Veterinary Nurses Council

Agenda for meeting to be held on Tuesday 4 October 2016 at 11.00am

1. Welcome to new members

2. Apologies for absence

3. Declarations of interest

4. Minutes of meeting held on 3 May 2016  
   Paper attached

5. Matters arising

6. Update on operational matters  
   Oral report

Matters for decision by VN Council and reports from Committees

7. VN Education Committee
   a. Membership of Committee  
      Oral report
   b. Minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2016  
      Paper attached

8. European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)  
   Paper attached

Matters of note

9. CPD Consultation  
   Paper attached

10. CPD Review Group  
    Oral report

11. Reports from RCVS Committees
    a. Practice Standards Group  
       Oral report
    b. Standards Committee  
       Oral report
    c. VN Preliminary Investigation Committee  
       Paper attached
12. **VN Futures**  
   Oral report

13. **VN Council Strategy Plan**  
   Oral report

14. **Communications report**  
   Oral report

15. **Meeting with BVNA Officers**  
   Oral report

16. **Any other business**

17. **Date of next meeting**
   Tuesday 31 January 2017 at 11.00am

**Confidential and private items**

Annette Amato  
Deputy Head of Veterinary Nursing  
September 2016  
[a.amato@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:a.amato@rcvs.org.uk)  
0207 202 0713
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Meeting</strong></th>
<th>Veterinary Nurses Council</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date</strong></td>
<td>4 October 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td>Minutes of meeting of VN Council held on 3 May 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classification</strong></td>
<td>Unclassified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary</strong></td>
<td>Minutes of the meeting of Veterinary Nurses Council held on 3 May 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Decisions required</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attachments</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Author</strong></td>
<td>Annette Amato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Committee Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0207 202 0713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:a.amato@rcvs.org.uk">a.amato@rcvs.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Veterinary Nurses Council
Minutes of the meeting held on 3 May 2016

Members:  Mrs Elizabeth Cox - Chair
           Mrs Victoria Aspinall
           Mrs Lucy Bellwood
           Miss Alison Carr
*         Dr Niall Connell - Vice-Chair
*         Mr Dominic Dyer
           Mrs Elizabeth Figg
           Mrs Andrea Jeffery
           Mrs Katherine Kissick - Vice-Chair
           Miss Hilary Orpet
           Professor Susan Proctor
           Miss Amber Richards
           Mr Peter Robinson
           Miss Marie Rippingale
           Colonel Neil Smith
           Mrs Penelope Swindlehurst

*absent

In attendance:  Mrs Annette Amato - Committee Secretary
                Mr Luke Bishop - Senior Communications Officer
                Mrs Julie Dugmore - Head of Veterinary Nursing
                Ms Eleanor Ferguson - Acting Registrar
                Mrs Victoria Hedges - Examinations Manager
                Ms Lizzie Lockett - Director of Strategic Communications
                Mr Ben Myring - Senior Policy and Public Affairs Officer
                Mr Anthony Roberts - Senior Manager (PSS)

Apologies for absence

1.  Apologies for absence were received from Mr Dominic Dyer and Dr Niall Connell.

Declarations of interest

2.  Mrs Kissick declared that she has been appointed a consultant chair for the Awarding Organisation Vetkskill. Miss Orpet is now a regional secretary for BSAVA.

Minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2016
3. The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2016 were accepted as a correct record.

Matters arising

4. **Protection of the Veterinary Nurse title.** The e-petition on the protection of the Veterinary Nurse title had closed on 14 February, and had received 37 thousand signatures. At the previous meeting, it had been suggested that the wording of the RCVS supporting guidance on the use of the term veterinary nurse might be reviewed, but it was thought this could not be achieved without further legislation. Col. Smith confirmed that there was in fact no need for a change in legislation to amend the supporting guidance.

5. **Ethical Review Panel.** The ethical review panel has now been established and offers have been sent to the successful applicants. The panel includes a veterinary nurse representative.

6. **Associates.** A working party had been set up to look at the criteria for Associates, and would report to RCVS Council in November. Mrs Kissick was a member of the working party.

7. **Admissions ceremonies.** The Chair confirmed that various options were being investigated for the future format of admissions ceremonies for newly qualified veterinary nurses, and she would report back to VN Council in October.

Update on operational matters

8. The Acting Registrar provided an additional report on various activities since the previous meeting, some of which had been covered in the matters arising.

9. **Alternative Dispute Resolution.** The trial of the ADR scheme was ongoing and the results would be fed back to RCVS Council in June.

10. **Fellowships.** The new fellowship scheme was now underway, and it was hoped that the first group of new fellowships might be awarded on RCVS day in July, although this may be a little ambitious.

11. **Governance.** The revised governance arrangements were under consideration by Defra and it was hoped that there might be a new Legislative Reform order in a year’s time.

12. **Great Place to Work.** The RCVS had moved up in the rankings for the Great Place to Work awards, achieving 23rd place at the recent awards ceremony, having been placed 30th in 2015.

VN Registration Rules

13. The Head of Veterinary Nursing introduced a paper containing proposed amendments to Schedule 1 of the Veterinary Nursing Registration Rules 2014, which set out the regulatory rules and standards in relation to education and training for entry to the register of veterinary nurses. Council was reminded of its decision, taken in February 2015, to remove the
requirement for any training programme to include a period of practical training of not less than 60 weeks, equivalent to 2,100 hours, in order to comply with the current HMRC national minimum wage requirement as it applies to students undertaking unpaid placements as part of their training. Council had also agreed at the time that the requirement to complete 2,100 hours should remain in force until the review of Day One Skills for Veterinary Nurses had been finished.

14. The review of Day One Skills is now complete, and the new skills list is more holistic and will require less time to assess. VN Education Committee has therefore agreed that the practical placement hours could be reduced from 2,100 to 1,800. This would comply with current HMRC requirements, and is calculated as 35 hours per week over a 52 week period. It was therefore recommended that the rules should be amended to formally remove the 60 week requirement, and to replace the requirement for 2,100 placement hours with 1,800 hours.

15. In response to a query, it was confirmed that 1,800 was the minimum number of hours required, in order that students were not disadvantaged. The rules apply to all enrolled students and it was certainly possible that some students would take longer. It was noted that there is some confusion amongst students regarding the rule that the practical training, which need not be continuous, must be spent in gainful employment or educational practice placement of at least 15 hours per week and it was suggested that guidance would be useful. There was also some discussion on the need to provide clarification on out of hours work and supervised training.

16. At the conclusion of the discussion, it was agreed that the Schedule 1 of the Veterinary Nursing Registration Rules 2014 should be amended:
   a. by the removal of ‘60 weeks’; and
   b. by the replacement of ‘2,100 hours’ with ‘1,800 hours.

   It was further agreed that the terms of Schedule 1 of the Rules regarding the requirement for a placement to be a minimum of 15 hours per week should be clarified and reworded and an amended Schedule (as drafted by the Acting Registrar and the Head of Veterinary Nursing) circulated by email to VN Council for comment rather than waiting for the next meeting, as the change in the rules would affect students starting their training in September 2016. It was also agreed that clarification should be provided, perhaps in the form of a FAQ document, on the areas where there is potential for confusion such as supervision.

VN Education Committee

17. Minutes of meeting held on 21 March 2016. Council received and noted the report from the meeting of the VN Education Committee (VNEC) held on 21 March 2016.

18. It was reported that there had been an overall increase in student enrolments, with more than 1,700 students enrolling so far since September 2016. A number of meetings were taking place, tied in with the VN futures events in various parts of the country, to provide college administrators with information on the enrolment process and how to avoid delays. One such meeting had already taken place and had been very positive.
19. A concern was expressed regarding the decision taken by the Committee that in future, 
external examiners appointed by Awarding Organisations and Higher Education institutions 
should be put forward to the Committee for approval before they are appointed, to ensure the 
RCVS criteria are met, in case this might cause delays. Mrs Jeffery, the Chair of the 
Committee, said that this would be taken back to the next meeting for further discussion.

20. In response to a query regarding the decision not to accredit the RVC’s graduate Diploma for 
the RCVS DipAVN, it was confirmed that the Committee had considered the visit report and the 
full response by the RVC before making its decision.

21. It was noted that the increased use of blended and e-learning to replace college hours was to 
be investigated and discussed at the next meeting of the VNEC.

**English Language testing**

22. The Policy and Public Affairs Officer presented a paper reporting on recent developments 
regarding the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications (MRPQ) Directive and the 
ability of the RCVS to test the English language skills of registrants from the EU. The new 
directive clarifies and reinforces the role of competent authorities in order to apply language 
controls. It is now possible for the Registrar to decline to register a veterinary surgeon where 
there are ‘serious and concrete doubts’ about the sufficiency of their English language 
knowledge. Following discussions with the Department for Environment Food and Rural 
Affairs (Defra) and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and a formal 
consultation, a Statutory Instrument was used to amend the Veterinary Surgeons Act and this 
is now in force.

23. The paper put forward proposed procedures for veterinary nurse applicants which have been 
adapted from the procedure used for veterinary surgeons but are somewhat more complex due 
to there not being an automatic recognition for EU-qualified applicants. These would involve 
an initial declaration from the applicant as to their language ability. For those whose English 
language is insufficient but the qualification is otherwise acceptable, the applicant would be 
required to pass IELTS level 7, or to spend time in a role or roles with English as the main 
language. For those with insufficient language skills and the qualification does not entitle them 
to register without examination or a period of adaptation, there would be several options in line 
with existing procedures, including a Period of Supervised Adaptation (PSA), the pre-
registration examination (practical and theory) or both. The PSA involves spending time in a 
role where English is the main language and would therefore serve to demonstrate language 
ability. The IELTS Level 7 test would be required for those not undertaking a PSA.

24. The proposals also included a procedure similar to that for veterinary surgeons, where if an 
applicant declares that their language competency is sufficient but then requires a translator, or 
is unable to answer basic questions in English at their examination or registration interview, the 
application would be referred to the Registrar.

25. Council was asked to consider whether the proposals should be implemented across the board
for all overseas-qualified applicants, in order to create a standard procedure regardless of the country of origin. Comments were made by a number of members that this seemed to be a reasonable and practical solution, which would not disadvantage any applicant. It was also commented that the onus would be on employers, who would not be likely to take on staff who were unable to communicate. The Examinations Manager added that all registrations for overseas-qualified VN's are carried out face to face, and a series of standard questions could be used. Additionally, it was intended to introduce registration days with presentations on being a veterinary nurse in the UK. These could include a short multiple choice test.

26. At the conclusion of the discussion, Council agreed that the procedures as set out in the paper should be adopted for all overseas-qualified applicants to the VN register, and that the details should be incorporated into the guidance notes on the website.

International Qualifications

27. The Examinations Manager presented the annual report summarising the applications for registration from nurses trained outside the UK, covering the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016. It was noted that the figures reported may have been affected by a change in the way that applications are recorded. Applications are now only included in the statistics when the fees and all necessary documentation have been received. Despite this change, the number of applications processed has increased by 24%, resulting in an increase in the overall number of RVNs currently on the register who were trained outside the UK to approximately 2% (287) compared with 1.8% (228) in 2015. It was further noted that 7.4% of new registrants between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016 were trained outside the UK, representing an increase of 1.4%.

28. The attention of Council was also drawn to current challenges in dealing with overseas qualified applicants. Some veterinary technicians trained in eastern Europe cannot reach the assessment stage as they are unable to provide evidence of the content of their qualification, due to apparently poor record keeping in their institutions. In some countries, the veterinary technician qualification is taken as a route to training as a veterinary surgeon, and some of these applicants wish to register as a veterinary nurse to gain experience in the UK, before applying to register as a veterinary surgeon. This is acceptable, but only those with a veterinary nurse/veterinary technician qualification may go through the assessment and registration process. It is intended to clarify this on the application form, as the number of overseas trained veterinary surgeons without VN qualifications wishing to register as a veterinary nurse has increased. A further challenge can be the very high cost of translating the relevant documentation, but the Examinations Manager now has systems in place to identify which sections need translating and will assist wherever possible.

29. One area of particular concern to Council was the reported increase in the number of nurses trained outside the UK being employed prior to registration, in some cases for many years. The information on their application form and reference shows that the practices have been delegating Schedule 3 procedures to these individuals which they are not permitted to perform. This is now being addressed in several ways. In such cases, the applicant is required to complete an assignment covering the role of the veterinary team and UK legislation before
being permitted to register. Arrangements are also being made to provide talks to newly registered veterinary surgeons about delegation, and it is also intended to write to the employers and referees in each case where inappropriate delegation comes to light. The Acting Registrar added that she would discuss the process further with the VN department.

Schedule 3 Review

30. The Policy and Public Affairs Officer presented a report setting out the plans for a review of Schedule 3, which had been offered by Defra at the time that government responded to the petition to request legal protection to the title ‘veterinary nurse’, to explain that such legislation would not be possible. The review of Schedule 3, however, is very timely as it coincides with the VN futures project, and information gathered by the various workshops and working parties for both projects can be shared.

31. The review will involve three phases. Phase 1 is already ongoing and involves desk based research including comparison with other countries; information gathering sessions at events such as BSAVA congress, the VN futures events and regional meetings; and possibly a survey at BVNA congress. This would be discussed at the meeting due to take place with BVNA officers in the afternoon.

32. Phase 2 will be the establishment of a working party to include key stakeholders such as the BVNA and BSAVA, and representatives of both VN and RCVS Councils. Ideally, a settled position would be reached by the end of the year to allow for Phase 3, the negotiations with Defra, to commence in 2017.

33. The hope was expressed that guidance would also be provided to make much clearer what procedures cannot be carried out by those who are not veterinary nurses, and that the opportunity would be taken to look at the possibility of a nurse practitioner role. It was also commented that it was very important to engage the profession as much as possible by attendance at regional meetings.

CPD Audit

34. Council noted the report and analysis of 2015 audit of veterinary nurses’ CPD. It was noted that six nurses who had repeatedly failed to respond to requests for their CPD records over several years had been referred to the Professional Conduct department, after the proper processes set out by the CPD referral group had been followed.

Fitness to practise

35. It was reported that the Fitness to Practise guidance for student veterinary nurses had been published at the end of March and was available on the RCVS website. It was pointed out that training providers may need to be reminded that this guidance is additional to their own specific guidelines and procedures, and was intended to be used alongside these as an example of good practice.
Reports from Committees

Practice Standards Group (PSG)

36. The Practice Standards Manager thanked Council for the feedback on some of the modules which it had provided at its February meeting. This had been taken on board by the PSG. There continues to be very positive feedback on the new Practice Standards Scheme (PSS) from the twenty practices currently trialling the system. The ability to upload documents in advance of an assessor’s visit is particularly appreciated, and allows more time for a relaxed discussion at the visit. There are some issues with the IT system at present but an interim solution has been found.

37. It was also reported that there has been a fourfold increase in the number of applications to join the PSS in comparison with the same period last year. The Chair, whose practice was one of the first to achieve the awards, commented on the tremendous level of support provided by the PSS team at the RCVS.

Standards Committee

38. Mrs Bellwood reported on a number of items discussed at the recent Standards Committee meeting.

39. **Ethics Review panel.** As reported earlier in the meeting, the panel has now been constituted and includes a veterinary nurse representative. The aim is to be ready to accept applications for ethical review from 1 August 2016.

40. **Guidance.** The Committee has approved new guidance on a number of areas: Guidance on incentives, which reiterates that a veterinary surgeon’s and a veterinary nurse’s first consideration should be the welfare of the animal and as such it would be unprofessional to allow incentives of any kind to distract from that; guidance on discounting veterinary fees, which will confirm that all discounts should be accounted for when presenting a claim to an insurer; and guidance on directing written prescriptions, to clarify that prescriptions should not include any recommendations or directions but if a practice directs clients by other means it should be made clear to clients if there is a financial or commercial relationship between the veterinary practice and the online pharmacy.

41. **Review of Schedule 3.** The Committee agreed that the review of Schedule 3 and the role of the VN should include consideration of the VN and certification. This was supported by the Certification Sub-Committee which has been reviewing the 12 Principles of Certification and associated guidance. Changes to the 12 Principles and guidance have also been approved by Standards Committee.

42. **Feline renal transplants.** The Committee has now concluded the review, and the new guidance will confirm that it is not acceptable to use living source donors for feline renal transplants. The new guidance has been drafted based on the Council discussions in March.
43. **Telemedicine.** The Committee plans to commence an evidence gathering exercise later in the year. It is expected that telemedicine will be one of the next major developments for the veterinary professions, and the aim is to discover what happens in other sectors and jurisdictions in order to develop protocols.

**VN Preliminary Investigation Committee**

44. The Report from the Chairman of the RVN PI Committee on the activity of the Committee since the last VN Council meeting was noted. This included a chart showing all the RVN concerns registered between 1 April 2011 and 18 April 2018. The Acting Registrar commented that this reflected very clearly the low number of VN cases in comparison with those for veterinary surgeons. It was noted that the types of concerns submitted were very different to those submitted in respect of veterinary surgeons, reflecting the differing roles within a practice.

**VN Futures**

45. The Chair reported that the VN Futures project was being very well received, with a high level of engagement by the profession, including practising VNs as well as educationalists. VN Futures workshops have already taken place in Bristol and Leeds, with a further event to be held in Edinburgh (11 May), and attached to the RCVS regional meetings in Nottingham and Cardiff. A number of common themes were emerging from the meetings. The report and action plan will be launched at the VetFutures event on 4 July. VN Council would be kept informed on developments.

**Communications report**

46. The Director of Strategic Communications reported on a number of recent and forthcoming activities.

47. **Regional Question Time.** Forthcoming RQT events would take place on 17 May (Nottingham) and 31 May (Cardiff) – tying in with the RCVS Council meeting later that week. As previously noted, both RQTs would have a specific VN stream, covering the VN Futures project.

48. **Publications.** The next edition of *VN Education* was well underway and would be signed off at the end of the week. RCVS News would be published after RCVS Council on 3 June.

49. **London Pet Show.** The RCVS would have a stand at the London Pet Show on 8 and 9 May. This event is always busy, and is a very good way to engage with the animal owning public.

50. **Overseas CPD.** An event covering CPD for veterinary surgeons registering from overseas was to be held in Leeds on 11 and 12 May. VNs had been invited to this event for the first time, and twelve were expected.

51. **Vet Futures.** The summit would take place on 4 July at the Royal Veterinary College and all VNC members were very welcome to attend. Tickets were available from
52. **Mind Matters Initiative (MMI).** There were a number of items to report on this subject. There are still a few places available on the mental health awareness training sessions in Nottingham and Cardiff. A SPVS/MMI wellbeing practice award had been launched at the BSAVA Congress, the award to be made at the January SPVS/VPMA Congress. MMI had teamed up with the Webinar-Vet to offer an online, mindfulness-based stress-reduction course for all members of the practice team, and over 500 people had signed up to-date. Two sessions had already been held and there had been very positive feedback.

### VN Council membership and appointments

53. **Election 2016.** The Chair reported that the results had been notified to the College by the Electoral Reform Services earlier in the day, and would be made public by means of a press release after the Acting Registrar had been able to notify all candidates. The percentage of RVNs voting had been 10.8%, compared with 11% in 2015.

54. **Lay membership.** It was reported that Mrs Penelope Swindlehurst would be retiring from Council at the AGM, having served two 4-year terms as a lay member. It had been decided not to replace her as the fourth lay member on VN Council for the coming year, pending the completion of the governance review.

### Golden Jubilee Award 2016

55. The Chair was very pleased to announce that the Golden Jubilee Award for 2016 would be made to Miss Louise O’Dwyer. Further details would be included in a press release later in the week. There would be a presentation at the BVNA Congress in October by the Chair, Mrs Dot Creighton (the 2015 award recipient) and Miss O’Dwyer by video link.

### Any other business

56. The Chair congratulated Mrs Kissick, who had been presented with the Bruce Vivash Jones award for outstanding contributions to the advancement of small animal veterinary nursing at the recent BSAVA Congress, and then thanked Mrs Kissick, who was retiring from Council, for all that she had done during her eight years as a member, including three years as Chair. Mrs Kissick would continue to play a key role in a number of working parties and committees.

57. Council also thanked Mrs Penelope Swindlehurst, who was retiring after eight years as a lay member, and Mrs Elizabeth Figg, who had served four years, for their commitment and contribution to its work.

58. Members were reminded that the AGM would be held at the Royal Institute of British Architects on Friday 15 July. Invitations would be sent out in the next few weeks and all members were encouraged to attend.

### Date of next meeting

VNC Minutes May 16

Classification: unclassified
59. The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 4 October 2016 at 11.00am. It was agreed that the start time for meetings should normally be 11.00am and that it was acceptable for the May 2017 meeting to take place on the day after the mayday bank holiday weekend.

Items discussed in confidential session

Election of Chair and Vice-Chairs for 2016/2017

60. Council had been circulated with the details of the nominations for the Chair and two Vice-Chairs for 2016/2017, in accordance with the election procedures. Council agreed unanimously that the following should be elected/re-elected for the forthcoming year:

Chair – Mrs Elizabeth Cox
Vice-Chair – Dr Niall Connell
Vice-Chair - Miss Hilary Orpet

CPD

61. **Policy.** Mrs Kissick introduced a paper produced by the CPD policy working group, setting out in detail its proposals to move to an outcome-based CPD policy. Council was invited to discuss the proposals which if agreed in principle, would be put out for consultation with the profession. The proposals applied to both veterinary nurses and veterinary surgeons, and would be considered by the Veterinary Surgeons Education Committee on 4 May and RCVS Council in June.

62. The discussions of the working party had focused on the direction of CPD and the increasing evidence that the long established and most commonly used CPD activities such as conferences, lectures and symposia have a limited effect on improving practitioner competence and performance and no significant effect on patient health outcomes. This is in contrast with interactive CPD activities which encourage reflection, provide opportunities to practise skills and are focused on outcomes, and are found to be the most effective at improving practice and patient health outcomes. The proposed system would involve four mandatory components (Plan, Do, Record and Reflect) and it was acknowledged that this would require improvement in CPD recording a good IT support system.

63. Comments made by VN Council members were very much in support of the proposals, which reflect moves in some other professions, although it was reiterated that a good IT and recording system would be essential. It was agreed that a system based on outcomes and reflection would be more challenging to older members of the profession, whereas those more recently qualified would be accustomed to online recording and reflection. It was also suggested that there may be cost issues for some.

64. It was noted that the proposals were to retain the current time requirement of 15 hours for veterinary nurses and this would include an allowance of 5 hours for the purpose of reflection. Some concerns were expressed on the number of hours stipulated for reflection, and it was suggested that it would be helpful to provide clear guidance on the stages of the reflective
cycle. It was also suggested that it might be helpful to look at other similar professions such as
dental and practice nurses. It was accepted that it would take time for the profession to
become used to the system which would be an educative process.

65. It was confirmed that it was not the intention of the RCVS to regulate or accredit CPD courses.

66. At the conclusion of the discussion it was agreed that VN Council was supportive of the
proposals with some modifications, and it was assumed that the consultation would be
accompanied by an explanation of the terminology. Mrs Kissick had taken note of the
discussion and would report back to the working group. The paper would be discussed by VS
Education Committee the following day, and by RCVS Council on 3 June.

67. **Report on Review Committee.** The Head of Veterinary Nursing presented the update from
the CPD referral group which had been appointed to make decisions on referring cases of
serial non-compliance or non-response to requests for CPD records, to the Professional
Conduct department. The report set out the steps which had been taken to investigate the 21
veterinary nurses who had not responded to requests to submit their CPD records in at least
three annual audits, and the outcomes in each case. The investigations had taken
considerable time and effort and it had been acknowledged that it would be difficult to take the
same approach for larger groups of veterinary nurses or veterinary surgeons.

68. Discussions had been held with the Acting Registrar to look at the processes involved, and as
a result proposals were brought forward for consideration, to change the annual renewal of
registration process. These were set out in detail in the paper.

69. Council was in agreement with the first proposal that in order to renew their registration,
veterinary nurses would be required first to complete the self-certification sections for CPD
compliance (and for criminal convictions) or if not compliant, to contact the RCVS to discuss
the situation further. These steps would need to be completed before paying the fee, and the
online form could not be submitted if the boxes were left blank. It was confirmed that there
would be a procedure to allow for practices wishing to complete renewal on behalf of their VNs
and veterinary surgeons, with a nominated person responsible for making the returns. This
individual would obtain the information on CPD compliance and criminal convictions from each
member and provide this information on the form. It was commented that consideration would
also need to be given to how this would work for direct debit payers.

70. Council considered the second proposal, on the series of interim sanctions that might be used
by the referral group in the early stages of the process. It was noted that the VS Education
Committee was keen to begin to take a stronger line on non-compliance and that referral to DC
should remain the ultimate sanction, although this would be very much a last resort. Council
was in agreement with the list of interim sanctions put forward by the referral group, with the
exception of the suggestion that a fine might be imposed. The comments from VN Council
would be reported to the VS Education Committee and will inform the paper that is put to
RCVS Council.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Veterinary Nurses Council</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>4 October 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Veterinary Nurse Education Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classification</td>
<td>Unclassified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>Minutes of the meeting of the VN Education Committee held on 27 June 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decisions required</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attachments</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Author          | Annette Amato  
Deputy Head of Veterinary Nursing  
0207 202 0713  
a.amato@rcvs.org.uk |
Veterinary Nurse Education Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2016

Members: 

- Mrs Victoria Aspinall, VN Council veterinary surgeon
- Mrs Talitha Cartmell, Employer representative
- Mrs Elizabeth Figg, VN Council veterinary nurse
- Mrs Susan Howarth, HE programme provider
- Mrs Andrea Jeffery, VN Council veterinary nurse (Chair)
- Dr Elizabeth Mossop, Independent educationalist
- Professor Susan Proctor, VN Council lay member
- Mr Peter Robinson, VN Council veterinary surgeon
- Mrs Penelope Swindlehurst, VN Council lay member
- Dr Jenny Watkins, FE programme provider

In attendance: 

- Mrs Annette Amato, Committee Secretary
- Mrs Elizabeth Cox, Chair, VN Council
- Mrs Julie Dugmore, Head of Veterinary Nursing
- Mrs Victoria Hedges, Examinations Manager
- Mrs Lily Lipman, Qualifications Manager

*absent

Apologies for absence

1. Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Talitha Cartmell and Dr Jenny Watkins.

Declarations of interest

2. Susah Howarth declared that she has been appointed as an external examiner for University College Dublin veterinary nursing programmes. There were no other new declarations of interest.

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee held on 21 March 2016

3. The minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2016 were accepted as a correct record. It was noted that the discussion on the use of blended and e-learning would be deferred until the November meeting of the Committee.

Operational update

4. The Head of Veterinary Nursing updated the Committee on a number of developments since the previous meeting.
Regional meetings. There had been a number of regional meetings to update centre staff on the procedures for enrolments and registrations, the relationship of the RCVS with the centres and the documentation needed. There had also been presentations on the revised Practice Standards Scheme, and centres had been updated on the VN Futures project and been given the opportunity to be involved. Four meetings had been held, in Gloucester, Edinburgh, Bristol and at the RCVS. There had been fewer than 20 delegates for the venues other than London, but the meetings had been very positive and much appreciated. Although it was not likely that meetings of this type would be held on an annual basis, it was possible that others would take place in the future.

5. Student enrolments. It was reported that as at 24 June, there had been a total of 1,734 student enrolments for the current academic year compared with 1,624 for the same period in the previous year. On the whole, the process had been smoother and had been helped by the employment of an administrator to assist over the busiest months. The college would be recruiting an enrolment administrator again from August, to cover the autumn/winter 2016 busy period.

6. There are still issues regarding the provision of clear student identification. A trial would be taking place with a few centres over the next few months using the keesing system.

7. Registrations. There are currently 13,670 registered veterinary nurses, of which 1,2595 had entered the register with a FE qualification, 834 with an HE qualification and 241 had qualified overseas. The main issues encountered in processing registrations, which can cause delays, are due to misunderstandings on how to complete the student record of training. This had been discussed at the centre meetings and it was hoped that there would be changes to the documentation for the future. There had also been a few cases in the past year where students had submitted record of training documents with forged training practice principal or head of centre signatures. Such cases are always investigated fully by the registrar before registration can take place.

8. Staffing. The examinations officer role, which was currently vacant, had been reviewed. The role would now focus on support for the pre-registration examinations, procession of applications from veterinary nurses with overseas qualifications and the secretariat for ACOVENE.

9. VN Futures. The regional meetings and workshops had all now been completed, run by the Chair of VN Council, the BVNA President and the Head of Veterinary Nursing. The turnout had been high, with one meeting being oversubscribed. The report would be launched at the VetFutures event at the RVC in Camden Town, on 4 July. An animation covering veterinary nursing would also be launched at the same time. A VN Futures action meeting would take place at the RCVS on 6 September, and it was possible that some of the actions would impact on the VNEC.

10. Nursing Progress log (NPL). The review of the NPL was now complete and a proposal for funding from the strategic fund for its development had been approved. The revised NPL would be available from September for all new enrolments, and would tie in with the revised
Day One Skills list. The functionality changes would be of benefit to all students.

11. **Other developments.** Following the successful review of the Day One Skills, there would be a Year One Skills Working Party which would meet in the Autumn. The handbooks for Awarding Organisations (AOs) and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Centres and Training Practices had been temporarily removed from the website for updating, to incorporate the new Day One Skills and changes in the Registration Rules regarding training hours.

**Review of accreditation standards**

12. **Approval of AO/HEI external examiners’ guidance notes.** The Committee noted and approved revised guidance notes for external examiners which contained changes to strengthen the guidance in terms of minimum qualification level, the period of time an external examiner could be employed after ceasing to be involved in the active training of veterinary nurses and the need for the external examiner to have access to practical examinations as well as the Day One Skills logs. The Committee was in agreement with these changes and confirmed the importance of external examiners being academically qualified and professionally competent (RGN or MRCVS).

13. The Committee also agreed the following details:
   - Examiners should be qualified at the level to which they would be examining.
   - An examiner should cease to be acceptable if they had been out of clinical practice and the educational system for more than five years.
   - Examiners should have substantial post-qualification experience of at least four years.

14. The proposals also incorporated the requirement for the RCVS to be provided with an examiner’s CV and CPD for approval before confirming the appointment. Whilst the Committee was in agreement with this in principle, it was felt that it may pose a problem of timing as institutions would wish to know when they appoint an examiner that they will be acceptable to the RCVS. It was suggested that the provision of a list of pre-approved external examiners, available to all AOs and HEIs, might solve this problem. Examiners would be asked by the RCVS to provide an annual update to ensure that they still meet the criteria. It was suggested that the Acting Registrar should be asked for advice on whether this would be acceptable, bearing in mind that the RCVS would be supplying a list of suitable names for a paid position.

15. It was agreed that the revised guidance should be incorporated into the accreditation handbook, and that the section of the guidance on assessment should be strengthened.

16. **Guided learning hours.**

   *The Committee was joined by Mrs K Kissick for this item at the request of the Chairman, in order to provide an FE programme provider perspective, as the FE member of the Committee was unable to be present.*
17. The Head of Veterinary Nursing presented a paper on the background to the current stipulation in the accreditation criteria that all licence to practise qualifications must include a minimum of 700 guided learning hours (GLH), and invited the Committee to consider whether this should be reviewed. The current requirement of 700 contact hours is equivalent to twenty three weeks of full time study. It was noted that when the Level 3 Diploma was designed with 180 credits (1800 hours) it was envisaged that this would be a full-time programme delivered over two years, and although it could be delivered part-time this would take longer. Historically further education VN qualifications have been delivered part-time (one day per week) over two years and the 2006 NVQ and VRQ awards comprised 440 contact hours over two years.

18. The FE colleges delivering part time training for the vocational qualifications are finding the 700 GLH expensive and labour intensive, and the view was expressed that this high minimum requirement for college hours was not favourable to the industry as a whole, and potential RVNs are being lost. Staff and students are being put under considerable pressure. It was also felt that the difference between the original 440 hours and the current 700 hours could not be justified in terms of the syllabus. Other members of the Committee commented the there are changes in the way students learn, and many learners do not respond well to lectures. Modern educational theory suggests that students should be encouraged to study independently and therefore the concept of a specified number of contact hours did not fit with this model.

19. It was also pointed out that a large proportion of students’ training is carried out in the workplace, but these hours of training cannot be included as part of the GLH. The RCVS standards and procedures for the accreditation of veterinary degrees do not include a specified number of guided learning hours but stipulate the QAA level descriptor and curriculum contact expected, along with the need to meet RCVS Day One Competences. It was suggested that the Day One Skills and Day One Competences should be the standard for VN training.

20. It was agreed by the Committee that the requirement for 700 hours should be removed. It was pointed out that Ofqual criteria stipulate that all regulated qualifications must meet a certain amount of contact time, and it was also pointed out that it would not be possible to meet the Day One Skills without considerable student contact time, so no qualification could meet the criteria by distance learning alone. The RCVS would audit the Awarding Organisations and Higher Education Institutions against the accredited criteria and would therefore be aware if there was a drop in standards.

21. There was considerable discussion as to whether a minimum number of hours should be specified, and if so, how this should be decided. It was concluded, however, that it would not be possible for the RCVS to audit this therefore it would not be appropriate to include a specific number. It was reiterated that there would be a minimum number of hours set by Ofqual for vocational qualifications, and by QAA for higher education qualifications, which these bodies would audit. It was agreed that guidance should be strengthened in terms of meeting the Day One Skills and Day One Competences, as for veterinary schools.

22. The agreement to remove the 700 GLH requirement would require a change in the Veterinary Nursing Registration Rules, to be approved by VN Council and RCVS Council.
23. **Examinations Sub-Committee.** The Examinations Manager provided an oral report on the first meeting of the newly formed Examinations Sub-Committee which had met on 15 June. This had been a useful meeting at which the criteria for the pre-registration examinations had been reviewed in detail.

24. The Sub-Committee had agreed a system for the weighting of items in the practical examinations, and the criteria required to achieve an overall pass.

25. There had been considerable discussion on the proposed format of the theory examinations, including the number of papers and the length of time to be allocated to each question. The original proposal was that there should be seven sections, based on the QCF credit framework. However after full discussion and taking advice from the independent examinations experts, it had been agreed that for reasons of reliability of the test, there should be fewer papers and that these should be based on the Day One Competences, so that each paper will meet many learning outcomes.

26. It had originally been envisaged by the Sub-Committee that the new format for the examinations would be introduced in August 2016, but the development of the papers along the lines agreed in the meeting would take considerable time. The Committee therefore agreed that the development and implementation of the new examination format should be delayed. This would also ensure that no candidates would be disadvantaged by the introduction of a format which they were not expecting. It was agreed that the Committee would be provided with an update in November and the aim would be to introduce the new format of examination in early 2017.

**VN Licence to practise qualifications**

27. The Qualifications Manager presented an update report on new and provisionally accredited AOs and HEIs offering awards leading to a licence to practise qualification in veterinary nursing.

28. **Royal Agricultural University (RAU).** The University had submitted an application for full accreditation for its FdSc in Veterinary Nursing, currently delivered at Askham Bryan College. The detailed report, together with the summary of action points and responses were considered and discussed. Mrs Aspinall declared an interest, as the external examiner for the programme, and left the meeting for the discussion on this item.

29. The Committee discussed a number of issues of concern regarding the examinations, and the Examinations Manager provided further details, together with information on the support which had been provided by the RCVS in respect of design, delivery and examiner training for these examinations.

30. It was agreed that at present, the accreditation status should remain as provisional and that the general examination support provided by the RCVS should continue although the RCVS would
not be involved in any aspects of the examination administration. In view of the fact that the RCVS has been heavily involved with the delivery and quality assurance of the examinations and the Examinations Manager is confident that the candidates passing these examinations have demonstrated a level of practical skills to indicate competency in the RCVS Day One Skills for Veterinary Nurses, the first cohort of graduates from this programme would be permitted to enter the Register without further assessment.

31. It was further agreed that provisional approval should continue until June 2017. The University should be requested to provide full details of its examination processes by November, for report to the November meeting of the Committee. These should include information and assurances that internal quality assurance processes are in place. The Head of Veterinary Nursing, Examinations Manager and Chairman of the Committee would agree the detailed content of the letter to the University. If full approval could not be granted in 2017, subsequent cohorts would be required to sit the RCVS pre-registration examinations. The university should also be advised that offers should not be made to candidates applying to start in September 2017, until the position was clear.

32. University of South Wales and University of Wales. It was reported that the Examinations Manager had delivered a training session on the design, delivery and management of OSCEs for the staff of both universities, and that they aimed to jointly deliver these examinations.

33. Vetskill. There was nothing further to report in respect of the application from this Awarding Organisation.

AO / HEI monitoring reports

34. Routine monitoring reports. The Qualifications Officer presented a summary report of the auditing activity undertaken for established AOs and HEIs since the last meeting. The risk assessments for some, where there had been a change in the risk banding, were noted and the Qualifications Manager answered a few queries.

35. City & Guilds. The Qualifications Manager reported that there had recently been a very positive meeting with City & Guilds at which the memorandum of understanding between the AO and its centres had been discussed. The Head of Veterinary Nursing added that she was confident that the current restructuring within City & Guilds would result in steps being taken to address outstanding actions, and that regular update meetings would continue to take place.

36. Central Qualifications. The Examinations Manager confirmed that as noted at the last meeting, she had requested further information and statistics on the examination system, which CQ had been happy to provide. This was discussed, and it was agreed that no further information on the examinations would be required at present. It was suggested that all examination candidates should be asked to provide qualitative feedback after the examinations.

Training practice and student numbers
37. The Committee noted a paper showing the current numbers of approved training practices offering clinical training and work experience to student veterinary nurses, including details of TP and student numbers by region. Information on the total number of practice premises in each region, and the number of Practice Standards Scheme (PSS) premises above core standards, was also included. It was agreed that for the next meeting information should be provided on the number of PSS practices above core standards which are not already TPs.

Continuing Professional Development

38. The Head of Veterinary Nursing reported that the annual audit of CPD for RVNs was ongoing. Results would be reported at the next meeting. The policy consultation for veterinary nurses and veterinary surgeons on proposals for an outcomes based system of CPD had opened a few days previously and already over 1,000 responses had been received.

Post Registration Qualifications

DipAVN monitoring report

39. The monitoring reports for the current DipAVN provision at Harper Adams University and Myrscough college (University of Central Lancashire) were noted. There were no areas of concern to report.

European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)

40. It was reported that at its meeting in May, the RCVS Education Committee accepted a recommendation from the Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee (PQSC) that the RCVS should apply for membership of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) which is the umbrella organisation which represents quality assurance organisations from the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) member states. The Committee also agreed that any application would need to encompass both veterinary and veterinary nursing accreditation procedures.

41. The Head of Veterinary Nursing presented a paper setting out the work necessary to achieve membership of ENQA, an outline timescale, the resources that will be required and an associated budget and stressed that the RCVS was keen to include veterinary nursing. It was confirmed that the purpose of ENQA was to regulate the regulators, and that it would be the RCVS, not the colleges or universities, that would be involved. The paper was provided for the information of the Committee, as it had already been agreed that the RCVS should apply for membership of ENQA.

Items for publication

42. The next edition of the VN Education newsletter should include information on the trial of the new system for provision of photo identification for student enrolments. Centres should be informed that the Ai/HEI, Centre and TP handbooks are currently available whilst revisions are taking place.
Any other business

43. The Chair expressed thanks to Penny Swindlehurst and Lizzie Figg for their contributions to the meetings over the past years. Both members were retiring from VN Council at the AGM in July.

Date of future meetings

44. The next meeting of the Committee would be held on Monday 21 November 2016, at 11.00am.
### Summary

This paper, together with the ENQA paper presented to VN Education Committee on 27 June 2016 sets out the background for ENQA, and the rationale for the RCVS application for ENQA accreditation.

The RCVS Education Committee accepted a recommendation from the Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee (PQSC) that the RCVS should apply for membership of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) which is the umbrella organisation which represents quality assurance organisations from the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) member states. The Committee also agreed that any application would need to encompass both veterinary and veterinary nursing accreditation procedures.

There are several changes that will be required in order to comply with ENQA standards. The initial proposed changes are outlined in the body of this paper. It is expected that further incremental changes will be passed through Veterinary Nurse Council, PQSC and Education Committee as the application evolves.

### Decisions required

1. The recommendation of two veterinary nurse critics for the ENQA application process
2. Approval/ amendment of new feedback forms for school visits as expected for ENQA accreditation
3. Agreement of the process of attaining a student panel member on accreditations.

### Attachments

- Annex A - Current ENQA timeline
- Annex B - School and participant feedback forms
Annex C - Terms of Reference of Audit and Risk Committee with area containing suggested changes shown in bold type (para 9.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Lily Lipman  
Qualifications Manager  
0207 2020756  
l.lipman@rcvs.org.uk |
Background

1. Work has commenced on putting together the application for ENQA accreditation. Attached is a proposed timeline (Annex A) put together by the Education and Veterinary Nursing departments with key deadlines leading up to the visitation by ENQA agents. Funding of up to £35,100 plus VAT has been agreed for the work by the Operational Board and a discussion at the first meeting of the Presidential Task Force following the Brexit vote confirmed support for pressing ahead with the application for ENQA membership. ENQA membership is wider than EU member states and there is no apparent reason why RCVS should reconsider its previous decision to apply: indeed, it could be argued that it is now even more important.

Staff have already begun to identify areas where RCVS standards and procedures would not currently meet ENQA requirements and where either new policies or processes would need to be created, or current ones amended. The preliminary changes are outlined in this paper.

Governance of ENQA application process

2. Any new or revised policies and procedures will need to be agreed through PQSC, Education Committee and Veterinary Nurse Council (VNC), as will the Self-Assessment report, but it would smooth the development process if staff could share emerging drafts informally with a group of ‘critical friends’. It is proposed that the application is developed with input from this internal review group before it is brought before committees. Input would be predominantly by email, although one face-to-face meeting of the group might be necessary in order to scrutinise the final submission prior to formal sign-off by PQSC and Education Committee.

3. It is suggested that two ‘critical friends’ should be drawn from PQSC and two from appropriate Veterinary Nursing committees. VNC is asked to agree this proposal and to seek volunteers to undertake this role. This has already been agreed by PQSC, and they have nominated Ms Lynn Hill, Chairman of PQSC and Mrs Jo Altrum, member of PQSC. It has been requested that the application be fed in manageable amounts to the individuals critiquing.

Self Evaluation

4. Part of the quality standard sufficient to satisfy ENQAs accreditation is an active engagement in the procurement and use of school evaluation on accreditation visits. Annex B is based on the education version, which has been submitted to PQSC and agreed with minor amendments. In it there is a feedback form for the visited school to fill out and a feedback form for any visitors attending on behalf of the RCVS to complete. VNC is invited to accept or comment on these new forms for visits to veterinary nursing schools.
5. One of the requirements for ENQA membership is that external quality assurance activities include student representation. With Veterinary schools, where visitations are undertaken jointly with EAEVE, there is a student member of the team as this is an EAEVE requirement, however for visitations conducted by the RCVS and ACOVENE we have not been including a student visitor. Given that we are now intending to apply for ENQA membership, RCVS needs to ensure that visitations do include student representation. PQSC have advised that the student representative be selected by the visiting team, and not the school. The RCVS will cultivate a pool of student representatives via communications with Centres. Where there are specific sectors (HE and FE) every effort will be made to source a student from the relevant sector.

6. The AO/HEI handbook refers to visiting teams for accreditation activities (Chapter 3) and quality monitoring activities (Chapter 5). While a student visitor would be expected to take part on mostly accreditation visits rather than the quality monitoring visits, should the need arise for students to attend the quality visits for ENQA approval, it would already written into the AO/HEI handbook.

7. Below is an extract from Chapters 3 and 5 to make it clear that where the visit is conducted solely by RCVS, student representation should be included for accreditations, and could be included for quality monitoring.

VNC is asked to agree these amendments and recommend this clarification to VN Education Committee. It is suggested that, if agreed, this change should apply from January 2017.
Chapter 3
RCVS AQ and HEI accreditation process
The initial accreditation
Visits will normally be conducted
by one or more members of RCVS staff, who will be
accompanied by visitor(s) appointed by VN Education
Committee and a suitable student representative. Where possible, visitors will have experience
appropriate to the sector (further or higher education).

Chapter 5
The visiting team
The appointment of visitors and composition of
the visitor team
An RCVS Qualifications Manager Officer will, in the main, carry
out site visits for quality assurance auditing purposes.
However, on occasion there may be a team of visitors
attending. This team could include a student representative where applicable. This will normally be where there is an
increased Centre risk or for staff training and standardisation.
During the visit, visitors are expected to take part as
members of the whole team, considering all standards
identified for audit on the visit agenda. During a visit
it is sometimes necessary to request documentation
and review standards not originally identified on the
agenda. The Qualifications Manager Officer will notify you of this
should it occur.
Changes to the Terms of Reference for the Audit and Risk Committee

8. ENQA requires the RCVS to have an independent internal quality panel responsible for ensuring the upholding of education standards, via review of all visit documentation and identification, where applicable, of themes and trends, so a more thematic approach may be undertaken in future external quality activity.

9. This activity in other areas of the RCVS is undertaken by the Audit and Risk Committee, who meet no less than three times per year. It is therefore suggested that amendment be made to the current terms of reference for this committee, to make explicit the need for its oversight of the quality activity undertaken by the education and veterinary nursing departments.

10. The change in wording of the terms of reference will be presented to the Audit and Risk Committee on the 5th October 2016.

11. Annex C contains the Terms of Reference for the Audit and Risk Committee, with the section containing proposed changes to make explicit the requirements for ENQA shown in bold type (in para 9 of the ToR).

Decisions for Veterinary Nurses Council

VNEC are requested to:

12. a) Recommend two veterinary nurse critics for the ENQA application process
    b) Approval/ amendment of new feedback forms for school visits as expected for ENQA accreditation
    c) Agreement of the process of attaining a student panel member on accreditations.
<p>| ENQA TIMELINE | Aug-16 | Sep-16 | Oct-16 | Nov-16 | Dec-16 | Jan-17 | Feb-17 | Mar-17 | Apr-17 | May-17 | Jun-17 | Jul-17 | Aug-17 | Sep-17 | Oct-17 | Nov-17 | Dec-17 |
|--------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| The agency informs the ENQA Secretariat, that it wishes to go through an external review. In the cases in which ENQA cannot be the coordinator of the review, the agency should provide the ENQA Secretariat with the identity and contact details of the body coordinating the review, as well as the reasons why the review cannot be coordinated by ENQA. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| The ENQA Board approves the review coordinator (if not ENQA). | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Terms of reference, protocol and preliminary timetable for the review are drafted by and agreed between ENQA and the agency. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| The agency starts to produce its SAR. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| The review coordinator (if not ENQA) submits the terms of reference, protocol and preliminary timetable for the review to the ENQA Board for consideration. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| The agency submits its SAR along with any other documentation of relevance to the review coordinator. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ENQA Secretariat carries out a pre-check of the SAR to ensure it meets the requirements of the provided guidelines. If meets the requirements, it is sent to the panel secretary for further distribution to the panel members, together with the review guidelines and the code of conduct. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENQA TIMELINE</th>
<th>Aug-16</th>
<th>Sep-16</th>
<th>Oct-16</th>
<th>Nov-16</th>
<th>Dec-16</th>
<th>Jan-17</th>
<th>Feb-17</th>
<th>Mar-17</th>
<th>Apr-17</th>
<th>May-17</th>
<th>Jun-17</th>
<th>Jul-17</th>
<th>Aug-17</th>
<th>Sep-17</th>
<th>Oct-17</th>
<th>Nov-17</th>
<th>Dec-17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If the SAR does not meet the requirements, the agency is requested to make the necessary modification and re-submit the SAR within one months from the request by the coordinator. After that, the SAR is forwarded to the panel secretary for further distribution to the panel, together with the review guidelines and the code of conduct.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The review coordinator submits to the panel any background information and documents about the review.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RCVS Timeline</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. DEVELOPMENT OF THE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT (SAR) Describe the means the agency has used to develop and produce the SAR (appointment of a team, involvement of stakeholders, etc.).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. HIGHER EDUCATION AND QA OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE AGENCY Describe the higher education system and the evaluation of higher education in your country/context (as relevant).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. HISTORY, PROFILE AND ACTIVITIES OF THE AGENCY Describe the history, profile and all activities of the agency as well as its position and status in the national context (where relevant) and its compliance with the national requirements.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENQA TIMELINE</td>
<td>Aug-16</td>
<td>Sep-16</td>
<td>Oct-16</td>
<td>Nov-16</td>
<td>Dec-16</td>
<td>Jan-17</td>
<td>Feb-17</td>
<td>Mar-17</td>
<td>Apr-17</td>
<td>May-17</td>
<td>Jun-17</td>
<td>Jul-17</td>
<td>Aug-17</td>
<td>Sep-17</td>
<td>Oct-17</td>
<td>Nov-17</td>
<td>Dec-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. SWOT ANALYSIS</td>
<td>Analyse the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the agency.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES OF THE AGENCY</td>
<td>Describe the external QA activities undertaken by the agency including its possible cross-border QA activities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. AGENCY’S QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES AND THEIR METHODOLOGIES</td>
<td>Provide details on the quality assurance processes and their methodology applied by the agency including: the different steps of the process; an account of the selection process and role of external experts; any relevant documentation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. AGENCY’S INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE</td>
<td>Describe the agency’s internal QA procedures.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. AGENCY’S INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES</td>
<td>Give information on the agency’s international activities, if applicable (e.g. involvement in international projects, external relations abroad, membership in international networks, etc.). N.B. cross-border QA activities should be addressed in the chapters 10 and 11 together with all other QA activities of the agency.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send to internal review group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. COMPLIANCE WITH EUROPEAN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES (PART 2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENQA TIMELINE</td>
<td>Aug-16</td>
<td>Sep-16</td>
<td>Oct-16</td>
<td>Nov-16</td>
<td>Dec-16</td>
<td>Jan-17</td>
<td>Feb-17</td>
<td>Mar-17</td>
<td>Apr-17</td>
<td>May-17</td>
<td>Jun-17</td>
<td>Jul-17</td>
<td>Aug-17</td>
<td>Sep-17</td>
<td>Oct-17</td>
<td>Nov-17</td>
<td>Dec-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1 ESG STANDARD 2.1 CONSIDERATION OF INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE - This should address the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described in Part 1 of the ESG- i.e., a summary of our standards for Vets/ VNS.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.2 ESG STANDARD 2.2 DESIGNING METHODOLOGIES FIT FOR PURPOSE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.3 ESG STANDARD 2.3 IMPLEMENTING PROCESSES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send to Internal Review group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.4 ESG STANDARD 2.4 PEER-REVIEW EXPERTS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.5 ESG STANDARD 2.5 CRITERIA FOR OUTCOMES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.6 ESG STANDARD 2.6 REPORTING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.7 ESG STANDARD 2.7 COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send to internal Review group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. COMPLIANCE WITH EUROPEAN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES (PART 3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1 ESG STANDARD 3.1 ACTIVITIES, POLICY AND PROCESSES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2 ESG STANDARD 3.2 OFFICIAL STATUS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.3 ESG STANDARD 3.3 INDEPENDENCE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send to internal review group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.4 ESG STANDARD 3.4 THEMATIC ANALYSIS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.5 ESG STANDARD 3.5 RESOURCES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENQA TIMELINE</td>
<td>Aug-16</td>
<td>Sep-16</td>
<td>Oct-16</td>
<td>Nov-16</td>
<td>Dec-16</td>
<td>Jan-17</td>
<td>Feb-17</td>
<td>Mar-17</td>
<td>Apr-17</td>
<td>May-17</td>
<td>Jun-17</td>
<td>Jul-17</td>
<td>Aug-17</td>
<td>Sep-17</td>
<td>Oct-17</td>
<td>Nov-17</td>
<td>Dec-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.6 ESG STANDARD 3.6 INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.7 ESG STANDARD 3.7 CYCLICAL EXTERNAL REVIEW OF AGENCIES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send to internal review group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. INFORMATION AND OPINIONS OF STAKEHOLDERS Outline the information and opinions of the agency’s key stakeholders. More substantial analysis can be added as an annex (e.g. a feedback analysis on the quality and consistency of the services of the agency)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. CURRENT CHALLENGES AND AREAS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send to internal review group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit SAR first draft to ENQA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Post-Visitation questionnaire for veterinary nursing school

**Visit**

**Date**

**Visiting team**

In order to reflect and improve upon our processes, it’s essential that our visitations are quality assured. We would be grateful if you would provide some feedback on the above visitation by answering the questions below.

**Name:**

**Position:**

**Type of visitation:** (initial accreditation visit, (re-) accreditation visit, quality audit visit)

1. **Before the visitation:**

Please rate the following factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Very poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organisation of the visit (dates, visiting team etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation of the visit schedule</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback from the team</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity of the standards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written guidance on completion of actions (where necessary)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please add any supporting/further comments below
2. During the visitation

a) Was the conduct of the visiting team in line with RCVS guidance (attached)?

Yes  
No  

If ‘No’ please tell us why below

b) Was the feedback provided at the end of the visit clear and unambiguous?

Yes  
No  

If ‘No’ please tell us why below

c) Please rate the overall organisation during the visit:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Very poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Are there any further comments/suggestions for improvement that you would like to make? If so, please make them below.


Signature:

Date: 

Thank you for your feedback
# Post-Visitation questionnaire for visitor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visit</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Visiting team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

In order to reflect and improve upon our processes, it’s essential that our visitations are quality assured. We would be grateful if you would provide some feedback on the above visitation by providing us with some information below.

**Name:**

**Position:** (Member of visitation team, observer)

**Type of visitation:** (Visitation, full re-visit, partial re-visit)

1. **Please comment on the visitation programme** *(comment on RCVS standards, AO/HEI records, timetable, base room documentation, liaison with school staff, reception by university, etc)*

2. **Please comment on the visitation team** *(did the team work within the guidelines stated in the RCVS AO/HEI Handbook, was the level of expertise as high as expected, was the visitation performed in a professional manner, etc)*

3. **Please comment on the administration of the visit by RCVS office, both before and during the visit** *(comment on performance, communication, efficiency, etc)*

4. **Any other comments**

5. **Suggestions for improvement**

**Signature:**

**Date:**
Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference

1. The Audit and Risk Committee shall support the Council by reviewing the comprehensiveness and reliability of assurances and internal controls in meeting the Council’s oversight responsibilities. The Committee is a non-executive committee and has no executive powers except as set out below.

2. The Committee has delegated authority to:
   - monitor the Council’s risk management arrangements;
   - approve the internal audit programme; and
   - advise the Council on the comprehensiveness and reliability of assurances and internal controls, including internal and external audit arrangements, and on the implications of assurances provided in respect of risk and control.

3. The Committee may request the attendance of any employee or member, as set out in paragraph 23 below, and may incur expenditure for the purpose of obtaining advice in terms of paragraph 27 below.

4. The Committee is accountable to the Council. The minutes of each committee meeting shall be circulated to the Council. The Committee shall report to the Council annually on its work. It may also submit separately to the Council its advice on issues where it considers that the Council should take action. Where the Committee considers there is evidence of ultra vires transactions or evidence of improper acts, the chairman of the Committee shall raise the matter at a formal Council meeting.

5. The Committee shall have five members, but may operate with fewer while a vacancy exists, provided the quorum is maintained. The members shall include two Council members, of whom one shall be a lay member and one a registrant member. The President, a Vice-President and the Treasurer shall not be members of the Committee. The members of the Committee who are not Council members (the “external members”) shall have appropriate audit and risk management experience.

6. The Council will appoint one of the external members serving on the Committee as chairman, based on relevant background and skills. In the absence of the chairman, the Committee shall elect another of its members to chair the meeting.

7. The Committee shall support the Council by reviewing and advising the Council on the operation and effectiveness of the arrangements which are in place across the whole of the Council’s activities that support the achievement of the Council’s objectives. In particular, the Committee shall review the adequacy of:-
- all risk and control related disclosure statements, together with any accompanying internal audit statement, external audit opinion or other appropriate independent assurances, prior to endorsement by the Council;

- the underlying assurance processes that indicate the degree of the achievement of corporate objectives, the effectiveness of the management of principal risks and the appropriateness of the above disclosure statements;

- the policies for ensuring compliance with relevant regulatory, legal, governance and code of conduct requirements; and

- the policies and procedures for all work related to fraud and corruption.

8. In carrying out this work the Committee will primarily utilise the work of internal audit, external audit and other assurance functions. It will also seek reports and assurances from Department Managers as appropriate, concentrating on the over-arching systems of governance, risk management and internal control together with indicators of their effectiveness.

9. In reviewing risk management arrangements, the Committee shall draw attention to areas where:

- risk is being appropriately managed and controls are adequate (no action needed);

- risk is inadequately controlled (action needed to improve control);

- risk is over-controlled (resource being wasted which could be diverted to another use); and

- there is a lack of evidence to support a conclusion (if this concerns areas which are material to the organisation's functions, more audit and/or assurance work will be required).

- The Committee shall carry out an annual review of all the accreditation and quality monitoring activities of the Education and Veterinary Nurse Departments, with the intention to evaluate the efficacy of the activity including:

- Review of the internal quality assurance related to defining, assuring and enhancing the quality and integrity of their activities

- The review and improvement of their activities are on-going so as to ensure that their services to institutions and society are optimal

- Evaluating the processes to ensure that all persons involved in activities are competent and act professionally and ethically;

- Reviewing the internal and external feedback mechanisms that should lead to a continuous improvement within the RCVS Education and Veterinary Nurse Departments

- Reviewing assurances that procedures are in place for the Detection of intolerance of any kind or discrimination

- allowing the agency to establish the status and recognition of the institutions with which it conducts external quality assurance.
The Committee shall review the summaries of themes, trends and responses within the data presented.
- The Committee shall receive updates of activity at each meeting
- an annual review which will include presentation of findings by the departments, and co-option of independent dedicated industry experts as part of the panel of reviewers.
- The Committee shall provide a written response of their review to the Veterinary Nurse and Education departments

10. In relation to internal audit the Committee shall:

- ensure that there is effective internal audit activity that complies with any applicable standards and provides appropriate independent assurance to the Council, Audit and Risk Committee, Secretary and Registrar;

- consider the appointment of advisers, the cost of the service and any questions of resignation or dismissal and make appropriate recommendations to the Council;

- ensure that the College makes adequate resource available to internal audit activity;

- review the internal audit strategy, operational plan and work programme;

- consider the major findings of internal audit work, and management's response; and

- annually review the effectiveness of internal audit.

11. In relation to external audit the Committee shall:

- consider the appointment and performance of the external auditor, the audit fee and any questions of resignation or dismissal and make appropriate recommendations to the Council;

- discuss and agree with the external auditor, before the audit commences, the nature and scope of the audit as set out in the external audit plan and their local evaluation of audit risks;

- review the work and findings of the external auditor, consider the implications and management's responses to their work; and

- review all external audit reports, including agreement of the annual audit letter before submission to the Council and any work undertaken outside the annual audit plan, together with the appropriateness of management responses.

12. The Committee shall review the annual financial statements, focusing particularly on:
- the statement on internal control and other disclosures relevant to the terms of reference of the Committee;

- changes in, and compliance with, accounting policies and practices;

- unadjusted mis-statements in the financial statements;

- major judgmental areas; and

- significant adjustments resulting from the audit.

13. The Committee shall ensure that the systems for financial reporting to the Council, including those of budgetary control, are subject to review as to completeness and accuracy of the information provided to the Council.

14. The Committee shall meet not less than three times a year. The external or internal auditors may request a meeting if they consider that one is necessary.

15. Only Committee members shall be entitled to attend meetings of the Committee. The Treasurer, Secretary and/or Registrar, and Head of Finance shall normally attend meetings. Representatives from the external auditors shall attend meetings as required for relevant items. The President and other Council members may attend meetings at the invitation of, or with the agreement of, the chairman of the Committee.

16. The Committee may request any employee or member to attend a meeting to assist with its discussions on any particular matter or to provide any information it may reasonably require in order to fulfil its remit. All employees and members shall co-operate with any reasonable request made by the Committee.

17. The Committee may ask any or all non-members to withdraw for all or part of a meeting if it so decides. In such an instance, the Chairman shall ensure that a proper record is made of the meeting.

18. The senior representatives of internal audit and external audit shall have free and confidential access to the chairman of the Committee. At least once a year, the Committee shall provide an opportunity to meet privately with the external and internal auditors.

19. The Committee may investigate any activity within its terms of reference. It may seek any information it requires from any employee and all employees shall co-operate with any request made by the Committee.

20. The Committee may obtain legal or other independent professional advice and secure the attendance of external advisers with relevant experience and expertise if it considers this necessary, within the budget approved by the Council. The Secretary and/or Registrar shall ensure that appropriate secretariat support is provided to the Chairman and Committee.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Veterinary Nurses Council</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>4 October 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Outcomes and findings from the CPD consultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classification</td>
<td>Unclassified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>This paper presents the findings and outcomes of the CPD consultation, the discussion and recommendations from the CPD Working Party and the Operational Board. A report will be made to RCVS Council in November.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decisions required</td>
<td>Agree the next steps for the outcome based CPD proposal as recommended by the CPD Policy Working Group and the way forward to address concerns on the time required for reflection.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Attachments | Annex A – Consultation report for the organisations  
Annex B – Consultation report for the professions |
| Author      | Jenny Soreskog-Turp  
Education Officer  
0207 202 0701  
j.soreskog-turp@rcvs.org.uk |
Introduction

1. The CPD Policy Working Party's proposal for an outcome based CPD system was endorsed by Education Committee, VN Council and RCVS Council. A six-week consultation with the professions started in June; veterinary surgeons and nurses were asked for their opinion about the proposal by completing an online survey.

2. 3357 people completed the consultation questionnaire, which is a great response from the professions. RCVS also received responses from the Association of Veterinary Students, AVI, BCVA, BSAVA, BVA, BVU, Cat's Protection, Dog's Trust and SPVS. A full report of responses received by these organisations is provided in Annex A.

3. The findings from the consultation have been analysed and will be presented in this paper along with CPD Working Party’s recommendations for the next steps. The Operational Board had also asked to see the consultation results and had an opportunity to discuss these at its meeting on 15 September. For the full report on the results of the consultation, please see Annex B.

Findings

4. Looking at the findings overall, there are a few points worth highlighting as follows:

   a. There were no major differences in the results between veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses.
   b. A small majority of the respondents agreed with each of the proposed changes to the CPD requirement
   c. Between 54-86% of respondents, depending on the question, did not leave any comments. This means that the opinions expressed in the open text questions represent a minority of respondents. Whilst it is important that we listen to the views expressed, we need to bear this in mind
   d. 8% of comments were supportive of the proposals, which also needs to be taken into account
   e. It would appear that parts of the professions are already following the CPD cycle but not recording each step of it. There are many positive comments about how the proposal will make a positive change for vets/vet nurses in the future, especially if the recording process is easy and not too time consuming.

CPD Cycle

5. More than 80% of respondents agreed with the do and record parts of the CPD cycle, which is very positive.

6. Overall 56% agreed with the planning component of the CPD cycle, while 33% disagreed with it. The lowest amount of support for planning was amongst veterinary surgeons/nurses that qualified less than five years ago, but 53% of vets and 43% of VN still agreed with it.
7. Part of the objection to planning CPD was that not all CPD can or should be planned as part of a formal development plan. The working group had acknowledged this in the proposal, but this point seems to have been missed.

8. The part of the CPD cycle that received the lowest amount of support was reflection, overall 45% agreed with it and 35% disagreed. Veterinary surgeons and nurses that qualified less than five years ago were less supportive of reflection than the other groups. Amongst veterinary surgeons 40% of recent graduates agreed with reflection as part of the cycle while 42% disagreed. 42% of veterinary nurses who had been qualified for less than five years agreed with reflection while 44% disagreed.

9. Overall, there seems to be a great deal of confusion and misunderstanding about what reflection entails and the term ‘reflection’ seems to hold some negative connotations for some people. It might be worth considering the use of a term such as ‘evaluation’ or ‘review’ in order to make this part of the cycle clearer to the professions. In any event, it is clear that there is a need to better explain what we are trying to achieve in this part of the cycle and what is expected of vets and vet nurses.

CPD Model

10. Overall more than 50% of respondents agreed with the proposed CPD model. Between 27-30% neither agreed nor disagreed with the different parts of the CPD model. There were no major differences between veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses or on the basis of the number of years since graduation.

11. The comments indicated a number of misunderstandings about the CPD Model. The Model was developed to encourage a variety of CPD activities, but many respondents thought that they would have to undertake CPD in each of the three domains even if it was not relevant to them. Others could not see specific examples relevant to them and wanted to add further CPD activities to the model. Whilst it might be helpful to add some additional examples, it is not going to be possible, or helpful, to produce an exhaustive list that will cover all possibilities and so this is another area where further explanation will be important.

Key findings

- There were many positive comments about the CPD proposal that should be taken into account, and a few examples are:
  - “I think this will make it much easier to focus efforts, especially when a new graduate in practice.”
  - “The inclusion of a reflection phase in the process is brilliant! That’s what’s going to make a difference in the development of skills and competences.”
  - “I think it will be difficult and there will be a lot of resistance initially, but I do think that despite not really feeling like doing it myself, it will make better vets in the future.”
  - “I will HATE having to prove to you that I reflect on my CPD, but so many vets I know get certificates from a congress for 20+ hours and learn sod all, I think you must
enforce this. As an employer since 2014, I have actually already enforced something similar at our practice. The vets and nurses must summarise and feed back their learning from cpd to the whole team. I return we have a £3k cpd budget. Those who don’t do this have their paid cpd suspended until they realize cpd is not just a social occasion. I don’t think I should have to send a plan of why I want to do something though. But the rest is good, although I doubt it will be popular…”

12. The main concerns that were expressed in the consultation comments were that it would take up additional time and vets/vet nurses would be required to undertake unnecessary paperwork in order to comply with the proposed CPD requirement.

13. Many veterinary surgeons and nurses were worried about additional time spent planning and reflecting; they felt that completing and recording CPD already took up part of their spare time and the new requirement would make it more difficult to maintain a good work/life balance. Many also expressed concerns that it would add stress or pressure to already busy and overworked professionals. A few examples of comments regarding time pressures are:
   - “I feel that by the time you plan, do, record and reflect your cpd, the 105 hours of recorded cpd would be in reality at least three times that number of hours of time taken up. I feel this is unnecessary and adding stress to an already pressure filled job.”
   - “The way I chose my cpds now is similar to outcome base system. I also record my cpds on the rcvs website. I am not so keen on formulating written plan of the cpd and writing reflections. I think I am busy enough and it won't bring any extra value to my work.”
   - “Already have enough to do, work long hours, on call, no lunch breaks etc, having to formally plan and write about planning CPD, reflecting on it etc just seems like it will take up more of my very limited free time, making my already poor work life balance even worse. Know I will not be given time at work to complete these tasks, so just even more to do in my supposed free time.”

14. It is suggested that the concerns about time could be resolved by re-introducing the CPD Working Party’s suggestion of a time allowance for reflection: the original proposal was that reflection could be counted as 10/5 hours of annual CPD hours.

15. The other main concern was that the new proposal would involve extra paperwork by being too bureaucratic: the phrase ‘a tick box exercise’ is used repeatedly. Many veterinary surgeons and nurses said that they were already reflecting either by just thinking through what they gained from the training/learning or by sharing it with colleagues after the event, but they did not see the need to record it. A flavour of the comments about excess paperwork are:
   - “Personally I find reflecting on CPD an onerous activity and don’t gain from it as it generally appears to be a tick box exercise”.
   - “The additional steps seem wholly unnecessary. Making vets write down what they learnt and what difference it will make smacks of a tick box exercise. I can't think of a single situation where it would help me longer term to sit and write cliches like ‘During this CPD I learnt how to tackle X, Y, Z, I feel that I can apply this in my daily work…etc etc’.”
   - “Getting veterinary professionals to consider what benefit proposed CPD will bring is clearly worthwhile but making all this something that has to be debated and wordily
recorded is yet another addition to the lake of bureaucracy we find ourselves trying to swim”

- “I believe the current system is working well for me and the proposed changes appear to represent more time spent on general bureaucracy and less actual learning. I believe it would increase the stress of gaining cpd and reduce the benefits from it. “

16. In order to make sure that the new process is not too onerous to complete, it is vital that the RCVS has an easy and straightforward recording system.

17. It would also be beneficial to produce case studies to show that recording reflections is beneficial and does not take valuable time away from either learning or seeing clients.

IT systems

18. Further enhancements should be made to the Professional Development Record (PDR) to make it easy and straightforward to plan, record and reflect on CPD. It would also be beneficial to develop an app where CPD can be recorded offline and perhaps also be recorded by voice recognition in order to ease the amount of paperwork that veterinary surgeons and nurses need to undertake.

19. It would also be useful if the PDR could include a network section where vets/vet nurses could find a mentor, form a study/peer review group or get support from other professionals when they are struggling.

20. Many veterinary surgeons and nurses expressed concerns about the cost of CPD or the difficulty of finding good quality CPD activities. The RCVS does not wish to start accrediting/quality assuring CPD providers but recognises that it might be beneficial to have a website/forum along the lines of ‘Trip Advisor’, where vets and vet nurses can review and recommend CPD courses/activities to other professionals. This could be set up independently of the RCVS, but made available to the profession as a useful resource.

CPD Policy Working Party’s discussion

21. The Working Group accepted the results of the consultation and, after reviewing the outcomes felt that there was no reason not to move forward with the original proposal: the evidence in support of outcomes-based CPD systems is strong and RCVS is right to show leadership in this area. However, the RCVS also needs to listen to the profession and the consultation had shown that there are concerns and misunderstandings around a number of aspects of what is being proposed. This means that, in order to take the professions with us, the intentions behind the new system would need to be explained in further detail and communicated clearly.

22. It was clear from the consultation that the concept of reflection is not understood by all and seems to hold negative connotations for some people. The group felt that the term ‘reflection’ should still be included in the cycle but be described as reflection/review or reflection/evaluation to clarify what is expected at each step of the cycle. We should also
define the scope of reflection more clearly and develop examples of what would be expected in a CPD record.

23. The main concerns about the proposal were the additional time that it would take and, allied to this, a worry about bureaucracy and unnecessary paperwork. The group acknowledged that it is likely to take some additional time to properly document the CPD plan and reflections and recommends to Education Committee and VN Council it would be sensible to allow up to five hours per year for documenting all the steps in the cycle. A time allowance (of 10 hours for vets and 5 for nurses) was included in the original proposals, but both Education Committee and VN Council did not feel that this was appropriate. However, the strength of the comments suggest that this should be re-considered.

24. The Working Group agreed that, in order to make recording as easy as possible, a good IT system is needed and it would be essential to develop an ‘app’ so that activities can be recorded offline and by using voice recording to minimise the amount of paperwork. It is not possible to include these features in the current system and the group agreed that it would be useful to do some research to see if it would be possible to use or customise an existing system rather than develop something from scratch.

25. The Working Group agreed that it would be important to respond to the consultation outcomes. It suggested that RCVS should produce a summary report of the results, plus a series of answers to the comments that were made. This would be in similar format to a set of ‘frequently asked questions’ and would address the common misunderstandings about CPD and the new proposals that were evident from the consultation. It also suggested that there should be a short video explaining the results.

Operational Board’s discussion

26. The Operational Board supported the recommendations of the CPD Policy Working Party and felt that the suggested next steps were appropriate. The Board suggested an alternative approach to addressing the concern regarding the time required for reflection. It was suggested that veterinary surgeons and nurses could count reflection as part of their CPD, logging the actual time taken for this activity, rather than giving a finite time allowance of 5 hours.

Recommended next steps

27. Both the CPD Policy Working Party and the Operational Board supported the suggestions for next steps presented in the paper. VN Council is asked to agree the following recommendations.

28. It is recommended that RCVS should move forward with trialling the proposed cycle and model. The CPD Working Party should remain in place as a steering group and that RCVS should recruit a small group of volunteers to help to help trial the proposal and drive the IT system forward. Ideally it would be helpful to work with vets/nurses that do not normally
engage with the College and VN Council may wish to express views on how best to achieve this. As part of the trial, further examples can be added to the model, where necessary, guidance can be developed and case studies can be completed to inform the professions about the benefits and ease of the new system. It is suggested that trials would last from 9 months to a year.

29. It is recommended that there should be recognition of the time taken to reflect on CPD, either through an allowance of up to 5 hours as suggested by the Working Party, or by allowing the time taken for reflection to count as CPD. VN Council is asked to consider these alternatives and agree the option it feels most appropriate.

30. It is also recommended that it would be helpful to organise some regional CPD meetings and volunteer to speak at regional CPD clubs about the findings of the consultation and the way forward. It will be important to engage with the professions to explain the proposals in more detail.

31. Once the trial and case studies are completed the CPD Working Party, Education Committee, Council and VN Council will decide if the CPD proposal should be mandatory for all registered veterinary surgeons or nurses. One option would be to make the system voluntary for a specified period and run the two systems in parallel, but this decision does not necessarily need to be taken at this point.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Meeting</strong></th>
<th>Veterinary Nurses Council &amp; Council</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date</strong></td>
<td>4 October 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td>RVN PI Committee Chairman’s Report to VN Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classification</strong></td>
<td>Unclassified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary</strong></td>
<td>This report sets out the work of the Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN) Preliminary Investigation (PI) Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Decisions required</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attachments</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Authors** | Michael Hepper  
Barrister/Chief Investigator/Committee Secretary  
020 7202 0755  
m.hepper@rcvs.org.uk  

Eleanor Ferguson  
Solicitor/Acting Registrar/Head of Professional Conduct  
020 7202 0718  
e.ferguson@rcvs.org.uk |
Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons

Registered Veterinary Nurses Preliminary Investigation Committee

Chairman’s report to VN Council 4 October 2016

Introduction

Since the last Report to Council the RVN Preliminary Investigation (PI) Committee has said good-bye to Lynne Hill MRCVS and Jenny Thompson RVN and welcomed Sally Bowden RVN. The current RVN PI Committee members are:

- Suzanne May RVN - Chairman
- Susan Macaldowie MRCVS – Vice-Chair
- Sarah Bedwell – Member
- Arun Midha – Member
- Sally Bowden RVN – Member

And since the Chairman’s last report there have been three meetings of the RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee (31 May 2016; 5 July 2016 and 6 September 2016)

RVN Concerns received

Between 3 May 2016 and 6 September 2016 there were fifteen new Concerns received against RVNs. Three cases are currently being considered by RVN PIC and twelve cases are under investigation by the Case Examiners Group (a veterinary and lay member on RVN PIC and a Case Manager).

RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee

The total number of new cases considered by the Committee between 3 May 2016 and 6 September 2016 was six. Four cases have been referred to the College’s solicitors for statements to be taken from relevant witnesses and two cases have been referred to the RCVS Disciplinary Committee.

The table below shows the number, categories and stages of the one hundred & sixty-seven total number of Concerns received against RVNs between 1 April 2011 (the date that RVNs were subject to regulation under the Rules agreed by VN and RCVS Council in November 2010) and 6 September 2016.
### RVN Concerns registered between 1 April 2011 and 6 September 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description of Category</th>
<th>Number of Complaints</th>
<th>Case Examiner Group</th>
<th>RVN PIC</th>
<th>Referred to DC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Client Confidentiality</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Fees</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Promoting the Practice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D/1</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D/2</td>
<td>24 hour emergency cover</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D/3</td>
<td>Euthanasia</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D/4</td>
<td>Communication/ Consent</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Running the business</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Treatment of animals by non-vet nurse</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Certification</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 (CPD Audit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>The use of Veterinary Medicine Products</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Jurisdiction of RCVS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Negligence/Inadequate Care</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Other (for example, fraudulent registration and investigations involving other agencies)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Convictions</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Appeals</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Performance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Restoration</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>Unclassified</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>167</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data source – Profcon computer system complaints data. Category ‘X’ is a temporary field assigned to complaint files where a final category has not been identified.

### Ongoing Investigations

The RVN PI Committee has two ongoing cases. One case is adjourned pending the outcome of a criminal court trial against the RVN. The RCVS Professional Conduct Department has been informed that the trial date is currently listed for 15 November 2016. Two cases (as above) are referred to the College’s solicitors for statements. These cases will be included in a future Report to VN Council.
Health Concerns

There is currently one RVN on the RCVS Health Protocol.

Referral to Disciplinary Committee

Since the last report the RVN PI Committee there are two cases referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee for a formal hearing. These cases are still to be listed and will be included in a future Report to VN Council. The RVN PI Committee has referred a total of four cases to the RVN Disciplinary Committee. This figure represents 2.4% of the total of Concerns received against RVNs since they were subject to regulation (1 April 2011).

MDH/09/09/2016