



## NPL pilot passes with flying colours



*Both trainers and students  
say it is easier and simpler  
than the portfolio.*

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**In this issue:** admissions ceremonies, European exchange, PEPAS update, what can an SVN do?, meet the team, enrolments, NPL, exam myths and feedback, events and diary dates.

# Broadening your horizons

Travel broadens the mind – and your knowledge of VN training

**UK veterinary nurse training is the best! Sounds great doesn't it, but how do you know? How much do you really know about veterinary nursing elsewhere and have you ever considered finding out?**

The RCVS has close links with Vetnet, the organisation for VN educators in Europe, and we know that veterinary nursing is a dynamic occupation with lots of interesting development going on across the EU. Your centre, and students, can be a part of this by applying for a Leonardo da Vinci mobility grant. The Leonardo foundation has funds available to enable further education students, and staff, to visit other EU countries and gain work experience in a European practice (or college, in the case of staff).

***“Student veterinary nurse exchanges should always be arranged through an RCVS-approved centre (either a college or university).”***

While European colleges use these funds to widen the experience of their students, colleges (and employers) in the UK are very slow to take advantage, with the result that funds are readily available and a bid would almost certainly be successful. The funding covers organisational costs (such as a preparatory visit), cultural and language preparation, travel and subsistence. A placement overseen by an ACOVENE-accredited school of veterinary nursing could count towards RCVS training time.

Interested? More information can be found at [www.leonardo.org.uk](http://www.leonardo.org.uk) under 'Mobility Projects'. Please also contact the VN Department if you are arranging an EU placement for student VNs.

## **Hosting overseas visiting nurses**

You might also be interested in hosting exchange students, or veterinary nurses, from overseas at your college or practice. Such exchanges are a good way of gaining insights into different ways of

working and sharing good practice, and could be the basis of some excellent CPD. However, there are some legal considerations to address when offering work experience to a non-UK student or VN.

The Veterinary Surgeons Act allows dispensation to both Listed nurses and students to undertake delegated medical treatments and minor surgical procedures. In the case of students, they must be enrolled with the RCVS and working towards a recognised veterinary nursing qualification. In order to allow visiting nurses to take a full part in veterinary nursing work, they must comply with the provisions of Schedule 3.

In the case of qualified veterinary nurses, they should contact the RCVS Registration Department for advice ([registration@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:registration@rcvs.org.uk) or 020 7202 0739). Provided that their overseas qualification is recognised, veterinary nurses from the EU may temporarily register for a short period in order to cover activity such as an exchange visit.

Student veterinary nurse exchanges should always be arranged through an RCVS-approved centre (either a college or university). They can then be enrolled with the RCVS as temporary student veterinary nurses for the duration of their visit.

If you plan to organise an exchange, be aware that other countries also have legislation covering veterinary (and veterinary nursing) practice, which will govern what you may, or may not, be allowed to do in your host practice.



# New exams, new arrangements

## Examination arrangements for the Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing

**The Veterinary Nursing Examinations Sub-Committee met in August to approve the arrangements for the theory and OSCE examinations that will be undertaken by students on the new Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing. The details are provided below.**

### Theory (MCQ) examination

There will be three theory examination papers, which can be taken at any point in training. Papers can be taken individually over several examination windows, or all in one examination window. There will be a discount for students sitting all three papers in the same window (not necessarily the same day). The examination windows will be extended to two weeks each, and the first papers will be available to sit at Pearson Vue test centres from July 2011. The content and length of the papers will be as follows:

Paper number	Paper title	Number of questions	Time allowed (minutes)
Paper 1	Essentials of veterinary nursing (VN1, VN5, VN6)	90	90
Paper 2	Animal health, husbandry, form and function (VN3, VN4)	135	135
Paper 3	Technical support of veterinary practice (VN8, VN9, VN10, VN11, VN12)	135	135

\* Paper 3 will be taken by students who completed NVQ Level 2 and transferred onto the Level 3 diploma.

Unit assessments will be available for those students who have enrolled on discrete units or those who have withdrawn from the qualification and wish to be credited with individual units. Units of five credits will have 30 questions (30 minutes), 10 credits will have 45 questions (45 minutes) and 20 credits will have 75 questions (75 minutes).

The examination papers will consist of generic, equine and small animal questions. The pass mark will be 65% and it is also expected that students will have to achieve a minimum score in each unit of the syllabus covered by the paper. A minimum score in relation to species-specific questions is also expected, ie it will not be possible to pass by answering only small animal or equine questions.

***“There will be a discount for students sitting all three papers in the same window.”***

### Practical examinations (OSCE)

The OSCEs will consist of 12 stations, each one six minutes long, and students will be required to pass eight. In order to facilitate the increase in OSCE stations, a number of new stations will be developed and added to the published bank over the next few months.

The administration of the test will be along the same lines as with the current examination, except that students will no longer have the station scenario read out to them. Instead, they will be given time to read it before entering the station. A copy of the scenario will also be provided for reference alongside the station. Arrangements will be made for students who require these instructions to be read to them by way of a ‘reasonable adjustment’ to the exam protocol. Other changes in the administration will be detailed in the guidance notes accompanying the entry form.

Students will be able to undertake OSCEs for either the equine or small animal route (or both). The examinations will contain a mix of generic and species-specific stations.

Students will be eligible for these examinations once they have completed the Nursing Progress Log (see page 9) and other pathway assessments.

Students registered for NVQ Levels 2 and 3 will be able to continue the relevant theory examinations and OSCEs until the award end (for Level 2 this is 31 July 2012, and for Level 3, 31 July 2013).

The 2011 exam dates are detailed on the back page.

# Legally speaking

## How much can student veterinary nurses do?

**N**ew students will shortly be enrolling onto the new Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing and for university courses, so it's a good time for us to provide some clarification as to what they (and others) can, and cannot, do in clinical practice. As July's Panorama programme demonstrated, there remains some uncertainty in this area at practice level, and that needs to be clarified.

### What the Veterinary Surgeons Act says

The Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 defines veterinary surgery<sup>1</sup> and sets out the circumstances in which non-veterinary surgeons may legally carry out veterinary treatments on animals. Dispensations specified for the owners of animals (or their employees/members of their household), veterinary nurses and student veterinary nurses are set out in Schedule 3 of the Act. Similar provisions exist within the Act for veterinary students.

The provisions of the Act are clear: the law distinguishes between what owners, or their employees/members of their household, can do (minor medical treatments) and what a veterinary surgeon may delegate to Listed<sup>2</sup> veterinary nurses and (supervised) enrolled student veterinary nurses (any medical treatments and minor surgical procedures). The law makes this distinction in order that owners can legally administer simple treatments (such as giving tablets).

### What is a medical treatment or minor surgical procedure?

We quite often get asked to provide a definitive list of procedures that can legally be delegated under Schedule 3. The medical treatment or minor surgery allowed by Schedule 3 includes anything that requires a veterinary diagnosis and intervention. It would be almost impossible to list all procedures allowed, because the delegation of veterinary procedures, even minor medical procedures, will involve consideration of all the circumstances, not just the procedure itself. However, broad guidance on what is allowed is available (see Section 4 of the *List/Register of Veterinary Nurses 2010*, or [www.rcvs.org.uk](http://www.rcvs.org.uk)) and advice can be sought from the RCVS.

### Who is a student veterinary nurse?

Listed veterinary nurses and enrolled student

veterinary nurses are very clearly identifiable groups of people within the meaning of the Act, just as are veterinary students. No other person, no matter what their job title in practice may be, has a legal dispensation to undertake delegated medical treatments or minor surgical procedures, regardless of how well trained or experienced they are considered to be. The RCVS advises that job titles for practice staff should be clear, and should not potentially confuse either clients or veterinary surgeons wishing to delegate treatments. In a busy practice a new, or locum, veterinary surgeon may not know the status of every member of staff and it is consequently important that designations are clear. The *RCVS Guide to Professional Conduct*<sup>3</sup> addresses this issue.

### What can a student veterinary nurse do?

Student veterinary nurses are included in the legislation because they need to learn, and become competent in, clinical skills. The Act recognises this and therefore stipulates that they must work under the supervision of a veterinary surgeon or Listed veterinary nurse. Once again, the *RCVS Guide to Professional Conduct* states what is meant by 'supervision'<sup>4</sup>. Provided that they are properly supervised, student veterinary nurses can, in the course of their training, do anything that may be delegated to a Listed veterinary nurse, ie they may undertake delegated treatments in order to learn.

### What can unqualified practice staff do?

As there is no specific legal dispensation for a veterinary surgeon to delegate to a lay person employed by a veterinary practice, any such delegation may need to be justified and is a matter of professional judgement in any individual case following risk assessment. The RCVS recognises that in certain circumstances it may not be in the public interest to take regulatory action where the delegation to a lay member of practice staff is reasonable in all the circumstances, does not put the animal at risk and does not amount to more than minor medical treatment of the sort which an owner could undertake. The RCVS has indicated that, out of hours (for example, when the on-duty nurse is alone in the practice at night), any nurse may be directed by a veterinary surgeon to

administer uncomplicated oral medications or subcutaneous injections. Intramuscular or intravenous injections, invasive procedures such as the introduction of an IV catheter or the passage of a urinary catheter, are all examples of medical procedures that should not be delegated to a lay person.

### What can be delegated?

As mentioned earlier, the Act does not provide a list of minor surgery and medical treatment that can be delegated. This is because it would be impossible to say with any certainty that a given procedure would, in every event, be safe to delegate. Whilst Schedule 3 does not provide a definitive list of permitted delegations, three key factors ought to be considered:

- The nature of the procedure (or treatment), ie its level of complexity
- The individual animal concerned, ie species, condition, likelihood of complications, owner's wishes

- The qualifications of the person being delegated to, ie Listed or enrolled student veterinary nurse (or in the case of a minor treatment, a lay person), specific training, experience, confidence, willingness to accept delegation and the availability of someone more qualified to step in if needed

Should a delegation decision become the subject of litigation, or a professional conduct complaint, a court (or an RCVS investigation) would consider the 'reasonableness' of the veterinary surgeon's actions. A clearly reasoned decision, taken having followed a logical and well-documented process, should therefore be behind every delegation of a veterinary treatment or procedure to a non-veterinary surgeon.

<sup>1</sup> Veterinary Surgeons Act (1966) 27(1) definition of veterinary surgery ([www.rcvs.org.uk](http://www.rcvs.org.uk))

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this article, 'Listed' refers to both Listed and Registered veterinary nurses

<sup>3</sup> RCVS Guide to Professional Conduct 2010 2D(4)

<sup>4</sup> Ibid 2F(5)

## Extracts from Schedule 3 to the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 Treatments and operations that may be given or carried out by unqualified persons

*Section 19(4)(b) of the Act allows a person who is not a veterinary surgeon to do "anything specified in Part 1 of Schedule 3 to this Act and not excluded by Part II of that Schedule".*

### Extract from Part I of the Schedule

1. Any minor medical treatment given to an animal by its owner, or by another member of the household of which the owner is a member, or by a person in the employment of the owner.
6. Any medical treatment or any minor surgery (not involving entry into a body cavity) to any animal by a veterinary nurse if the following conditions are complied with, that is to say:
  - (a) the animal is, for the time being, under the care of a registered veterinary surgeon or veterinary practitioner and the medical treatment or minor surgery is carried out by the veterinary nurse at his direction;
  - (b) the registered veterinary surgeon or veterinary practitioner is the

employer or is acting on behalf of the employer of the veterinary nurse; and

- (c) the registered veterinary surgeon or veterinary practitioner directing the medical treatment or minor surgery is satisfied that the veterinary nurse is qualified to carry out the treatment or surgery.

In this paragraph and in paragraph 7 below:

'veterinary nurse' means a nurse whose name is entered in the list of veterinary nurses maintained by the College.

7. Any medical treatment or any minor surgery (not involving entry into a body cavity) to any animal by a student veterinary nurse if the following conditions are complied with, that is to say:

- (a) the animal is, for the time being, under the care of a registered veterinary surgeon or veterinary practitioner and the medical treatment or minor surgery is carried out by the student veterinary nurse at his direction

and in the course of the student veterinary nurse's training;

- (b) the treatment or surgery is supervised by a registered veterinary surgeon, veterinary practitioner or veterinary nurse and, in the case of surgery, the supervision is direct, continuous and personal; and,

- (c) the registered veterinary surgeon or veterinary practitioner is the employer or is acting on behalf of the employer of the student veterinary nurse.

In this paragraph:

'student veterinary nurse' means a person enrolled under bye-laws made by the Council for the purpose of undergoing training as a veterinary nurse at an approved training and assessment centre or a veterinary practice approved by such a centre;

'approved training and assessment centre' means a centre approved by the Council for the purpose of training and assessing student veterinary nurses.



# Fjording ahead

## Final PEPAS conference in Oslo

**T**he final conference of the Pan-European Practical Assessment System project (PEPAS) will be held in Oslo in September. All those involved with veterinary nurse training are invited to experience the results of the project and see how this might benefit practical assessment in UK veterinary nursing schools.

Once again, RCVS staff will deliver presentations summarising the results of the project and detailing how this project will be sustained beyond the pilot. It is expected that PEPAS will become part of Vetnnet and that European schools and colleges will be able to gain access to the OSCEs developed as part of the project via membership. This will be of benefit to the UK veterinary nursing schools, especially those delivering degree programmes. Membership will include:

- Access to 100 tried and tested OSCE stations, mark-sheets and examiner notes



- Integration with other European veterinary nursing schools
- Access to OSCE examiner training and CPD events

If you would like to attend the final conference in Oslo on 3 September, please contact Vicky Hedges on 020 7202 0782 or [v.hedges@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:v.hedges@rcvs.org.uk). Further information is also available at [www.pepas.net](http://www.pepas.net).

# Celebrating success

## Admissions ceremony dates

**A**re you recently qualified? Do you have a recently qualified VN in the practice? Come and celebrate your success with us.

New qualifiers will have been sent information about the next registration ceremony dates, which are 4 October and 16 December 2010, here at Belgravia House in London. It's a great chance to celebrate success after those hard years of hard slog. Newly registered veterinary nurses are welcomed to the College by the RCVS President and Chairman of the Veterinary Nurses Council. The formal proceedings are followed by a drinks reception and each veterinary nurse is able to bring up to two guests.

If you can't make a ceremony or don't wish to trek to London, don't forget that you still need to register. This is a legal requirement to enable you to carry out tasks under Schedule 3 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act (see page 6). Recently qualified VNs are given a three-month grace period from the date of completing the last part of their qualification, during which they remain on our database as student veterinary nurses.

After this time, their student status lapses and they must register in order to carry out Schedule 3 tasks legally. Registration can be done by post.

If you would like to attend an admissions ceremony but can't do so within the first three months of qualifying, you can still register by post to ensure you are practising legally, and reserve a place at a later event.

For more information, contact [vetnursing@rcvs.org.uk](mailto:vetnursing@rcvs.org.uk).



# VN trainers going Dutch

Conference brings a European perspective on VN training

**If you have an interest in veterinary nurse training, it's not too late to sign up for the the annual Vetnet Conference, which offers the opportunity to network with, and learn from, colleagues across Europe.**

Vetnet is a European network for veterinary nurse training and the conference brings together colleges and veterinary and veterinary nursing associations with an active interest in the field.

Organised under the theme 'Veterinary nursing on the move', the 2010 event will take place from

30 September to 2 October at Groenhorst College, Barneveld, in the Netherlands.

The RCVS Awarding Body team will be there, with Quality Assurance Manager Julie Dugmore and External Verifier Juliet Whatley holding practical sessions on experiencing OSCEs, plus managing clinical training in the workplace.

For more information, visit [www.vetnetconference2010.nl](http://www.vetnetconference2010.nl).

## Qualification queries?

Join us at BVNA Congress

If you still have questions about the new qualification, join us at the British Veterinary Nursing Association Congress on 8-10 October in Kettering, where the VN team will be on hand to help. Plus, at 3.45-4.30 on the Saturday, Awarding Body Board Chairman Jacqui Molyneux (pictured) will deliver a presentation about the new award. We hope to see you there!



## Meet the team

### Amy Woods



#### What's your role?

VN Careers and Admissions Officer

#### What's your background?

After graduating with a Biology degree from the University of York in 2006, I spent a year working for the Students' Union running events and elections.

After living in Calcutta for five months doing a variety of charity projects and teaching everything from art to algebra, I packed my bags and moved to London. Following a variety of temping roles in administration, I found my role at the RCVS.

#### What do you do?

As Careers and Admissions Officer, I deal with a large number of careers enquiries from people who

want to take their passion for animals further and become veterinary nurses. I process the enrolment forms of all new students and liaise with centres and students about re-enrolments, enrolment extensions and the transfer of current students to different Training Practices.

I also deal with publication order requests that come into the Veterinary Nursing Department, and keep students' details up to date.

#### What's been your biggest challenge?

Preparing all our new forms, processes and updating general information for the new Level 3 Diploma coming into place this summer has been keeping me very busy, but has given us a great opportunity to update and streamline our forms and processes.

#### Surprise us....

I once had my shoes stolen by monkeys!

# Enrolments and transfers

## Enrolment arrangements for the new qualification

**Enrolments for the new Level 3 Diploma commenced on 1 August and colleges starting their 2010/11 programmes are now registering this year's new students with the RCVS. The new programme brings some key changes to the enrolment process, which are important for Training Practices.**

Under the old system, practices used to initiate enrolments onto the Level 2 NVQ because this could be started separately from the Certificate in Veterinary Nursing Theory (the college course). Now that there's just one qualification, colleges (centres) will be enrolling students at the beginning of their college programme or, in some cases, when students have confirmed their acceptance of a place.

Students will still need to fill in a (simpler) enrolment form and provide evidence of their identity and entry qualifications. Their college will collate these details onto a spreadsheet and forward them electronically to us, along with payment for the enrolment fees. Colleges will therefore send in periodic batches of enrolments, rather than individual applications throughout the year.

Students who are unfunded will still have to pay enrolment fees, however, these should be paid to their college, who will make one overall payment to the RCVS on their behalf. This should, in many cases, simplify things, as only one payment, covering both enrolment and course costs, needs to be made.

The new system is an extension of the successful electronic exam and VRQ registration protocols that

are already established, and will reduce the time we take to enrol new students. However, delays will still occur if students do not complete their initial application forms correctly or omit to include the requisite certificates. Colleges will not be in a position to enrol students with us if this information is missing, so please ask potential VN students for this year's courses to make sure their documents are to hand now!

***“Delays will still occur if students do not complete their initial application forms correctly.”***

Colleges will also apply electronically to transfer current Level 2 NVQ certificate holders to the transition pathway of the new Diploma. For information concerning who is eligible to transfer, please see *VN Standard Extra* (May 2010), where this is covered in detail. If you have any queries, please contact your centre for advice



## Black and white but not read all over....

### Please read the exam guidance notes

**An increasing number of students say that they have not read the examination guidance notes, which is a cause for concern. Some of the increasing number of students calling the VN Department with queries say that they were just given the form to complete by their college, and not the guidance notes.**

Several students recently missed the opportunity to book their appointment because they left it until after the booking window had closed. It is important that all students read the examination

entry guidance notes and keep a copy to refer to if needed; these notes contain important information, such as the content of papers, dates of results and the details of the relevant booking and examination windows.

Colleges must provide a copy of the exam guidance notes to every student entering an exam; they can also be found on RCVSonline. When students sign the application form, they are confirming that they have read the guidance notes.



# Logging on...

## Feedback on the new Nursing Progress Log

**T**he new RCVS Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing incorporates an electronic logging system to record practice-based tuition, experience and competence.

Known as the Nursing Progress Log (NPL), the system is founded on a series of 'day one' clinical skills that are expected of all qualified nurses when they join the RCVS Register. These skills have been identified by the RCVS Awards Working Party and are based on the assessment criteria within the Diploma units and the National Occupational Standards for veterinary nurses.

The NPL is a key element of the new qualification, so it has been important to test it thoroughly to ensure that not only the skills and guidance are relevant, but that it is user-friendly and accessible.

We piloted the NPL across five centres in June:

- Harper Adams University, Shropshire
- The Open College of Equine Studies, Suffolk
- Greenmount College, Co Antrim
- Edinburgh's Telford College, Midlothian
- University of Bristol, Somerset

The pilot included both small animal and equine students from further and higher education programmes. The pilot students were all at differing stages of training to ensure that a broad range of skills across all units of the NPL would be tested. The pilot ran for a total of six weeks, during which time evaluation meetings and interviews with centre staff, clinical coaches and students took place.

Feedback has been very positive. Both trainers and students said how much easier and simpler than

the portfolio the NPL is to navigate and complete. One student said she is now more aware of what practical skills she is required to perform and feels that the demonstration phase of the NPL has enabled her to gain better training and supervision from her clinical coach.

Throughout the pilot, we gathered feedback on the skills and guidance, along with the functionality of the programme software. Although there were a few glitches for some students initially, once our technology partners Skillwise were alerted, they were able to resolve the individual problems quickly and easily. From the feedback received, we have also made some minor amendments to a small number of skills: placing and managing naso-gastric or oesophageal tubes has now been split into two skills 'Place or assist with placement of naso-gastric or oesophageal tubes' and 'Manage naso-gastric or oesophageal tubes', and the core requirement for all nurses to apply and safely handle a nose twitch and fit a Chifney bit has been removed.

We also received some useful suggestions about the programme software, which will make completing the NPL even more user-friendly. Students will now be able to log multiple skill experiences and link them to one case reference and reflective comment, and we have also improved navigation within the units.

We will continue to make improvements to the tool and are already planning some additional refinements to be introduced during the autumn.

***“Both trainers and students said how much easier and simpler than the portfolio the NPL is to navigate and complete.”***



# Practical tips

## Taking your practical? Avoid these pitfalls

**T**he June 2010 OSCEs not only saw the highest ever number of entrants but also one of the highest pass rates. There were 370 small animal candidates and 11 equine, with pass rates of 71% and 82% respectively. Congratulations to all those who passed, especially the 44 candidates (12%) who passed all 8 OSCE stations.

For those who are preparing for their examination, the following feedback might be of use. Of those students undertaking station ST07, 51% failed to label correctly the autoclave bag with the name of the instrument, many writing 'scissors' rather than the type of scissors. It is a requirement for students to demonstrate their knowledge of instrument recognition, so those who did not provide the full name of the instrument did not achieve the mark. We also noted that a large number of students could not spell 'scissors', although this did not affect their mark!

### Calculations

There was a general improvement in calculations; however, 83% failed to calculate the correct dose of buprenorphine to be administered (station SP03). Three candidates were unable to even attempt the calculation. Many students also failed to shake the contents of the vial before drawing up the medication.

Station SA05 was used for the first time during this examination. There is a requirement in this station to check the breathing system for leaks: 44% of students did not achieve this step. This is a vital check when setting up for an anaesthetic and this criterion is now included in other anaesthesia stations. There were two other new skills tested in this OSCE: selecting and preparing an endotracheal tube (which was performed well by the majority) and the setting of an oxygen flowmeter. Sadly, 30% of students were unable to achieve this. Students should be aware that the fresh gas flow reading is taken from the top of the bobbin or the equator of the ball.

### Urine analysis

The urine analysis station, SL03, requires students to perform tests using both a refractometer and a urine test stick. Many students only recorded the specific gravity (SG) for the refractometer reading and not for the test stick. Students are given a pre-printed sheet on which to record the results, with space for both readings.

The pass rates for individual OSCE stations are shown in the table below.



Station description	Station code	Pass rate (%)
Application of bandage	SB06	79
Anaesthesia	SA05	62
Anaesthesia	EA04	82
Fluid therapy	SF00/EF00	73
Lab	SL02/EL02	55
Lab	SL03/EL03	40
Administration of medication	SP03	64
Administration of medication	EP02	91
Radiography	SR04	52
Radiography	ER04	73
Theatre practice	ST01/ET01	89
Theatre practice	ST07/ET08	82

# Putting you in the picture

## Hints on collimation and question types

**W**e continue our series that debunks some of the myths that surround the practical exams.

**Myth:** when undertaking a radiography OSCE, students should always collimate to the edges of the cassette.

*“Many students position the patient on the plate first without giving consideration to the position of the x-ray machine or the cassette.”*

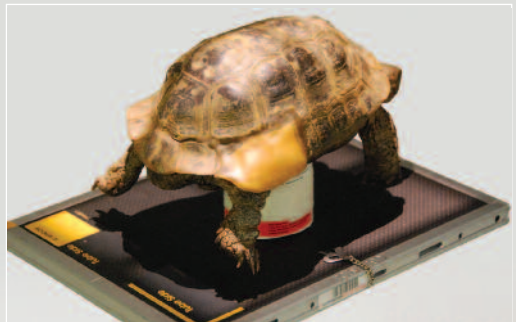
**Fact:** it is best practice to collimate to include the area of interest. Collimation should not extend far beyond this. The skin edges are usually the boundary limit. Examiners report that many students position the patient on the plate first without giving consideration to the position of the x-ray machine or the cassette. This often results in students being unable to collimate adequately. Students have less difficulty if they place the cassette on the table and use the light beam to ensure that it is centred under the x-ray tube head. The patient can then be positioned with the area being radiographed placed in the centre of the cassette. The collimation can then be adjusted.

**Myth:** the Level 2 paper 1 VRQ theory examination only contains anatomy and physiology questions.

**Fact:** the Level 2 paper 1 theory examination is titled ‘Understanding and Maintaining Animal Health’. It is referenced to units VNT3 and VNT4 of the professional syllabus. There are approximately 45 questions relating to each unit. The misconception that it only contains questions about anatomy and physiology probably arises because the Level 2 paper 1 previously related to anatomy and physiology only,

but this was altered when the 2006 Veterinary Nursing Professional Syllabus was launched. Unfortunately, this myth has resulted in a small number of candidates reporting to Pearson Vue staff that they are sitting the wrong exam. Some have even left the examination without completing it, convinced that the RCVS has made an error. There have also been a couple of unsuccessful appeal attempts based on this misunderstanding. Information relating to the content of the exam is contained in the guidance accompanying the examination application form. Students enrolled on the Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing can see the theory examination structure on page 3.

There will be more myth-busting in the next issue – why not send us your favourites?



## Who's on VNC?



Liz Branscombe

The following are the VN Council members for 2 July 2010 to 1 July 2011.

### Elected veterinary nurses

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

### RCVS Council members

Jerry Davies  
Jacqui Molyneux (*Vice-Chairman*)  
Jill Nute

### Appointed veterinary surgeons

Richard Hooker  
Alan Hughes

### Lay members

Tony Birbeck  
Penny Swindlehurst

### Lantra representative

Chris House

Plus BVNA and BSAVA  
non-voting observers

Theory examinations (e-assessment)		Practical examinations	
<b>Winter 2010</b>		<b>Autumn 2010</b>	
Closing date for entries	10 September	Closing date for entries	13 August
Appointment booking window	18 October – 12 November	Exam weekend	17 – 19 September
Exam week	15 – 20 November	Results published	21 October
Results published	6 January 2011	<b>Winter 2010</b>	
<b>Spring 2011</b>		Closing date for entries	5 November
Closing date for entries	28 January	Exam weekend	10 – 12 December
Appointment booking window	21 February – 18 March	Results published	20 January 2011
Exam week	21 – 26 March	<b>Spring 2011</b>	
Results published	21 April	Closing date for entries	4 February
<b>Summer 2011</b>		Exam weekend	11 – 13 March
Closing date for entries	6 May	Results published	14 April
Appointment booking window	6 June – 1 July	<b>Summer 2011</b>	
Exam weeks	4 – 16 July	Closing date for entries	13 May
Results published	25 August	Exam weekend	17 – 19 June
<b>Winter 2011</b>		Results published	21 July
Closing date for entries	16 September	<b>Autumn 2011</b>	
Appointment booking window	17 October – 11 November	Closing date for entries	12 August
Exam weeks	14 – 25 November	Exam weekend	16 – 18 September
Results published	TBC	Results published	20 October

### Who does what...

Libby Earle: *Head of Veterinary Nursing*  
Annette Amato: *Deputy Head of Department, Awarding Body Board Secretary, Secretary to VN Council*  
Julie Dugmore: *Quality assurance and EV liaison*  
Vicky Hedges: *Examinations and higher education quality assurance*  
Christine James: *Centre approvals and monitoring*

Amy Woods: *Student enrolments, careers advice*  
Jenny Orme: *Award certificates, registration for newly-qualified nurses*  
Ben Myring: *Examinations*

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