



New national qualifications framework

“This qualifications review gives us a unique opportunity to address many of the concerns expressed about training by practices.”

In this issue: more OSCEs, new face on Council, major qualifications review, enrolment, data protection, PSP, exam feedback, reasonable adjustment, meet the team, events and diary dates.

PEPAS please!

Mid-term conference for European practicals project

The partners of the Pan-European Practical Assessment System (PEPAS) project met in June in Lunteren, Holland, for the mid-project conference to evaluate progress to date and make decisions about longer-term plans. The project receives funding from the EU Leonardo da Vinci programme and our involvement has been to train examiners in each of the eight countries to take Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs).

At the event, Kathy Boursicot, Reader in Medical Education at St Georges Hospital, was invited to provide an insight into OSCE examinations in other professions. This helped the partners to resolve many questions, including how many tasks should be used in an examination, how live animals can be safely used and how long each OSCE task should be.

The most important aspect of the project is the production of new OSCE tasks, which we will be

able to add to our bank. The partners had collectively written over 45 OSCE tasks, mapped to the European Dossier of Competences. The aim is to publish 50 tasks on the PEPAS website (www.pepas.net) by the end of September. A further 50 will be produced before the project ends, in 2010. The partners will then concentrate on translating the tasks into the various languages (Italian, Danish, Swedish, Dutch, Slovenian and Norwegian) ready for them to be used.

Vicky Hedges, VN Exam and Higher Education Quality Manager, and Julie Dugmore, Awarding Body Quality Assurance Manager, will depart for Slovenia in October to deliver the final training event. This will be followed by a further conference in Majorca in March 2010, with the final conference planned for Oslo in September 2010.

All change on VN Council

New faces and new roles at RCVS Day

At RCVS Day, our AGM and awards ceremony that took place on 3 July, new VN Council member Louise Glysen (pictured) was formally welcomed to the team by then-President Jill Nute.

Liz Branscombe became the new Chairman of VN Council, supported by Vice-Chairmen Dot Creighton and Jacqui Molyneux, a veterinary nurse and vet respectively. Sophie Pullen retired from Council; lay member the Reverend Anthony Birbeck, and veterinary surgeon Richard Hooker, were appointed for further terms; and Stuart Craig, Lantra representative, was replaced by Chris House.

Jill had warm words of tribute for Andrea Jeffery, retiring Chairman of the VN Council, who was re-elected as a member for a further four years: "I would like to congratulate Andrea on her excellent chairmanship of VN Council over the last four years, during which time we have seen much positive change for the profession, including the introduction of the Register for Veterinary Nurses," she said.

During the awards ceremony, Honorary Associateship of the RCVS was bestowed upon

Carole Martin, a high-achieving and dedicated veterinary nurse whom Jill Nute believes "epitomises what a veterinary nurse should be," and is "a well-respected ambassador for both veterinary nursing and the veterinary profession as a whole".



In the frame: VN awards review

Major review of VN awards

The most major review of VN qualifications for many years is underway. The RCVS veterinary nursing awards accreditation expires next year and so these qualifications are due for review. This coincides with the introduction of a new national framework for qualifications, the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). This gives us a unique opportunity to address many of the concerns expressed about training by practices, and, in particular, the heavy and expensive burden of practical teaching and assessment that NVQ awards entail.

Reduced burden

The new QCF aims to provide a more user-friendly and flexible system. Under the new arrangements, all qualifications will be built from units held on a national database and all units (and qualifications) will carry a value in terms of their level and the volume of learning involved. It's a similar system to that used in higher education for a number of years. Qualifications no longer have to comply with set types, such as NVQs for work-based learning, giving far more flexibility in terms of what needs to be learned and/or assessed practically in the workplace, and what can perhaps be learned and assessed in the college environment. This could allow practices to concentrate on providing quality mentorship and work experience, with less emphasis on assessment and all the paperwork which that entails.

Demand

One of the pressing issues we shall be considering is the ongoing shortage of qualified veterinary nurses. The demand for qualified VNs has been rising steadily for several years and there is substantial evidence to suggest that employers find it hard to fill posts. However, the number of students in training has barely changed in the last ten years: supply is definitely not keeping up with demand. We shall therefore need to ensure that significantly more students can enter training and be supported in clinical learning. In order to do this, we need to make it easier, and cheaper, for practices to support the clinical training of VNs.

We will be considering whether a larger proportion of VN training and education could be provided within full-time further education, which is possible now that the lower age-limit for students has been dropped, and would enable colleges to recruit direct

from the school-leaver population. Such an arrangement could provide students with a substantial grounding in the essentials of veterinary nursing before perhaps progressing to a more clinically-focused training phase in veterinary practice.

“Qualifications no longer have to comply with set types, such as NVQs for work-based learning, giving far more flexibility.”

As now, qualifications will continue to address Lantra's National Occupational Standards (NOS) in veterinary nursing. Lantra will be conducting a review of the NOS this autumn to ensure that the standards continue to describe what a veterinary nurse needs to do, know and understand in their job to carry out their role in a consistent and competent way.

Help please...

We need your views, please! An initial consultation is already in progress and, over this summer, evidence-gathering meetings will be held at the RCVS to explore the issues in more depth. At its May meeting, VN Council agreed an action plan for the review and reaccreditation of our VN awards, which needs to be completed by next summer in order to meet the timetable for Ofqual's implementation of the QCF. If you have not received a formal consultation letter and would like to contribute, your views would still be very welcome.



Have your say

It's your chance to help us shape the future of VN training:

Visit:

www.rcvs.org.uk/vnawardsreview
for the consultation paperwork,
then email your views to
vetnursing@rcvs.org.uk.

A degree of knowledge

Do you know if your degree students are properly enrolled?

Do you take degree students on placement within your practice? Are you sure that the student is enrolled with the RCVS? Are all staff aware of the status of the student?

Now is the time of year that new veterinary nurse undergraduates are starting at one of the 14 university courses around the country. As part of their studies, undergraduates must complete a minimum of 70 weeks' practical placement in a veterinary practice. Many will commence placement within the next few months and we have become aware that some are attending placement without being enrolled with us as students. Until a student has been enrolled, he or she is unable to undertake activities as defined by Schedule 3 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act. It's up to the practice staff to check the status of students and ensure that they are not requested to undertake activities which could potentially be illegal.

"It's up to the practice staff to check the status of students."

The universities must ensure that information relating to the undergraduate's status is conveyed to the practice staff. Universities are encouraged to send the enrolment forms

to us as part of the induction process during the first week of term. Enrolments are usually processed within two weeks. The enrolment number and candidate pack is then sent to the university for onward circulation.

All universities now have, or are working towards, direct accreditation, which means that undergraduates commencing courses in 2009 will now not be working towards either an NVQ or a VRQ. However, they still need to demonstrate how they meet the requirements of the National Occupational Standards and the professional syllabus. Students are eligible to apply to enter the VN Register on completion of their degree, and students who leave the degree programme without completing the degree can apply to transfer onto the NVQ and VRQ.



Reporting in

Centre annual reports are due

Centre annual reports, along with the annual centre fee and Memorandum of Understanding, should reach us by 1 August each year. If you haven't already submitted yours, here are some points from previous years to watch out for:

- If your EV reports during the year included action points or recommendations, ensure you report on progress;
- If you have experienced any other issues that actually, or potentially, impacted on quality, report these and how they have been addressed;
- Ensure the statistics you provide for this year's report are consistent with previous reporting; and,

- Send any supporting evidence electronically, making sure the files are clearly labelled (preferably using your centre number) and referenced to the report.

We have noticed in previous years that centres are reluctant to report quality issues that have not been picked up on EV audit. However, it is a mark of good management and quality assurance to demonstrate that a centre is conducting internal audit and is identifying and addressing issues such as staff shortages or other resource problems. A blank report section could indicate that such internal audit isn't occurring, rather than a problem-free award delivery!

Come-back kids

Support for returning VNs

The VN Council has recognised that VNs taking a career break may be somewhat rusty when they return to practice. Accordingly, a Period of Supervised Practice (PSP) has been introduced for all nurses returning to the Register after a long break. Whilst the PSP will be mandatory for all nurses who have been off the Register for five or more years, the principle can also be very useful for nurses who have had a shorter break or are moving to a different type of practice and feel in need of an update.

What is the Period of Supervised Practice (PSP)?

The PSP is time spent by a returning nurse in clinical veterinary practice in order to refresh his/her skills before rejoining the Register. During the PSP, a nurse will work with a named mentor (an experienced RVN or vet) in order to update their knowledge and skills and re-gain the confidence to work as a fully registered VN.

The PSP isn't re-training: nurses returning to work are already qualified and experienced. It is therefore not a mini-NVQ and there is no formal assessment (PSP nurses and their mentors carry out ongoing informal evaluation). "The lack of formal assessment may seem strange," according to Head of Veterinary Nursing, Libby Earle. "However, PSP nurses are bound by the *Guide to Professional Conduct for Veterinary Nurses* as soon as they re-join the Register. In other words, they are trusted, as professional practitioners, to ensure they are competent in their sphere of work."

How does it work?

PSP nurses register with the RCVS as a special category of student VN. This allows them legally to undertake a full range of veterinary nursing work, including the administration of medical treatments and performance of minor surgical procedures, under veterinary supervision and support. A named (experienced) vet or RVN will act as mentor throughout to help plan and organise suitable experience and updating. At the end of the PSP, the mentor will confirm completion to the RCVS and provide a professional reference so that the nurse may re-join the Register.

Want to know more?

You can find the PSP Handbook at (www.rcvs.org.uk/PSPHandbook). This gives a complete guide to the PSP and useful tools for keeping a record of clinical updating.

If we tell you that...

Our data protection policies



We often receive enquiries about student VNs, especially from prospective employers. However, we have to be mindful of data protection requirements.

Enrolment as a student veterinary nurse serves two purposes:

- It enables the RCVS to register a candidate for vocational awards, or to note their registration for an RCVS-approved degree; and,
- It gives students the legal right to undertake certain veterinary procedures (under Schedule 3 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966) in the course of their training to become a qualified veterinary nurse.

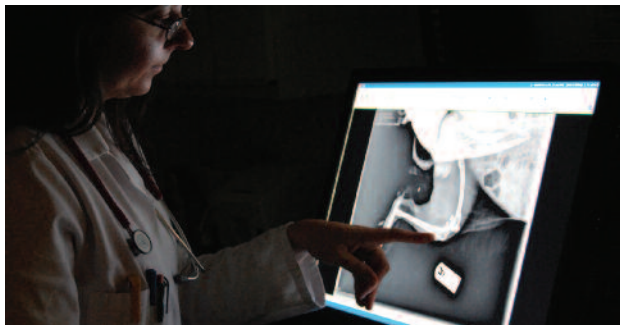
We will accordingly provide information to two categories of enquirer – general and the candidate's registered centre (VNAC/VNCP). For general enquirers (usually practices), we will confirm whether or not an individual is, or isn't, an enrolled student. We will also confirm the centre at which the student is registered, if applicable. This enables prospective employers to verify a student's status and to seek a training reference.

We will disclose information on a student's award progress to the relevant Head of Centre or his/her authorised representative. In the case of centres and students themselves, we ensure the person enquiring is entitled to such disclosure and has been positively identified, especially in the case of telephone enquiries.

In the case of Listed/Registered nurses, we disclose only the information contained in the published List. Everything else is deemed to be personal data and remains confidential.

Computer says 'no'...

Level 3 examination feedback



In the April *VN Standard*, we provided feedback on the Level 2 VRQ theory examination, now taken on computer at Pearson VUE centres. As promised, here is part two: feedback for the Level 3 exam, which is drawn from examination papers taken between July 2008 and March 2009.

As with the Level 2 exam, candidates found difficulties in applying nutritional knowledge to nursing care (VNT7). Providing suitable diets for patients with exocrine pancreatic insufficiency, hepatic disease or chronic renal failure were especially problematic. In addition, only 35% of students understood the difference between 'enteral' and 'parenteral' feeding tubes. Candidates also found simple fluid therapy calculations problematic. This might be due to a high reliance on calculators in practice. Calculators are not provided in the theory exams, but it is possible to compete all questions without one.

Radiography

It has always been recognised that candidates are weak in the radiography practical examination. Similar results were seen in the theory examinations, with over half of students unable to identify collimation borders and centring points for standard radiographic views (VNT8). Half of the candidates were unaware that silver can be reclaimed from fixative; even fewer knew the chemical reactions in the stages of X-ray development. Candidates were knowledgeable about the use of barium as a contrast medium, but were less aware of other commonly-used contrast media. The recognition of the causes of common film faults was also poorly demonstrated. By contrast, a high percentage of candidates demonstrate good knowledge of laboratory diagnostics (VNT8).

Pharmacology

Knowledge of pharmacy management (VNT9) is generally good, but a third of students are unaware of current veterinary medicines legislation. Questions on the legal categories of medicines are generally well answered, though. Pharmacology of commonly-used classes of veterinary drugs is generally poor: 40% indicated that spasmolytics inhibit gastric acid secretions, while 52% believed that they cause uterine contraction.

Surgical nursing (VNT8) is another area where knowledge is good, except for theatre conduct. Two-thirds of students had no awareness of methods of passing surgical instruments to the veterinary surgeon and a third were not familiar with the properties of different suture materials.

Anaesthesia

The monitoring of anaesthesia (VNT11) is an activity that nurses carry out regularly. It is therefore concerning that only 44% of students knew the maximum percentage of Nitrous Oxide that can be safely administered during gaseous anaesthesia for a patient. Even more worrying, is that 54% of students monitoring an anaesthetic would turn the oxygen off prior to disconnecting the patient from the anaesthetic machine.

The purpose of soda lime is also poorly understood: 42% thought that it absorbs waste anaesthetic gases, while 59% indicated that sodium bicarbonate absorbs carbon dioxide in a re-breathing anaesthetic system. Perhaps it would be a good idea to avoid their cooking, just in case they use calcium hydroxide when baking...

Avoid the bounce-backs

Hints to improve candidate exam entry process

Looking at a popular veterinary nursing blog recently, we were concerned to see that candidates were complaining that they had not received details of their written examinations. Sometimes, people's expectations are not right: one post was submitted on 19 May, even though their examination email was not due until 8 June. Details of the various key dates related to the examinations are published with the notes accompanying the examination entry form. Dates can also be found published within editions of *VN Standard*.

Email inaccuracies

One explanation for some of the delays may be inaccurate email addresses. Over 100 incorrect email addresses were submitted for candidates sitting the July theory examinations. It is likely that the students provided the correct address to their course provider, but these were supplied to us with inaccuracies. Students become very anxious when they do not receive an email from exam-hosters Pearson VUE, and there is added stress if they can see that the exam centres are filling up and they are unable to book. When the email address is incorrect, we have to create a new authorisation for each candidate and transfer this to Pearson VUE, which can take several hours. Students will not receive a further email so have to phone Pearson VUE to book their appointment. The anxiety and stress this causes is unacceptable when the email address is so easy to check.

“Over 100 incorrect email addresses were submitted for candidates sitting the July theory exams.”

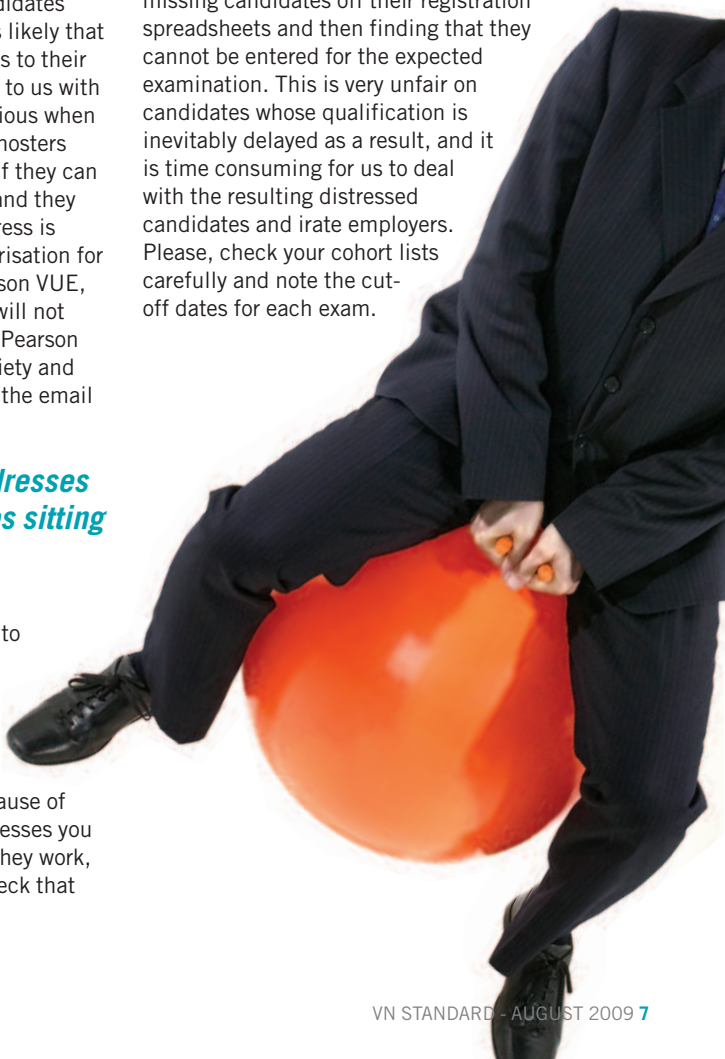
In future, course providers will be asked to confirm that they have checked the addresses on the entry declaration. The easiest way to record email addresses is to cut and paste them directly from an email message. We receive a large number of rejected email addresses because of typing errors: please check that the addresses you send to us have been checked and that they work, by sending your candidates emails to check that the address does not bounce.

Common errors include:

- ‘Goggle’ instead of ‘google’
- A hyphen rather than an underscore (or vice versa)
- Numbers being transcribed as letters
- .com rather than .co.uk

VRQ registration

It is also important for centres to ensure that all candidates are registered for the relevant Certificate in Veterinary Nursing Theory (VRQ) award at least four months before you apply to enter them for examination. Some centres are still missing candidates off their registration spreadsheets and then finding that they cannot be entered for the expected examination. This is very unfair on candidates whose qualification is inevitably delayed as a result, and it is time consuming for us to deal with the resulting distressed candidates and irate employers. Please, check your cohort lists carefully and note the cut-off dates for each exam.



Practicals taken by storm

June practical examination feedback

This time last year, 314 students entered the practical examination. This year, the same period saw at least 525 students sitting. The unexpected increase, of nearly 70%, took us by surprise and it's unclear why it happened. Four examination centres were advertised and a fifth centre (Harper Adams University College) was prepared as a reserve in case of an increase. This provided spaces for 340 candidates, but with 370 candidates applying to sit, we had some big challenges: firstly, to find another available centre; secondly, to find nine additional suitably-experienced examiners; and, thirdly, to move candidates from their original choice of centre to one that had not been advertised. And all this had to be done within two weeks of the closing date for entries!

Against the odds, we were able to achieve this but, sadly, it meant that some candidates had to travel to centres some distance from their homes. The majority of students were understanding and accepted the situation. A small minority was less than happy and, where possible, these people were moved, if places became available at other centres. We would like to thank the examiners who agreed to work at short notice, and the staff at Writtle College, who worked hard to ensure that the centre was suitable for use.

There will be four examination centres in September: Myerscough College, Bridgwater College, Sparsholt College and Nottingham Trent University College. Entries close on 14 August.

Do not adjust yourself

Defining 'reasonable adjustment'

Do you think you or one of your students will be disadvantaged in the practical examinations because of a difficulty which you overcome in practice? If so, please inform us by making a reasonable adjustment request.

"If the application is sound, candidates will be permitted to bring their own equipment to the examination to ensure that they are not disadvantaged."

'Reasonable adjustment' is not just about people needing adjustments due to a disability. Students should also inform us if they feel that they will be disadvantaged due to problems using the equipment supplied by us, for example, having an allergy to latex gloves or to the hand hygiene gel. Some shorter students may also feel that the surgical gowns supplied in the examinations are too long for them to put on aseptically. In all cases, the student must submit a reasonable adjustment

request no later than the examination application closing date.

Students must identify what reasonable adjustment they require to perform the tasks within their practice. If the application is sound, candidates will be permitted to bring their own equipment to the examination to ensure that they are not disadvantaged.



Up to the task?

OSCE task-bank grows

We are preparing for an expansion in the task bank, and during May and June, 17 examiners met to write new OSCE tasks. The first two events focused on developing small animal tasks, and the final group looked at revisions required for the equine tasks and discussed ideas for new tasks.

In addition, we are delighted that the PEPAS examiner training events delivered to European examiners are starting to bear fruit (see page 2). At the June mid-term conference, 40 new tasks were presented, many of which are suitable for use in the UK.

All of the new tasks will be trialled by students, examiners and qualified veterinary nurses prior to being published. The new tasks include:

- IV medication
- Administration of a chemotherapy drug
- Nursing of patients in isolation
- Nursing a patient with an indwelling urinary catheter
- Providing nutrition through a PEG tube
- Packaging of instruments for sterilisation
- Taking an ear swab to send to an external laboratory.



If you would like to be involved with the testing phase, please contact Victoria Hedges on v.hedges@rcvs.org.uk.

Fall of the legends

More exam tales come under scrutiny

We continue our series that debunks some of the myths and legends that surround the practical exams.

Pass or fail?

Myth: the examiners decide which students pass or fail the examination.

Fact: the pass-mark in each task is set using the Contrasting Group Comparison Scores method of standard setting. Examiners are not aware if a student has passed the examination task or the whole examination. All candidates undertaking an OSCE task are examined independently. The examiners are requested to mark each step as achieved or not achieved. They are also asked to give a subjective opinion of the candidate's performance - ie was the candidate competent or not. All of this information is fed into a computer, which calculates how many steps a candidate needs to achieve in each task to pass the examination. All of this is done after the examination,

so it is impossible for an examiner to know the results of any particular student.

Explanation time

Myth: explaining how to do a practical task will give you extra marks.

Fact: the practical examinations require you to demonstrate common nursing tasks through performance. All the tasks are possible to do, and you are expected to complete them fully. Some candidates do explain to the examiner what they are doing, this is acceptable but only the practical performance will be marked. Do not worry that you are using the consumable equipment provided - there will be plenty of equipment for all candidates and you are expected to use it (the cost is covered in your examination fee).

There will be more myth-busting in the next issue – don't forget to send in any of your favourites...

Meet the Awarding Body team



Juliet Whatley

D32/33/34/35/36
NVQ Management Level 4

What's your role?
External Verifier

What's your background?
I have spent over 18 years working in both large and small animal veterinary practices and undertook

some part-time lecturing at Holme Lacy College in Hereford, before taking a full-time lecturing position at Hartpury College, where I became Head of Centre for Veterinary Nursing. I was also an RCVS examiner for a number of years, examining both small animal and equine students. On leaving Hartpury College, I took a gap year, travelling to Sri Lanka, then Italy, to teach English as a foreign language. In September 2008, I stewarded at the Beijing Paralympic Equestrian Games in Hong

Kong. I train and compete with my own horses in both eventing and dressage, and have bred horses for over 20 years. I am also a keen diver and windsurfer.

What do you do?

My role involves verifying the performance of VNACs in order to ensure the quality and consistency of NVQ training and assessment against national requirements. A key part of the job is providing support to the centres – I work with them to help improve the effectiveness of their veterinary nurse training.

What's been your biggest challenge?

Having travelled extensively and managed to return to England without any problems, my biggest challenge is now finding my way around the London Underground.

Surprise us...

I have a photo of myself in the Captain's chair of the Starship Enterprise!

Consistent approach

New format for IV Standardisation Days

Feedback from a recent Regional Question Time meeting highlighted how important it is for the work of Internal Verifiers (IV) to be consistent – it particularly impacts on practices who take students from more than one centre.

This is a key part of the work of the Awarding Body and we recently ran a successful day IV Standardisation Day at Bridgwater College. The event began with a presentation about the Practice Standards Scheme, from Scheme Inspector Sue Chorlton, who provided an insight into how the Scheme integrates with TP status and what is looked for during an inspection.

The IVs then rotated through three 45-minute workshops including communication with the RCVS department, professional discussion and witness testimonies.

The final part of the day was an open forum, which mainly covered the changes to the VN awards.

Attendance at one of the IV events is compulsory for all IVs and there are two further standardisation events planned in 2009: Hadlow College on 21 July and Newcastle College on 29 October. Places are still available at the Newcastle event, contact vetcnursing@rcvs.org.uk.

Sad news

We were very saddened to hear of the tragic death of veterinary surgeon Liz Crowsley, who was fatally injured by cattle while walking her dogs in the North Yorkshire Dales during June. As Head of the VNAC at Beech House in Warrington, Liz was a familiar face to the VN team and our deepest sympathies go to her family, friends and colleagues.

Rights and responsibilities

Join us at BVNA Congress

Are you planning to visit BVNA Congress in Kettering this year? Please join new VN Council Chairman, Liz Branscombe, who will be making a presentation on Sunday 11 October at 9.15am entitled 'Professional Rights and Responsibilities: The Disciplinary System for RVNs'. She aims to help RVNs understand the impact of the disciplinary mechanism when it is introduced next year.

In addition, the Awarding Body team will be on hand during the Saturday of Congress to discuss training issues, including the review of the VN awards taking place this autumn (see page 3).



Fancy meeting you here!

Join one of our open days

If you have ever wondered what goes on behind the scenes at the RCVS – and where your retention fees go – why not join one of our Meet the RCVS Days?

Small groups of no more than 20 VNs, veterinary surgeons and others involved in the profession meet at the College to hear an overview of our activities from the President, then take a tour of the building, meeting the Heads of Department and hearing what goes on. Lunch is laid on and we even pay for your travel expenses.

One delegate who joined a recent day said: "A very enjoyable day which exceeded my expectations. I think it would be useful for nurses to attend."

For more information, contact Debbie Dowden on d.dowden@rcvs.org.uk or **020 7202 0773**.

Questions in Lincoln

If you can't make a Meet the RCVS Day, but have some burning questions for us, you could attend one of our Regional Question Time meetings. The next one is in Lincoln on 1 October. Contact Debbie (as above) for more information, or visit www.rcvs.org.uk/RQTs for reports from previous events.

VETNNET Conference 2009

The 2009 Conference of VETNNET, the European association for veterinary nurse educators, is now open for booking. It will be held in Zagreb, Croatia, on 1-3 October.

Membership of VETNNET is open to representatives of any colleges and universities offering VN programmes. VNC Chairman Liz Branscombe is going to have a busy week, as before she heads to Kettering for BVNA Congress, she will be talking in Croatia on "Germ warfare at the clinic: the vital role of veterinary nurses in infection control." Other topics to be covered include emerging parasites, teaching laboratory procedures and animal welfare and genetics.

For more information, visit: www.vef.hr/vetnnet2009.



BVNA President Bonnie Millar at a recent Meet the RCVS Day

Who's on VNC?



Liz Branscombe

The following are the VN Council members for 3 July 2009 – 2 July 2010

Elected veterinary nurses

Liz Branscombe (*Chairman*)
 Dot Creighton (*Vice-Chairman*)
 Louise Glysen
 Katherine Kissick
 Andrea Jeffery
 Hilary Orpet
 Jenny Thompson
 Jo Yates

RCVS Council members

Catherine Goldie
 Jacqui Molyneux (*Vice-Chairman*)
 Jill Nute (*RCVS Council Senior Vice-President*)

Appointed veterinary surgeons

Richard Hooker
 Alan Hughes
 Helen Torrington

Lay members

Tony Birbeck
 Penny Swindlehurst

Lantra representative

Chris House

Plus a BVNA Observer

Written examinations (e-assessment)	
Winter 2009	
Award registration deadline	11 May
Closing date for entries	11 September
Appointment booking window	19 October – 13 November
Exam week	16 – 21 November
Results published	7 January 2010
Spring 2010	
Award registration deadline	22 September
Closing date for entries	22 January
Appointment booking window	22 February – 19 March
Exam week	22 – 27 March
Results published	22 April
Summer 2010	
Award registration deadline	7 January
Closing date for entries	7 May
Appointment booking window	7 June – 2 July
Exam week	5 – 17 July
Results published	26 August

Practical examinations	
Winter 2009	
Closing date for entries	6 November
Exam weekend	11 – 13 December
Results published	21 January 2010
Spring 2010	
Closing date for entries	5 February
Exam weekend	19 – 21 March
Results published	29 April
Summer 2010	
Closing date for entries	14 May
Exam weekend	18 – 20 June
Results published	29 July
Autumn 2010	
Closing date for entries	13 August
Exam weekend	17 – 19 September
Results published	21 October

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Who does what...

Libby Earle: *Head of Veterinary Nursing*
 Annette Amato: *Deputy Head of Department, Awarding Body Board Secretary*
 Julie Dugmore: *Quality assurance and EV liaison*
 Vicky Hedges: *Examinations and higher education quality assurance*
 Christine James: *Centre approvals and monitoring, student enrolments, careers advice*
 Jenny Orme: *Award certificates, registration for newly-qualified nurses*
 Ben Myring: *Examinations*



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