VN V EDUCATION

Launching the PAVE project

Shaping the future of practical assessment
in veterinary nurse education

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On 26 June 2025, the Veterinary Nurse Education Committee (VNEC) officially launched the PAVE (practical assessment in veterinary (nurse) education) project – a forward-thinking initiative aimed at exploring the future of practical assessment in veterinary nurse education.

The project will last three years and aims to determine whether the current competency-based assessment methods, which form part of the *RCVS Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training*, remain fit for purpose in a rapidly evolving educational landscape.

Why now?

The veterinary nursing profession has seen significant changes in training and assessment since we first introduced formal qualifications in 1961 – from the early days of written and practical exams, to the adoption of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and the introduction of objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs) nearly 20 years ago. However, more recent challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, have highlighted both the strengths and limitations of current methods.

The PAVE project seeks to build on past experiences, exploring a broader range of assessment models used in medical education and considering how these might be adapted for veterinary nurse training.

What will PAVE explore?

The project will examine a wide spectrum of assessment types, including:

- Workplace-based assessments (for example, Mini-Clinical Evaluation Exercise (Mini-CEX), Direct Observation of Procedural Skills (DOPS), case-based discussions)
- Structured practical exams (for example, OSCE, Integrated Structured Clinical Examination (ISCE), and Objective Structured Long Examination Record (OSLER))
- Holistic frameworks such as programmatic assessment and entrusted professional activities (EPAs)

These models offer varying degrees of objectivity, flexibility, and realism, and the PAVE project will consider how best to balance these qualities to ensure assessments are both rigorous and reflective of day-to-day veterinary nursing practice.

A collaborative and evidence-based approach

The review will be collaborative, drawing on educator, examiner, clinical supervisor, and student expertise. It will also be informed by data collected through our quality monitoring activities of existing assessment methods. Stakeholder sessions are likely to take place next year.

Time frame

While the PAVE project is still in its early stages, its outcomes could shape the next iteration of the *Standards Framework for Veterinary Nurse Education and Training*, due for review in 2028 and launch in 2029. Any proposed changes will be carefully considered, piloted, and evaluated to ensure they enhance the quality and fairness of veterinary nurse education.

As the profession continues to evolve, the PAVE project represents a timely opportunity to ensure that practical assessments remain aligned with the needs of students, educators, and animal health and welfare.

Insights from the European Board of Medical Assessors 2025

In April 2025, Vicky Hedges, our VN Examinations Quality Lead, attended the European Board of Medical Assessors (EBMA) Annual Conference at the University of Algarve, Faro, Portugal. The EBMA conference is an annual event that brings together educators, researchers, and assessment specialists from across the healthcare professions, including veterinary education, to share best practices and innovations in assessment.

This year's theme, 'Integrating technology, evidence and quality in assessments for health professions education', was particularly timely and resonated with developments in veterinary nurse education, especially in relation to competency-based assessment and the newly launched PAVE project (see page 2).

Although the majority of attendees were from the medical education sector, the conference offered many insights applicable to veterinary nurse education.

Keynote lectures were delivered by leading experts in medical education on topics including:

• Validity in programmatic assessment
• Entrusted professional activities (EPAs) and their implementation across disciplines
• Physiological measurements and assessment performance

In addition to keynote sessions, the conference featured roundtable discussions on diversity, equity and inclusion, and the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in medical education, as well as over 25 short presentations showcasing assessment initiatives and research projects. Noteworthy presentations included the use of click maps to detect cheating in online exams, the impact of rest stations in OSCEs on candidate performance, and reflections on the

General Medical Council's (GMC) journey to implement a national medical licensing assessment in the UK. This was particularly interesting, as the GMC now mandates OSCEs or similar practical examinations across all UK medical schools – a requirement that closely mirrors current expectations for veterinary nursing education.

Veterinary education-centric sessions included a presentation by Harper and Keele Veterinary School on the implementation of an Entrustable Professional Activity (EPA) framework for workplace-based assessment of veterinary undergraduates, as well as a session exploring inclusive assessment practices and strategies to reduce attainment gaps in diverse student populations.

Attending the conference was a valuable opportunity to engage in cross-professional dialogue and explore innovative assessment practices. The event reinforced the importance of collaboration across disciplines and highlighted the potential for veterinary professionals to contribute more actively to these discussions.

The next EBMA conference will be held in Cardiff from Wednesday 1 to Saturday 4 July 2026. Veterinary nursing educators are encouraged to attend as delegates and present their work in this field.

European Board of Medical Assessors

Further details will be available on the **EBMA website**.

Staying on track with your CPD

The RCVS Academy can help

Continuing professional development (CPD) is a fundamental responsibility for veterinary nurses, reflecting a commitment to lifelong learning and professional excellence. Keeping knowledge and skills up to date not only supports best practice – it also contributes to high standards of patient care.

The RCVS monitors CPD compliance through our 1CPD platform, and the RCVS Academy is there to help you stay on track, not just to meet requirements, but to get real value from your learning and development.

The Academy provides a wide range of free, flexible online learning for both student veterinary nurses (SVNs) and registered veterinary nurses (RVNs). With tailored content designed to support the veterinary nursing journey at every stage, it's a growing platform committed to accessibility, relevance, and practical benefit.

For SVNs

As a new academic term begins, many SVNs are taking their first steps towards a career in veterinary nursing. To support them, the RCVS Academy offers 'SVN: RCVS & me,' a short online course designed to introduce students to the RCVS, the role of regulation, and the various support services available during their training and as they progress into professional roles. The course is structured into three concise modules, designed to be completed in just one hour and 30 minutes. With flexible access, students can complete it at their own pace, making it an ideal resource to fit around study and placement schedules. Course tutors are encouraged to incorporate this valuable learning into their students' development, as it closely aligns with curriculum content on professional regulation and responsibilities.

For new RVNs

For newly registered veterinary nurses (RVN), the 'RVN starting out' course helps ease the transition into professional life. Comprising four modules; 'Getting started', 'Gaining confidence', 'Working in a team', and 'Developing your career', this course offers guidance on building confidence, integrating into practice teams, and shaping long-term career development. Each module is designed to take between 30 and 45 minutes and can be accessed at any time, offering flexibility for learners.

Incorporating user feedback

We are also committed to continuously improving our Academy courses based on user feedback. A recent update to the 'Clinical supervisor' course has introduced:

- Increased interactive elements and activities
- New video content
- Downloadable worksheets and checklists to support your role as a clinical supervisor

These additions are designed to better support veterinary nurses undertaking a clinical

supervisor role. The most significant updates have been made to module two, 'The role of the clinical supervisor', and module three, 'Professional behaviours'. Nurses who have previously completed this course are encouraged to revisit it and explore the refreshed content.

Our 'VN accreditations and quality monitoring' course has also been recently updated with the addition of a new third module focusing on quality monitoring. This addition builds on learners' existing knowledge and provides a deeper understanding of the processes involved in maintaining and reviewing standards within AEIs.

The additional content covers key audit types, including Day One Skills (DOS), external quality assurance (EQA), and OSCEs, as well as in-person progress reviews, training practice audits, and how to approach reporting and action planning. This new module helps prepare veterinary nurses to contribute effectively to the RCVS's robust quality assurance framework.

'For those who value interactive learning and discussion, 'Academy Live' events provide opportunities to connect with subject matter experts and fellow professionals in real time.'

For RVNs who are new to the CPD process, returning to the profession, or simply looking to enhance the way they approach learning, the 'CPD: record and reflect' course serves as a practical introduction or refresher. It outlines how to plan, record, and reflect on CPD in line with RCVS expectations. Those returning to clinical practice after a career break may also benefit from the 'Nurse return' course, which includes guidance on the period of supervised practice (PSP), where applicable.

Other recently launched courses include:

- **Communicating cost** – understand your role in effectively communicating veterinary treatment costs to clients
- **Civility fundamentals** – learn the value of workplace civility and the impact of incivility on others and patient safety

- **Mentorship** – develop your mentoring skills to help others thrive in the workplace

In addition to these, we are currently developing several new Academy courses, including the following topics:

- Advertising and social media in veterinary practice
- Appointed senior veterinary surgeon implementation
- Support for practices hosting overseas-qualified vets undertaking 'seeing practice' placements

Academy Live
For those who value interactive learning and discussion, 'Academy Live' events provide opportunities to connect with subject matter experts and fellow professionals in real time. So far this year, popular sessions have included 'Roles and responsibilities of a clinical supervisor', 'Professional development as an RVN – finding your niche', 'Tackling tutorials', 'Breaking barriers: supporting struggling students', and 'What do RVNs want to see in the future of the profession?'. More live events are planned for the remainder of the year, and full details and registration information can be found on the **RCVS website**.

To discover the full range of learning opportunities currently available, we invite you to browse the new **RCVS Academy brochure**.

All Academy courses are freely available and can be accessed by logging in with your MyAccount credentials at **academy.rcvs.org.uk**.

If you have any questions or feedback, please don't hesitate to get in touch with the Academy Team at **academy@rcvs.org.uk**.

Advancing skills with new clinical supervisor training

Our commitment to improvement

In our role as qualification assessors, we have recently noticed that the amount of information provided at clinical supervisor (CS) training varies between different accredited education institutions (AEIs) and their delivery sites. To help address this and ensure consistency in training, we've developed a training session focusing on common CS challenges in practice and providing practical support strategies, as part of our ongoing commitment to improving CS training.

An initial version of the session was presented at our VN Educators Conference at Myerscough College in June 2025. Key session themes included:

• Effective communication
• Understanding professional behaviours
• Recognising and supporting neurodiversity in students

Building on this session, we will also be delivering a targeted CS workshop at BVNA Congress, exploring the evolving role of the CS, moving beyond the Day-One Skills (DOS) to consider wider responsibilities and common challenges.

Collaborative training
Additionally, we're exploring the potential for qualifications assessors to be more actively involved in delivering CS training and standardisation sessions in collaboration with AEIs. This initiative is currently under consideration, and would aim to enhance alignment and quality assurance across veterinary nurse education.

We hope these developments will, over time, contribute to a more standardised approach to clinical supervision. The VN Qualifications Team remains committed to continually enhancing training and support for clinical supervisors and educators. If your AEI would benefit from involvement in this initiative, or if you have any feedback or suggestions, please get in touch at **vnqa@rcvs.org.uk**.

Introducing reasonable adjustment best practice guidance for students

Back in June, we published best practice guidance to support veterinary nursing educational establishments to make appropriate reasonable adjustments decisions for student veterinary nurses. Under the Equality Act 2010, employers and educators are required to put in place reasonable adjustments for employees or students with a disability – defined as a physical and/or mental health condition that has a substantial and long-term impact on a person's ability to undertake normal daily activities.

The guidance for veterinary nursing educators provides information on reasonable adjustments to support consistent decision-making and clarify how reasonable adjustments align with the competence standards for veterinary nurses. The guidance document also provides examples of the types of reasonable adjustments that could be appropriate in different cases.

"We have produced this set of guidance following feedback from veterinary nurse educational establishments that they needed clearer guidance on how best to support students with disabilities."

The guidance is relevant for current students and those applying to become students by clarifying how, and to what extent, support can be put in place for students with disabilities, while still ensuring they can meet the competence requirements for registration and a licence to practise in the UK.

Julie Dugmore, our Director of Veterinary Nursing, said: "We have produced this set of guidance following feedback from veterinary nurse educational establishments that they

needed clearer guidance on how best to support students with disabilities and what to do to ensure they can meet the respective Day One Competences.

"We hope that they will find the practical elements of the guidance useful – with examples of the kind of physical and mental health conditions that may require reasonable adjustments, and how these can be accounted for within educational settings."

The reasonable adjustments guidance for veterinary nurses is available to read at: **Reasonable adjustments for student veterinary nurses**.

A PDF document version of the guidance is also available to download.
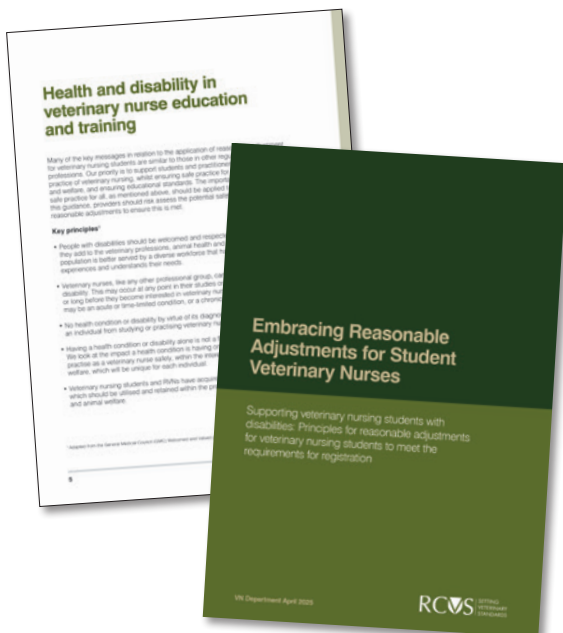
Let's talk adjustments

Findings from the joint RCVS and British Veterinary Chronic Illness Support (BVCIS) 'Disability and Chronic Illness in Veterinary Work and Education survey (2024)' highlighted a need to increase awareness about reasonable adjustments in veterinary workplaces.

'Let's talk adjustments' was a six-month campaign launched in February 2025 as a joint initiative between the RCVS and our Mind Matters Initiative (MMI). The campaign was specific to the veterinary workplace context and provided a source of information and guidance for organisations on how to support people with different disabilities, conditions and needs.

The campaign provided real stories and insights from veterinary professionals living with a health condition/disability, as well as management perspectives on how best to support people with different disabilities and health conditions.

Resources were also developed in collaboration with Professor Nicola Spalding and Professor Elinor O'Connor, academic experts in the fields of occupational therapy and work psychology. Information on occupational therapy in the workplace and practical tips can be found on the 'Let's talk adjustments' **campaign webpage**, where a guide on how to have discussions about reasonable adjustments in the workplace can also be found.

Additionally, a webinar panel discussion 'Reasonable adjustments in veterinary workplaces – looking back and moving forwards' was held on 22 July, with panellists Charlotte Pace RVN, Dr Jo Daniels, Professor Elinor O'Connor, and Dr Jenny Seward MRCVS. The combinations of expertise and lived experiences amongst the panellists created rich dialogue, debate and questions from delegates.

'70% of those who responded to a post-event survey rated the webinar as excellent or good and 75% said they had a better understanding of reasonable adjustments in veterinary workplace environments as a result of attending the webinar.'

Some 169 people attended the webinar, with line managers making up the biggest part of the audience. Over 70% of those who responded to a post-event survey rated the webinar as excellent or good and 75% said they had a better understanding of reasonable adjustments in veterinary workplace environments as a result of attending the webinar. A recording of the webinar is available to watch on the 'Let's talk adjustments' **campaign page**.

An update on the Nursing Progress Log

Designing and implementing enhancements to improve the NPL platform

Throughout this year, the RCVS Development Team has collaborated closely with the VN Team to design and implement enhancements to the Nursing Progress Log (NPL), – a digital platform that enables student veterinary nurses to log and reflect on their clinical experiences. The platform supports their learning journey and provides a structured record of how they are meeting the Day-One Skills required for professional registration.

Since January, the project has progressed through several key phases including a series of internal workshops to create visual representations of the new NPL interface. The proposed new design was then presented to the VN Team for feedback, as well as the project working group. Once the design was approved, RCVS software developers began redesigning the system architecture and database and producing detailed design specifications in preparation for the coding phase.

Upon completion of the code updates, the software was first tested internally (alpha testing phase) before being tested externally (beta testing phase) by a small group comprising students, clinical supervisors, and VN educators. This played a crucial role in assessing the platform's quality and usability, providing constructive feedback. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to everyone who participated in the beta testing phase for their time and valuable contributions.

The updated NPL introduces a range of exciting new features designed to benefit veterinary nursing students and educators by enhancing functionality, improving usability, and supporting more effective learning and supervision. Some of the highlights of the new platform include:

- **Audio recording:** reflective accounts can now be submitted either as written text or audio recordings. Tutors also have the option to record audio comments within the Professional Behaviour Evaluation.

- **Tutorial feature:** enables students to review and record their progress and set learning targets in collaboration with their clinical supervisor.

- **Electronic timesheets:** students can log their hours digitally, with supervisors approving entries. This removes the need for paper records for RCVS registration, although existing students using paper records should continue with their current method.

- **Internal quality assurance (IQA) report:** this report feature – also visible to clinical supervisors and tutors – consolidates all IQA feedback into a single, accessible report. It also provides the option for internal quality assurers to add an overarching comment for each date on which they sample a student's progress log.

- **Improved student search:** delivery site administrators benefit from a more efficient search function, enabling quicker and more efficient access to student records.

- **Improved activity logging:** an improved 'multi-logging' feature allows a single experience to be logged against multiple skills across all units. (A separate reflective account must be recorded for each individual skill).

- **Improved mobile usability:** the interface has been redesigned to provide a more responsive and user-friendly experience on mobile devices, making it easier for users to access and interact with the platform on the go.

The updated platform will be launched early next year.

Highlights from the inaugural VN Educators Conference

Building momentum and looking to the future

On 17 June 2025, we held our first-ever VN Educators Conference, hosted in collaboration with the team at Myerscough College's School of Veterinary Nursing. This new event brought together VN educators from across the UK, creating a dedicated space for sharing innovation, addressing current challenges, and building a stronger community for those delivering veterinary nurse education.

The atmosphere on the day was energising and deeply collaborative. From the very start, it was clear that this was something the VN educator community had been asking for: a platform to exchange ideas, share best practice, and reflect honestly on the evolving needs of learners and educators alike.

Sessions throughout the day focused on practical training, inclusion, learner support, and wellbeing – topics that resonated deeply with attendees. A particular highlight was the keynote presentation by Sarah Parkhouse and Jude Parry from Bottle Green Training, whose inspiring session on supporting student individuality challenged educators to think differently about how they connect with and respond to the diverse needs of their learners.

The event also offered early insights from our RCVS accreditation and audit activity, focusing on student wellbeing in both academic and placement settings. These findings, together with discussion of the recently published reasonable adjustments guidance, prompted meaningful conversations around how providers and practices can proactively support learners, ensuring that student wellbeing is embedded in every stage of the VN training journey.

'Delegates appreciated the blend of evidence-informed content, peer-led discussions, and practical takeaways, as well as the warm, supportive tone of the day.'

Feedback from attendees has been overwhelmingly positive, with many describing the event as timely, relevant, and much needed. Delegates appreciated the blend of evidence-informed content, peer-led discussions, and practical takeaways, as well as the warm, supportive tone of the day. They stated it was 'enjoyable and thought provoking', 'beneficial and informative' and provided a much-anticipated forum for connecting, networking and development.

We're now using this feedback to shape our next VN Educators Conference, due to take place in 2026.

Introducing a revised Post-registration Framework

Our Veterinary Nurses Council (VNC) has ratified an updated *Post-Registration Framework for Veterinary Nursing*, due for implementation from January 2026. This revised framework governs the development and delivery of the Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (CertAVN) and is the result of a comprehensive review led by the Veterinary Nursing Team, supported by a dedicated working group of VN Council and VN Education Committee members.

Originally introduced in 2019, the framework was reviewed to ensure it remains fit for purpose and aligned with the evolving needs of learners, educators, and the wider profession. Following initial internal review and wide consultation with AEIs, accreditation panellists, and other stakeholders, a number of updates have been agreed.

'These changes will help ensure the framework is clear, actionable, and supportive of high-quality delivery across the sector.'

A key addition to the revised framework is a new standard focusing on learning culture – recognising the need to foster inclusive, reflective, and student-centred learning environments. The updated version also strengthens expectations around academic support, advancing knowledge, and the integration of wellbeing considerations – elements that echo broader themes within the current VN education landscape.

The six-week public consultation, launched in January 2025, attracted 183 responses, with overwhelmingly positive feedback. Stakeholders welcomed the clarity of the proposals and offered constructive insights which have helped shape the final version. In response, the working group made several refinements, including clarification of terminology (for example, standardising the term 'candidate' throughout the framework) and the decision to develop comprehensive written guidance to accompany each requirement.

These changes will help ensure the framework is clear, actionable, and supportive of high-quality delivery across the sector.

To aid with implementation, we're developing a pre-accreditation support package, similar to that already in place for licence to practise qualifications. This package will include tailored guidance and resources to support providers in aligning with the new standards. AEIs currently accredited to provide the CertAVN will be offered the first session free of charge on an optional basis; for new providers, the support package will become mandatory and chargeable from 2026.

The updated framework will be implemented from January 2026, at which point all accreditation events and quality monitoring activities will be assessed against the new standards. This approach ensures fairness and continuity, allowing AEIs sufficient time to prepare for the transition.

The updated framework is more than a refresh: it represents a continued commitment to excellence, relevance, and support in advancing veterinary nursing education. By embedding wellbeing, inclusion, and flexibility into its foundations, it sets the stage for the next generation of confident, capable veterinary nurses to enhance their careers and strengthen the profession.

Shaping the future of veterinary nursing internationally

In addition to ongoing UK-based work, the Veterinary Nursing Team continues to play an active role in shaping veterinary nursing education at a European level. Engagement with international partners ensures that UK veterinary nursing remains aligned with evolving global standards, and that the voice of the profession is included in wider policy and practice conversations.

European Specialist Nurses Organisation (ESNO)

This year, we deepened our involvement with ESNO, contributing to high-profile discussions on the future of healthcare education across Europe.

In January, Shirley Gibbins, our Qualifications Lead, moderated a session at the ESNO-European Economic and Social Committee event in Brussels, entitled 'Shaping the future of healthcare: building a sustainable paradigm for nursing and beyond'. The event explored system-level change and the role of specialist nursing education in achieving sustainable healthcare outcomes.

In May, she then represented veterinary nursing at the ESNO Congress in Zagreb, delivering a well-received session on integrating sustainability into education. This congress was notable for dedicating a full day to policy development, enabling professional associations to collaborate on education reform and recognition initiatives across borders.

Foundation of Nurse Specialists Europe (FoNSE)

FoNSE was formally relaunched during the ESNO Congress in Zagreb, marking an important development in the advancement of specialist nursing across Europe. FoNSE aims to be a leading enabler in this space, responding to a recognised gap in the infrastructure supporting specialist nursing. Its work focuses on securing research-driven resources, enabling research, and providing operational support to strengthen evidence-based practice and elevate the role of specialist nurses within European healthcare systems.

'The Veterinary Nursing Team continues to play an active role in shaping veterinary nursing education at a European level.'

The foundation also promotes collaboration, professional development, innovation, and excellence in specialist practice, while driving advocacy and educational reform. Shirley, a member of the FoNSE management board, has been actively involved since its inception. She continues to contribute to its strategic direction, including through the introductory webinar held on 9 July, which introduced FoNSE's priorities and opportunities to nursing professionals across Europe.

Accreditation Committee for Veterinary Nurse Education (ACOVENE)

We also remain engaged with **ACOVENE** – the European accrediting body for veterinary nurse education, with Julie Dugmore, our Director of Veterinary Nursing, chairing the board. Since 2007, ACOVENE has been setting the benchmark across Europe, promoting

excellence, professional mobility, and the recognition of veterinary nurses as vital contributors to clinical and economic success.

Through its rigorous accreditation process, ACOVENE ensures that training institutions deliver high-quality, relevant, and contemporary programmes. Accreditation serves as a formal endorsement that an institute meets European-wide standards, building trust with students, employers, and regulators alike. A training session for new accreditation panel members took place on 29 July, with a further session planned for October.

This year, ACOVENE has already completed two successful re-accreditation visits. At Thomas More University (TMU) in Belgium, the panel praised the team's exceptional commitment to quality and their innovative, forward-thinking approach to curriculum development. Meanwhile, Aeres MBO in the Netherlands was commended for its strong student support, excellent peer-reviewed learning resources, and the inspirational leadership of its veterinary nursing team.

In addition to these visits, two new schools have embarked on their ACOVENE accreditation journey, with evaluation visits scheduled in Belgium (June) and Portugal (September). Full details and outcomes of these reviews will be featured in the next edition of *VN Education*.

ACOVENE continues to champion inclusivity, collaboration, and educational excellence, thus driving veterinary nurse training forward across Europe.

European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)

In April 2025, we attended the **ENQA** Members' Forum, where Kirsty Williams, our Education Quality Improvement Manager, presented a thematic poster as part of the conference's focus on sustainability in higher education. The poster sessions provided opportunities for dialogue with international delegates,

exploring how quality assurance methods can support education providers in responding to sustainability goals. This aligned well with plenary content and thematic discussions from other European agencies.

The programme also included updates from the ENQA General Assembly, covering agency reviews, governance, and finances, along with a progress report on the ongoing revision of the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*. Proposed changes include clarifying expectations, addressing alternative provider models, and strengthening key standards such as independence, complaints processes, and thematic analysis, several of which are of direct relevance to our work. Our team submitted an interim report in September 2025 and will attend the General Assembly in Brussels in October, which will also mark ENQA's 25th anniversary.

Veterinary European Transnational Network for Nursing Education and Training (VETNNET)

VETNNET was established in 1995 by four pioneering veterinary nursing training colleges in the UK and mainland Europe. Its mission is to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and ideas, fostering a collaborative network dedicated to enhancing veterinary nursing education across Europe.

The 28th VETNNET Conference was held from 17 to 19 September 2025 in Deventer, Netherlands. The programme featured an engaging mix of keynote presentations, interactive workshops, and networking opportunities, addressing key themes such as workforce sustainability, resilience and mental health, educator development, sustainability in veterinary nurse training, professional accreditation, and tackling workplace incivility. This exciting event was attended by Tori Thornton RVN, our Qualifications Assessor, who will subsequently be sharing the initiatives and ideas gathered with our Veterinary Nursing Team to help inform and enhance future practice.

A vision or a necessity?
Strengthening the role of veterinary nurses in team-based veterinary healthcare

RCVS | SETTING VETERINARY STANDARDS

VN Vision events – a vision or a necessity?

Strengthening the role of veterinary nurses in team-based veterinary healthcare

In the last edition of VN Education, we shared plans to expand our VN Vision events throughout 2025. Building on insights from the VN Vision Snapshot report – which captured outcomes from the 2024 events that brought veterinary nurses together to discuss the future of the profession – this year's events aim to explore how we can develop systems within practice that will empower nurses to work to their professional potential. By doing so, we aim to enhance team-based healthcare, client experience, accessibility to veterinary healthcare, and practice efficiency.

The 2025 events are now well underway, with six events behind us and two still to come (including a session at BVNA Congress), with further events currently being planned for 2026.

Strengthening the role
The 'effective utilisation of veterinary nurses' has been a topic of debate for many years. Within this, we recognise the diversity of practices within the UK and the teams which work within them, and that culture change can be difficult.
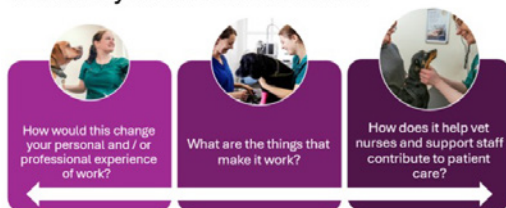
These events ask:
• What's the problem?
• What impact do we wish to make?
• How do we get there?

For change to be effective, it needs to be a collaborative process, involving and engaging the professions and all of those who support veterinary healthcare delivery.

We aim to think less about 'utilisation' and more about how teams can work effectively and efficiently together, drawing on each team member's strengths to provide the best patient outcomes.

What does team-based veterinary healthcare look like?

How would this change your personal and / or professional experience of work?

What are the things that make it work?

How does it help vet nurses and support staff contribute to patient care?

- Outline of ToC
- Impact (goal)
- Outcomes
- Measuring success
- Enablers/preventers
- Assumptions
- Ranking of ideas
- Final reflection

Defining key steps
The events are run as workshops and involve working in small groups to define long-term goals, identify the practical steps needed to achieve them, and determine how success will be measured and shared with the wider profession and public.

This is carried out using a Theory of Change approach – an introduction to which is provided to delegates at the beginning of the session to help them to understand its purpose.

In order to develop a long-term strategy, discussions consider:

• Long term impact
• Short, medium and long term outcomes
• How we will measure the success of outcomes
• The enablers and preventers that may impact the success of the work
• The assumptions we may make

What does good look like?
We appreciate that many people may not have fully visualised 'what good looks like', so we've created videos featuring two teams who have achieved highly effective, team-based healthcare in practice to encourage VN Vision delegates to think more broadly and engage with the process. In these videos, the teams share their motivations and the practical steps that helped them succeed. In addition, two experienced veterinary nurses from practice have joined us as guest speakers at many of our events, bringing valuable insights and real-world perspectives.

A listing of all upcoming VN Vision events is available to view via our **VN Vision event collection on Eventbrite**.

More information on the VN Vision Snapshot report is available to read **on our website**.

Four months of Hardwick Street

Updates from our new office space

We've now been in our new Hardwick Street headquarters since May 2025 and are delighted to be welcoming an increasing number of veterinary professionals through our doors.

Whether they are using the dedicated members space, or attending for events and meetings, it's fantastic to have a home to call our own once again and have a central hub for members, registrants, staff and stakeholders alike.

As well as dedicated working floors for staff (one of which is dog-friendly) the building provides:

• Dedicated space and facilities for visiting MsRCVS and RVNs
• Adaptable meeting rooms to support Council and committee work
• Additional meeting rooms to suit in-person and hybrid working
• Video conferencing facilities
• Private booths for remote meetings and calls
• Breakout areas for informal meetings and collaborative working
• An event space with catering facilities
• The RCVS Knowledge Library & Information Service and heritage collection
• Multi-faith and wellbeing rooms for visitors and staff
• A small recording studio for webinars, podcasts and interviews

So far at the new headquarters, we have hosted two VN Vision events for members, as well as Council and committee meetings and disciplinary hearings.

Upcoming events include our Regional Question Time, the official building opening, and the Riding Establishment Annual General Meeting.

For a list of all our upcoming events, please visit the events page **on our website**.

Work for us

Become our Chief Examiner for the VN Pre-registration OSCEs

We're seeking a new chief examiner for the Veterinary Nurse Pre-registration Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCE) – a key role in ensuring the validity, reliability, and fairness of the examination process.

This part-time role (approximately nine days per year) involves reviewing OSCE content,

contributing to examination board meetings, supporting quality assurance, and advising on complex examination issues.

We're looking for an RVN with extensive experience in OSCE design and delivery, and a working knowledge of the *RCVS Standards Framework for Veterinary Nursing Education and Training*.

Remuneration: £200/day plus expenses
Term: Three years

Interested?
Please contact Vicky Hedges, VN Examinations Quality Lead at **prereg.vn@rcvs.org.uk** for the full job description and application details. Applications close at 4pm on Friday 24 October 2025.

Veterinary Nursing Department Personnel

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Qualifications Assessor:
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