Diploma in Veterinary Nursing – Small Animal
- Central Qualifications Diploma in Veterinary Nursing – Equine

19. **Royal Veterinary College**

Full accreditation for five years for the following programme:

- FdSc Veterinary Nursing

20. **Ulster University**

Provisional accreditation for the following programme:

- BSc (Hons) Veterinary Nursing (with Diploma in Professional Practice)

Programme changes

21. *See confidential appendix paras. 26 - 27*

Changes to the following programmes were noted and agreed:

22. **University of Glasgow – Scotland's Rural College (SRUC):**

- Scottish BSc in Veterinary Nursing
- Scottish BSc (Hons) in Veterinary Nursing

23. **University of Portsmouth**

- FdSc Veterinary Nursing Science

Matters for decision - Post-registration qualifications

Post-registration framework review

24. The Post Registration Framework for Veterinary Nursing had been reviewed as part of the routine five-year review process by a small working group established by VN Council, chaired by Simon Williams from VN Council. VNEC members Lisa Grainger and Perdi Welsh had been part of the group.
25. The review had commenced with a public consultation, run over six weeks. There had been a good response, with 183 responses in total. The committee was provided with a summary of the consultation process from start to finish, together with the following:
 - Collated responses
 - Summary of changes and working group decisions
 - Proposed revised framework

Comments and questions had been left in the document with tracked changes, so the committee was able to see the full process. Full guidance would be developed to accompany the framework and requirements once approved by Veterinary Nurses Council.
26. The proposal was that as per the precedent with the licence to practise framework, there would be a grace period for Accredited Education Institutions (AEIs) undergoing accreditation and quality monitoring activities during the academic year 2024/25. AEIs with accreditation events scheduled in the academic year 2025/26, would be assessed against the updated framework. This approach would ensure AEIs did not have to re-submit applications or be concerned that they were being assessed against a framework with which they were unfamiliar.
27. It was also proposed that any quality monitoring activities carried out prior to 1 September 2025 would be completed against the existing framework, with all AEIs being reminded that compliance against the new framework would be expected moving forward.
28. The committee agreed that the revised framework was robust and unanimously agreed that the proposal should be put forward to VN Council for ratification.
29. There was considerable discussion on the proposed timeline for implementation, with concerns raised regarding the providers' committee structures and timing of the committees that would need to make course modifications based on the changes in the standards over a very busy period for universities, followed by the summer break and the start of the new academic year.
30. The QL pointed out that the proposed timeline was the same as that used for the licence to practise (LtP) standards that had been introduced the previous year, and that the RCVS would take a supportive approach, with training sessions, a support package and additional

guidance that had not been offered previously. The DoVN added that although the publication of the formal document on the website may take a while, the document could be sent to all those that needed it, as soon as approval had been granted by VN Council, along with the offer of a support package.

31. The Chair added that a number of the changes that were being introduced into the standards would be items that were emergent through the organisation or the programme in a wider context, for example sustainability.
33. However, further points made by members were that although accepting that there should be parity with the LTP for the implementation of timeframes, it could be argued that these timeframes should be reviewed for future reviews of the LTP standards framework. The views of the post-registration provider on the committee were sought as to what would be a reasonable timeframe and it was felt that implementation in January 2026 would be more realistic. This was then unanimously agreed by the committee.
34. In summary, the committee agreed to propose to VN Council:
 - a. that the revised Post Registration Framework for Veterinary Nursing be approved, and
 - b. that the implementation of the revised framework should take effect in January 2026.
35. The DoVN also added that the points made in the discussion regarding implementation timeframes would be taken into consideration for future reviews of the LTP standards framework.

Matters for note - Licence to practise qualifications

Pre-accreditation support

36. The Qualifications Lead (QL) presented a paper setting out the current position in respect of the pre-accreditation support package for AEIs, which had now moved into a routine phase following the completion of all initial visits. The QL suggested that going forward, details of support visits undertaken for the CertAVN programmes should be included in the same paper.
37. In regard to the update to the Standard 2.17 on communication, the QL confirmed that compliance with the revised standard would not be expected until September 2025, but that guidance had been incorporated into the documentation and support visits, to enable AEIs to develop familiarity with the requirement.

Action plan monitoring accreditation/re-accreditation

38. Oral updates were provided on the action plan monitoring and progress for the following:
 - Aberystwyth University
 - Middlesex University

- Ulster University
- University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)

Quality Monitoring activities

39. The Committee was provided with papers detailing the quality monitoring activities, actions and risk ratings, for the following Accredited Education Institutions (AEIs):
- University Centre Askham Bryan
 - Lantra Awards
 - Central Qualifications
40. In response to a query, the VN Examinations Quality Lead (VNEQL) confirmed that detailed audits of the mock or trial Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) are carried out for all new qualifications that are provisionally accredited, prior to the summative assessments being held on completion of the first cohort. At the end of the programme, the committee would then be presented with an overview of all audits undertaken during the first cohort completion so that a decision can be made as to whether the programme is ready for full accreditation.

Self Assessment reports and risk ratings

41. The VN qualifications team provide Self Assessment Report (SAR) templates to all Accredited Education Institutions (AEIs), comprising the Awarding Organisations, Higher Education Institutions and their Delivery Sites, on an annual basis. The SARs had been received and reviewed, the data and content of the reports had been analysed and each report had been allocated a level of risk, incorporated into the overall risk rating.
42. The Committee noted the report, setting out the risk ratings from accreditation, quality monitoring and SAR, for each AO, HEI, and the Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (CertAVN) qualifications, with notes on changes and actions taken. Several risk ratings had changed following the SAR reviews and the quality monitoring activities. The revised SAR template had improved the data quality and would hopefully enable clearer thematic analysis moving forward. The VN team were confident that the audit process was robust, that concerns could be mitigated, and that there was appropriate support in place for AEIs and delivery sites. The qualifications team would continue to apply the current audit framework and adjust risk ratings as needed.
43. The QL added that at the June meeting of the committee, there would be a comparative review of the module outcomes, module by module, programme by programme covering a five-year data set, to enable a full discussion.

Action plan quality monitoring

44. Oral updates were provided on the monitoring of action plans and future planned actions for the following AEIs:
- VetSkill Limited

- Coventry University
- Harper Adams University
- Lantra Awards
- University of Bristol
- University of Portsmouth

Matters for note - Post-registration qualifications

45. **Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (CertAVN) statistics** – The committee noted a paper setting out the enrolments for the CertAVN in each academic year since the initiation of the qualification, together with the number of certificates completed in each calendar year. The information on certificates awarded would be included in the *RCVS Facts* publication.

Pre-Registration Examination Board

46. The VNEQL presented the minutes of the Pre-registration Examination Board that met on 27 February 2025 to consider the results of the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) held earlier in February. The pass rate of 75% was within the normal range. The board had noted that the OSCE Chief Examiner would reach the end of their term this year, and the RCVS would therefore shortly be advertising for a replacement. Details were not yet known, but all VNEC members would be notified when details were available.
47. The VNEQL thanked Donna Cotton for acting as Chair for the Board meetings. It had been very helpful to have a member of the committee as a permanent chair.

Items for publication

48. The following items that had been reported in the meeting were identified for publication in the public domain:
- Notification regarding the last year for consideration of reduced clinical hours from students who had completed their training, who may have been affected by the Covid pandemic.
 - Programme for the VN Educator Conference in June.

Any other business

49. The VNEQL reminded the committee that it had already been agreed that there would be a discussion at its in-person meeting in June around practical assessment, and how this might develop in the future. She had held individual sessions with the veterinary nurses who work at the RCVS to obtain their thoughts and would now like to invite those members of the committee who were involved with veterinary nurse education, including the student members, to book a 1:1 session with her, if they wished. The individual inputs would then be collected into a discussion paper for the committee. The committee secretary would email further details.

Meeting dates 2025

50. The following dates were confirmed:

- Thursday 26 June (in person, full day meeting)
- Tuesday 19 August
- Tuesday 21 October
- Wednesday 17 December

Remote meetings would start at 9.30am, and the in-person meeting in June would start at 10.30am.

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	21 May 2025
Title	Review of the Post Registration Framework for Veterinary Nursing
Summary	<p>The Post Registration Framework for Veterinary Nursing has been reviewed based on collated feedback from users and consultation with all stakeholders. Proposed amendments following the review have been considered and agreed by the task and finish working group.</p> <p>It should be noted that full guidance will be developed to accompany the Framework and requirements once approved by Veterinary Nurses Council.</p>
Decisions required	Veterinary Nurses Council is required to ratify the updated version, for implementation from January 2026.
Attachments	<p>Annex A – Collated responses</p> <p>Annex B – CertAVN summary of changes_WGDecisions_March25</p> <p>Annex C – CertAVN_Standards_VNEC_Approved_Apr25</p>
Author	<p>Julie Dugmore</p> <p>Director of Veterinary Nursing</p> <p>j.dugmore@rcvs.org.uk</p> <p>Shirley Gibbins</p> <p>Qualifications Lead</p> <p>s.gibbins@rcvs.org.uk</p>

Classifications		
Document	Classification ¹	Rationales ²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Annex A	Confidential	1, 4
Annex B	Confidential	1, 4
Annex C	Confidential	1, 4

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

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

Review of the RCVS Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training

Background

1. The Post Registration Framework for Veterinary Nursing (the Framework) details the requirements for development and delivery of Certificates in Advanced Veterinary Nursing.
2. The current Framework was ratified by Veterinary Nurses' Council (VNC) in May 2019, with immediate implementation, and the first accreditation undertaken in July 2019.
3. Whilst there was a small-scale review in 2022, resulting in some minor amendments and the addition of suggested evidence, to ensure the Framework remains relevant and fit-for-purpose, it is reviewed, and consulted on every five years. As the current Framework was initially agreed by VNC in 2019, they required review in 2024.
4. A small task and finish working group (WG), supported by the Director of Veterinary Nursing and the VN Qualifications Lead, was created in September 2024 to support the review.
5. Following feedback gathered from accredited education institutions (AEI), accreditation panel members and RCVS quality monitoring personnel, the RCVS veterinary nursing team conducted the initial review.
6. Draft proposals on areas for improvement, including the incorporation of a new standard focusing on learning culture, were considered, and agreed for consultation by the WG at its meeting in November 2024.
7. The six-week consultation was launched on 20 January which gave an opportunity for all stakeholders to provide constructive and specific feedback on the proposals. There were 183 survey responses received. Feedback, in the main, was overwhelmingly positive with many stakeholders agreeing with the proposed changes. Please see Annex A – Collated responses. The responses highlighted in yellow indicate the responses requiring consideration, as opposed to confirmation of agreement with the proposals.
8. Following consultation, the initial review of responses was conducted by the Director of Veterinary Nursing and Qualifications Lead and provided to the WG for consideration. Please see Annex B – Summary of changes.
9. At its meeting on 17 March, the WG reviewed, discussed, and agreed the suggested amendments. It should be noted that the consultation responses generated further suggestions from the WG; these were noted in the 'WG comments/decisions' column of the table in Annex B and presented to Veterinary Nurse Education Committee (VNEC) as tracked changes at its April meeting.

Current position

10. VNEC approved the proposed changes, which is presented as Annex C for ratification by this Council.
11. VNEC was initially requested to agree to an implementation date of September 2025, however, members of the Committee felt this timeline was too short, and thus agreed to an implementation date of January 2026.

Discussion/ issues

12. As per the precedent, there will be a grace period for Accredited Education Institutions (AEIs) undergoing accreditation and quality monitoring activities following the publication of the updated Framework. AEIs with accreditation events scheduled after January 2026 will be assessed against the updated Framework. This approach will ensure AEIs do not have to re-submit applications or be concerned that they are being assessed against a Framework with which they are unfamiliar.
13. Quality monitoring activities which take place prior to 1 September 2025 will be completed against the existing Framework, with all AEIs being reminded that compliance against the new Framework will be expected moving forward.
14. The WG considered and discussed the correct terminology relating to those undertaking the CertAVN qualifications; the WG agreed that 'candidate' is the correct term, and the Framework has been updated to reflect this.

Financial issues / PR implications

15. Outdated or ineffective frameworks and standards can negatively impact the RCVS reputation. These regular reviews identify and address issues and demonstrate a commitment to transparency, accountability, and continued improvement.
16. This review has increased the number of requirements within the Framework; however, it could be argued that the new additions should be expected of UK regulated educational institutions irrespective of regulatory oversight.
17. There are two face-to-face VN Educator Conferences planned for 2025, which will be an ideal opportunity to provide AEIs with highlights on the amendments. The costs of these meetings are being met by a small cost covering fee paid by delegates. There will also be some online meetings scheduled throughout the summer.

18. Development of a pre-accreditation support package, similar to that provided for licence to practise delivery, is underway with the first one being free of charge and optional for those AEIs currently accredited. Moving forward, it will be mandatory and chargeable for any new provider.
19. There will, of course, be costs incurred with producing the revised versions for the website and in communicating the updates. These costs fall within the Communications Team budget for this type of work.
20. The existing Framework does not include any additional guidance, however, the consultation responses included some valuable comments which would support compliance with the Framework, as opposed to suggested amendments to the wording. These suggestions will be incorporated into guidance for this updated version, which should improve compliance and outcomes.

Conclusions

21. In order to ensure that the Framework remains relevant, effective, and fit for purpose, and to meet RCVS VN quality assurance processes, a review of the current Framework, incorporating the standards and requirements, has been completed. The revision of the Framework also ensures it is aligned with the evolving needs of the education landscape.

Decision

22. Veterinary Nurses' Council is required to ratify the updated version, for implementation from January 2026.

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	21 May 2025
Title	CPD Buddies
Summary	This paper proposes pilot of a new CPD buddy scheme that can offer peer support in achieving the CPD requirement.
Decisions required	VN Council is asked to approve the CPD buddy pilot
Attachments	None
Author	Jenny Soreskog-Turp Lead for Postgraduate Education j.soreskog-turp@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0701

Classifications		
Document	Classification ¹	Rationales ²
Paper	Unclassified	NA

¹Classifications explained

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²Classification rationales

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CPD Introduction

1. The CPD requirement is mandatory for veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses that are on RCVS register.
2. There is plenty of support available for anyone struggling with CPD such as information on the website, a CPD and reflection course on the RCVS Academy and dedicated staff to help with CPD enquiries.
3. The RCVS has previously had a CPD buddy system where vets and nurses volunteered to be a CPD buddy and would sign up to an RCVS mailing list to get useful information and tips about CPD, as well as any updates from the RCVS that they could share with their colleagues within the same practice/workplace.
4. At the last meeting of the VetGDP and CPD engagement group, it was agreed that further support would be beneficial and it is therefore suggested that we pilot a new voluntary CPD buddy scheme.

CPD buddy pilot

5. Having a CPD buddy may provide accountability and motivation, ensuring regular check-ins to keep professionals on track with learning goals. Peer encouragement makes it easier to stay committed to CPD activities, preventing procrastination on required hours. Discussions may also encourage active reflection, moving beyond simply 'ticking off' CPD requirements to truly integrating new skills into practice. Buddies may provide valuable feedback, helping to refine professional practice and improve overall competency.
6. It is suggested that the new CPD buddy scheme is introduced and piloted over the next 12 months. The scheme would be facilitated by the RCVS, however, participants will be individually responsible for maintaining contact with their buddy and maximising the benefit of the relationship.
7. It is suggested that, as a first step, the RCVS would advertise for volunteers to sign up as CPD buddies and volunteers can select from the following categories:
 - a) Tech support buddy– to help individuals struggling with 1CPD or accessing online CPD.
 - b) CPD encouragement buddy–to support peers in regularly recording and reflecting on CPD
 - c) Clinical CPD buddy – to engage in discussions and reflect on clinical cases.
 - d) Other - for any support that does not fall into the above categories.
8. The RCVS would compile and maintain a list for each category, including preference for in person or remote contact.
9. Once there are sufficient number of volunteers in each category, the RCVS would start to promote the scheme. Participants may either be matched by the RCVS or provided with a list of available buddies to contact directly and arrange their own pairing and follow-up.

10. It is suggested that the pilot runs for 12 months and that a short survey is sent to members at the end of the 12 months to evaluate the scheme's effectiveness, gather feedback, and determine its future direction.
11. Once the CPD buddy scheme is established it may be suitable to advertise for CPD buddies who are willing to host quarterly CPD drop-in sessions to answer questions and share their approach to CPD and reflection to a wider group.

CPD buddy scheme

12. Aside from setting up and developing the scheme it should not require any additional resources from the RCVS. If the Education Committee agree to the pilot, the Education Team/VetGDP & CPD engagement group would need to complete some initial work before it could be introduced, such as:
 - a) Clarify Roles and Responsibilities: Clearly define what is expected from both buddies and participants to avoid confusion or lack of engagement.
 - b) Provide Initial Guidance/Toolkit: Create a short onboarding document or webinar outlining how to get started, communication tips, and how to reflect on CPD effectively.
 - c) Diversity of Access: Ensure that the scheme is inclusive by encouraging a range of professionals (e.g., different regions, sectors, and career stages) to participate
13. It is important and should be clearly communicated that CPD buddies are not employed by the RCVS and that the scheme operates independently of RCVS oversight in terms of individual buddy interactions. While the RCVS facilitates the initial contact and provides resources, the development of the relationship and all ongoing communications are the responsibility of the participating individuals.
14. The CPD buddy system would be a voluntary scheme, but the VetGDP and CPD Compliance subcommittee may recommend non-compliant vets and RVNs to consider joining the scheme as a supportive measure to help re-engage with CPD.

Next Steps

15. VN Council is asked to discuss the CPD buddy pilot and agree next steps.

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	21 May 2025
Title	Report on registration of VNs educated outside the UK
Summary	This paper summarises the applications for registration from nurses educated outside the UK. It covers the period between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.
Decisions required	None
Attachments	Annex A – Registration process for VNs educated outside the UK
Authors	<p>Victoria Hedges VN Examinations Qualifications Lead v.hedges@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0782</p> <p>Jasmine Winter VN Examinations Administrator j.winter@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0778</p>

Classifications		
Document	Classification ¹	Rationales ²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Annex A	Unclassified	n/a

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Registration for holders of qualifications achieved outside the UK (2024/2025)

Background

- 1. The RCVS considers applications from individuals intending to enter the register of veterinary nurses in the UK. Annex A provides an overview of the process followed to determine the suitability of applicants.
- 2. This paper provides details of the outcome of applications received between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.

Outcome of applications received between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025

- 3. Table 1 details the data for completed applications processed between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. A completed application is one where all information has been received, and the decision has been conveyed to the applicant. The figures in brackets relate to the previous reporting period (1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024) and have been provided for comparison.

Key:

Accepted	Application accepted without further assessment. Applicants are invited to register without completing examinations. This is only applicable for individuals educated in an institution accredited by ACOVENE.
Adaptation	Additional assessment required. This is normally in the form of the Pre-registration examination, but in some cases could include a compulsory Period of Supervised Adaptation (PSA) in a UK veterinary practice and/or the completion of an assignment. The Pre-registration examination is compulsory for everyone except for those educated in an ACOVENE accredited institution.
Rejected	Applicant does not meet the minimum RCVS requirement for entry onto the register of veterinary nurses. Applications from veterinary surgeons fall into this category.

Table 1 Applications for entry onto the register by nurses trained outside the UK

Applicant qualification origin	Total Applications	Accepted (ACOVENE)	Adaptation	Rejected	Registered
Australia	14 (23)	0 (0)	14 (23)	0 (0)	13 (14)
Austria	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)
Cameroon	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)
Canada	3 (3)	0 (0)	3 (3)	0 (0)	2 (3)
Colombia	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)
Croatia	1 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Denmark	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Finland	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)	1 (0)
France	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (1)
Ghana	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)
Hong Kong	2 (12)	0 (0)	2 (12)	0 (0)	6 (20)
Italy	1 (2)	1 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (2)
Japan	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)	1 (0)
Lithuania	1 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Netherlands	3 (2)	0 (1)	3 (1)	0 (0)	1 (1)
New Zealand	11 (13)	0 (0)	11 (13)	0 (0)	6 (8)
Nigeria	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)
Norway	1 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Pakistan	2 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Portugal	0 (4)	0 (2)	0 (2)	0 (0)	0 (3)
Republic of Ireland	17 (22)	17 (22)	0 (0)	0 (0)	15 (21)
Singapore	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)

Applicant qualification origin	Total Applications	Accepted (ACOVENE)	Adaptation	Rejected	Registered
South Africa	2 (3)	0 (0)	2 (3)	0 (0)	4 (8)
Spain	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)
Switzerland	1 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)
USA	8 (10)	0 (0)	8 (10)	0 (0)	1 (4)
Zimbabwe	2 (8)	0 (0)	2 (8)	0 (0)	1 (5)
Total	73 (109)	19 (27)	50 (80)	4 (2)	53 (90)

4. There were 73 completed applications processed in the reporting period. This has decreased by 33% from the previous year. As usual, the highest number of applications were received from applicants educated in the Republic of Ireland. This is followed by applicants educated in Australia, New Zealand and the USA.
5. With the exception of those educated in the Republic of Ireland, very few applications were received from veterinary nurses educated within the EU.
6. As of 31 March 2025 there were 16 partially completed applications. Reasons for non-completion relate to lack of / incorrect affidavits, non-payment or insufficient evidence about the content of the qualification. Where applications are incomplete, we communicate with the applicant and support them to obtain the required information.
7. As of 31 March 2025 there were 78 applicants preparing for the Pre-registration Examinations (adaptation). This compares to 98 applicants in the same position on 31 March 2024. Applicants have two years to sit the examination from the date of their decision letter.
8. The number of applicants entering the register decreased from 90 in 2023/24 to 53 in 2024/25. This is a decrease of 41%.
9. As of 31 March 2025, 590 (568) nurses educated outside the UK were active on the register. This equates to 2.4% of all RVNs on that date.
10. It should be noted that the reduction in applications and registrations may be due to the introduction of the theory examination in April 2024. This examination is mandatory for anyone requiring adaptation and is completed alongside the established practical examination. This is likely to lengthen the amount of time it takes an individual to enter the register following the initial application decision. It is expected that this will continue to affect registration numbers during 2025.
11. There is also a large reduction in the number of applications and subsequent registration from nurses educated in Hong Kong. A large number of applications were received between 2021 and 2024 with many of the applicants attending a post graduate course in the UK. This

course is no longer recruiting nurses educated in Hong Kong and the course in Hong Kong has also closed.

12. A number of applicants who have been given permission to sit the examination have reported difficulty in obtaining a visa to work in the UK. This has resulted in them withdrawing from the process.
13. On 8 May 2025 the Veterinary Nurse Examination Quality Lead delivered an RCVS Academy live webinar in conjunction with the Education Team. The aim of the event was to provide information to veterinary professionals educated outside the UK about the registration process and the courses on the Academy which will assist them. The event was attended by 63 people.

Registration process for VNs educated outside the UK

Background

1. VN Council and VN Education Committee have both agreed on the criteria for veterinary nurses trained outside the UK to apply for entry into the RCVS Register of Veterinary Nurses. The summary is provided below.

Registration of veterinary nurses educated at an ACOVENE accredited institution

2. Holders of ACOVENE (the European Accreditation Committee for Veterinary Nurse Education) accredited qualifications are normally permitted to enter the register directly. The exception to this is where an applicant has completed their qualification via distance learning. They are then processed as outlined below. It should be noted that ACOVENE requires a minimum of 500 hours of clinical practical to be undertaken.

Registration of veterinary nurses educated at a non ACOVENE accredited institution

3. Where a qualification has been achieved at an institution which is not accredited by ACOVENE the applicant is required to provide evidence that they hold a qualification which aligns closely to those delivered in the UK. Applicants are required to map their syllabus/curriculum to the RCVS Day One Skills and Day One Competences and provide evidence that the educational level is at a minimum of Qualification and Curriculum Framework (QCF) Level 3. If this is aligned the applicant is permitted to proceed to the RCVS Pre-registration examination which they must pass before applying to enter the register.
4. Where a large number of applicants have a qualification from one country/awarding organisation, VNC is asked to consider accepting the qualification so that future applicants holding that qualification are not required to provide their syllabus/curriculum. This has been the case for some applications received from Australia, Portugal, New Zealand, South Africa, Hong Kong, Canada and the USA. These applicants are still required to pass the RCVS Pre-registration examination. Table 1 outlines the frequently received applications along.
5. Mechanisms are in place to ensure that when a qualification changes, applicants are required to submit the syllabus / curriculum.
6. Applicants are permitted to work in practice by enrolling for an optional Period of Supervised Adaptation (PSA) while they prepare for the Pre-registration examination.
7. Holders of veterinary degrees who do not also hold a veterinary nursing or veterinary technician qualification are not permitted to enter the register in the UK.
8. All applicants are required to demonstrate that they have knowledge of the Code of Professional Conduct (COPC). This is evidenced via the Pre-registration examinations or completion of a module in the *Working in the UK for Veterinary Nurses* course on the RCVS Academy.

Table 1 – Qualifications accepted without submission of syllabus/curriculum

Country	Awarding/accrediting Organisation	Qualification	Code	Year accredited	Syllabus required
Australia	Government approved Regional Training Organisations	Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing	ACM40412	2012	No
		Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing	ACM40410	2010	No
		Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing	RUV40404	2004	No
		Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing	RUV40198	1998	Yes
		Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing	ACM40418	2018	No
	University of Queensland	BSc Science with extended Major in Veterinary Technology	No info	No Info	No if Awarded prior to 2022 (including 2022)
	La Trobe University	Bachelor of Veterinary Nursing	No info	No info	Yes

Country	Awarding/accrediting Organisation	Qualification	Code	Year accredited	Syllabus required
Canada	Various organisations accredited by the CVMA	All CVMA accredited qualifications	N/A	N/A	No
Hong Kong	Hong Kong Polytechnic University	BSc (Hons) in veterinary nursing	N/A	2010	Awarded in 2014
	School of Continuing and Professional Education (SCOPE) City University of Hong Kong	Advanced Diploma in Veterinary Nursing	163-30280	2016	No
			173-30280	2017	No
			183-30280	2018	No
			193-30280	2019	No
			203-30280	2020	No
			213-30280	2021	No

Country	Awarding/accrediting Organisation	Qualification	Code	Year accredited	Syllabus required
			223-30280	2022	No
The Netherlands	Kwalificaties mbo Vocational Education and Business qualifications	Veterinary assistant/Paraveterinary	97590	2009	No
			22238	2012	No
New Zealand	Training organisations approved by the New Zealand Qualifications authority	National Diploma in Veterinary Nursing	NCF 0222	1996	No
		National Diploma in Veterinary Nursing	NCF 2491	2019	No
		National Diploma in Veterinary Nursing with strands in Companion Animal, and Equine Veterinary Nursing	NCF 4389	2021	Yes
	Massey University	Bachelor of Veterinary Technology	Before 2018	No information	No
Portugal	Castelo Branco University of Applied Sciences	Bachelor in Veterinary Nursing	Before 2018	No information	No
South Africa	University of Pretoria	University Diploma in Veterinary Nursing	0812002	Before 2022	No
		Bachelor of Veterinary Nursing	0813006	After 2019	Yes

Country	Awarding/accrediting Organisation	Qualification	Code	Year accredited	Syllabus required
USA	Various organisations accredited by the AVMA	AVMA-accredited college qualifications	N/A	N/A	No
Zimbabwe	University of Zimbabwe	Diploma in Veterinary Nursing	N/A	N/A	No for qualifications issued between 2006-2022.

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	21 May 2025
Title	Report on temporary student enrolments
Summary	This paper summarises the applications for temporary student enrolment completed between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Authors	<p>Lucy Blampied Qualifications Officer l.blampied@rcvs.org.uk / 020 8148 5562</p> <p>Victoria Hedges VN Examinations Quality Lead v.hedges@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0782</p>

Classifications		
Document	Classification ¹	Rationales ²
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

Report on temporary student enrolments

Background

- 1. Student veterinary nurses studying outside the UK may apply for temporary student enrolment to allow them to complete a short period of work experience in the UK.
- 2. Applications are either made on behalf of large groups of students travelling as part of an organised exchange programme or individuals travelling on their own.
- 3. The length of temporary student enrolment is for a maximum period of 12 weeks which can be undertaken as one block or split into several short blocks. The majority of the student's required practical experience must be completed outside the UK.
- 4. The application must be supported by the student's school / college and the training practice that they will be attending.
- 5. This paper provides details of the outcome of applications for temporary student enrolment commenced between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.

Temporary enrolments between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025

- 6. Table 1 shows details of application for temporary student enrolment for the reporting period. The figures in brackets relate to the previous reporting period (1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024) and have been provided for comparison.

Table 1

Applications for temporary enrolments

Applicant's qualification origin	Number of Applications
Netherlands	7 (3)
Republic of Ireland	21 (13)
Total	28 (19)

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	21 May 2025
Title	RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee Annual 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 / Secretary to the RVN PIC 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	Classification ¹	Rationales ²
Paper	Unclassified	N/A

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Registered Veterinary Nurses Preliminary Investigation Committee

Annual Report to VN Council

Introduction

1. Since the last Report to Veterinary Nurses Council, there have been two meetings of the RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee which took place on 11 March and 15 April. The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 27 May.

RVN Concerns received / registered

2. Between 5 February 2025 and 5 May 2025, there were 17 new concerns relating to RVNs. Of these 17 new concerns:
 - One case was closed by the Stage 1 PIC.
 - Fifteen are currently under investigation by a Case Manager, Veterinary Nurse, Veterinary surgeon, and a lay member (Stage 1 PIC).
 - One case has been referred to Stage 2 PIC.

RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee

3. No new cases have been considered by the RVN PIC between 5 February and 5 May 2025. At the meeting on 11 March, the Committee considered three ongoing cases which were referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee. At the meeting on 15 April, the Committee considered three ongoing cases which were also 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. There are currently no RVNs 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 Charter Case Committee

7. Since the last report, no cases have been referred to the Charter Case Committee.

Referral to Disciplinary Committee

8. Since the last report, six cases (involving five RVNs) have been referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee. The hearing dates will be confirmed in due course.

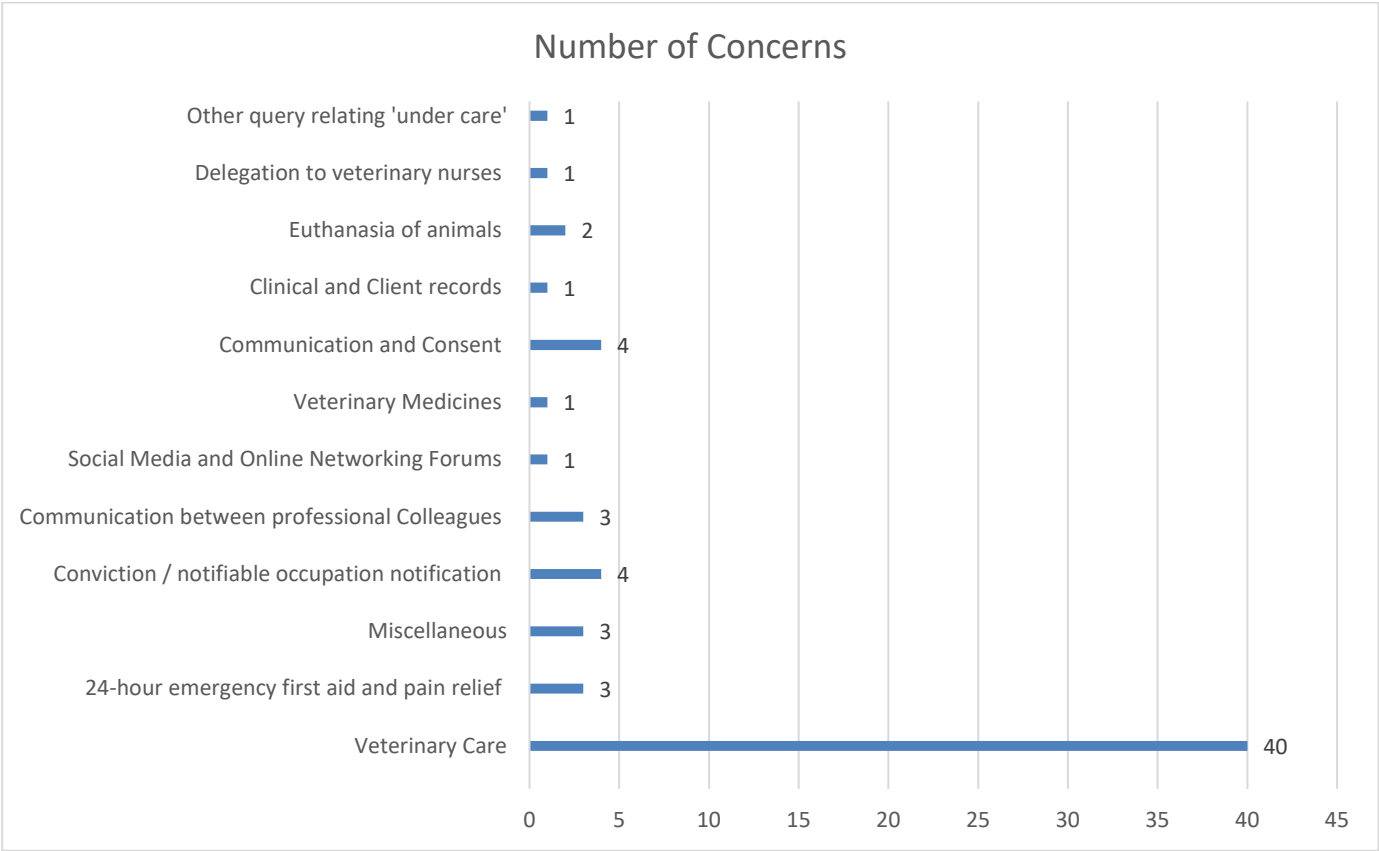
Disciplinary Hearings

9. Since the last report, two disciplinary hearings have taken place in relation to veterinary nurses. The first hearing took place on 26th and 27th February 2025 and related to the Respondent's conviction for fraud by abuse of position. The Disciplinary Committee found that the conviction, set out in the charge, rendered the Respondent unfit to practise and directed the Registrar to remove the Respondent's name from the Register.

The second hearing took place between 10th and 12th March 2025 and related to the veterinary nurse's conviction for stealing controlled drugs from a practice where they were employed. A further four charges related to incidents in which the Respondent dishonestly took veterinary medicines from her place of work. The Disciplinary Committee concluded that for each of the individual charges, the Respondent's conduct fell far short of the conduct expected of a member of the profession and that each of the charges one to four amounted to serious professional misconduct. In relation to charge five, the criminal conviction, the Committee concluded that it rendered the veterinary nurse unfit to practise. The Committee concluded that the sanction of removal was the only proportionate sanction it could impose and therefore directed the Registrar to remove the Respondent's name from the Register.

Professional Conduct Department

10. The chart below shows the number and categories of the **64** concerns relating to RVNs registered between **1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025**.



11. Of the 64 concerns registered between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025:

- 40 were closed at Stage 1.
- 1 was referred to Stage 2 and will be considered at a future meeting.
- 1 was closed at Stage 2 with formal advice issued to the Respondent.
- 3 were referred to Stage 3 (RVN Disciplinary Committee)
- 2 were referred by Stage 2 PIC to the Charter Case Committee.
- 17 are currently under investigation at Stage 1.

In the preceding five years, the total number of concerns registered against RVNs for each year is as follows:

- 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024 – 46
- 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 – 34
- 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022 – 36
- 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021 – 37
- 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020 – 27

Cases considered by RVN PIC (Stage 2)

12. Between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, the RVN PIC considered **14 new cases**. Of these:

- 4 cases closed with formal advice issued to the Respondent.
- 1 case was referred to external solicitors for formal statements to be taken.
- 2 cases were referred to the Charter Case Committee*.
- 7 cases were referred to the Disciplinary Committee.

*In relation to the cases referred to the Charter Case Committee, both Respondents were issued with a warning.

During the same period, the RVN PIC considered **8 ongoing cases**. 1 case was adjourned to obtain further information, and 7 cases (involving 3 veterinary nurses) were referred to the Disciplinary Committee.

Disciplinary Hearings

13. Between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, there have been five DC hearings involving RVNs. The Disciplinary Committee concluded that the conduct of the RVNs amounted to serious professional misconduct in four of the cases. In terms of sanction, two RVNs were removed from the Register and one RVN was issued with a reprimand and a warning as to their future conduct. There was no further action taken in one case. In relation to the remaining case, the Disciplinary Committee acceded to the Respondent's application to adjourn the hearing while undertaking to voluntarily remove themselves from the Register and supply a witness statement in respect of a separate RCVS investigation into the conduct of a veterinary surgeon.

Year overview

14. An in-person training day for members of the department and Committee members took place on 14 April 2025. The topics included a case law update and results of the 2024 cases audit.

In July 2024, the RVN PIC welcomed Arlene Connor RVN and Mark Stobbs started his term as RVN PIC Chair.