

Supporting educators to deliver for their students

New accreditation support scheme launched



In this issue: new online enrolment process, applicants sought for VN Education Committee, CertAVN next steps, day one competences consultation, Julie Dugmore wins BSAVA award, ACOVENE update, VN Futures report published, meet the new team member, pre-registration exam dates

New support scheme launched

AEIs to get option for more support from RCVS

Launching our new support scheme for programmes going through the accreditation process, AEIs will receive the option of dedicated support to aid their understanding of the Standards and their requirements.

The RCVS Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training (the Standards) have been utilised for accreditations and quality monitoring of Accredited Education Institutions (AEIs) since January 2020, with compliance for all AEIs required from June 2020. Veterinary Nurses Council (VNC) has approved minor updates and amendments to the Standards since their implementation, based on stakeholder feedback.

“All new AEIs will be required to undertake the support, to prepare them fully for the accreditation process and ensure there is sufficient knowledge and understanding of the Standards.”

Since implementation Veterinary Nurse Education Committee (VNEC) and the RCVS accreditation panels were routinely noting areas for improvement within the accreditation applications, often leading to postponed accreditations. Where accreditations were able to be completed, VNEC was often identifying that accreditation for a one-year period was the most appropriate outcome. This accreditation decision will allow the AEIs time to address the actions identified by the accreditation panel, with a follow up accreditation ensuring that the AEI had taken all feedback on board and the previous concerns had been satisfactorily addressed.

Accreditation outcomes may include either:

- Full accreditation for a five-year period – usually awarded where an existing programme demonstrates significance

compliance with the Standards. There may be some actions and suggestions identified, but these should be easily achievable within a short timeframe.

- Full accreditation for a shorter period – usually awarded where an existing programme cannot demonstrate significant compliance with the Standards. There is likely to be a number of actions and suggestions identified, which will take a longer period of time to address.
- Provisional accreditation – usually awarded where a new programme has applied for accreditation and has demonstrated good compliance with the Standards. There may be longer term actions and suggestions identified, which the AEI can address prior to the completion of the first cohort.
- Terminal accreditation – usually awarded where an existing programme has demonstrated significant non-compliance over an extended period. There is likely to be a large number of actions and suggestions which are unlikely to be addressed within a reasonable timeframe.

In order to support AEI compliance with the Standards, the RCVS Veterinary Nursing Department delivered online training sessions for the AEIs during the summer of 2021. With common themes and concerns emerging from both the postponed events and the accreditation outcomes for a shorter period, it was identified that further support is now required. VNEC is therefore instigating an optional pre-accreditation support package for existing AEIs. All new AEIs will be required to undertake the support, to prepare them fully for the accreditation process and ensure there is sufficient knowledge and understanding of the Standards. The support package will entail an in-person visit from RCVS personnel; this may include the Director of Veterinary Nursing, the VN Qualifications Manager or the Education Quality Improvement Manager. A thorough overview of the Standards will be provided, with supporting documentation, as well as a

discussion regarding the AEI's current provision and any proposed changes. In order for AEIs to implement changes to programmes, as required, VNEC will offer all AEIs accepting the support package a one-year extension to their accreditation cycles, where necessary.

“We want to ensure that programmes are effectively educating and training student veterinary nurses in order for them to join the professional register upon completion of their qualification.”

All AEIs will be contacted directly to discuss their preferred approach. There will be no positive or negative connotations of AEIs accepting or declining the support. VNEC accepts that for some AEIs, additional support may not be a necessity, whilst others will appreciate the guidance. Irrespective of where the support package is utilised, the RCVS panel

will review the application for accreditation in the normal way, with the follow up reporting and decision-making procedure following the normal process. In order to prevent any potential conflict of interest, the accreditation panels will not include RCVS personnel who have provided the support. Programmes due for accreditation in 2022 and 2023 will be prioritised for the support visits.

Julie Dugmore, RCVS Director of Veterinary Nursing, said: “We want to ensure that programmes are effectively educating and training student veterinary nurses in order for them to join the professional register upon completion of their qualification. The accreditation process is a stringent but fair review of the entire provision; whilst it is appreciated that this process requires rigorous development, review and commitment by the AEIs, it is an invaluable process in order for VNEC to make an informed decision. We are confident that expert support by RCVS personnel can only continue to improve student veterinary nurse education and training in the UK.”



Standard 3 Student empowerment

Standards

Students are provided with a variety of learning opportunities and appropriate resources which enable them to achieve the RCVS Day One Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurses and programme outcomes and be capable of demonstrating the professional behaviours in the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Nurses.

Students are empowered and supported to become resilient, caring, reflective and lifelong learners who are capable of working in inter-professional teams.

Requirements

Accredited education institutions, together with centres and training practices, must ensure that all students:

- 3.1 are well prepared for learning in theory and practice having received relevant inductions.

- This may be evidenced through:
- a Induction handbooks
 - b Induction timetables
 - c Induction materials for DOS recording platform

Guidance/Examples

Students are provided with an induction handbook and an induction timetable which allows for full understanding of the academic and placement requirements of the course.

Students attending campus should be given a tour of the facilities including the location of resources beneficial to their programme i.e. the library and clinical skills area.

Placement Handbooks should be provided detailing the parties with inclusion of the Fitness to Practice policy / requirements and the opportunity to ask questions regarding on wellbeing support available to students.

Final OSCE criteria should be provided including limited

3.2 Have access to the resources they need to demonstrate Competences and Skills for Veterinary Nurse programme outcomes required for their placement

- This may be evidenced through:
- a Practical, equipment, consumables and
 - b Library resources
 - c IT resources
 - d Timetabled resources
 - e Clinical placement audits
 - f TPA/TP risk assessments

Guidance/Examples

TPA/TP approval paperwork should assess available resources for the students including relevant

Supporting texts, e books, and journals should

The clinical skills area should be well-equipped with resources to develop their skills whilst not

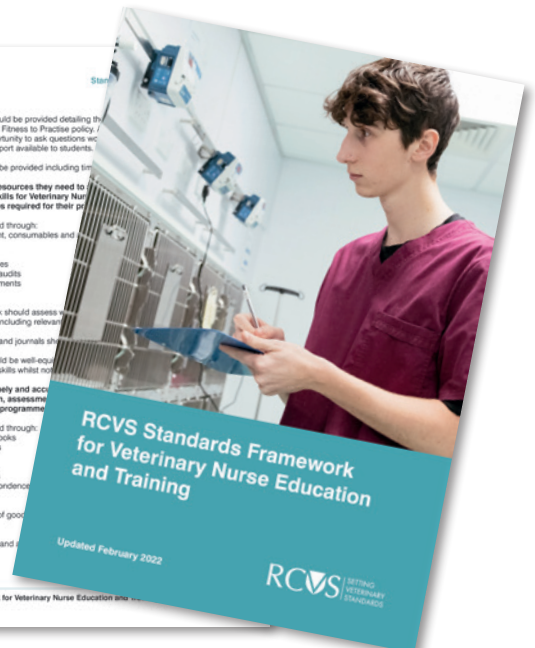
3.3 are provided with timely and accessible teaching, supervision, assessment information relevant programme

- This may be evidenced through:
- a Programme handbooks
 - b Student handbooks
 - c Timetables
 - d Schemes of work
 - e Module handbooks
 - f Placement correspondence

Guidance/Examples

There should be evidence of good academic team

SoW should be completed and



We need you... to join the Veterinary Nurse Education Committee

Applications welcome from those from higher and further education routes



Have you ever wanted to influence the future of veterinary nurse education? Do you want to be part of making VN education as accessible and diverse as possible?

We are currently recruiting for new student members to join the RCVS VN Education Committee and we would love for as many people as possible to apply. As well as having a good knowledge of, and passion for VN education, applicants will need to be comfortable with voicing their opinions amongst other professionals and reviewing and considering

supporting papers for decision making. We are looking for representatives from both higher and further education programmes, ensuring all types of qualification routes are considered fairly by the Committee.

The successful applicant will be part of a Committee which has a wide range of expertise and experiences. Chaired by Susan Howarth RVN, the new Committee member will join a group of dedicated students, RVNs and educators and help to make decisions that affect Accredited Education Institutions across the country. If you have any questions about the Committee role, you can contact the Veterinary Nursing Department via vnqa@rcvs.org.uk and we will be able to respond appropriately.

Student VN online enrolment process

New system launched to streamline enrollments

On 10 January 2022, the Veterinary Nursing Department launched the new online enrolment system. The purpose of this new system is to allow Delivery Sites to have a clearer overview of their student enrolments, Training Practices, and invoice information.

The new procedure requires the same information that Delivery Sites have always been required to provide to the RCVS, but in a much more streamlined way. The online process includes the opportunity for both educators and students to amend and update information, empowering individuals to make changes in a simplified and efficient way.

The new online system will now enable Delivery Sites to have access to a list of all of their associated Training Practices and they will be able to see details of when they are due for reapproval. They will also have access to a full

list of their students, including their enrolment number, enrolment start date and end date. Students will also have access to their own MyAccount area where they will be able to access their enrolment letter and can change their own address and personal contact details; this, in turn, will prepare them for use of the RVN MyAccount once they have registered.

In addition to all the practical reasons listed above, the new online process is much more environmentally friendly. It negates the need to print and complete paper documents or print out enrolment letters to send to the students individually, as they will now have access to an online version.

Training sessions have already been delivered by the Enrolments Officer and a supporting handbook, with detailed guidance, is available upon request from vnenrol@rcvs.org.uk.



What's next with the CertAVN?

Next steps of the landmark VN Futures project

One of the outcomes from the first stage of the VN Futures project was the recognition that many VNs felt that there wasn't a clear route for career progression or continuing the learning process after registration. It is important that RVNs feel they have meaningful ways of progressing in their careers and learning about specific areas of veterinary nursing that they are passionate about.

In 2019, the VN Futures Post-Registration Qualification Working Group developed the framework for new veterinary nursing qualification, the Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (CertAVN), which would give RVNs the opportunity to gain an accredited award in a range of subject areas. The subject area depends on the course provider but there are already courses in both clinical and non-clinical areas, ensuring all RVNs have an opportunity to continue to advance, irrespective of career aims. Some examples include Teaching, Coaching and Mentoring, Anaesthesia, Oncology and Dentistry. RVNs who are keen

to see a programme in a specific subject are encouraged to contact CertAVN providers to discuss this.

There are currently four CertAVN providers, with more applications currently under review. We would encourage veterinary educators that are interested in finding out more about how to apply to deliver the CertAVN to get in touch with the VN Qualifications Manager via vnqa@rcvs.org.uk.

You can also find out more about the course here www.rcvs.org.uk/lifelong-learning/postgraduate-qualifications/certificate-in-advanced-veterinary-nursing

VETFUTURES 

RCVS Day One Competences, Skills and Professional Behaviours for Veterinary Nurses Review

Results of the 2021 consultation



In November 2019 members of the RCVS Veterinary Nursing Department visited various Colleges across the UK and met with a range of student veterinary nurses, Clinical Supervisors, Internal and External Quality Assurers and Lecturers.

The next step in the consultation process was unfortunately delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, however, work was commenced again in April 2021. A working group was created, with representation from both small animal and equine veterinary nurses, students, educators, and Clinical Supervisors. The group was chaired by Matthew Rendle, Chair of VN Council.

The working group initially reviewed feedback from the meetings held in November 2019 and agreed to some initial amendments. Following on from this, a number of meetings were held during the summer of 2021 with veterinary nursing educators, allowing a first opportunity

for those delivering and assessing the DOC/ DOS/PB to consider their relevance, currency and usability.

In November 2021, a six-week consultation was launched to give members of the veterinary professions, and other stakeholders, the chance to have their say on how future VN students are trained. This included key areas within the RCVS Day One Competences, Skills and Professional Behaviours that required updating, reflecting the current and contemporary practice demands of newly Registered Veterinary Nurses. As well as the skills, competences and behaviours that students would need to develop during their training, some of the key changes looked at how to improve the health and wellbeing of veterinary nursing students.

“A six-week consultation was launched to give members of the veterinary professions, and other stakeholders, the chance to have their say on how future VN students are trained.”

The consultation closed on the 22 December 2021, and we want to thank everyone who took the time to complete the survey. There was a good response rate, with overwhelmingly positive support for the proposed changes; the vast majority of competences, skills and behaviours had a 93% agreement rate or higher. Where the agreement rate was lower, the feedback was reviewed and considered by the working group and changes made as necessary. VNC was presented with the proposed changes in its February meeting, and unanimously agreed the proposal with no amendments.

VNC has determined that AEs should aim for implementation of the new Competences, Skills and Behaviours by September 2022, allowing time for the required curriculum changes ahead of the coming academic year. It is also anticipated that AEs will use this opportunity, alongside the new pre-accreditation support package, to complete thorough curricula reviews, ensuring the programmes continue to deliver relevant and contemporary programme outcomes, whilst ensuring student veterinary nurses are fully prepared for the current professional demands of the RVN role.

“It is appreciated that not all modules or units will have been fully reviewed and updated by that point, so evidence is likely to differ across the AEs, but mapping documents would be expected as a minimum.”

All AEs are required to evidence the planned approach for inclusion of the changes to the Veterinary Nursing Department by the end of August 2022. It is appreciated that not all modules or units will have been fully reviewed and updated by that point, so evidence is likely to differ across the AEs, but mapping documents would be expected as a minimum. The amendments will then be reviewed by the relevant member of the Veterinary Nursing Department during the routine quality monitoring procedures. Should there be any questions regarding these changes, please do not hesitate to contact the Veterinary Nursing Department via vnqa@rvs.org.uk.

Job Vacancy: Vet Nursing Examinations Coordinator

Salary: £27k-£30k

Location: Central London with remote working options

Close Date: 23 March 2022

Do you have experience in the development and delivery of written and practical examinations? Working for the RCVS, we have an opportunity to join our Veterinary Nursing team, working with the Examinations Manager to develop, deliver and quality assure the RCVS pre-registration examinations to ensure that they remain robust, valid and reliable. The role also involves providing support to applicants educated outside the UK through the registration process.

The full advert and job details are available on our website: www.rcvs.org.uk/who-we-are/work-for-us

Pre-registration Examinations

2022 dates

The dates for this year's practical exams for overseas registrants have been finalised. The pre-registration Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) need to be undertaken by prospective veterinary nurse registrants who achieved their veterinary nursing qualification outside the UK or who attend a RCVS accredited course which does not have full accreditation status.

The examinations take place at MYF Training in Aldershot and the dates are as follows:

- Saturday 26 and Sunday 27 March 2022
- Saturday 2 and Sunday 3 July 2022
- Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 November 2022

Any candidates undertaking the examination or interested in applying to join the Register should contact the veterinary nursing examinations Team on prereg.vn@rcvs.org.uk.

RCVS VN Director wins BSAVA plaudit

Julie recognised for dedication to vet nurse education



RCVS Director of Veterinary Nursing Julie Dugmore has received an award for her decades-long dedication to improving standards of VN education.

Julie (pictured), who qualified as a veterinary nurse in 1987 and has been Director of Veterinary Nursing at the College since 2013, was announced as the recipient of this year's British Small Animal Veterinary Association's (BSAVA) Bruce Vivash Jones Veterinary Nursing Award, announced on Friday 18 February.

The Award is presented by the BSAVA in recognition of outstanding contributions to the advancement of small animal veterinary nursing and it cited Julie's national and international work on veterinary nursing education standards.

The Award citation also noted her role as Chair of the Accreditation Committee for Veterinary

Nurse Education (ACOVENE), as a former Board Member of the Veterinary European Transnational Network for Nursing Education and Training (VETNNET) and her involvement with several Leonardo da Vinci Programme-funded projects developing veterinary nurse training across the European Union.

"I would like to thank BSAVA for this special award. I am delighted and honoured to have been recognised by my peers and, along with my wonderful team, I will continue to do all I can to progress our profession."

This is complementary to Julie and her team's work at the College which, over recent years, has seen the introduction of a new Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing, an overhaul and improvement of the quality standards for veterinary nurse education, the ongoing progression of the VN Futures project, and the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the veterinary nursing profession. Currently her team is working on new standards for the competences, skills and professional behaviours required of newly-qualified veterinary nurses.

Lizzie Lockett, RCVS CEO, said: "I am very proud to have Julie as my colleague and it is wonderful that her decades-long contribution to the veterinary nursing profession both in the UK and abroad has been recognised in this way."

Julie added: "I would like to thank BSAVA for this special award. I am delighted and honoured to have been recognised by my peers and, along with my wonderful team, I will continue to do all I can to progress our profession.

VN Futures achievements highlighted in interim report published

Project moves on to next phase

The VN Futures project launched its interim report giving a review of the achievements of the project from the last five years, a summary of the initiatives that have been launched as part of the project and a wealth of veterinary nursing and stakeholder case studies.

The VN Futures project, a joint initiative delivered by the RCVS and the BVNA, was launched in 2016 and developed out of the Veterinary Futures initiative. The project was set up with ambitions which included highlighting veterinary nursing as a career and encouraging more

“The launch of the VN Futures Interim Report signifies the end of the first five-year phase of the VN Futures project.”

people into veterinary nursing, expanding the scope of the VN role, and providing more opportunity for career progression.

Highlights since the project's launch include the School Ambassadors Project, creating new routes for post-registration qualifications via the Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing and ensuring that the proposals for legislative reform introduce protections for the VN role and expand its potential.

The launch of the VN Futures Interim Report signifies the end of the first five-year phase of the VN Futures project, the report makes a wealth of recommendations to continue the positive steps made to improve the profession for current and future veterinary nurses including focusing on ongoing issues such as financial remuneration, lack of career progression and the struggle to maintain a good work/life balance.

The Interim Report is available to view at: www.vnfutures.org.uk

VNFUTURES

VNFUTURES SCHOOLAMBASSADORS

VNFUTURES INTERIM REPORT 2021

Key findings and recommendations:

- Increasing Training Practices: In order to support more student veterinary nurses entering training, there needs to be the availability of sufficient Training Practices (TPs) to accommodate the placement and clinical training aspects of their study, which this was initially identified as a need during the early stages of the project the number of TPs steadily increased, and this section was no longer deemed a priority. However, it is unclear how this picture will change and the impact that the coronavirus pandemic has had on the number of TPs, so this will be closely monitored over the coming months.
- Being a TP while a commitment, has significant positive benefits to the practice, to staff and to the profession as a whole. A series of case studies identified by those involved in the training within TPs are in the process of being collated and published on the website.
- VN Educator Forum: In line with VNF's aims to create a VN Schools Council, BNA has facilitated the development of a 'VN Educator Network', which has accumulated over 100 participants from within the VN training sector since its launch in late 2016. In its current format, the VN Educator Network involves regular online meeting opportunities to discuss a wide range of issues relating to VN education, drawing on the support of the RCVS and awarding organisations as required. BNA also incorporate a VN Educators Online and Open Forum within its annual Congress programme.
- Future plans to develop the VN Educator Network include the introduction of an annual VN Educator Survey, in order for BNA to remain informed on current training issues and to facilitate feedback to relevant bodies. BNA also plans to deliver regional VN Educator meetings, with the longer term goal of hosting an annual dedicated VN Educator Congress.
- Finally, many Network members have shown an appetite to work towards VNF's original goal of developing a VN Schools Council, with a comparable level of influence on VN training matters as the Schools Council. BNA is currently exploring opportunities to support educators to achieve this aim.

Future plans include:

- Disseminating information on veterinary nursing careers to online careers hubs and careers advisers
- Potential collaboration with My Future on initiative run jointly by the BNA and the RCVS
- Creating animated careers videos for younger and older age groups, highlighting veterinary nursing as a career option
- Being part of the 'Yes Team in a Blue' project, which disseminates career information as practical, curriculum-linked activities to schools
- Reviewing veterinary nursing careers information provided by the RCVS and the BNA
- Highlighting the ambassadorial role of the profession and creating a network of ambassadors
- Creation of VN careers ambassadors to inspire and support veterinary nurses exploring career options
- Highlighting the benefits of being a veterinary nurse
- Training Practice
- Continuing the work of the VN Educator Network

Sara Penhale, a member of the RAGS says:
"I was keen to get involved in the VN Futures School Ambassador's Pilot Scheme as I would like to see

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www.vnfutures.org.uk

Student VN Discussion Forum Report published

Key outcomes and next steps highlighted

MMI and VN Futures have released a report which details the key discussions from their recent Student Veterinary Nurse (SVN) Wellbeing Discussion Forum and what next steps the profession needs to take to improve the mental wellbeing of student and recently qualified vet nurses.

The event was organised following the results of an MMI survey of 650 student veterinary nurses, recently qualified veterinary nurses and clinical coaches which revealed that the overwhelming majority of the people surveyed felt that bullying and incivility were serious problems in the profession.

The Discussion Forum's programme was structured around the survey results, which revealed four key areas that were impacting the mental wellbeing of the profession. These four key areas were incivility and bullying (as the MMI survey results revealed that 96% of respondents felt like incivility and bullying were

a problem within the profession); juggling demands; disability and chronic illness (as one in three respondents identified as having a disability or chronic illness and one in five identified as neurodiverse); and awareness, recognition and pride. +

“The Discussion Forum’s programme was structured around the survey results, which revealed four key areas that were impacting the mental wellbeing of the profession.”

Speakers who appeared on the day to discuss the issues including Lisa Quigley, Mind Matters Manager, Dr Claire Hodgson MRCVS, co-founder of the British Veterinary Chronic Illness Support (BVCIS) organisation, Alexandra Taylor RVN, current President of the BVNA, Jane Davidson, VN Council member, and Jill Macdonald, VN Futures Project Manager.

Presentations and talks

Presentation of MMI Student Veterinary Nurse Wellbeing Survey results

This was delivered by Mind Matters Manager Lisa Quigley who highlighted four key themes that came out of the information provided in the survey results and which formed the basis for the content and structure of the day.

These were:

- 1. Incivility and bullying:** the findings in this respect were quite sobering as 96% of those surveyed strongly believed bullying and incivility was a problem in the profession – 3% were unsure and just 1% disagreed. A worrying trend in the data showed that these incidents often related to protected characteristics such as disability, sex and pregnancy, but respondents spoke about this as being bullying rather than harassment and discrimination linked to a protected characteristic. One common feature identified in many of the stories about bullying was a power imbalance, with more senior people acting poorly towards those with lower status and less security and protection. The severity and seriousness of the poor behaviour varied from low level incivility and rudeness, all the way into behaviour that crossed the line into unlawful. As to who was exhibiting these behaviours, based on the qualitative data it seemed like it was other students, vets, nursing peers and education staff, but not so much clients. However, when respondents spoke about stressful situations, that's where tricky conversations with clients came up in their responses. There was a general sense in the responses that things have been exacerbated by Covid-19 and the associated additional workplace stresses.
- 2. Juggling demands:** the survey found that 89% of respondents found their work stressful and 75% found the demands of work and studying were affecting their wellbeing. Delegates commented that factors that affected wellbeing included trying to fit in all their responsibilities while still attending to self-care. Respondents commented that self-care was often the first thing that fell by the wayside when they lacked time, with many saying they often didn't even have time to eat or use the toilet. Qualitative data found that some respondents were at breaking point. In more positive news, 51% of respondents felt they were well-supported, and there was a sense that clinical coaches were very supportive and that, overall, the in-practice training was good.
- 3. Disability and chronic illness:** around a third of survey responses identified as having a disability or chronic illness, and one in five identified as neurodiverse. There was a sense that respondents were unaware that those were protected characteristics under equality legislation. In the results there were disappointing stories of harassment,

Report of the Student Veterinary Nursing Wellbeing Discussion Forum

3 November 2021

mindmatters VNFUTURES



Attendees were then invited to join breakout discussion sessions, where they had opportunities to openly discuss their experiences and how they felt the profession could improve the mental wellbeing of vet nurses.

The key outcomes from those discussions were:

- More needed to be done to make it clear that the MMI is for the whole veterinary profession, not just vet surgeons.
- There needed to be additional resources and training to educate employers and the wider veterinary professions about the legal rights for people with a chronic illness and/or disability in the workplace and their expectations in terms of reasonable adjustments.
- Training needed to be given to help people understand how to address bullying in the workplace and that this should be given as early as their initial veterinary training.
- Some students said they would not feel comfortable challenging a senior member of staff and said that they would benefit from having training in how to address the behaviour of someone in a senior position.
- There needed to be a change in the culture around taking breaks and that staff should be actively encouraged to switch off during their break times.

The full report is available to read here:
www.vetmindmatters.org/resources

ACOVENE freezes fees for 2022

Organisation met in early March

The latest meeting of the board of the Accreditation Committee for Veterinary Nurse Education (ACOVENE), a voluntary Europe-wide organisation founded to accredit veterinary nurse education programmes and chaired by RCVS Director of Veterinary Nursing Julie Dugmore, took place virtually on Thursday 3 March 2022.

One of the first items on the agenda was welcoming Emily Murray as a new member of the ACOVENE Board, representing the Veterinary Council of Ireland and taking over from Fiona Lianne. The Board also considered the self-evaluation reports from a number of veterinary nurse education institutions that were conducted in 2021. These were for: Abivet SRL, an online veterinary nursing programme based in Italy; Thomas More University in Belgium; Politecnico de Viseu in Portugal; the Norwegian School of Life Sciences; and, the Veterinary Council of Ireland. Upon reviewing the self-evaluation reports the board continued to agree ACOVENE accreditation for each of the institutions. The ACOVENE board also agreed that it would undertake quality monitoring spot checks during 2022 although it had not yet been determined whether these would be virtual or in-person.

Other decisions made by the Board included agreeing to freeze the ACOVENE membership fees for 2022 and review these again in 2023. The Board also agreed that it would redesign and update the ACOVENE marketing in due course so that the organisation would have a refreshed design and identity when it started to attend European and international conferences again.

Meet the new team member: Tori Page, Qualifications Assessor

What is your role in the Veterinary Nursing Department?

I am a Qualifications Assessor within the RCVS VN Department, and I am responsible for the quality monitoring of universities that are accredited to deliver the veterinary nursing degree. The responsibilities of the role are quite diverse and enable me to carry out remote audits as well as in-person visits to training practices and delivery sites. I enjoy working with the rest of the VN Department and have learnt so much from them since starting last July.

What is your professional background and how does it relate to your current role?

I am a Registered Veterinary Nurse and I qualified from Edinburgh Napier University in 2005. I have worked in small animal first-opinion practices as well as for charities such as Guide Dogs and the PDSA. I loved working in practice, caring for patients but I also really enjoyed working with clients and helping them care for their animals. Most recently, I worked for over 10 years as an Internal Quality Assurer at a College that delivers both the Level 3 Diploma and degree programme for student veterinary nurses. This role enabled me to develop my knowledge and understanding of veterinary nurse education as well as my communication and quality assurance skills which I am now applying to my current role.

What is the most important thing you've learned since starting in this role?

I think one of the most important things I have learned is ensuring that good lines of communication are in place with both my colleagues and education providers to ensure that everyone is aware of what is expected and to enable a supportive approach to the role.

What have you learned about the veterinary nursing profession since joining the team?

Since joining the VN team, I have learnt about Schedule 3 procedures, differentiation between veterinary care assistant, SVN and RVN roles and the varying routes towards becoming an RVN.

What would be your top tips for VN education providers in terms of the assessment process?

My top tips would be making sure students are given an overview of the requirements for each assessment in advance and that there is clear scheduling of assessments to avoid confusion and allow for good preparation. Assessments can be stressful for students so the use of mindfulness techniques and having the opportunity to talk about concerns or to ask questions should be readily available. I think it is also important that students are given good feedback on assessments so that they can identify areas they need to revise or improve upon.

Veterinary Nursing Department Personnel

Director of Veterinary Nursing:

Julie Dugmore RVN – 020 7202 0775

Administration Manager:

Annette Amato – 020 7202 0713

Examinations Manager:

Victoria Hedges RVN – 020 7202 0782

Examinations Co-ordinator:

Currently recruiting

Qualifications Manager:

Shirley Gibbins RVN – 020 7050 5046

Qualifications Assessor (HE):

Tori Page RVN – 020 7050 1243

Qualifications Assessor (FE):

Jasmine Curtis RVN – 020 7050 1229

Qualifications Co-ordinator:

Sian Tanner – 020 7050 1245

Enrolments Officer:

Lucy Blampied – 020 8148 5562

VN Futures Project Lead:

Jill Macdonald RVN – 020 8148 5549

CONTACTING US | E vetrnursing@rcvs.org.uk | T 020 7202 0788 | F 020 7222 2004

Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, The Cursitor, 38 Chancery Lane, London, WC2A 1EN | www.rcvs.org.co.uk



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