Frequently-asked questions for potential RCVS Veterinary Nurses Council candidates

Please read these notes in conjunction with the ‘Guidance notes for candidates’

1. **How can I stand for election to RCVS Veterinary Nurses (VN) Council?**
   Those considering standing for election first need to secure nomination from two individuals who must be veterinary nurses registered with the RCVS, but not current VN Council members.

   There is then paperwork for you to fill out and sign, and paperwork for your nominees and you to sign. Both can be found at [www.rcvs.org.uk/vncouncil17](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/vncouncil17), together with guidance notes.

   For you, there is a short form which includes your name, qualifications, address and other contact details.

   You are then asked to include a short biography (200 words, maximum) and a personal statement (300 words, maximum).

   You also need to send us a high resolution digital image (preferably portrait style, facing the camera) to be included in the election booklet which is sent to voters.

   Meanwhile your nominees need to complete a form which asks for their name and Register information and to sign that they agree to nominate you, and you also need to sign this form.

   The paperwork needs to be submitted to Annette Amato at a.amato@rcvs.org.uk by 5pm on 31 January 2017 – although it can be sent electronically, a signed hard copy is also required and this must be received by the closing date.

2. **Do I have to be a registered veterinary nurse in order to stand?**
   Yes.

3. **What is the timeframe for the election?**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Closing date for submission of nominations</td>
<td>5pm, Tuesday 31 January 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Posting of voting paperstomembers</td>
<td>Week commencing Monday 13 March 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closing date for receiving votes</td>
<td>5pm, Friday 28 April 2017</td>
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<td>Candidates informed of results</td>
<td>Tuesday 2 May 2017</td>
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<td>New members join Council</td>
<td>Friday 7 July 2017 (RCVS Day)</td>
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4. **What is the composition of VN Council?**
VN Council comprises:
- Eight elected veterinary nurses
- Four veterinary surgeons – including two RCVS Council members
- Four appointed lay people

5. **Are there any restrictions on what I can include in my candidate statement?**
It should go without saying that your statement needs to be legal, decent, honest and truthful. Links to external websites are not permitted but you may include details of personal social media accounts. The telephone number and email address which you provide in your statement will be included in the published election leaflet.

We aim to publish exactly as submitted – which means that any typographical errors will also be included. The College would only intervene if the proposed statement is libellous or is perceived to bring the College into disrepute.

The Code of Professional Conduct pertains to the publication of your statement, as much as any other element of your professional life.

More detail about what to include in your statement is included in the ‘Guidance notes for candidates’ which can be downloaded from [www.rcvs.org.uk/vncouncil17](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/vncouncil17)

6. **How many people will stand for election?**
There is no limit to the number of election candidates each year.

A minimum of two elected VN Council members retire each year, although they can re-stand and there is no limit to the number of Council terms they can serve.

7. **What is the term for an elected member?**
Each term is a maximum of four years, although some may retire early for personal reasons. There is no limit to the number of terms that an elected VN Council member can serve.

8. **How much of my time would being a VN Council member take up?**
This depends on the committees and working parties on which you are asked to sit.

There are at least three VN Council meetings per year, plus RCVS Day (our AGM and awards ceremony). Additional Council meetings may be called, but this is rare.

In addition, you will be asked to sit on a VN Council Committee or an RCVS committee, which generally sit three times a year.

You may also be asked to join a working party on a particular issue, and there may be other College activities, such as Regional Question Time meetings.
On average, therefore, successful candidates might expect to spend around eight days a year on VN Council business in terms of formal meetings during their first year on Council. Additional time will be required to keep on top of emails, read paperwork etc.

As your Council career develops you may be required to take a more active role. For example, the Chair of VN Council sits on the Operational Board, which meets 8-10 times a year, and also attends at least three RCVS Council meetings per year.

9. Where are meetings held?
Meetings are usually held at Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, Westminster, London SW1P 2AF.

10. When are meetings held?
RCVS VN Council meetings are generally held on the first Tuesday of February, May and October. RCVS Day is generally the first or second Friday of July.

Subcommittees and working parties meet on a more ad hoc basis.

11. Is the RCVS family friendly?
We try to be, both for staff and Council members. Council and Committee meetings are planned at least a year in advance, although additional meetings may be added at shorter notice and, generally, there are fewer meetings during the holiday periods, because we follow an academic calendar.

12. Would I be paid for Council work?
VN Council members are not paid directly for the work they do. However, employers can claim a loss of earnings allowance on your behalf (and, if you are self-employed, you can do this). The rate is currently set at £155 per day.

Days spent on specific College business can be claimed for – eg meetings – but not time spent on emails or preparation for a meeting.

13. Would I receive expenses for Council work?
Reasonable expenses are covered, including an overnight stay in London if that is required.

14. What support might I receive as a Council member?
New VN Council members are invited to an induction day at the College where they meet the President and senior staff to find out more about the role of Council and the activities of the College.

VN Council members are happy to support newly-elected members, either with informal advice or in a more formal mentoring role.
15. Who can I talk to for more information about becoming a VN Council member?
A ‘Meet the RCVS Day’ for potential candidates for both VN and RCVS Councils is being held on **23 November 2016** at Belgravia House. You are also welcome to contact the Chair of VN Council, Liz Cox, on 01275 852552, or the Head of Veterinary Nursing, Julie Dugmore, (j.dugmore@rcvs.org.uk) for more information.

16. What will I get out of being involved on VN Council?
Our Council members tell us that being on VN Council has broadened their horizons, and allowed them to meet people and go places they never would normally have done. In some cases it’s given them back the buzz about their profession that they enjoyed when they first qualified. They feel good about giving something back to their profession – and often the employers benefit too, from having someone on their team ‘at the heart’ of the governance of the profession.

Council work can count as CPD if you feel it has helped you meet your development objectives, and it’s even been rumoured that it can be fun….

Why not watch our video, in which some current Council members talk about why they stood for election, what life’s really like on Council, how to juggle Council and the ‘day job’ and what benefits you can expect to gain: [www.youtube.com/rcvsvideos](http://www.youtube.com/rcvsvideos).

17. Can I attend a Council meeting to see what it’s like?
VN Council meetings are held in public and anyone is welcome to attend, providing there is space. Please contact Annette Amato on mailto:a.amato@rcvs.org.uk for more information.

However, unfortunately, there is not a VN Council meeting during the candidate nomination period.

Paperwork from past VN Council meetings is available online at [www.rcvs.org.uk/about-us](http://www.rcvs.org.uk/about-us), and will give you an indication of the type of business conducted.