

Veterinary Nurses Council

Meeting to be held on Wednesday 13 May 2026 at 10.00am
at the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, 1 Hardwick Street, London EC1R 4RB

Agenda		Classification ¹	Rationale ²
1.	Apologies for absence	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
2.	Declarations of interest	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
3.	Obituaries	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
4.	Minutes of meeting held on 25 February 2026 i. Unclassified minutes ii. Classified appendix	Unclassified Confidential	n/a 2,3,4
5.	Matters arising	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
6.	CEO update	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
Matters for decision by VN Council and for report (unclassified items)			
7.	VN Education Committee		
	7.01 Minutes of meeting held on 19 February 2026 i. Unclassified minutes ii. Classified appendix	Unclassified Confidential	n/a 2,3,4
	7.02 Minutes of meeting held on 21 April 2026 i. Unclassified minutes ii. Classified appendix	Unclassified Confidential	n/a 2,3,4

Matters for note			
8.	Report on registration of VNs educated outside the UK	Unclassified	n/a
9.	Report on temporary student enrolments	Unclassified	n/a
10.	Reports from RCVS Committees		
	10.01 RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee Annual Report	Unclassified	n/a
	10.02 Standards Committee	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
	10.03 Advancement of the Professions Committee	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
	10.04 Registration Committee	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
	10.05 RVN Disciplinary Committee	Oral report	n/a
11.	Communications report	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
12.	VN Council membership		
	13.01 Confirmation of membership	Oral report	n/a
	13.02 Thanks to retiring members	Unclassified	
13..	Any other business (unclassified)	Oral report Unclassified	n/a
14.	Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2026/2027	Oral report	n/a
15.	Date of next meeting Tuesday 8 September 2026	Oral report Unclassified	n/a

Confidential and private items (closed session)			
16.	Policy and Public Affairs update	Oral report	
17.	Continuing Professional Development (CPD)		
	17.01 Minutes of the VetGDP and CPD Compliance Subcommittee	Confidential	1,4
	17.02 CPD deadlines	Confidential	1,2,
	17.03 CPD compliance	Confidential	1
18.	Registration Appeals and Reviews Rules	Confidential	1
19.	VN Prescribers	Confidential	1
20.	VN Education Committee (VNEC) confidential items		
	20.01 Confidential items from meeting of 19 February 2026 (see item 7.01 classified appendix)	Confidential	2,3
	20.02 Confidential items from meeting of 21 April 2026 (see item 7.02 classified appendix)	Confidential	2,3
21.	Risk Register		1,2,3,4
	21.01 Update on changes since the previous meeting	Confidential	
	21.02 Items identified from the meeting to add to Risk Register	Oral report	
22.	Items for RCVS Committees	Oral report	
23.	Any other business (confidential items)	Oral report	
24.	Reflective session		
	Annette Amato Secretary, VN Council 0207 202 0713 / a.amato@rcvs.org.uk /		

¹Classifications explained

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²Classification rationales

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Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	13 May 2026
Title	VN Council Minutes 25 February 2026
Summary	Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 25 February 2026
Decisions required	To approve the unclassified minutes and classified appendix
Attachments	Classified appendix (confidential)
Author	Annette Amato Committee Secretary a.amato@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0713

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Classified appendix	Confidential	2,3,4

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Veterinary Nurses Council

Minutes of the meeting held at the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, 1 Hardwick Street, London EC1R 4RB on Wednesday 25 February 2026

Members:

Mrs Belinda Andrews-Jones	Chair
^Mrs Anita Bickerdike	
*Ms Jessica Franklin	
Ms Lisa Grainger	
Mrs Susan Howarth	
Mr Tim Hutchinson	
Dr Zara Kennedy	
*Mrs Katherine Kissick	
Mrs Bethan Pinhey	
Mr Matthew Rendle	
Ms Stephanie Richardson	
Miss Hannah Welsman	
Mr Simon Williams	
Mrs Kirsty Young	Vice-Chair

*Denotes absent

^Denotes remote

In attendance:

Mrs Annette Amato	Committee Secretary
Mr Luke Bishop	Media and Publications Manager (open session only)
Mrs Julie Dugmore	Director of Veterinary Nursing
Miss Shirley Gibbins	VN Qualifications Lead
Mrs Victoria Hedges	VN Examinations Quality Lead
Ms Lizzie Lockett	Chief Executive
Mr Ben Myring	Head of Policy, Insight and Public Affairs (confidential session only)
Ms Clare Paget	Registrar

Guests:

<i>Mr Chris Simpson</i>	<i>Vet Times (open session)</i>
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Apologies for absence

1. Apologies for absence were received from Jessica Franklin and Kathy Kissick.

Declarations of interest

2. There were no new declarations of interest to report.

Obituaries

3. No written obituaries had been received. Council stood to observe a minute's silence for all members of the professions who had passed away since the last meeting.

Minutes of meeting held on 12 November 2025

4. The minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2025 were approved as a correct record.

Matters arising

5. There were no matters arising on the previous Minutes.

CEO update

6. The CEO gave a brief oral update on recent activities, some of which would arise later in the agenda.
7. **Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and legislative change.**
Work had continued on the major pieces of work required to ensure that the College was ready for its role in the remedies put forward by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA). The CMA was intermittently providing extracts of the final decision report relating to the College, to be checked for confidentiality and accuracy, and there continued to be meetings with the CMA at staff level. The final deadline by which the remedies documents could be published was 22 May.
8. There had been a BBC Panorama programme in January 2026 on the subject of veterinary pricing.
9. The communications around the launch of the consultation on new veterinary legislation had been somewhat confusing in that it had conflated the CMA investigation and wider legislative change objectives. The CMA was focusing on an important but rather narrow part of veterinary business, focusing on the customer experience of small animal veterinary practice. The Veterinary Surgeons Act changes were encompassing the wider context of veterinary and veterinary nursing practice. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) consultation and the proposed RCVS response would be covered later in the meeting.
10. **Strategic Plan.** The College was now working through the first year of the Strategic Plan that had been approved in September 2025, and the first report against the new plan had been presented to College Council in January.

11. Other ongoing activities included a recent announcement of funding by the Mind Matters Initiative (MMI) for a Masters in mental health and nursing education, the launch of some new online Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions, and the launch of a new Practice Standards Scheme (PSS) requirement around suicide prevention. These initiatives should have a positive impact on all members of the veterinary team. Additional guidance on the new PSS requirement was being developed and there should be a new module on suicide awareness in the RCVS Academy, as well as other courses being developed.

Veterinary Nurse Education Committee (VNEC)

12. Susan Howarth, Chair of the VNEC, presented the minutes of the meeting of the VNEC held on 19 December 2025 and highlighted her thanks to the Deputy Chair of the Committee, Sarah Reynolds-Golding, for chairing the recent meetings of the Committee. The Committee had noted the appointment of a new chief examiner for the pre-registration Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) from January 2026, and a new chief examiner for the pre-registration theory examination to commence in January 2027, and had also approved the appointment of a new member to the Pre-registration Examination Board to tie in with the changes resulting from the changes in chief examiners.
13. The VNEC had been provided with a draft joint statement from the Education Inter-Regulatory Group (IRG) on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education and had noted that the RCVS Education Committee (EC) had approved the inclusion of the RCVS in the publication of the statement. The document had now been published and would be disseminated to education providers by the RCVS.
14. It was noted that although there had been a comment by the EC on the wider environmental impact of AI when it had discussed this document, the consensus had been that although this was a significant issue, it was not considered to be part of the remit of the statement that was focusing on the educational use of AI by staff and students, and therefore no changes had been made to the document on this issue. Council was assured, however, that environmental issues were included in the Standards Framework and these were closely reviewed and monitored.

Reports from RCVS Committees

Registered Veterinary Nurse Preliminary Investigation Committee (RVN PIC)

15. Council noted the report of the RVN PIC that had been circulated with the agenda.

Advancement of the Professions Committee (APC)

16. The Chair of the APC, Zara Kennedy, highlighted some of the activities of the APC workstreams since the previous meeting.
17. **Health passport (Tailored Adjustment Passport – TAP).** The RCVS TAP toolkit and passport project, designed to support people with disabilities and chronic conditions in the veterinary sector who needed to request reasonable adjustments, was nearing completion and was expected to be ready for launch in April 2026. A series of video guides was being developed to cover the key sections of the toolkit.

18. **Diversity and Inclusion.** Work on module development for the RCVS Academy course on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) fundamentals had resumed with a view to the course now launching in summer 2026.
19. **Workforce Action Plan.** In alignment with the RCVS Strategic Plan and Workforce Action Plan, a new project titled 'Next Steps' had been initiated, focusing on three key career transitions - returning from parental leave, returning after a career break and transitioning into management for the first time. Alongside that, a new 'Welcoming a returner' Academy course was being developed for practice staff and employers welcoming returners.
20. **Mind Matters Initiative (MMI).** The CEO had already mentioned the MMI research grants. Grants totalling £60,000 had been awarded in 2025, and the next round had just been launched. There were two grants available, with an application deadline of 22 March.
21. The new Practice Standards Scheme (PSS) suicide prevention requirements would come into force from 1 April 2026, and the MMI team continued to work closely with colleagues in Standards and PSS to ensure that resources were made available for both assessors and practices to support them ahead of the new requirement.
22. **Fellowship.** The Fellowship Team had received a high number of volunteers for the Task and Finish Groups set up to plan the content for Fellowship Day, the Fellows of the Future student competition and a new Early Career Researcher project due to start in 2027. It had been really good to see so many of the Fellows giving their time to support these initiatives.
23. **Climate Fresk Workshop.** APC had taken part in a Climate Fresk workshop, covering environment and sustainability and the impact and consequences of climate change. APC had particularly focused on two of the commitments made by the RCVS in terms of exploring ways to educate members on the links between climate and health, and to acknowledge the link between climate change and social inequalities.

Standards Committee

24. Matthew Rendle reported on the unclassified items from the December meeting of the Standards Committee.
25. **Code of Professional Conduct.** The Committee had been advised that Chapter 13 of the supporting guidance to the Code ('Clinical and client records') was to be rewritten from scratch and the Committee had discussed high-level themes that should be included. These included definition and scope of the clinical record, rules applying to different categories of information, amending the clinical records, and professionalism in recorded comments about clients. It had been felt that an outcomes/principles-based set of guidance would be more useful than specific guidance on what should be included in records.
26. **Certification Subcommittee update.** The Committee had been given an update on the Subcommittee and had agreed to the plan for the work and scope of the Subcommittee for the next year.

Registration Committee

27. There were no VN-related matters to report from the Registration Committee.

RVN Disciplinary Committee

28. The reports of the VN disciplinary hearings that had taken place since the previous meeting of the Committee had been uploaded into the library areas of the VN Council BoardEffect platform, for information.

Communications report

29. The Media and Publications Manager provided an overview of recent VN-related activities in the Comms Department.
30. **Website.** The new College website, which had been two years in the making, had been launched earlier in the week, with a significantly improved design with user experience at its core. The content team was currently fixing a number of bugs and links.
31. **Veterinary Surgeons Act consultation.** There would shortly be communications around the Veterinary Surgeons Act consultation, including a VN-focused podcast featuring a discussion between the Chair of VNC, the Director of Veterinary Nursing and the Head of Policy, Insight and Public Affairs. There would also be an article for the *Veterinary Nursing Journal*. There had also recently been a webinar with the Director of Veterinary Nursing, looking at the implications and benefits of the new Veterinary Surgeons Act.
32. There had been thirteen thousand new page views on the consultation page of the website to date, with over 1,230 visitors then following the links through to Defra, and about 250 webinar attendees. The deadline for responses to the consultation was 25 March.
33. **Events.** There would be a VN Vision event in Leeds on 10 March, Veterinary Nurses Day in Edinburgh on 6 May and the VN Educator Conference on 17 June.
34. **Council elections.** The RCVS Council elections were ongoing, with fifteen candidates for the three available places. There would be no VN Council election as there had been two candidates for the two places, however, the candidate profiles for these candidates would be posted on the website, for information.
35. **VN Education newsletter.** The next edition of *VN Education* was in preparation, with members of the VN team, due to be published on 20 April.
36. A member commented positively on the new website, in particular the highlighting of related content on each page.

VN Council election 2026

37. The Registrar confirmed that there had been two candidates for the two positions on Council, and therefore no election would be necessary. Meghan Conroy and Lauren Hargrave would take up their positions on VN Council in July 2026, on Royal College Day.

VN Register report

38. Council noted a report showing statistics on the total number of registered veterinary nurses, including the number of new registrations annually for the calendar years 2020 – 2025, and removals in January 2026 for non-payment of the annual fee. Data were also provided for the number of student enrolments for the past six academic years, and the number of those enrolling for a Period of Supervised Practice, having been unregistered for a period of five years or more.

Any other business (unclassified)

39. No items were raised

Date of next meeting

40. The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 13 May 2026. This would be an in-person meeting at the RCVS, Hardwick Street, starting at 10.00am

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Attachments	Classified appendix
Author	Annette Amato Committee Secretary a.amato@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0713

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Veterinary Nurse Education Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2026 remotely via Teams

Members:	Mrs Sally Betterton	Employer representative
	* Mrs Sarah Batt-Williams	HE veterinary nursing provider
	Mrs Donna Cotton	Employer representative
	Ms Lisa Grainger	VN Council lay member
	Miss Alison Heywood	FE veterinary nursing provider
	Mrs Susan Howarth	VN Council veterinary nurse (Chair)
	Ms Helen King	FE Independent regulatory expert
	Mrs Sarah Reynolds-Golding	HE independent regulatory expert (Deputy Chair)
	Miss Marie Rippingale	FE veterinary nursing provider
	Miss Gemma Thirkettle	Student representative – HE sector
	Mrs Perdi Welsh	Post-registration veterinary nurse provider
	Mrs Bethan Pinhey	VN Council non-voting observer
In attendance:	Mrs Annette Amato	Committee Secretary
	Miss Lucy Blampied	Qualifications Officer
	Mrs Sophie Geake	Qualifications Assessor
	Miss Shirley Gibbins	Qualifications Lead
	Miss Abigayle Gomez	Senior Qualifications Officer
	Mrs Victoria Hedges	VN Examinations Quality Lead (VNEQL)
	Ms Tori Thornton	Qualifications Assessor
	Mrs Kirsty Williams	Education Quality Improvement Manager
	Mrs Georgina Winston	Examinations Assessor

*denotes absent

Apologies for absence

1. There were no apologies for absence. The Director of Veterinary Nursing was unable to attend the meeting. The Chair reported that Georgina Larkin, the student representative for the Further Education (FE) sector, had resigned from the Committee, and the recruitment process for a new FE student representative was underway.
2. The Chair thanked Sarah Reynolds-Golding for chairing the last few meetings of the Committee in her absence.

Declarations of interest

3. There were no declarations of interest relevant to matters for decision at the current meeting.

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee (VNEC) 17 December 2025

4. The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2025 as an accurate record.

Matters arising

5. There were no matters arising on the previous minutes.

Operational update

6. The Chair reported that the Director of Veterinary Nursing (DoVN) was unable to attend the meeting and would circulate a written update on recent activities and issues of note since the previous meeting. The DoVN wished to place on record her thanks to Jasmine Curtis, who had recently left the College, for all her hard work during almost six years as a member of the VN team. The team would shortly also be losing Jasmine Winter, the Examinations Administrator. Further updates on recruitment would be provided at the next meeting.

VN Pre-registration Examination

7. The VN Examinations Quality Lead (VNEQL) presented the minutes of both the Pre-registration Examination Board meetings held in December 2025. These related to the practical examination (OSCE) that took place at the beginning of November and the theory examination (MCQ) that took place toward the end of November. It was noted that there had been two equine candidates sitting the OSCE and three equine candidates sitting the MCQ on this occasion. At both meetings the outcome of the moderation for the equine and companion animal OSCEs had been agreed.
8. In response to a query about the future venue for the practical examinations with effect from 2027, the VNEQL gave an update on the proposed plans but would report back with the final confirmation at the next meeting.

Licence to practise qualifications – Further Education

Lantra Awards

9. The Committee noted a paper setting out the auditing activity of a new delivery site approval conducted by Lantra, together with the Lantra Awards action plan, and the Qualifications Assessor clarified a few points. The Committee was reminded that the

review conducted by the RCVS had been a review of Lantra's audit of the delivery site to ensure that Lantra was meeting the required Standards.

Licence to practise qualifications – Higher Education

10. **University of Greenwich (UoG).** The Committee was provided with the report of quality monitoring activity, and the action plan, on the assessments carried out as part of the UoG's FdSc Veterinary Nursing programme.
11. The Qualifications Lead clarified, in response to a general query on the risk rating of an institution and when this can be adjusted, that the overarching risk rating for any new provision was always automatically set at high for the duration of the provisional accreditation period and could not be reduced whilst the provider had provisional accreditation status, even if actions were all being signed off. When the first cohort of students had completed the programme, the qualifications team and the examinations team would provide evidence to the Committee of all the auditing that they had carried out during the first delivery cycle of the programme in order for the Committee to determine whether to amend the accreditation status to full. Should the Committee afford full accreditation at that point the risk rating would be carried out in accordance with the full risk matrix and the Committee would review the accreditation status in the usual way.
12. The Committee considered and approved a programme change request submitted by UoG.
13. The Qualifications Assessors introduced papers for each of the following Higher Education Institutions, including an update and overview of the qualifications, risk and ongoing monitoring activities, and responded to any questions raised by the Committee:
 - Aberystwyth University
 - Coventry University
 - Hartpury University
 - Ulster University
 - University Centre Askham Bryan
 - University of Bristol
 - University of Chester
 - University of Lancashire
 - University of Portsmouth
 - University of South Wales
 - Wrexham University
14. It was confirmed that going forward, it was intended to introduce more in-person audits of assessments, rather than desk-based audits followed by correspondence. This should allow for a better dialogue with the institutions and be helpful to the RCVS, universities and colleges.

Post-registration qualifications

15. The Committee was provided with papers setting out the auditing activity and action plans for the following Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing providers:
- Harper Adams University
 - University of London (Royal Veterinary College)

Items for publication

16. The Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing Standards and additional guidance had been published on the RCVS website in January. The *VN Education* newsletter would be published in late April, and content creation was underway.

Any other business

17. There were no items raised.

Meeting dates 2026

- 18.
- The remaining meeting dates for 2026 were confirmed as follows:
 - Tuesday 21 April
 - Thursday 25 June (in person, full day)
 - Wednesday 19 August
 - Wednesday 21 October
 - Tuesday 15 December

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	* Ms Lisa Grainger	VN Council lay member
	Miss Alison Heywood	FE veterinary nursing provider
	Mrs Susan Howarth	VN Council veterinary nurse (Chair)
	* Ms Helen King	FE Independent regulatory expert
	Mrs Sarah Reynolds-Golding	HE independent regulatory expert (Deputy Chair)
	* Miss Marie Rippingale	FE veterinary nursing provider
	* Miss Gemma Thirkettle	Student representative – HE sector
	Mr Christopher Riddington	Student representative – FE sector
	* Mrs Perdi Welsh	Post-registration veterinary nurse provider
	Mrs Bethan Pinhey	VN Council non-voting observer
In attendance:	Mrs Annette Amato	Committee Secretary
	Miss Lucy Blampied	Qualifications Officer
	Mrs Julie Dugmore	Director of Veterinary Nursing
	Mrs Sophie Geake	Qualifications Assessor
	Miss Shirley Gibbins	Qualifications Lead
	Miss Abigayle Gomez	Senior Qualifications Officer
	Mrs Victoria Hedges	VN Examinations Quality Lead
	Ms Tori Thornton	Qualifications Assessor
	Mrs Georgina Winston	Examinations Assessor

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Apologies for absence and welcome to new member

1. Apologies for absence were received from Donna Cotton, Lisa Grainger, Helen King, Marie Rippingale, Gemma Thirkettle, and Perdi Welsh. The Chair confirmed that the Committee was quorate.
2. The Chair welcomed Christopher Riddington as the new Further Education sector student representative. Committee members introduced themselves and their backgrounds.

Declarations of interest



3. There were no declarations of interest relevant to matters for decision at the current meeting.

Minutes of the meeting of the Education Committee (VNEC) 19 February 2026

4. The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2025 as an accurate record.

Operational update

6. The Director of Veterinary Nursing (DoVN) updated the Committee on recent activities and issues of note.
7. **Training provision.** The Royal Agricultural University's degree provision at Askham Bryan College had now ceased, with all students having either being invited to register, transferred to the exit award or withdrawn.
8. **Nursing Progress Log (NPL).** The updated NPL had been launched as planned on 19 January and since then several updates had been deployed to fix bugs that had been reported by users. The next update would include the College rebranding, which had taken place since the NPL launch. Overall feedback had been generally very positive and those using the platform were making use of the additional benefits.
9. The FE member of the Committee added her congratulations and thanked the team, commenting that the NPL was working very well.
10. **VN Education.** The spring edition of the *VN Education* newsletter was due to be published imminently. This was a bumper edition with articles and updates covering many relevant areas for VN educators, and links to the podcasts on legislative reform. The link to the newsletter would be forwarded to all VNEC and VN Council members as soon as it was available.
11. The VN educator conference planned to take place on 17 June had currently 36 delegates booked, and further advertising was due to take place to encourage further applications. The theme would be around the future RVN, people, practice and technology and would look at the evolving context of veterinary nursing, team based healthcare and contextualised care. There would be updates on legislation and regulation, and a couple of workshops.
12. **VN Vision.** The VN Vision work was continuing apace, and the RCVS had attended the Association of Veterinary Surgeons Practising in Northern Ireland (AVSPNI) the previous week, presenting a session around VN Vision and the theory of change. Further events at which VN Vision would be covered were the Veterinary Management Group (VMG) congress, the Society of Practising Veterinary Surgeons (SPVS) congress, British Veterinary Association (BVA) Live, and the British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA) congress.

13. The data gathered from the VN Vision events was now being analysed, following which the theory of change would be developed. An advisory panel was being set up to advise on the theory of change and to provide feedback, and it was hoped that by the end of the year there would be a consultation with the professions and the public, following which activities to support the outcomes and the impact statement would be developed.
14. **Veterinary Nurses Day.** The next Veterinary Nurses Day would be held at the Edinburgh Assembly rooms, with morning and afternoon sessions. Veterinary nurses attending would include newly registered veterinary nurses as well as overseas-qualified VNs, Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing holders, and for the first time, a veterinary nurse who had returned to the profession following a period of supervised practice. The keynote speaker would be Dot Green, a previous Golden Jubilee Award winner, who would be talking about the human animal bond and the role played by veterinary professionals.
15. **Apprenticeship.** As reported at a previous meeting, the work on the Apprenticeship Standard had been completed, but the end point assessment had been paused during the pilot. The pilot had concluded, allowing the veterinary nursing apprenticeship to move forward. Discussions were underway with Skills England and the RCVS IT department to determine the plans for the RCVS to assume responsibility for external quality assurance from Ofqual.
16. **Staffing.** A project officer had recently been recruited to support the VN Vision work and other upcoming projects and would start in post in July.
17. This would be the last VNEC meeting for Shirley Gibbins, the VN Quality Lead, who would be leaving the College at the end of May. The DoVN thanked Shirley for all the work she had carried out over her seven years at the College, and specifically the support that she had provided to the DoVN and the team.

Report from RCVS Education Committee

18. There had not been a meeting of the RCVS Education Committee since the previous VNEC meeting, so there were no items to report.

VN Pre-registration Examination

19. The VN Examinations Quality Lead (VNEQL) reported that the examination board had met on 26 February 2026 to discuss the results of the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) that took place on 7 February. The pass rate had been very high, with ten of the eleven candidates passing the examination. The minutes of the meeting would be added to the boardpack directly after the meeting.



20. The Board had been given an update in relation to the venue for the examinations once the existing arrangement with MYF training expired at the end of 2026. With effect from 2027, the pre-registration OSCE would be delivered at the RCVS premises in Hardwick Street. The facilities were very appropriate with different floors being used for the examiners and candidates, and equipment being stored at the RCVS. Although there were likely to be only two examinations each year, it would be easier to plan in additional sessions if required.

Licence to practise qualifications – Further Education

Lantra Awards

21. The Qualifications Assessor presented the report of the audit of Lantra Awards that had covered Lantra's external quality audits of two of its delivery centres.

Licence to practise qualifications – Higher Education

22. The Qualifications Assessors introduced papers for each of the following Higher Education Institutions, with updates on the ongoing monitoring activities and action plans.
- Aberystwyth University
 - Harper Adams University
 - Ulster University
 - University of Bristol
 - University of Chester
 - University of Greenwich
 - University of Portsmouth
 - University of South Wales

Matters for discussion

Self Assessment reports and risk ratings

23. The Qualifications Assessors presented a report on the annual review and analysis of the self-assessment reports for the academic year 2024-2025 submitted by all Accredited Education Institutions (AEIs), which consisted of Awarding Organisations, Higher Education Institutions, and delivery sites. Each submission had been analysed, with each AEI assigned a risk level which had then been incorporated into the overall risk rating. The report covered each AEI delivering a licence to practise qualification, as well as an overview of the Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing qualifications.

Matters for note

Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (CertAVN) statistics

24. The Committee noted a paper setting out the enrolments for the CertAVN in each academic year since the initiation of the qualification, together with the number of

certificates completed. The information on certificates awarded in each calendar year would be included in the *RCVS Facts* publication.

25. A member queried whether there was any way of gauging how achievement of the CertAVN was recognised and valued within veterinary practice. The DoVN commented that during conversations held at the various VN Vision events over the past two years, the certificate holders said that they were valued both in terms of their skills and financially. It was hoped that with changes in legislation, specific skills could be attached to the different CertAVN qualifications and would also tie into the advanced practitioner and prescriber roles that were being developed.
26. The RCVS could survey those who had achieved the qualification as part of future research, and it was also pointed out that the concept of stakeholder engagement had been strengthened in the updated accreditation standards, and it should be the case that providers were able to obtain feedback from practices, prior to their re-accreditation events.

Items for publication

27. The spring edition of the *VN Education* newsletter had just been published, and the link would be sent to the Committee. There were no items arising from the meeting to be included in future publications.

Any other business

28. A suggestion was made that it might be helpful to provide a list of points that are often minor issues or errors in accreditation paperwork, to assist the AElS. It was noted that there is a list of this type for accreditation panel members, and also an Academy course covering the accreditation standards in detail, as well as written guidance for the CertAVN. It was agreed that the team could consider providing a list of common issues going forward.

Meeting dates 2026

- 29.
- The remaining meeting dates for 2026 were confirmed as follows:
 - Thursday 25 June (in person, full day 10.00am – 4.00pm)
 - Wednesday 19 August
 - Wednesday 21 October
 - Tuesday 15 December

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	13 May 2026
Title	Report on registration of VNs educated outside the UK
Summary	This paper summarises the applications for registration from nurses educated outside the UK. It covers the period between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026.
Decisions required	None
Attachments	Annex A – Registration process for VNs educated outside the UK
Authors	<p>Victoria Hedges VN Examinations Qualifications Lead v.hedges@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0782</p> <p>Georgina Winston VN Examinations Assessor g.winston@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0778</p>

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a
Annex A	Unclassified	n/a

¹Classifications explained

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²Classification rationales

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Registration for holders of qualifications achieved outside the UK (2025/2026)

Background

1. The RCVS considers applications from individuals intending to enter the register of veterinary nurses in the UK. Annex A provides an overview of the process followed to determine the suitability of applicants.
2. This paper provides details of the outcome of applications received between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026.

Outcome of applications received between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026

3. Table 1 details the data for completed applications processed between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026. A completed application is one where all information has been received, and the decision has been conveyed to the applicant. The figures in brackets relate to the previous reporting period (1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025) and have been provided for comparison.

Key:

Accepted	Application accepted without further assessment. Applicants are invited to register without completing examinations. This is only applicable for individuals educated in an institution accredited by ACOVENE.
Adaptation	Additional assessment required. This is normally in the form of the Pre-registration examination, but in some cases could include a compulsory Period of Supervised Adaptation (PSA) in a UK veterinary practice and/or the completion of an assignment. The Pre-registration examination is compulsory for everyone except those educated in an ACOVENE-accredited institution.
Rejected	Applicant does not meet the minimum RCVS requirement for entry onto the register of veterinary nurses. Applications from veterinary surgeons fall into this category.

Table 1 Applications for entry onto the register by nurses trained outside the UK

Applicant qualification origin	Total Applications	Accepted (ACOVENE)	Adaptation	Rejected	Registered
Australia	14 (14)	0 (0)	14 (14)	0 (0)	8 (13)
Belgium	1 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)
Canada	2 (3)	0 (0)	2 (3)	0 (0)	1 (2)
Colombia	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)
Croatia	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Denmark	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)
Finland	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (1)
Germany	1 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Ghana	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)
Hong Kong	1 (2)	0 (0)	1 (2)	0 (0)	2 (6)
Italy	4 (1)	1 (1)	3 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1)
Japan	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (1)
Lithuania	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)	1 (0)
Netherlands	1 (3)	1 (0)	0 (3)	0 (0)	2 (1)
New Zealand	11 (11)	0 (0)	10 (11)	1 (0)	5 (6)
Nigeria	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)
Norway	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Pakistan	0 (2)	0 (0)	0 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Philippines	1 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Republic of Ireland	14 (17)	14 (17)	0 (0)	0 (0)	12 (15)
Singapore	1 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
South Africa	1 (2)	0 (0)	1 (2)	0 (0)	0 (4)

Applicant qualification origin	Total Applications	Accepted (ACOVENE)	Adaptation	Rejected	Registered
Spain	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (1)	0 (0)
Switzerland	0 (1)	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (1)
Turkey	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)
USA	9 (8)	0 (0)	9 (8)	0 (0)	3 (1)
Zimbabwe	1 (2)	0 (0)	1 (2)	0 (0)	2 (1)
Total	63 (73)	17 (19)	44 (50)	2 (4)	40 (53)

4. There were 63 completed applications processed in the reporting period. This has decreased by 13.7% from the previous year. As usual, the highest number of applications were received from applicants educated in the Republic of Ireland, Australia and New Zealand.
5. With the exception of those educated in the Republic of Ireland, seven applications were received from veterinary nurses educated within the EU. This is similar to last year.
6. As of 31 March 2026 there were seven partially completed applications. Reasons for non-completion relate to lack of / incorrect affidavits, non-payment or insufficient evidence about the content of the qualification. Where applications are incomplete, we communicate with the applicant and support them to obtain the required information.
7. As of 31 March 2026 there were 64 applicants preparing for the Pre-registration Examinations (adaptation). This compares to 78 applicants in the same position on 31 March 2025. Applicants have two years to sit the examination from the date of their decision letter.
8. The number of applicants entering the register decreased from 53 in 2024/25 to 40 in 2025/26. This is a decrease of 24.5%.
9. As of 31 March 2026, there were 590 actively registered RVNs educated outside the UK, unchanged from 31 March 2025. This marks the first year in which the number of actively registered registrants educated outside the UK has not increased.
10. A total of 49 RVNs educated outside the UK were removed from the register and 9 restored during the reporting period. Table 2 provides this data in relation to the country of qualification.

Table 2 Overseas educated RVNs leaving and restoring to the register

Applicant qualification origin	Left the register	Restored to the register
Australia	9	3
Canada	1	0
Italy	2	0
New Zealand	4	1
Norway	1	1
Portugal	7	0
Republic of Ireland	19	3
South Africa	6	0
USA	0	1
Total	49	9

11. The majority of those removed from the Register were educated in Ireland, with approximately 68% leaving within three years of joining. The remaining 32% had been registered for between seven and eleven years.
12. A small number of individuals who qualified in other EU countries (Italy, Norway, and Portugal) were removed from the Register. Of these, 70% had been registered for between five and twelve years, while 30% had been registered for less than two years.
13. The remaining were educated in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa. Of this group, 70% had been registered for between four and twenty-two years, while 30% had been registered for less than three years.
14. Half of those removed informed us of their intention to do so, while the other half were removed from the Register following non-payment of the retention fee. Of those who informed us of their intention to leave, the majority indicated that they were returning overseas or relocating overseas.
15. A number of applicants who had been granted permission to sit the examination reported difficulties in obtaining a visa to work in the UK. This resulted in their withdrawal from the process.

Registration process for VNs educated outside the UK

Background

1. VN Council and VN Education Committee have both agreed on the criteria for veterinary nurses trained outside the UK to apply for entry into the RCVS Register of Veterinary Nurses. The summary is provided below.

Registration of veterinary nurses educated at an ACOVENE accredited institution

2. Holders of ACOVENE (the European Accreditation Committee for Veterinary Nurse Education) accredited qualifications are normally permitted to enter the register directly. The exception to this is where an applicant has completed their qualification via distance learning. They are then processed as outlined below. It should be noted that ACOVENE requires a minimum of 500 hours of clinical practical to be undertaken.

Registration of veterinary nurses educated at a non ACOVENE accredited institution

3. Where a qualification has been achieved at an institution which is not accredited by ACOVENE the applicant is required to provide evidence that they hold a qualification which aligns closely to those delivered in the UK. Applicants are required to map their syllabus/curriculum to the RCVS Day One Skills and Day One Competences and provide evidence that the educational level is at a minimum of Qualification and Curriculum Framework (QCF) Level 3. If this is aligned the applicant is permitted to proceed to the RCVS Pre-registration examination which they must pass before applying to enter the register.
4. Where a large number of applicants have a qualification from one country/awarding organisation, VNC is asked to consider accepting the qualification so that future applicants holding that qualification are not required to provide their syllabus/curriculum. This has been the case for some applications received from Australia, Portugal, New Zealand, South Africa, Hong Kong, Canada and the USA. These applicants are still required to pass the RCVS Pre-registration examination. Table 1 outlines the frequently received applications.
5. Mechanisms are in place to ensure that when a qualification changes, applicants are required to submit the syllabus / curriculum.
6. Applicants are permitted to work in practice by enrolling for an optional Period of Supervised Adaptation (PSA) while they prepare for the Pre-registration examination.
7. Holders of veterinary degrees who do not also hold a veterinary nursing or veterinary technician qualification are not permitted to enter the register in the UK.

8. All applicants are required to demonstrate that they have knowledge of the Code of Professional Conduct (COPC). This is evidenced via the Pre-registration examinations or completion of a module in the *Working in the UK for Veterinary Nurses* course on the RCVS Academy.

Table 1 – Qualifications accepted without submission of syllabus/curriculum

Country	Awarding/accrediting Organisation	Qualification	Code	Year accredited	Syllabus required
Australia	Government approved Regional Training Organisations	Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing	ACM40412	2012	No
		Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing	ACM40410	2010	No
		Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing	RUV40404	2004	No
		Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing	RUV40198	1998	Yes
		Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing	ACM40418	2018	No
	University of Queensland	BSc Science with extended Major in Veterinary Technology	No info	No Info	No if Awarded prior to 2022 (including 2022)
La Trobe University	Bachelor of Veterinary Nursing	No info	No info	Yes	
Canada	Various organisations accredited by the CVMA	All CVMA accredited qualifications	N/A	N/A	No
Hong Kong	Hong Kong Polytechnic University	BSc (Hons) in veterinary nursing	N/A	2010	Awarded in 2014

Country	Awarding/accrediting Organisation	Qualification	Code	Year accredited	Syllabus required
	School of Continuing and Professional Education (SCOPE) City University of Hong Kong	Advanced Diploma in Veterinary Nursing	163-30280	2016	No
			173-30280	2017	No
			183-30280	2018	No
			193-30280	2019	No
			203-30280	2020	No
			213-30280	2021	No
			223-30280	2022	No
The Netherlands	Kwalificaties mbo Vocational Education and Business qualifications	Veterinary assistant/Paraveterinary	97590	2009	No
			22238	2012	No
			97040	No information	No
			25477	No information	No

Country	Awarding/accrediting Organisation	Qualification	Code	Year accredited	Syllabus required
			25540	No information	No
			25577	No information	No
New Zealand	Training organisations approved by the New Zealand Qualifications authority	National Diploma in Veterinary Nursing	NCF 0222	1996	No
		National Diploma in Veterinary Nursing	NCF 2491	2019	No
		National Diploma in Veterinary Nursing with strands in Companion Animal, and Equine Veterinary Nursing	NCF 4389	2021	Yes
	Massey University	Bachelor of Veterinary Technology	Before 2022	No information	No
Portugal	Castelo Branco University of Applied Sciences	Bachelor in Veterinary Nursing	Before 2018	No information	No
South Africa	University of Pretoria	University Diploma in Veterinary Nursing	0812002	Before 2022	No
		Bachelor of Veterinary Nursing	0813006	After 2019	Yes

Country	Awarding/accrediting Organisation	Qualification	Code	Year accredited	Syllabus required
USA	Various organisations accredited by the AVMA	AVMA-accredited college qualifications	N/A	N/A	No
Zimbabwe	University of Zimbabwe	Diploma in Veterinary Nursing	N/A	N/A	No for qualifications issued between 2006-2022.

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	13 May 2026
Title	Report on temporary student enrolments
Summary	This paper summarises the applications for temporary student enrolment completed between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026.
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Authors	<p>Lucy Blampied Qualifications Officer l.blampied@rcvs.org.uk / 020 8148 5562</p> <p>Victoria Hedges VN Examinations Quality Lead v.hedges@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0782</p>

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	n/a

¹Classifications explained

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Report on temporary student enrolments

Background

1. Student veterinary nurses studying outside the UK may apply for temporary student enrolment to allow them to complete a short period of work experience in the UK.
2. Applications are either made on behalf of large groups of students travelling as part of an organised exchange programme or individuals travelling on their own.
3. The length of temporary student enrolment is for a maximum period of 12 weeks which can be undertaken as one block or split into several short blocks. The majority of the student's required practical experience must be completed outside the UK.
4. The application must be supported by the student's school / college and the training practice that they will be attending.
5. This paper provides details of the outcome of applications for temporary student enrolment commenced between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026.

Temporary enrolments between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026

6. Table 1 shows details of application for temporary student enrolment for the reporting period. The figures in brackets relate to the previous reporting period (1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025) and have been provided for comparison.

Table 1

Applications for temporary enrolments

Applicant's qualification origin	Number of Applications
Netherlands	9 (7)
Republic of Ireland	21 (21)
Czechia	1 (0)
Belgium	1 (0)
Total	32 (28)

Summary	
Meeting	Veterinary Nurses Council
Date	13 May 2026
Title	RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee Annual Report to VN Council
Summary	This report sets out the work of the Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN) Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC)
Decisions required	None
Attachments	None
Authors	<p>Sandra Neary Senior Professional Conduct Officer / Secretary to the RVN PIC s.neary@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0730</p> <p>Gemma Crossley Head of Professional Conduct g.crossley@rcvs.org.uk / 020 7202 0740</p>

Classifications		
Document	Classification¹	Rationales²
Paper	Unclassified	N/A

¹Classifications explained

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Registered Veterinary Nurses Preliminary Investigation Committee

Annual Report to VN Council

Introduction

1. Since the last Report to Veterinary Nurses Council, there have been two meetings of the Stage 2 VNPIC which took place on 10 March 2026 and 28 April 2026. The meeting scheduled to take place on 20 January 2026 was cancelled as there were no agenda items. The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 4 June 2026.

RVN Concerns received / registered.

2. Between 14 February 2026 and 28 April 2026, there were 8 new concerns relating to RVNs. Of these 8 new concerns:
 - All cases are currently under investigation by a Case Manager, Veterinary Nurse, Veterinary surgeon, and a lay member (Stage 1 VNPIC).

RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee

3. 5 new cases have been considered by the Stage 2 VNPIC between 14 February and 28 April 2026. One case was referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee. Two cases closed, one with formal advice to the Respondent and two cases were referred to external solicitors for formal statements to be taken. At the meeting on 28 April 2026, one ongoing was considered and a decision was adjourned for further information to be obtained.

Ongoing Investigations

4. Five concerns are currently under investigation, and these will be returned to the RVN PIC for a decision in due course.

Health Concerns

5. There are currently no RVNs being managed in the context of the RCVS Health Protocol.

Performance Concerns

6. There are currently no RVNs being managed in the context of the RCVS Performance Protocol.

Referral to Charter Case Committee

7. Since the last report, no cases have been referred to the Charter Case Committee.

Referral to Disciplinary Committee

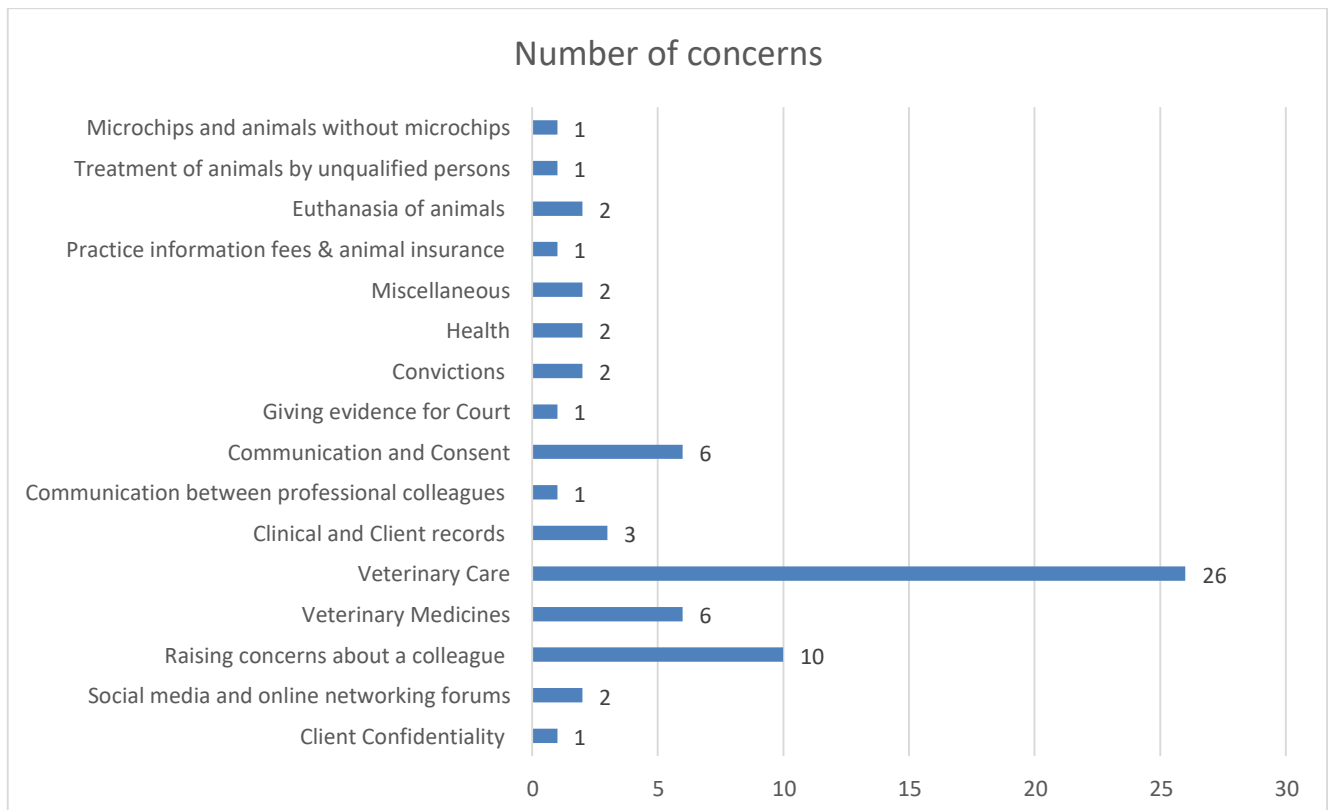
8. Since the last report, one case (involving one RVN) has been referred to the RVN Disciplinary Committee. The hearing dates will be confirmed in due course.

Disciplinary Hearings

9. Since the last report, one disciplinary hearing has taken place in relation to one veterinary nurse. The hearing took place between 4 and 9 March 2026. The first charge related to a bile acid stimulation test (BAST) blood sampling conducted on 13 December 2023 in respect of a dog at a practice in Knutsford, Cheshire. The respondent admitted several sub-charges relating to the blood sampling. The second charge, which the respondent admitted, was that, in respect of the first charge, she had been dishonest and misleading. The Committee found that the respondent breached key aspects of the Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Nurses around honesty and integrity, client trust and accountability. It also found the following aggravating factors in regard to her admitted conduct – that there was a risk of harm to the dog, a breach of her employer’s trust, a breach of her colleagues’ trust as she was dishonest to them and also falsely implicated her colleague in her dishonesty, and the fact that her misconduct was repeated. In terms of mitigation the Committee considered there was no actual harm to the dog in question. The respondent was found guilty of disgraceful conduct and the Committee decided that the most appropriate sanction was to suspend her from the Register for a period of three months.

Professional Conduct Department

10. The chart below shows the number and categories of the **67** concerns relating to RVNs registered between **1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026**.



11. Of the **67** concerns registered between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026:

- 32 were closed at Stage 1.
- 27 are currently under investigation at Stage 1.
- 3 were closed at Stage 2, with formal advice issued to the Respondent in 2 of the cases.
- 3 are currently under investigation at Stage 2.
- 2 were referred to Stage 3 (RVN Disciplinary Committee)

In the preceding five years, the total number of concerns registered against RVNs for each year is as follows:

- 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025 – 64
- 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024 – 46
- 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023 – 34
- 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022 – 36
- 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021 – 37

Cases considered by RVN PIC (Stage 2)

12. Between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026, the Stage 2 VNPIC considered **12 new cases**. Of these:

- 2 cases closed with no further action.
- 2 cases closed with formal advice issued to the Respondent.
- 4 cases were referred to external solicitors for formal statements to be taken.
- 1 case was referred for further investigation.
- 3 cases (involving 3 veterinary nurses) were referred to the Disciplinary Committee.

During the same period, the Stage 2 VNPIC considered **6 ongoing cases**. 2 cases were closed (1 with formal advice issued to the respondent), and 4 cases (involving 4 veterinary nurses) were referred to the Disciplinary Committee.

Disciplinary Hearings

13. Between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026, there have been four DC hearings involving five RVNs. The Disciplinary Committee concluded that the conduct of the RVNs amounted to serious professional misconduct in four of the cases. One RVN was found not guilty of serious professional misconduct. In terms of sanction, one RVN was removed from the Register, two RVNs received suspensions for periods of 3 and 6 months. One RVN was issued with a reprimand.

Year overview

14. An in-person training day for members of the Professional Conduct Department and Committee members took place on 10 February 2026. The topics included Contextualised care, Schedule 3 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act and delegation to RVNs, a case law update and Referrals to the Charter Case Committee.

The Chair is very sorry that he is unable to attend this meeting because of a clash of engagements. He will be very happy to answer any questions outside of the meeting or attend another one.