

VN Education

THE RCVS VETERINARY NURSE TRAINING NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2026

Artificial intelligence in health and care professional education

Inter-Regulatory Group releases joint statement



Prompt :

Artificial intelligence in health and care professional education

Regulators release joint statement



On 11 February 2026, we, along with members of the Inter-regulatory Group (IRG) including the General Chiropractic Council (GCC), General Optical Council (GOC), General Osteopathic Council (GOsC), General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) and the Health Care and Professions Council (HCPC), jointly published a statement setting out shared principles on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in health and care professional education. The statement, developed collaboratively over several months, reflects a collective commitment by regulators to provide clarity, consistency and assurance in a rapidly evolving educational landscape.

As regulators, we set the knowledge, skills, understanding and professional behaviours required of health and care professionals. Education providers must meet our education and training standards, and professionals must meet our professional standards. The emergence and rapid development of AI – particularly generative AI – has significantly altered how learners access information, develop understanding and complete assessments. It is therefore essential that regulatory expectations are clear.

Why?

AI technologies are already being used by learners in a variety of ways to support their education. When used appropriately, AI can enhance learning, improve efficiency, support personalised study, and enable increasingly realistic simulations. These innovations offer genuine opportunities to strengthen educational delivery and better prepare learners for contemporary practice.

However, AI also presents risks. These include overreliance on automated outputs, potential erosion of core knowledge and critical thinking skills, and exposure to biased, inaccurate or misleading information. In professional education, such risks have direct implications for public protection and patient safety.

‘When used appropriately, AI can enhance learning, improve efficiency, support personalised study, and enable increasingly realistic simulations.’

Regulators therefore have a responsibility to ensure that standards are upheld and that the integrity of approved programmes is maintained.

The purpose of the IRG joint statement is to provide clarity about regulators’ collective position. Education providers have sought reassurance that appropriate use of AI will not negatively affect course accreditation. Remaining silent would create uncertainty and inconsistency. By articulating shared principles, the IRG reduces regulatory overlap and offers a coherent framework for institutions delivering programmes approved by multiple regulators.

Statement overview

The statement is directed primarily at quality assurance and professional leads within education providers. It also provides reassurance to the public, demonstrating that regulators are actively addressing the opportunities and risks associated with AI in professional education.

It sets out four core principles:

- Accountability
- Academic integrity
- Development of AI literacy for staff and learners
- Preparation for practice

The IRG joint statement does not replace existing guidance from organisations such as

the Office for Students or the Quality Assurance Agency. Rather, it complements existing frameworks by clarifying regulator expectations in the specific context of health and care professional education.

The publication of this statement demonstrates proactive, collaborative regulation in action. It recognises innovation while safeguarding standards and public protection. The IRG will continue to engage with education providers to understand how these principles are being embedded in programme design and delivery.

The statement – which includes further detail on each of the four core principles – is available to view on the [RCVS website](#).

Introducing our ‘Veterinary clinical skills model making and innovation workshop’

Register your interest

The RCVS Veterinary Nursing Department is exploring the possibility of running a one-off ‘Veterinary clinical skills model making and innovation workshop’ and would like to gauge interest from colleagues involved in veterinary nursing education and clinical skills teaching.

Clinical skills models are an invaluable part of veterinary nurse education, helping students develop confidence and competence in a simulated learning environment. Many education providers develop their own innovative models and teaching approaches, yet opportunities to share ideas and practical solutions are limited.

This proposed event would provide a collaborative and practical forum for educators to come together to:

- Participate in a guided model making workshop, where each participant will create one model to take away.

- Share ideas through an informal ‘show and tell’ session, presenting models they have developed.
- Take part in a facilitated discussion exploring common challenges in clinical skills model design and implementation.

We are currently gathering feedback to help shape the event, including interest in attending, potential contributions to the ‘show and tell’ session, and topics participants would like to discuss.

If this sounds like something you would be interested in attending, please take a few minutes to complete the [short online form](#) to register your interest.

Your feedback will help determine whether the event goes ahead and ensure that it meets the needs of the veterinary clinical skills education community.

Get involved in new research on mental health in VN curricula

VN educators wanted



Dr Faye Didymus



Dr Jackie Hargreaves

Our RCVS Mind Matters Impact Grant recipients for 2025 have launched the VET-MIND project, which has ambitious aims to design, deliver, and evaluate the impact of mentally healthy curricula for veterinary nurse tutors and students. Specifically, VET-MIND aims to:

- 1) co-design interactive training webinars with VN educators, students and wellbeing practitioners;
- 2) deliver interactive training for higher and further education VN educators about how to integrate mental health education and principles into existing curricula; and
- 3) evaluate the impact of the training over time.

The project is being led by Dr Jackie Hargreaves and Dr Faye Didymus from Leeds Beckett University and will culminate in an evidence base for curricula enhancement. They are looking for course leaders and tutors who are interested in being involved with the research.

VET-MIND will include three phases over three years.

Phase one

First, it will develop webinars with VN educators, students and wellbeing practitioners, for VN educators. The webinars will focus on upskilling tutors about mental health education and

principles and aim to build confidence among those who attend. This was highlighted as a priority for future work in Jackie and Faye's previous work with the Mind Matters Initiative.

Phase two

Second, the VET-MIND team will deliver the webinars, which will be open to all VN educators in the UK who are interested in embedding mental health education and principles into their curricula. This will involve integrating mental health principles into existing curricula and will not involve wholesale changes to curricular design.

Phase three

Third, the VET-MIND team will mentor and work alongside VN educators who wish to work more closely on embedding their learning into practice. During this final phase of the project, they will evaluate the impact of the project through open-ended questionnaires, field notes and assessment of VN educators' mental health education efficacy and students' self-efficacy and wellbeing.

For further information about the project or to get involved, please contact either Jackie (J.Hargreaves@leedsbeckett.ac.uk), Faye (F.Didymus@leedsbeckett.ac.uk), or Dr Ollie Williamson (O.Williamson@leedsbeckett.ac.uk).

Got an idea for a mental health research project?

Mind Matters now has a new grant programme which is currently accepting applications. This year, there are three research grants available; two £5,000 Discovery Grants, targeted towards postgraduate or early career researchers looking to kick-start small-scale studies, and one £15,000 Impact Grant, aimed at more established researchers working on more substantial medium-size projects. Applications for both grants are open to researchers at all career stages.

Applications must reflect one of MMI's strategic areas for 2025. This includes mental health in

veterinary education, and MMI are particularly interested in veterinary nursing studies.

For more information on the new MMI research grant programme, please visit the Mind Matters website or contact the MMI Team on researchgrants@rcvs.org.uk. All proposals must be sent to researchgrants@rcvs.org.uk by 11.59pm on Wednesday 28 May 2025.



An update from the RCVS Diversity & Inclusion Team

Inclusive Language Guide and Tailored Adjustment Passport coming soon

This spring, our Diversity & Inclusion Team will be launching two new publications: an Inclusive Language Guide and the TAP (Tailored Adjustment Passport) toolkit.

The Inclusive Language Guide explains some of the key terminologies across race and ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, neurodiversity and mental health. It will showcase language that is widely considered to be inclusive and is intended to be used as a resource to help improve knowledge and inform daily interactions within veterinary workplaces.

The RCVS TAP toolkit is a resource designed to support employees and students with disabilities and health conditions on work placements,' and update pull quote to reflect this. It will include a TAP document template, which can be used voluntarily by employees (in both clinical and non-clinical roles) and students undertaking training in veterinary workplaces to record details of reasonable

adjustments they require. It serves to help organisations to understand what reasonable adjustments they should consider to ensure an individual is supported effectively at work, or within their work placement.

'The RCVS TAP toolkit is a resource designed to support employees and students on work placements with disabilities and health conditions.'

The toolkit will also include information on reasonable adjustments and legislation, guidance sections for students, employees, line managers and placement supervisors, and FAQs. Importantly, the content is designed to be tailored by organisations and used as a standalone resource by any employee, veterinary student or student veterinary nurse who wishes to create their own passport. The toolkit will be accessible via the RCVS website.

ENQA progress review

A collaborative approach to maintaining high education standards

Every five years, the RCVS is subject to review by the European Association for Quality Assurance (ENQA) in order to maintain membership of the association.

Following the submission of our mid-term report to the ENQA in September 2025, the College hosted a further progress review visit as part of the ongoing follow-up to the 2023 external review.

Progress visit overview

The visit took place on Tuesday 17 February 2026 at our office in London.

The discussions were wide-ranging and focused on both current quality assurance priorities and the future direction of our accreditation activity. Topics included the growing role of artificial intelligence in veterinary and veterinary nursing education, and how quality assurance bodies may respond to rapid developments in educational technology while maintaining robust standards.

The visit also provided an opportunity to explore approaches to the recruitment of panel members, including mechanisms to avoid and manage conflicts of interest. Particular emphasis was placed on transparency and maintaining confidence in the integrity and independence of the accreditation process.

In addition, our Veterinary Nursing and Education teams discussed their approach to accreditation events, with an emphasis on the use of evidence and measurable outcomes. This included a strong focus on triangulating evidence during visits, rather than relying on a self-evaluation report as the primary source of information.

A further discussion was had around our approach to the publication of thematic analyses – an important ENQA expectation, supporting sector-wide learning and transparency by identifying recurring themes and trends across accreditation activity.

Lizzie Lockett, RCVS CEO, and Tim Parkin FRCVS, RCVS President, also provided a strategic overview of emerging opportunities and challenges facing the RCVS, including the implications of the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) report and the potential development of a new Veterinary Surgeons Act.

Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) review

The review of the ESG – the framework for internal and external quality assurance drafted by ENQA and other stakeholders – is continuing. We contributed to the public consultation at the end of 2025, supporting the sector-wide review of how the ESG remain relevant and effective within an evolving higher education environment.

The revised ESG are expected to be finalised towards the end of 2026, with formal adoption anticipated in 2027. We will continue to monitor developments closely to ensure ongoing alignment with European expectations for external quality assurance.

Moving forward

The February 2026 progress review visit represented a valuable milestone in our relationship with the ENQA, providing an opportunity to demonstrate progress, reflect on areas of ongoing development, and engage constructively with international colleagues on shared quality assurance challenges.

Continued engagement with the ENQA will remain a key part of the RCVS commitment to transparency, continuous improvement, and high standards in veterinary and veterinary nursing education.



European Association for
Quality Assurance in Higher Education

An update from ACOVENE

Championing excellence in veterinary nurse education

The Accreditation Committee for Veterinary Nurse Education (ACOVENE) is a pan-European, voluntary organisation dedicated to advancing the quality, consistency, and recognition of veterinary nurse education.

Since its establishment in 2007, ACOVENE has played a central role in setting benchmarks across Europe, supporting excellence in training, facilitating professional mobility, and reinforcing the position of veterinary nurses as essential contributors to both clinical outcomes and the economic success of veterinary practice.

Through its robust and continually evolving accreditation framework, ACOVENE ensures that educational institutions deliver programmes that are high-quality, relevant, and aligned with modern veterinary practice. Accreditation represents a formal recognition that a programme meets European-wide standards, strengthening confidence among students, employers, and regulatory bodies.

‘Through its robust and continually evolving accreditation framework, ACOVENE ensures that educational institutions deliver programmes that are high-quality, relevant, and aligned with modern veterinary practice.’

Following the October 2025 update, we can report that the Committee was highly impressed with the outcomes of the accreditation visit to Egas Moniz (Portugal). The programme demonstrated significant strengths, including a cohesive and forward-thinking faculty with strong professional integrity. Effective monitoring systems and rigorous quality assurance processes were evident, ensuring consistently high standards. The Committee recognised the programme



as dynamic and outward-looking, successfully balancing innovation with strong governance.

Similarly, at HOGENT (Belgium), the Committee commended the institution for its proactive engagement with the accreditation process and its clear commitment to meeting ACOVENE standards. The school demonstrated a strong willingness to evolve and enhance its programme.

Through these ongoing partnerships and evaluations, ACOVENE continues to champion excellence in veterinary nurse education, ensuring that programmes across Europe are well-equipped to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving profession.



VN Vision – A vision or a necessity?

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

In our previous update in the last edition of **VN Education**, we outlined plans for a series of events throughout 2025 to explore how we can develop systems within practice that empower veterinary nurses to work to their

full professional potential. In doing so, we aimed to enhance team-based healthcare, improve client experience, increase accessibility to veterinary care, and support practice efficiency.

How can veterinary nurses be more fully integrated into multidisciplinary teams, and what steps are needed to achieve this change?

The project aims to:

- Define long-term goals for VN integration
- Identify practical, context-sensitive steps to achieve them
- Establish measurable indicators of success that are meaningful to the profession and the public.

Fig: Context and aims of the project

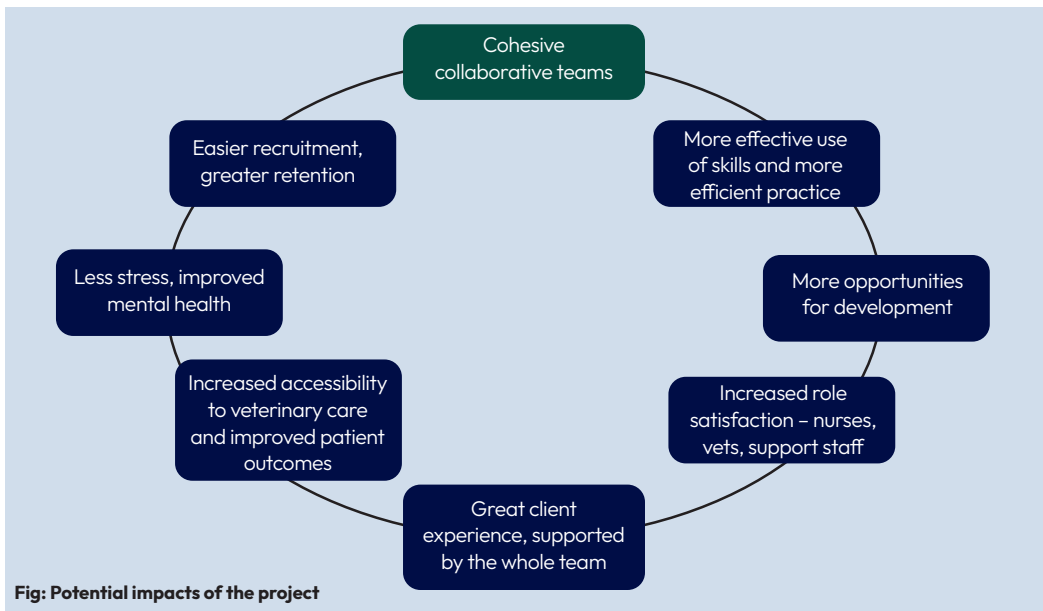
Six months on, these workshops are nearing completion. We have now reached the point of data saturation, with consistent themes emerging across events involving veterinary professionals and support teams from across the UK. This marks an important milestone, as it gives us confidence that the insights gathered reflect a broad and representative range of perspectives from the profession.

You can read more about the foundations of this work in the **VN Vision report**.

A paper on the VN Vision work was published in *The Veterinary Nurse* in December 2025: Dugmore, J., and Macdonald, J. (2025) **'The future of veterinary nursing: challenges, opportunities and a vision for progress.'** *The Veterinary Nurse*. Vol.16 (10), pp 228–234.



Fig: Example board from one of the workshops



Strengthening the role

The workshops have continued to focus on a key question: how can we move beyond the concept of ‘utilisation’ of veterinary nurses, and instead support genuinely effective, collaborative team-based care?

Discussions have reinforced that while there is strong appetite for change, achieving this will require not only practical adjustments, but also meaningful cultural change within practices.

Emerging themes

Several key themes have consistently emerged:

• Impact

Participants identified a wide range of potential benefits, including improved efficiency in care delivery, better patient outcomes through a holistic team-based approach, increased job satisfaction across all roles, enhanced career progression opportunities, improved access to veterinary care, and better wellbeing within the profession.

• Culture

Culture has been central to many discussions, including team dynamics, hierarchy, communication, trust in delegation, psychological safety, and valuing the contribution of all team members.

• Interprofessional education (IPE)

There is a clear need for greater understanding of roles within the veterinary team. This goes beyond shared learning environments and includes clarity around scope of practice, delegation, and how different roles contribute to patient care.

• Guidance on Schedule 3 and delegation

Clarity around legislation remains a key issue. While professional judgement is essential, participants highlighted the need for more practical guidance or examples of ‘good practice’ to support confident and consistent delegation.

What happens next?

We are now using these insights to further develop a theory of change that will underpin the long-term implementation of the project. This will outline the intended impact, the outcomes required to achieve it, and the enablers and barriers that may influence success.

The next phase will involve engaging with a wider range of stakeholders to gather feedback and refine this approach. We anticipate launching a formal consultation in early 2027 to ensure the final strategy reflects the needs and perspectives of the profession. To find out more, contact the VN Vision Team at vnvision@rcvs.org.uk.



VN Educators' conference



Join our VN Educators' Conference

The future RVN: people, practice and technology

This June, we're hosting our second VN Educators' Conference, bringing together those involved in the development, delivery and assessment of student veterinary nurses to explore the evolving landscape of the profession.

Following a successful inaugural event last summer, this year's conference – themed 'The future RVN: people, practice and technology' – will take place on Wednesday 17 June from 9.00am to 4.30pm at our Hardwick Street offices in London.

Designed specifically for VN educators, the conference provides a valuable opportunity to reflect on how developments across veterinary healthcare may shape the veterinary nurses of tomorrow. From collaborative models of care to regulatory change and technological

innovation, the programme invites delegates to consider what these shifts mean for the ongoing development of confident, capable and future-ready RVNs.

Exploring key developments shaping the profession

The conference programme will examine a range of interrelated themes central to the future of veterinary nursing.

The day will open with a session on team-based healthcare and contextualised care, exploring how collaborative practice and the realities of modern veterinary work are influencing the evolving RVN role. This will be followed by an RCVS update on legislation and regulation, outlining current developments and considering their implications for veterinary nursing practice and education.

In the afternoon, delegates will be able to attend one of two parallel workshop sessions. One will focus on rethinking practical assessment through the PAVE (practical assessment in veterinary (nurse) education) project, while the other will explore developing scope of practice for future veterinary nurses. Both workshops are designed to encourage discussion and reflection on how emerging developments may influence the direction of the profession.

“The day itself is highly interactive and provides a valuable opportunity for VN educators to come together, explore emerging trends, share perspectives and reflect on how education and training can respond to a changing professional landscape.”

The conference will close with a forward-looking panel discussion on technology-enabled veterinary practice, bringing together perspectives from across the profession to explore the opportunities and challenges presented by AI, digital innovation, paperless systems and entrepreneurial developments within veterinary nursing.

Research and engagement opportunities

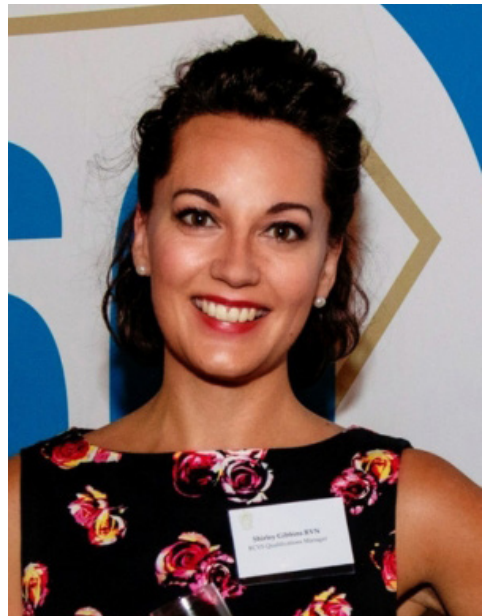
Alongside the main programme, research abstracts will be presented during the conference, showcasing current work and emerging insights from the veterinary nursing community.

Members of our Veterinary Nursing Team will also be available for pre-booked drop-in support sessions throughout the day. These sessions will provide delegates with the opportunity to discuss specific queries relating to:

- Accreditation processes
- Quality monitoring
- Qualifications
- Training practices
- Student enrolments
- The Nursing Progress Log (NPL)

To help the team prepare and ensure the relevant team member is available to answer queries, delegates are encouraged to submit questions in advance via email once they have registered for the conference. Further details will be provided upon booking.

Tickets cost £60 per person, with lunch and refreshments included. To book, visit our **VN Educators' Conference Eventbrite page.**



“We had such fantastic feedback from our first VN Educators' Conference, so we are really pleased to be running it again this year.

“The day itself is highly interactive and provides a valuable opportunity for VN educators to come together, explore emerging trends, share perspectives and reflect on how education and training can respond to a changing professional landscape.

“Whether you're involved in curriculum delivery, assessment, quality assurance or programme leadership, we would love for you to join us.”

Shirley Gibbins, RCVS Veterinary Nursing Qualifications Lead

Spotlight on the RCVS Academy

Supporting the progression of veterinary nurses



The RCVS Academy is our free online learning platform, offering a range of digital resources to support student and registered veterinary nurses throughout their professional journey.

For students

For student veterinary nurses (SVNs), the Academy provides resources to help them understand their professional responsibilities and prepare for practice. Courses such as 'SVN: RCVS & me' introduce the role of the RCVS and the professional expectations placed on veterinary nurses, while the forthcoming 'SVN: Stepping into practice' course focuses on preparing students for their time in clinical training. The course explores how clinical placements support the application of theoretical knowledge and help students develop the skills and professional behaviours required in practice. An accompanying Academy Live session (an online live event designed around the Academy course) will also explore these themes in discussion with experienced practitioners.

For new RVNs

The Academy also supports veterinary nurses as they transition into practice and continue to develop professionally. Courses such as 'RVN Starting out' provide guidance for newly registered veterinary nurses, while resources on recording and reflecting on continuing professional development (CPD) help nurses understand how to meet their ongoing professional development requirements.

For RVNs supporting education and training

For veterinary nurses supporting education and training in practice, the Academy offers a

number of resources relevant to supervisory and leadership roles. The 'Clinical Supervisor' course remains one of the most widely used Academy courses and is designed to support veterinary professionals who supervise student nurses in practice. While it does not replace the training provided by delivery sites, it offers additional guidance on coaching, assessment and supporting students during clinical training.



For those working in VN education and quality assurance

The Academy also provides learning for those involved in veterinary nursing education and quality assurance. The 'VN External Examiner' course has recently been updated with new interactive scenarios and expanded content on sampling strategies, offering further guidance for those undertaking this important role. In addition, the 'VN Accreditations and quality monitoring' course provides insight into the processes that underpin the accreditation and monitoring of veterinary nursing education programmes, including detailed guidance on the standards.

Beyond education

Beyond education-focused content, the Academy includes a range of courses that support broader professional skills relevant to veterinary professionals. These include resources on communication, client relationships and confidentiality, as well as courses focused on leadership and delegation for those taking on additional responsibilities within their teams.

Recognising the increasing demands on veterinary professionals, the Academy continues to create resources that support organisation, workload management and wellbeing. The recently launched 'Time management' course offers practical approaches to prioritising tasks and managing competing responsibilities. The Academy's 'Culture and wellbeing' category also includes courses on topics such as managing mental health in the workplace, suicide awareness, civility and unconscious bias.

'The RCVS Academy aims to support veterinary nurses at every stage of their careers, from student to experienced practitioner and educator.'

Join the Academy, live!

Alongside its self-directed courses, the Academy hosts regular 'Academy Live'

sessions. These interactive events allow veterinary nurses and educators to engage with subject experts, explore current topics and share experiences with colleagues across the profession. Recent sessions have covered subjects including the role of the clinical supervisor, professional development, and the evolving role of veterinary nurses in practice.

The RCVS Academy aims to support veterinary nurses at every stage of their careers, from student to experienced practitioner and educator. By providing accessible learning resources and opportunities for discussion and reflection, the Academy supports the continued development of the veterinary nursing profession.

The RCVS Academy can be accessed at academy.rcvs.org.uk, using your MyRCVS login details.

For more information on the Academy Live sessions, visit our [events pages](#).

Delivering team-based contextualised care

The important role of veterinary nursing educators

A team-based approach is essential to adapting veterinary care to the individual circumstances of each animal, its owner and the broader context. What more could veterinary nursing educators do to equip RVNs with the skills and confidence to contextualise care as part of the veterinary team?

Contextualised care is a way of delivering veterinary care that is adapted to the needs and circumstances of each individual animal, its owner and the wider context.

Research carried out by the RCVS' charity partner, RCVS Knowledge, in 2025, gathered insights from more than 1,000 veterinary surgeons, RVNs and pet owners to explore what

good contextualised care looks like in practice, and the barriers and enablers to its delivery.

The findings showed strong agreement from all groups that applying a contextualised approach brings benefits, including improving trust between pet owners and veterinary teams, and improving quality of care.

Veterinary team members emphasised that when contextualised care is done well, it involves the entire practice team. Indeed, the **RCVS Supporting Guidance** states that RVNs must 'make decisions on treatment regimes based first and foremost on animal health and welfare considerations, whilst providing contextualised care and exercising professional

judgement about what is best for the animal in each individual case, taking into account the needs and circumstances of the client*.

However, more than 80% of RVNs surveyed reported barriers to providing contextualised care, compared to 46% of veterinary surgeons. Top barriers included lack of continuity of care, financial constraints limiting the care provided, and a feeling of being most comfortable providing 'gold standard' care. A fifth of RVNs surveyed reported that practice protocols and guidelines restricted their ability to provide contextualised care.

The report findings led to the creation of a roadmap that lays out what needs to happen to empower all veterinary teams to deliver contextualised care in five areas: leadership, veterinary education, practice support, evidence and research, and pet owner empowerment.

'More than 80% of RVNs surveyed reported barriers to providing contextualised care, compared to 46% of veterinary surgeons.'

Education of vets and vet nurses is identified as an important enabler of contextualised care, with a call for the knowledge and skills needed to practise contextualised care to be *more explicitly* embedded in education and training for all veterinary team members, in both academic and workplace-based learning environments.

Key recommendations are:

- Ensure that a spectrum of evidence-based options is explicitly included, together with teaching on how diagnostic and treatment pathways can be adapted to individual circumstances.
- Embed people and communication skills as a key component into all training.
- Teach vet and vet nurse students to apply knowledge in a contextualised way and to make decisions under conditions of uncertainty.

"[There is a need for] more evidence-based learning, case-led approaches rather than black and white tick box exercises. A collaboration of vets and nurses training together at university and specific modules that relate to customer care, business and client communication."

RVN (survey)

"Everyone on the team has to be part of the process. Practice manager, support staff, vets, nurses, etc. Everyone on the team plays a different role but they all have to be supporting contextualised care otherwise it isn't going to work."

RVN (interview)

RCVS Knowledge, as the charity partner of the RCVS, is committed to working across the veterinary sector to help ensure that veterinary teams and animal owners are empowered to achieve contextualised care.

To find out more, please visit the [**RCVS Knowledge website**](#).



Nursing Progress Log 2026 update

A positive step forward

The updated Nursing Progress Log (NPL) platform has now been successfully launched, marking an important milestone in the continued development of support for student veterinary nurses, clinical supervisors and education teams across the profession.

The NPL remains central to recording achievement of the RCVS Day-One Skills and supporting high-quality clinical mentorship. The 2026 update was designed to strengthen clarity, consistency and usability for all users.

How does the update enhance the platform?

Licence to practise qualifications leading to entry onto the Register must demonstrate clear alignment with the RCVS Day-One Skills and be recorded in a format that is accessible and auditable. The updated platform enhances this by:

- Improving transparency across roles
- Strengthening audit functionality
- Enhancing reflection and feedback processes
- Introducing clearer recording of practical training hours

While much of the functionality remains familiar, several targeted enhancements have been introduced to better support users in practice.

Key enhancements

Online timesheets for new cohorts

Students who enrolled from September 2025 onwards, as well as those who had not yet begun recording their practical training hours prior to the update, can now record these hours electronically within the platform. This ensures:

- A clear and consistent record of hours in practice
- Direct clinical supervisor approval
- Greater clarity at the point of registration

Existing students will continue with their current recording method to maintain consistency throughout their training. To ensure accuracy and audit integrity, students must complete one

recording method only, either paper or online, for the duration of their practical training.

Enhanced reflection and multilog functionality

Reflection is now mandatory for all logged skills, reinforcing its importance in professional development. Users can:

- Upload audio reflections
- Log multiple skills from a single case, across all of the Day-One Skills, with individual reflections for each
- Edit reflections prior to competence sign-off, with full timestamp transparency

These changes support deeper learning while maintaining strong audit integrity.

Improved quality reporting

The quality process has been strengthened to provide clearer oversight of sampling activity and feedback, with a new quality report tab. Internal quality assurers can add contextual comments to support clinical supervisors, while maintaining appropriate visibility controls within the system.

Tutorials and professional behaviours

A new tutorials tab provides structured prompts to support meaningful supervisory discussions, including target-setting and reflection.

The professional behaviours process has also been refined to better support students who require additional time or development, ensuring a structured and supportive progression pathway.

Greater transparency and usability

Additional improvements include:

- A streamlined skill opening process
- Clearer recording of reasonable adjustments
- Enhanced autosave functionality
- A renamed documents tab, now allowing students to upload supporting evidence
- Improved search and cohort filtering options for administrators and internal quality assurers

Collectively, these changes enhance usability while reinforcing accountability and consistency.

Engagement and feedback

Since the launch, engagement from the veterinary nursing profession has been both strong and constructive. Delivery sites, clinical supervisors and internal quality assurers have provided thoughtful questions, practical insights and valuable feedback, strengthening the guidance and supporting the successful implementation of the platform.

‘We are particularly grateful for the proactive communication from users who have identified areas where additional clarification would be helpful.’

This collaborative approach has been instrumental in ensuring that the updated platform works effectively in real-world settings. The level of engagement reflects the profession’s shared commitment to maintaining high standards in veterinary nurse education.

We are particularly grateful for the proactive communication from users who have identified

areas where additional clarification would be helpful. This feedback has directly informed updated guidance and our Academy Live sessions, designed to support confident use of the system.

Where are we now?

The platform is fully operational, and support materials are in place to assist all user groups. Updated user guidance has been published, and further engagement sessions continue to provide opportunities for discussion and shared learning.

As with any system enhancement, continued dialogue remains important. Feedback will continue to be reviewed and used to inform future refinements where appropriate.

The NPL is more than a recording tool: it’s a structured framework that supports mentorship, reflection and professional growth. The 2026 update represents a positive step forward in ensuring the framework remains robust, transparent and fit for purpose.

We would like to thank everyone involved in supporting the launch and for the professionalism shown throughout the transition.

‘A new Veterinary Surgeons Act?’

Listen to our latest podcast episode



Did you know that last year we relaunched the RCVS podcast?

In our March 2026 episode, during Defra’s consultation on a new Veterinary Surgeons Act, we chat to RCVS Chair of Veterinary Nurses Council, Belinda Andrews-Jones RVN; RCVS Head of Insights, Policy and Public Affairs, Ben Myring; and RCVS Director of Veterinary

Nursing, Julie Dugmore RVN about what potential legislative reform could mean for the veterinary professions from a veterinary nurse perspective.

In the second part of the episode, Julie is then joined by RCVS Veterinary Nursing Progression and Development Lead, Jill Macdonald RVN, to explore the work of our VN Vision project, helping to shape the future of team-based veterinary healthcare.

Listen to the podcast **on our website**, or simply search for The RCVS Podcast on Spotify or Apple Podcasts.

Evaluating the implementation of reasonable adjustments in SVN education

Introducing the 2025 Mind Matters Initiative Discovery Grant research project



The recipients of the 2025 RCVS Mind Matters Initiative Discovery Grant have commenced work on their research project, evaluating the implementation of reasonable adjustments designed to address challenges associated with mental health and neurodivergence for student veterinary nurses (SVNs) during clinical placement.

The Nottingham Trent University research team is made up of Dr Lauren Cooke MRCVS, Dr Heather Imrie MRCVS, Dr Gregory Steele MRCVS and Nicola-Jayne Johnson RVN.

The project involves four phases:

Phase one: Dissemination of surveys aimed at both SVNs and members of RCVS Approved Training Practices (TPs) within the institution's population. The purpose of these initial surveys is to identify the prevalence of SVNs with mental health issues and neurodivergence, the difficulties and barriers they face, the current implementation and perception of reasonable adjustments, and current awareness of the RCVS 'Embracing reasonable adjustments for student veterinary nurses' guidance.

Phase two: Following the initial surveys, an implementation phase will commence, in which

the team will increase awareness about reasonable adjustments and provide SVNs and their TPs with support in their implementation.

Phase three: Distribution of secondary surveys to both SVNs and members of TPs. This survey will draw further conclusions on themes explored in the initial surveys, as well as evaluate the effectiveness of the RCVS guidance.

Phase four: Interviews will be conducted with individuals previously surveyed to obtain valuable qualitative data.

Findings from the project aim to further develop the reasonable adjustments provision and enhance how training providers can support SVNs and TPs in relation to reasonable adjustments, mental health and neurodivergence.

Did you see the RCVS and MMI Let's Talk Adjustments campaign?

The Let's Talk Adjustments campaign aimed to raise awareness of the need for reasonable adjustments, address common myths and misconceptions surrounding them, and highlight the legal obligations of leaders and managers around implementation.

You can find a range of useful resources on the topic on the RCVS [website](#).



Staff update

Introducing Georgina Winston – our new Examinations Assessor

“I qualified as a Registered Veterinary Nurse in 2008 and later completed the Graduate Diploma in Professional and Clinical Veterinary Nursing with the RVC. Most of my career has been in charity practice, where I held senior roles such as Head Nurse and Pet Hospital Lead, supporting many students as a clinical coach.

and supporting quality assurance in higher education. This role has broadened my skills and comes at an exciting time as potential changes to the Veterinary Surgeons Act approach.”



“I have lectured on the Veterinary Nursing Diploma, examined for diploma and degree OSCEs, and participated in several overseas neutering projects, mentoring aspiring veterinary professionals. I have volunteered with WVS—receiving a bursary for a 2020 Tanzania neutering project—Mission Rabies, International Cat Care, and various local charities, also organising community neutering campaigns.

“I joined the RCVS in July 2025 as an Examinations Assessor within the VN team, working on preregistration theory and OSCE examinations

VN Team names and numbers

Director of Veterinary Nursing:

Julie Dugmore RVN – 020 7202 0775

Administration Manager:

Annette Amato – 020 7202 0713

Examinations Quality Lead:

Victoria Hedges RVN – 020 7202 0782

Qualifications Lead:

Shirley Gibbins RVN – 020 7050 5046

Qualifications Assessor:

Tori Thornton RVN – 020 7050 1243

Qualifications Assessor:

Sophie Geake RVN – 020 7965 1102

Senior Qualifications Officer:

Abigayle Gomez RVN – 020 7856 1034

Qualifications Officer:

Lucy Blampied – 020 8148 5562

VN Progression and Development Lead:

Jill Macdonald RVN – 020 8148 5549

Examinations Assessor:

Georgina Winston RVN – 020 7050 1245

CONTACTING US

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