

Veterinary Nurses Council

Wednesday 17 September 2025 at 10.00am at the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, 1 Hardwick Street, London EC1R 4RB

Agenda

	Classification ¹	Rationale ²
1. Welcome to new members	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
2. Apologies for absence	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
3. Declarations of interest	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
4. Obituaries	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
5. Minutes of meeting held on 21 May 2025		
i. Unclassified minutes	Unclassified	n/a
ii. Classified appendix	Confidential	1,2,3,4
6. Matters arising	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
7. CEO update	Oral report Unclassified	n/a

Matters for decision by VN Council and reports from Committees (unclassified items)

8. VN Education Committee		
8.01 Minutes of meeting held on 26 June 2025	Unclassified	n/a
8.02 Minutes of meeting held on 19 August 2025	Unclassified	n/a
9. Reports from RCVS Committees		
9.01 VN Preliminary Investigation Committee	Unclassified	n/a
9.02 Standards Committee	Oral report Unclassified	n/a

9.03	Advancement of the Professions Committee	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
9.04	VN Disciplinary Committee	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
10.	Communications report	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
11.	Any other business (unclassified)	Oral report Unclassified	
12.	Date of next meeting Wednesday 12 November 2025 (remote)		
Confidential and private items (closed session)			
13.	Draft budget for 2026	Confidential	1,4
14.	VN Education Committee confidential items		
14.01	Confidential items from meeting of 26 June 2025	Confidential	2,3,4
14.02	Confidential items from meeting of 19 August 2025	Confidential	2,3,4
15.	Risk Register		
15.01	Update on changes since the previous meeting	Confidential	1,2,3,4
15.02	Items identified from the meeting to add to Risk Register	Oral report	
16.	South African Veterinary Council	Oral report	
17.	Policy, Innovation and Public Affairs update	Oral report	
18.	Items for RCVS Committees	Oral report	
19.	Any other business (confidential items)	Oral report	
20.	Survey of the professions analysis	Oral report	
21.	VN Vision	Oral report	
22.	Reflective session		

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Secretary, VN Council
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¹Classifications explained

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

Summary

Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	17 September 2025
Title	Minutes of meeting of Veterinary Nurses Council held on 21 May 2025
Summary	Minutes of meeting of Veterinary Nurses Council (VNC) held on 21 May 2025
Decisions required	To approve the unclassified minutes and classified appendix
Attachments	Classified appendix (confidential)
Author	Annette Amato Committee Secretary a.amato@rcvs.org.uk 020 7222 0713

Classifications

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

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Veterinary Nurses Council

Minutes of the meeting held online via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday 21 May 2025

Members:

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

In attendance:

Mrs Annette Amato	Committee Secretary
Mr Luke Bishop	Media and Publications Manager (open session only)
Mrs Julie Dugmore	Director of Veterinary Nursing
Miss Shirley Gibbins	VN Qualifications Lead
Mrs Victoria Hedges	VN Examinations Quality Lead
Mrs Abi Judd-English	Media and Publications Officer
Ms Lizzie Lockett	Chief Executive
Mr Ben Myring	Head of Policy, Insight, and Public Affairs
Ms Clare Paget	Registrar (confidential session only)
Dr Linda Prescott-Clements	Director of Education (confidential session only)
Mrs Jenny Soreskog-Turp	Lead for Postgraduate Education
Mr Simon Wiklund	Head of Legal Services/Assistant Registrar

Guests: (open session only)

Mr Josh Loeb	BVA Publications
Mr Chris Simpson	Vet Times
Mr Mark Stobbs	Chair, RCVS RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee

Apologies for absence

1. Apologies for absence had been received from Anita Bickerdike, Jessica Franklin, Susan Howarth and Holly Witchell.

Declarations of interest

2. Two members reported amendments that would be notified to the committee secretary for updating on the website. The Chair reminded members to check their declarations of interest on the website and ensure they were kept up to date. A declarations of interest form would be circulated annually to all members, and this should be completed even if there had been no changes. There were no declarations of interest relevant to items on the agenda.

Obituaries

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

Minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2025

4. The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2025 were approved as a correct record, subject to the removal of the Vice-Chair designation for Matthew Rendle.

Matters arising

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

CEO update

6. The CEO gave a brief an oral update on recent activities.
7. **Competition and Markets Authority (CMA).** The hearing held on 14 March, referred to in the previous meeting, had lasted several hours and the focus had been on how some of the emerging harms that the CMA was finding could be addressed. Some of the suggested areas, such as regulation of practices, could not be supported by the RCVS without a new Veterinary Surgeons Act, although guidance could be provided. The remedies paper had been published by the CMA on 1 May, with a response deadline the forthcoming week. The RCVS response was currently being prepared and would be put to the CMA Working Group later that day for discussion.
8. The Director of Veterinary Nursing had been involved in answering the questions relevant to veterinary nursing, and these had generally focused on how the role of veterinary nurses could be increased within practice. The CEO reiterated the previously expressed view that although the RCVS was supportive of developing the veterinary nursing role, it was necessary to ensure that this was in an appropriate context, and that veterinary nurses should not just be considered a

cheap resource and that their professional contribution to the veterinary team be properly recognised.

9. Key points that had been covered in the CMA remedies document included suggestions for a type of price comparison website; that veterinary surgeons should provide a specific number of options to clients looking at treatment; and whether clients should be given a specific time-frame within which to make a decision. The consultation response from the RCVS would address these points.
10. **Hardwick Street.** The new RCVS premises were now ready for occupation and there would be two staff days at the end of the week, where the staff team would come into the building, many for the first time. The days would focus on health and safety induction, the history of the College through its buildings and guided walks around the area, as well as some conversations around culture and working in the building. The plan was to be able to invite veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses into the building as soon as the snagging activities had been carried out, with an RCVS Council meeting in June and a few other meetings over the summer, and a more formal opening in autumn.
11. **Strategic Plan.** The CEO had been gathering feedback from different groups on how they wanted to contribute to delivery of the strategic plan. This would be discussed by the Senior Team and then the Officer Team in July, with a document being prepared for the 1 October meeting of Council. An update would be reported to the VN Council meeting at its September meeting.

Veterinary Nurse Education Committee (VNEC)

12. Council noted the minutes of the two recent meetings of the VNEC. The Chair of the VNEC had had sent her apologies, but the Director of Veterinary Nursing and members of the VN team were present and would be happy to answer any questions relating to the minutes. There were no questions, and Council ratified the unclassified sections of the following VNEC Minutes:
 - Meeting held on 12 February 2025
 - Meeting held on 23 April 2025

Review of the Post-Registration Framework for Veterinary Nursing

13. The Chair of the Working Group, Simon Williams, presented the updated Post-Registration Framework for Veterinary Nursing, that detailed the requirements for development and delivery of Certificates in Advanced Veterinary Nursing. The current framework had been ratified by VNC in May 2019, with some minor amendments in 2022. The framework was reviewed and consulted on every five years to ensure it remained fit for purpose.

The task and finish Working Group was established in September 2024 to support the review. The initial review had been conducted by members of the veterinary nursing team, taking into account feedback from accredited education institutions (AEI) and accreditation panel members, following which the Working Group had reviewed the draft proposals and had launched a six-week consultation in January 2025. The response to the feedback had been mainly overwhelmingly positive. The Working Group had reviewed the revised proposals and had agreed the suggested amendments. VNEC had approved the proposed changes, which incorporated a new standard focusing on learning culture. An implementation date of January 2026 had been set, as VNEC had felt the original proposed timeline, with implementation in September 2025, was too short.

14. Council was provided with the following documents:
 - Paper setting out the review
 - Collated responses from consultation
 - Summary of changes and Working Group decisions
 - Revised Standards approved by VNEC in April 2025
15. Members commented favourably on the review and were pleased to see that the contributions from the different stakeholders had been considered and implemented into the standards. As part of the learning culture, the inclusion of guest speakers and staff from the institution who were suitably qualified at that level with a good understanding of evidence-based research, not necessarily veterinary experts, was welcomed. This had come out clearly in the consultation feedback and would be addressed in the new guidance and support process.
16. A comment was made on the difficulty in reading one of the Annexes due to the formatting, and a plea made to address such issues in the future.
17. At the conclusion of the discussion, the Chair thanked the Working Group and the staff team and Council agreed unanimously to ratify the updated Post-Registration Framework for Veterinary Nursing, for implementation from January 2026.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

18. The Lead for Postgraduate Education (LPE) presented a paper that proposed a pilot of a new voluntary CPD buddy scheme that could offer peer support in achieving the mandatory CPD requirements for veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses on the RCVS Register, proposed by the VetGDP and CPD Engagement Group. The views of Council were sought on the proposal.
19. Overall, the views expressed by members were supportive of the proposals, with the following additional comments being made:
 - This was a good idea in principle but could turn out to be more resource intensive than anticipated.
 - It might be helpful to clarify that CPD buddies and volunteers could cover more than one category, depending on their areas of expertise.

- It might also be helpful to provide information on geographical areas, and to pilot face-to-face as well as online support.
 - Concern that after the initial engagement with the scheme, some volunteers might pull out - there would need to be a pool of buddies willing to step in and provide support.
 - As the pool widened, it would be helpful for those in the pool to share good practice and mentor one another.
 - Clarity might be needed on the type of resources to be provided by the RCVS, maybe a business case might be needed to quantify the resources and the potential cost.
20. Council was happy to support the proposals being taken forward to the next step. The LPE would report back the comments from Council, including the caution in respect of the resources required.

Report on registration of veterinary nurses educated outside the UK

21. The VN Examinations Quality Lead (VNEQL) presented the report summarising the applications for registration and assessment of qualifications from nurses educated outside the UK, covering the period between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, with figures for the previous year shown for comparison. Details of the registration process were provided, as well as a list of the common qualifications submitted, and whether the applicant was required to submit a syllabus.
22. Council's attention was drawn to trends in the current reporting year. There had been a marked decrease in applications to have qualifications assessed for suitability to enter the Register or the pre-registration examinations and this was mirrored in those entering the Register. The veterinary nursing course in Hong Kong had now closed and therefore a decrease in applications from nurses educated in Hong Kong was expected. There had been a general decrease in applications since the UK left the EU with potential applicants finding it difficult to obtain the necessary visas. The introduction of the theory examination in April 2024 as part of the pre-registration examination process meant that it could take longer for an applicant to enter the Register, as previously they were required to complete only one practical examination. At the end of the reporting period there were 78 applicants preparing to sit the examinations.
23. The College continued to promote this route to registration and on 8 May the VNEQL had delivered an Academy Live event alongside colleagues in the Education department. This was aimed at people with qualifications achieved overseas wishing to join the Register. The session was well attended and would become a regular feature.
24. A member commented on the difficulty in obtaining visas and entry to the UK and queried whether Council should review this in the future. It was noted, however, that veterinary nurses were not on the skills shortage list and so it was not clear as to whether this could be influenced currently, and other government initiatives may affect the landscape in the future. A member also suggested that the veterinary nursing programme in Hong Kong might be restarted in the future.

Report on temporary student enrolments

25. Council noted a paper setting out information on the number of temporary enrolments from students on a veterinary nursing course outside the UK. A maximum of twelve weeks of work experience was allowed, provided the application had been supported by the education provider and the practice. There had been an increase in applications during the reporting period, from 19 to 28, mainly from Ireland and the Netherlands.

Reports from RCVS Committees

Registered Veterinary Nurse Preliminary Investigation Committee (RVN PIC)

26. The Chair of the RVN PIC, Mark Stobbs, joined the meeting to introduce the annual report of the RVN PIC Committee that had been circulated with the agenda. This had been a busy year with many cases considered. The Chair added that he wished to thank this very positive committee, which included excellent expertise from veterinary nurses, the vet representative and the lay representatives, and there had been much sensible robust discussion. He also thanked the staff that service and advise the Committee. The Committee had been a joy to chair.
27. In response to a query on the possible reason for the uplift in the number of concerns since 2019, it was difficult to suggest a particular reason, and may be due to an increasing awareness of the regulatory system and the concerns and complaints process. One area of concern was the cases caused by behaviours triggered by mental health issues. The team were very good at signposting those concerned to the support that was available and were always very aware of looking at potential health issues.
28. In regard to the increase in cases, it was also pointed out that there had been an increase in the number of registered nurses, so as the size of the profession increased there might be an expected increase in the number of complaints.

Advancement of the Professions Committee (APC)

29. Simon Williams reported that the APC had met earlier in the month at the Battersea Dogs and Cats Home and had covered a wide range of subject items including the Strategic Plan. There had been a presentation on the VN Vision work that had been carried out to date, and how the role of the veterinary nurse ties into the legislative reform and the outcome of the CMA review. The Committee was looking to exemplify practices that use RVNs particularly well. The Committee had also discussed environmental issues and how the RCVS would lead from the front on environmental change.

Standards Committee

30. Matthew Rendle reported on relevant issues discussed by the Standards Committee, relating in particular to the review of the guidance on the Codes of Professional Conduct.

31. The Committee had discussed adding guidance around maintaining professional boundaries with clients. This idea stemmed from wanting to highlight the existence of a power disparity between vets and clients and to provide advice on safeguarding clients against potential financial exploitation. The new draft of the guidance acknowledged the power disparity and stated that mutual protection should be ensured for all parties.
32. The Committee had discussed the wording in the guidance around RCVS Specialist, which could be confusing as there are limitations on the use of 'specialist'. The Committee had agreed to remove this language and replace with 'a particular interest in...' or 'a focus on'.
33. Recent discussions within the RCVS and with the British Veterinary Nursing Association (BVNA) had highlighted some difficulties with interpretation of the guidance around RVNs and anaesthesia. The Committee had been invited to provide comments on how the guidance should look in the future, with a first draft to be presented at the June meeting. The Committee had been happy with the direction of travel, and commented that guidance should include that there be continuous communication between the prescribing vet and the RVN/SVN performing the anaesthetic to the level appropriate to the situation.

RVN Disciplinary Committee

34. The Chair reminded Council that the RVN Disciplinary Committee reports summarising recent hearings could be found in the VN Council workroom library in the BoardEffect platform, and the full hearing details were also available on the RCVS website.

Communications report

35. The Media and Publications Manager provided an overview of recent activities from the Comms team.
36. The latest edition of the *VN Education* e-newsletter had been published in early April, and the Strategic Plan was due to be published imminently. The RCVS 2024 Annual Report was being finalised ready for presentation at Royal College Day in early July. Further information on Royal College Day would be sent out shortly, including details of the guest speaker.
37. The veterinary nursing student reasonable adjustment guidance was due to be published in June and was being prepared into a suitable format for inclusion on the website. There would be publicity around those guidelines and also on the ongoing Reasonable Adjustments campaign being led by the Advancement of the Professions team. The aim of the Reasonable Adjustments campaign was to raise awareness and empower those in the veterinary workplace to talk about ways in which the workplace could be made more suitable for them, no matter what their disability or health condition. There would be a series of interviews, blogs and case studies with members of the professions.
38. The Advancement of the Professions team would be running a series of webinars revisiting some of the main action points and conclusions from the 2022 Workforce Action Plan.

- 39. The Mind Matters team had recently published some guidance written in conjunction with health experts and clinicians, created to raise awareness and expand knowledge of mental health and illness.
- 40. The VN Educators Conference would take place on 17 June, and 57 delegates had registered so far.
- 41. The Veterinary Nurses Day held on 7 May 2024 at St George's Hall in Liverpool, had been a very positive event, with around 270 attendees, 90 of whom had been newly qualified veterinary nurses.

VN Council membership

- 42. **VN Council election 2025.** The Chair confirmed that Bethan Pinhey and Hannah Welsman had been elected for three-year terms, with effect from the AGM in July and Council would look forward to welcoming them at its next meeting.
- 43. **Retiring members.** This would be the last Council meeting for Jessica Beckett and Holly Witchell, who had both served a three-year term after being elected to VN Council in 2022. The Chair thanked Jessica and Holly for their contributions to VN Council over the past three years, and hoped to be able to say a formal goodbye to them at the AGM in July.

Any other business (unclassified)

- 44. No items had been raised.

Date of next meeting

- 45. The next meeting of Council would be held in person on Wednesday 17 September 2025 at the new RCVS headquarters, 1 Hardwick Street, London EC1R 4RB, starting at 10.00am.

Summary

Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	17 September 2025
Title	Minutes of meeting of VN Education Committee held on 26 June 2025
Summary	Minutes of the meeting of Veterinary Nurse Education Committee held on 26 June 2025
Decisions required	To approve
Attachments	Classified appendix (Confidential)
Author	Annette Amato Committee Secretary a.amato@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0713

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Veterinary Nurse Education Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2025 held remotely via Teams

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

*absent

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

Apologies for absence

1. Apologies for absence were received from Sarah Batt-Williams, Lisa Grainger, Susan Howarth, Betsy Malamah-Thomas and Marie Rippingale. The meeting was chaired by Sarah Reynolds-Golding (Deputy Chair).

Declarations of interest

2. Sarah Reynolds-Golding declared that as External Examiner for the University of Chester she would not be involved in the decision on this item but would remain in the meeting to guide and facilitate the discussion.

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee (VNEC) 23 April 2025

3. The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2025 as a correct record.

Matters arising

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

Operational update

5. The Director of Veterinary Nursing (DoVN) provided an update on recent activities and issues of note:
6. **Declarations of Interest.** The committee secretary would shortly be sending all members a document to complete with their declarations of interest (DoI), and a decision tree. Going forward, the DoI document would be circulated annually. There would still be a DoI section at the start of each meeting, in case there had been any changes and to allow members to remind the committee of any specific interest relevant to items on the agenda.
7. **Educator forums.** The inaugural conference hosted by Myerscough College on 17 June had been very successful, with 58 delegates attending. The theme had been 'Wellbeing and Support' with guest speakers talking about their experiences with students, and their own personal experiences. The qualifications assessors had provided a session on clinical supervisors from an educator perspective, the Qualifications Lead (QL) had provided an overview of wellbeing specific data outcomes from accreditation and audit reports, and the VN Examinations Quality Lead (VNEQL) had presented the updated information on reasonable adjustments that is now on the website and had been included in newsletters. There had also been a presentation from a member of the Academy, covering learning spaces. There had been time for networking. The next educator forum would take place in October, at Hardwick Street.
8. **Nursing Progress Log (NPL).** The review of the NPL was moving forward and there had recently been a live demonstration. The pilot group had been set up and would carry out beta testing over the coming few months. It was expected that phase one would be ready for launch in September 2025, ready for the new cohorts of students.
9. **Database.** The new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) database system was currently undergoing beta testing and was due to launch in September 2025, with a portal for colleges and educators which should be more user-friendly than the current system. The website was also undergoing a complete review and was likely to be launched in the next year.

10. **Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (CertAVN) Standards.** The Standards that had been approved at the previous VNEC meeting had been ratified by VN Council and had now been published. The QL was currently preparing supporting guidance similar to that for the licence to practise standards and was also working on a support package for providers. The handbook would be published by September, and as agreed at the previous meeting, the new standards would come into effect in January 2026.
11. **Applications for registration.** There had been no applications requiring consideration of reduced clinical hours from students who had completed their training, since the previous meeting of the committee.
12. **Apprenticeship Standard.** The Apprenticeship Standard continued to progress well. The different focus groups had been meeting.
13. **Veterinary Nurses Day.** The Veterinary Nurses Day held in May in Liverpool had been very successful, with around 90 newly qualified RVNs attending, although disappointingly, only one CertAVN nurse. The next event would be in December 2025.
14. **Strategy plan.** The new strategy plan had been completed and included a number of items from an educational perspective, as well as some items arising from VN Vision.
15. **VN Vision.** The snapshot report had been published on 12 June to coincide with BVA Live. For those members that had not seen this, a link would be provided on request. Discussion at each event identified the need for clarification of current legislation, and the first project aimed to strengthen the role of vet nurses in team based healthcare, and to provide a better understanding of how nurses could be better utilised. Professional film makers had been engaged, and two veterinary nurses with a strong online presence would be attending events and speaking to the delegates. Theory of change would be used to engage the stakeholders and encourage them to develop their own ideas. The intention was to produce a resource pack which would include the films and other resources to aid better understanding of delegation and Schedule 3.
16. The project would be taken to all four UK nations, starting in South Wales on 5 August, and venues had been booked in Scotland, Northern Ireland and throughout the UK. Members were encouraged to publicise this and encourage colleagues to attend.
17. **Definition of Veterinary Nursing.** The College was developing a new definition of veterinary nursing, from a nursing perspective, hopefully with a working group starting later in the year. The VN team had made an initial start and put some preliminary thoughts together for discussion.
18. **Staff changes.** The staff member who had been on a fixed term contract within the examinations team would be leaving at the end of the week and the new full time member of the team would start in July, to support the VNEQL and provide the capacity for the VNEQL to develop the PAVE (Shaping the future of practical assessment in veterinary nurse education) project that the committee would be discussing in its afternoon session.

19. **Pre-registration examination.** The contract for the current venue for the Pre-registration OSCE was due to end in 2026 and the examinations team would be looking into the possibility of holding future examinations at Hardwick Street with effect from 2027.
20. **Education Symposium.** In response to a query, the DoVN confirmed that it had not been possible to publish separate information materials for veterinary nurses about the postgraduate education symposium taking place in November. A newsletter would be provided, referencing the paper by the Director of Education, to be provided to all VN educators, particularly those involved in post-registration and postgraduate education. The event would take place at the Ironmongers Hall in Sheffield from 17-19 November 2025. There would be six keynote speakers covering four themes around post registration and postgraduate related topics. The DoVN would send further information to the committee when available.

Matters for decision - Licence to practise qualifications

Re-accreditations

See confidential appendix paras 1-17

21. The Committee reviewed and discussed accreditation reports and action plans and took the following decisions:
22. **University of Chester**
Full accreditation for a twelve month period for the University of Chester's BSc (Hons) Veterinary Nursing programme to be delivered from September 2025.
23. **VetSkill**
Full accreditation for five years for the following programmes:
 - VetSkill VTEC Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing (Companion Animal)
 - VetSkill VTEC Diploma in Veterinary Nursing (Companion Animal) at SQF Level 7
 - VetSkill VTEC Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing (Equine)
 - VetSkill VTEC Diploma in Veterinary Nursing (Equine) at SCQF Level 7

Accreditation status

See confidential appendix paras 18-21

24. **University of Portsmouth (University Centre Sparsholt)**
The accreditation status of the FdSc Veterinary Nursing Science was changed to Full Accreditation for the remainder of the accreditation period, until academic year 2026/27.

Matters for decision - Post-registration qualifications

Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing reaccreditation

See confidential appendix paras x – x

25. **University of Glasgow**

The Committee conferred full accreditation for five years, for the Post Graduate Certificate Advanced Practice in Veterinary Nursing awarded by the University of Glasgow.

Matters for discussion

26. **Self Assessment Report (SAR) analysis**

The QL presented a paper setting out a detailed analysis on the outcomes of the self assessment reports (SARs) received annually from all AEIs and delivery sites. The outcomes of the SARs are reported to VNEC annually at its April meeting. Having now gathered a five-year data set, a detailed analysis had been undertaken to identify trends within, and across, veterinary nurse training programmes. The committee was invited to discuss the findings and consider suggestions for teaching and assessments in the areas identified as requiring improvements. The paper set out the reasons and methodology.

27. The report had been split into Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) separately. It had not been possible to compare across different Awarding Organisations (AOs) as their programmes were too significantly different. There was not currently sufficient data coming from the equine pathways, although some similar trends were starting to emerge. The intention was to provide the data to each AEI individually for information and it was likely that some sections may provoke a wider conversation.

See confidential appendix paras 25-26

28. The Committee thanked the QL for the very interesting and useful report.

Matters for note

Higher Education regulatory update

29. The Chair reported that in discussions with the DoVN, it was agreed that it would be helpful for her to provide an annual overview of the higher education regulatory landscape impacting students and HEIs, in her capacity as Higher Education Regulatory expert on the Committee. The Chair presented the report which had been included with the agenda papers.

Programme change

30. **University of Portsmouth**

The Committee noted a programme change for the University of Portsmouth.

(See confidential appendix paras 27-28)

Action plan monitoring accreditation/re-accreditation

31. Oral updates were provided on the action plan monitoring and progress for the following:
- Aberystwyth University
 - Central Qualifications
 - Middlesex University
 - Royal Veterinary College
 - Ulster University
 - University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)

Quality Monitoring activities

32. The Committee noted a paper reporting on a Day One Skills audit carried out for University Centre Askham Bryan in April 2025, together with the action plan.

Action plan quality monitoring

33. Oral updates were provided on the monitoring of action plans and future planned actions for the following AElS:
- Coventry University
 - Harper Adams University
 - Hartpury University
 - Lantra Awards
 - Middlesex University
 - Nottingham Trent University
 - University of Bristol
 - University Centre Askham Bryan

Pre-Registration Examination Board

34. The Board noted the minutes of the Pre-registration Examination Board which met on 16 April 2025, to consider the results of the theory MCQ examinations that were delivered in March.
(see *confidential appendix paras 29-30*)

Items for publication

35. The DoVN and QL were currently working on content for the next *VN Education* newsletter that would be published in early October. This would also include information about the VNEQL's PAVE project that would be discussed in the afternoon workshop of the committee.
36. Other items that would be publicised in the next few months would include the new NPL, the Education Symposium, and work associated with VN Vision projects.

Any other business

37. **Committee membership.** The Chair reported that this was Sarah Holman's last meeting as a FE representative on the Committee, having served two three-year terms. Betsy Malamah-Thomas (employer representative) had decided to stand down from the Committee due to work commitments. The Committee thanked Sarah and Betsy for their contributions to its work over the past years.
38. It was reported that VN Council had appointed Alison Heywood as the new FE representative and her appointment would take effect from July 2025. A new employer representative would be appointed shortly, also to take effect from July 2025.

Meeting dates 2025

39. The following dates were confirmed:
- Tuesday 19 August
 - Thursday 23 October (this was a revised date that had been notified to the committee)
 - Wednesday 17 December
- Meetings would start at 9.30am

Summary

Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	17 September 2025
Title	Minutes of meeting of VN Education Committee held on 19 August 2025
Summary	Minutes of the meeting of Veterinary Nurse Education Committee held on 19 August 2025
Decisions required	To approve
Attachments	Classified appendix (Confidential)
Author	Annette Amato Committee Secretary a.amato@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0713

Classifications

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

¹Classifications explained

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

²Classification rationales

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

Veterinary Nurse Education Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 19 August 2025 held remotely via Teams

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

*absent

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

Welcome to new members

1. The Committee and staff introduced themselves and welcomed two new members: Sally Betterton and Alison Heywood. The Committee would be joined at future meetings by Bethan Pinhey who would be attending the meetings as a VN Council observer. As the VN Council representative on the RCVS Education Committee, Bethan would be the conduit between the two committees on matters of mutual interest.

Apologies for absence

2. Apologies for absence were received from Donna Cotton and Susan Howarth. The meeting was chaired by Sarah Reynolds-Golding (Deputy Chair).

Declarations of interest

3. There were no declarations of interest relevant to items on the agenda which required a decision. Members' declarations of interest were held on record, and all members had been sent the decision tree that provided guidance on action to be taken in the case of a conflict, for a particular agenda item. There were no items in the agenda that would require members to leave the meeting.

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee (VNEC) 26 June 2025

4. The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2025 as a correct record, subject to the correction of the date of the meeting in the header.

Matters arising

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

Operational update

6. The Director of Veterinary Nursing (DoVN) provided an update on recent activities and issues of note since the previous meeting.
7. **Nursing Progress Log (NPL).** The NPL development was progressing well, and the pilot had started the previous day. Guidance was being developed over the next few weeks to accompany the NPL and to help with testing. There would be a slight delay in the introduction due to a delayed launch of the new database, which was also under development and linked to the NPL. It was likely that the launch of the NPL would be in January 2026, which would allow a longer test window and time to ensure that any issues had been addressed.
8. **Veterinary Nurses (VN) Day.** The next Veterinary Nurses Day would take place on 3 December 2025, at Central Hall in London. The venue would be shared between two RCVS events. The registration ceremony for overseas educated veterinary surgeons who had passed the statutory membership examination would take place in the morning, and the VN Day event would take place in the afternoon. This would facilitate attendance by the President at both events.
9. The first VN day in 2026 would take place at the Assembly Rooms in Edinburgh, on 6 May 2026. The events team would be publishing details of both events within the next few weeks.

10. **VN Vision.** The VN Vision report had been published on 12 June, and the DoVN and VN Futures Lead were currently developing the first derivative project, looking at strengthening the role of veterinary nurses within team based veterinary healthcare, based on theory of change. Sessions were being held around the country, involving stakeholders in co-designing the resources to be developed, or providing guidance on how to integrate nurses into a more team based healthcare approach. The aim was to produce a resource pack that teams could use to pick the most appropriate approaches to suit them.
11. The first sessions had already been held at the University of South Wales and Ulster University, with the next session due in Scotland the following week. There would be further sessions in London, Dorset and Birmingham in 2025, and planning was underway for events and dates in 2026, aiming to reach as many areas of the country as possible. Members were very welcome to attend and to contact the DoVN with any questions.
12. The next project to come out of the VN Vision work would cover scope of practice, with discussions arising particularly around education. There would be a workshop session held at the VN educator conference on 29 October, that would look at questions around the Day One Skills and Competences.
13. **Postgraduate Veterinary Education symposium.** The symposium was fully booked, with a number of veterinary nurses due to attend. The event had been so popular that the number of places had been increased.

Matters for decision

Accreditation panel approval

14. The Committee considered and discussed the completed person specification, Curriculum Vitae and CPD records for a proposed accreditation panel member. The applicant was appointed as an educator representative for both the Higher Education (HE) panel and the Further Education (FE) panel.

PAVE Report

See confidential appendix paras 1-5

Matters for note

15. **External Examiner update**
The Committee noted the annual update paper detailing all current External Examiner (EE) appointments for licence to practise and post-registration qualifications. It was noted that the University of Plymouth had now ceased delivery of the accredited qualification, and all students had completed. The examiner details would be removed from the list.
16. **Action plan monitoring accreditation/re-accreditation**

The Committee was provided with the action plans resulting from the accreditation events for the following Accredited Education Institutions (AEIs), and oral updates on progress were given by the relevant member of the qualifications team.

- Aberystwyth University
- Central Qualifications
- Royal Veterinary College
- University of Central Lancashire
- Ulster University
- University of Chester

17. The terminology in the action plans was clarified for newer members of the Committee. It was confirmed that an action was set where an AEI had demonstrated a non-compliance or a partial non-compliance, and these must be followed up and addressed. Suggestions may also be noted in the action plan, but there was no obligation for the AEI to provide a response to a suggestion, as the baseline expectations would have been met.
18. *See confidential appendix para. 6*
19. **Quality Monitoring activities**
Quality monitoring activities were carried out by the qualifications team as part of the accreditation cycle. Once an AEI had been accredited, there was a progress review, normally conducted in the first year following an accreditation visit, and then a series of different audit activities covering all different areas. Progress reviews were also conducted for delivery sites that had moved from one Awarding Organisation to another.
20. Members of the qualifications team presented papers detailing the quality monitoring activities that had been undertaken since the previous meeting, and any actions that had been identified, for the following Accredited Education Institutions (AEIs):
 - Aberystwyth University
 - Coventry University
 - Harper Adams University
 - Hartpury University
 - Lantra Awards
 - Middlesex University
 - University Centre Askham Bryan
 - University of Chester
 - University of Greenwich
 - VetSkill Limited
21. Following consideration of the reports, the Chair commented that she was reassured that there was meticulous oversight by the qualifications team covering all aspects of each programme and asked whether there were any specific themes or patterns arising from the monitoring, that the Committee needed to be aware of.
22. The QL had undertaken some data analysis for the recent VN educator conference, on the well-being specific requirements and compliance, as the theme for that conference had been support and wellbeing. She would carry out further analysis on overall compliance for

the next educator conference in October, in order that AElS and delivery sites could be collectively considering how, as educators, some of the challenges could be addressed and improved. This would also be used as an example of the thematic analysis being undertaken, for the next report to the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). It was agreed that the presentation for the conference would be added to the agenda for the Committee's December or February meeting.

23. The QL added that accreditation compliance was clearly improving, and this had already been reported to the committee and published in *VN Education*.
24. **Action plan quality monitoring**
Oral updates were provided by the Qualifications Assessors on the monitoring of action plans that had arisen from the various quality monitoring activities taking place over the five-year accreditation cycle, for the following AElS:
 - Coventry University
 - Harper Adams University
 - Lantra Awards
 - Nottingham Trent University
 - University Centre Askham Bryan
 - University of Portsmouth
25. **VetSkill accreditation status.** The Committee confirmed extension of availability of VetSkill's previously accredited programmes for some learners in England and Northern Ireland.
See confidential appendix para.7
26. **Programme changes**
The Committee approved programme changes for the following AElS:
See confidential appendix paras 8-11
 - Lantra Awards
 - University of South Wales
 - Royal Veterinary College (RVC)
 - University of Portsmouth
27. **Affiliated delivery sites**
It was reported that Bridgwater and Taunton College, which delivered the VetSkill qualification, had informed the RCVS and VetSkill that it would no longer be delivering a VN qualification.
Confidential appendix para 12.

VN Pre-Registration Examination Board

28. VN Examinations Quality Lead (VNEQL) presented the report of the Pre-registration Examination Board that had met on 4 July 2025 to consider the results of the Pre-registration OSCE held on 14 June 2025. The Board had agreed the results, including the outcome of any moderation that took place. The Committee noted the report.

Items for publication

29. The October edition of the *VN Education* e-newsletter would include information about the PAVE project.

Any other business

30. **Action plan monitoring.** The Committee had been provided for the first time with all the action plans relating to the different oral updates provided by the qualifications team. Currently these were presented under separate headings, covering the accreditation action plan monitoring and, separately, the routine quality monitoring and programme reviews. It was felt that this format, which had been evolved over a number of years, was somewhat confusing now that the level of quality monitoring had increased significantly and the number of reports in different areas had increased. The QL and DoVN would review the reporting format with a view to providing amalgamated reports on each AEI, rather than in separate sub-sections. Committee members who had any feedback to make on this were asked to notify the secretary.
31. **PAVE working group.** Members were asked to notify the secretary within two weeks if they would like to put themselves forward to chair the PAVE working group, or to nominate another committee member to chair the group.

Meeting dates 2025

32. The remaining meeting dates for 2025 were confirmed as follows:
- Thursday 23 October
 - Thursday 17 December
- Meetings would be remote, starting at 9.30am

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	17 September 2025
Title	RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee Report to VN Council
Summary	This report sets out the work of the Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN) Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC)
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Authors	<p>Sandra Neary Professional Conduct Officer / Secretary to the RVN PIC s.neary@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0730</p> <p>Gemma Crossley Head of Professional Conduct g.crossley@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0740</p>

Classifications		
Document	Classification ¹	Rationales ²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

¹Classifications explained

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Registered Veterinary Nurses Preliminary Investigation Committee

Report to VN Council

Introduction

1. Since the last Report to Veterinary Nurses Council, there have been three meetings of the RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee which took place on 27 May, 8 July and 19 August. The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 23 September.

RVN Concerns received / registered.

2. Between 6 May 2025 and 5 September 2025, there were 19 new concerns registered relating to RVNs. Of these 19 new concerns:

- Eighteen are currently under investigation by a Case Manager, Veterinary Nurse, Veterinary surgeon, and a lay member (Stage 1 PIC).
- One case has been referred to Stage 2 PIC.

RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee

3. Five new cases have been considered by the RVN PIC between 6 May and 5 September 2025. One case closed with no further action. One case was closed with formal advice issued to the RVN. One case was referred to external solicitors for formal statements to be taken. A decision on two cases was adjourned to obtain further information. At the meeting on 27 May, the Committee considered one ongoing case which it referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee.

Ongoing Investigations

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

Health Concerns

5. There are currently no RVNs being managed in the context of the RCVS Health Protocol.

Performance Concerns

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

Referral to Charter Case Committee

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

Referral to Disciplinary Committee

8. Since the last report, one case (involving one RVN) has been referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee. The hearing dates will be confirmed in due course.

Disciplinary Hearings

9. Since the last report, no disciplinary hearings have taken place in relation to veterinary nurses.