

Scheme of delegation from the RCVS Council to committees

Operative date

1. The following delegations shall have effect from 4 June 2026.

The vision of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons

2. Our vision is always to be ambitious and compassionate, working collaboratively to build trust and inspire all veterinary professionals to succeed.

Role of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons [derived from the Charter]

3. The objects of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, as laid down in the Supplemental Charter granted on 17 February 2015 to the Royal Charter of 1844, ie:
 - a. To set, uphold and advance veterinary standards, and to promote, encourage and advance the study and practice of the art and science of veterinary surgery and medicine, in the interests of the health and welfare of animals and in the wider public interest.
 - b. The Charter also recognises those functions provided for in the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966, in terms of the regulation of the profession, and also recognises other activities not conferred upon the College by the Veterinary Surgeons Act or any other Act, which may be carried out in order to meet its objects, including but not limited to:
 - i. Accrediting veterinary education, training and qualifications, other than as provided for in the Act in relation to veterinary surgeons;
 - ii. Working with others to develop, update and ensure co-ordination of international standards of veterinary education;
 - iii. Administering examinations for the purpose of registration, awarding qualifications and recognising expertise other than as provided for in the Act;
 - iv. Promulgating guidance on post-registration veterinary education and training for those admitted as members and associates of the College;
 - v. Encouraging the continued development and evaluation of new knowledge and skills;
 - vi. Awarding fellowships, honorary fellowships, honorary associateships or other designations to suitable individuals;
 - vii. Keeping lists or registers of veterinary nurses and other classes of associate;
 - viii. Promulgating guidance on professional conduct;
 - ix. Setting standards for and accrediting veterinary practices and other suppliers of veterinary services;
 - x. Facilitating the resolution of disputes between registered persons and their clients;
 - xi. Providing information services and information about the historical development of the veterinary professions;

- xii. Monitoring developments in the veterinary professions and in the provision of veterinary services;
- xiii. Providing information about, and promoting fair access to, careers in the veterinary professions.

The purpose of RCVS Council [derived from the Charter]

- 4. It is laid down in the Charter that the affairs of the College shall be managed by the Council as constituted under the Act. The Council shall have the entire management of and superintendence over the affairs, concerns and property of the College (save those powers of directing removal from, suspension from or restoration to the register of veterinary surgeons and supplementary veterinary register reserved to the disciplinary committee established under the Act) and shall have power to act by committees, subcommittees or boards and to delegate such functions as it thinks fit from time to time to such committees, subcommittees or boards and to any of its own number and to the employees and agents of the College.
- 5. The Council is also responsible for the appointment of the CEO and Registrar, and the ratification of the Assistant Registrars. The appointment of the Registrar will be undertaken in consultation with the Chief Executive. Appointment of all other staff members is the responsibility of the CEO and relevant members of the Senior Team.
- 6. A strategic plan is developed and agreed by Council to facilitate the delivery of these activities and to ensure ongoing development and quality improvement.
- 7. A delegation scheme that outlines how Council's functions are managed via system of committees and other groups is agreed annually by Council.

How Council members work

- 8. In order to enable the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons to fulfil its vision, and to discharge its functions under its Royal Charter and the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966, RCVS Council members will:
 - a. Abide by the Nolan Principles of Public Life;
 - b. Work in the best interests of the public, and of animal health and welfare and public health;
 - c. Respectfully listen to the voices of the professions, the public and other stakeholders, and reflect them in discussions where appropriate, ensuring they are put into context;
 - d. Neither be answerable to, nor represent, any group of individuals;
 - e. Support the College's vision and work towards the success of the College and its functions;
 - f. Live the College's values;
 - g. Act at all times in a constructive, supportive and compassionate manner;
 - h. Exercise a duty of care to the staff employed by the College, working through the CEO and Registrar;
 - i. Recognise the importance of a collegiate atmosphere where robust discussion is welcomed in the formation of policy and multiple points of view are listened to and respected;
 - j. Respect and support the decisions made by Council when communicating externally;
 - k. Communicate College activities and positions to relevant stakeholders;
 - l. Abide by the Code of Conduct for Council and Committee members.

9. This scheme outlines how Council's functions are currently delegated.

Committees

10. There shall be the following statutory and non-statutory disciplinary and investigation committees, and appeals committees:

- the Accreditation of Veterinary Programme Appeals Committee (appeals committee);
- the Charter Case Committee (non-statutory disciplinary committee);
- the Disciplinary Committee (statutory committee);
- the Examination Appeals Committee (appeals committee);
- the Preliminary Investigation Committee (statutory committee);
- the Registration Reviews and Appeals Committee (appeals committee)
- the Veterinary Nurses Preliminary Investigation Committee (non-statutory disciplinary committee);
- the Veterinary Nurses Disciplinary Committee (non-statutory disciplinary committee); and,
- the Specialist Recognition and Advanced Practitioner Appeals Committee (appeals committee).

11. There shall be the following standing committees:

- the Advancement of the Professions Committee;
- the Audit and Risk Committee;
- the Education Committee;
- the Finance and Resources Committee;
- the Nominations Committee;
- the Professional Conduct Liaison Committee;
- the Registration Committee;
- the Standards Committee; and,
- the Veterinary Nurses' Council.

12. The standing committees shall report to Council and shall be constituted and work within the terms of reference set out below. Their Chairs will be elected by Council unless the Chair is role-based (for example, Treasurer for Finance and Resources Committee, incoming JVP for three years for ProfCon Liaison Committee), with the exception of VN Council, which will elect its own Chair. The Chairs of the standing committees, with the exception of the VN Council, shall be members of RCVS Council, and could be MRCVS, RVN or lay. The Chair of VN Council may or may not be made a member of RCVS Council. The Chair of VN Council will be an RVN, either elected or appointed. The Chairs of the statutory and non-statutory disciplinary, investigation and appeals committees shall be non-Council members. The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee should be an external individual, independent of Council, but elected by Council. Chairs of subcommittees and other groups do not need to be Council members unless otherwise stated.

13. Chairs of the standing committees will generally hold the office for a three-year period and will be re-elected by Council annually. They will be expected to align with the chair role specification.

14. Standing committees will select their own Vice-Chairs, unless otherwise specified. The Vice-Chairs can be any full member of the committee* (ie not an observer, but does not have to be a Council member) apart from the Vice-Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee, who should be a full member and a Council member. They will be re-elected every year by members of the relevant committee, from among self-nominated candidates, as soon as possible into the new presidential year, with the exception of VN Council, which has its own arrangements – see pars 84-85, below
15. The main standing committees will generally meet between three and six times a year, either in-person or remotely. Some meet less frequently, for example, the Nominations Committee. If there is no, or not enough, business to justify a meeting, the Chair can cancel a meeting. There may also be occasions when an additional meeting is required if decisions need to be made more quickly. Small amounts of business can also be conducted by email if there is not sufficient time to mount a meeting and full discussion is not required, but this should be the exception. The quorum for standing committees will generally be a simple majority of the total number of full voting members (ie not observers), unless otherwise specified (for example, VN Council, see below). For more detail about the operation of a meeting, see the role specification for an RCVS Committee Chair.
16. If an item crosses the remit of more than one committee, a joint meeting may be held. The Chair of the meeting will be one of the Chairs of the two committees coming together, to be agreed between them. If an item starts with one committee but, over time, becomes more relevant for another, it may be cross-referred to the most appropriate by the original Chair, or come back to Council for either a decision on the item itself, or a decision on the delegation route. The guidance of the President on the most appropriate course of action may be sought.
17. Where a joint meeting is held of two committees, each committee must be quorate in its own right. Where such joint meetings take place, the Chair of the meeting may be the Chair of either committee, or another member of either committee, at the discretion of the President.
18. The committees may appoint one or more subcommittees or working parties for such general or special purpose as they may think fit, subject to the approval of the Finance and Resources Committee and/or Council, and, subject to any contrary direction from the Council, may on behalf of the Council delegate to such subcommittees power to act in the name of the College and the Council in relation to the matters set out in their terms of reference.
19. The RCVS Officer Team may select one Observer for each of the non-statutory standing committees. If an Officer is on the Committee in another capacity, this additional Observer may not be required.

Accreditation of Veterinary Programme Appeals Committee

20. The Accreditation of Veterinary Programme Appeals Committee shall deal with appeals of the outcome of RCVS accreditations of veterinary degrees or VN educational programmes, following review by the Primary Qualifications Subcommittee (PQSC)/Education Committee/VN Education Committee (VNEC), as appropriate. The appointment of the panel is coordinated by the Registrar.

One member should be appointed from the Council Officer team (for example, current President or Vice-President), one member from Council and one lay member (should be nominated from the list of RCVS accreditation panel members). The meeting will normally be held within two months of receipt of the request by the appellant institution for consideration of the appeal by an appeals panel.

Advancement of the Professions Committee

21. The Advancement of the Professions Committee will oversee work that is non-statutory in nature and contributes broadly to the advancement of the veterinary and/or veterinary nursing professions.
22. Such activity includes, but is not limited to, leadership, innovation, mental health (Mind Matters), the Fellowship, international strategy, Vet Futures, VN Futures, diversity and inclusion, sustainability and other workstreams to be defined by Council.
23. This will exclude work that is non-statutory but sufficiently covered by existing standing committees, such as postgraduate education.
24. The Committee shall comprise the chairs of relevant working parties or taskforces, or appropriate Council member champions, together with up to four other members of Council (chair, lay member, veterinary surgeon, veterinary nurse), together with relevant members of the Senior Team. Other Committee members may be co-opted if necessary. RCVS Knowledge, an independent charity, will contribute by means of its Chair of Trustees, who will be an invited observer. Although they each have responsibility for individual projects or areas of work, Committee members will review and input across all areas, with collective responsibility.
25. The Committee shall:
 - a. Take regular reports from the leads on these areas of work and consider the ongoing effectiveness of the work against agreed strategy, timing and resourcing, making recommendations for changes, where appropriate. Consider any additional budgetary impact of these workstreams, which would then be escalated via the Financial Controls process;
 - b. Ensure that potential synergies between the various projects and initiatives reporting into the Committee are identified and exploited, and that opportunities for working collaboratively to maximise the impact of workstreams is explored;
 - c. Provide a forum for in-depth consideration of the issues surrounding or arising from the projects and initiatives that report into the Committee;
 - d. Provide a forum for blue-sky thinking to support the identification and development of new non-statutory projects that would serve to advance the professions;

- e. Flag up any issues of concern to the Audit and Risk Committee, via the Risk Register, particularly in terms of financial, reputational or legal risks associated with the project and initiatives reporting to the Committee;
- f. Make recommendations to Council for any new streams of work that may be appropriate under our Royal Charter; and,
- g. Make a report to Council on a regular basis summarising the work that comes under its purview (usually via the minutes of its meetings).

Audit and Risk Committee

- 26. The Audit and Risk Committee shall support the Council by reviewing the comprehensiveness and reliability of assurances and internal controls in meeting the Council's oversight responsibilities. The Committee is a non-executive committee and has no executive powers except as set out below.
- 27. The Committee has delegated authority to:
 - a. Monitor the Council's risk management arrangements;
 - b. Approve the internal audit programme; and,
 - c. Advise the Council on the comprehensiveness and reliability of assurances and internal controls, including internal and external audit arrangements, and on the implications of assurances provided in respect of risk and control.
- 28. The Committee may request the attendance of any employee or member, as set out in paragraph 41 below, and may incur expenditure for the purpose of obtaining advice in terms of paragraph 45 below.
- 29. The Committee is accountable to the Council. The minutes of each Committee meeting shall be circulated to the Council. The Committee shall report to the Council annually on its work. It may also submit separately to the Council its advice on issues where it considers that the Council should take action. Where the Committee considers there is evidence of *ultra vires* transactions or evidence of improper acts, the Chair of the Committee shall raise the matter at a formal Council meeting.
- 30. The Committee shall have five members, but may operate with fewer while a vacancy exists, provided the quorum is maintained. The members shall include two Council members, of whom one shall be a lay member and one a registrant member. Neither the President, Vice-Presidents, nor the Treasurer shall be members of the Committee. The members of the Committee who are not Council members (the "external members") shall have appropriate audit and risk management experience.

31. The Council will elect one of the external members serving on the Committee as Chair, based on relevant background and skills. The Committee will elect a Vice-Chair and in the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair will chair the meeting.
32. The Committee shall support the Council by reviewing and advising the Council on the operation and effectiveness of the arrangements which are in place across the whole of the Council's activities that support the achievement of the Council's objectives. In particular, the Committee shall review the adequacy of:
 - a. All risk and control related disclosure statements, together with any accompanying internal audit statement, where appropriate, external audit opinion or other appropriate independent assurances, prior to endorsement by the Council;
 - b. The underlying assurance processes that indicate the degree of the achievement of corporate objectives, the effectiveness of the management of principal risks and the appropriateness of the above disclosure statements;
 - c. The policies for ensuring compliance with relevant regulatory, legal, governance and code of conduct requirements; and
 - d. The policies and procedures for all work related to fraud and corruption.
33. In carrying out this work the Committee will primarily utilise the work of internal audit, where appropriate, external audit and other assurance functions. It will also seek reports and assurances from Department Managers as appropriate, concentrating on the over-arching systems of governance, risk management and internal control together with indicators of their effectiveness.
34. In reviewing risk management arrangements, the Committee shall draw attention to areas where:
 - a. Risk is being appropriately managed and controls are adequate (no action needed);
 - b. Risk is inadequately controlled (action needed to improve control);
 - c. Risk is over-controlled (resource being wasted which could be diverted to another use); and,
 - d. There is a lack of evidence to support a conclusion (if this concerns areas which are material to the organisation's functions, more audit and/or assurance work will be required).
35. In relation to internal audit, where appropriate, the Committee shall:
 - a. Ensure that there is effective internal audit activity that complies with any applicable standards and provides appropriate independent assurance to the Council, Audit and Risk Committee, Secretary and Registrar;

- b. The internal audit activity will include reviews into RCVS internal processes, policies and procedures. These reviews will be based on identified high risk areas from the Corporate Risk Register and assurance map;
- c. Ensure that the College makes adequate resource available to internal audit activity, where required;
- d. Review the need for an internal audit strategy, operational plan and work programme;
- e. Consider the major findings of the internal audit/review work, where carried out, and management's response; and,
- f. Annually review the effectiveness of internal audit.

36. In relation to external audit, the Committee shall:

- a. Consider the appointment and performance of the external auditor, the audit fee and any questions of resignation or dismissal and make appropriate recommendations to the Council;
- b. Discuss and agree with the external auditor, before the audit commences, the nature and scope of the audit as set out in the external audit plan and their local evaluation of audit risks;
- c. Review the work and findings of the external auditor, consider the implications and management's responses to their work; and,
- d. Review all external audit reports, including agreement of the annual audit letter before submission to the Council and any work undertaken outside the annual audit plan, together with the appropriateness of management responses.

37. The Committee shall review the annual financial statements, focusing particularly on:

- a. Disclosures relevant to the terms of reference of the Committee;
- b. Changes in, and compliance with, accounting policies and practices;
- c. Unadjusted mis-statements in the financial statements;
- d. Major judgmental areas; and,
- e. Significant adjustments resulting from the audit.

38. The Committee shall ensure that the systems for financial reporting to the Council, including those of budgetary control, are subject to review as to completeness and accuracy of the information provided to the Council.

39. The Committee shall meet not less than three times a year. The external auditors may request a meeting if they consider that one is necessary.
40. Only Committee members shall be entitled to attend meetings of the Committee. The Treasurer, CEO, Secretary and/or Registrar, and Director of Operations shall normally attend meetings. Representatives from the external auditors shall attend meetings as required for relevant items. The President and other Council members may attend meetings at the invitation of, or with the agreement of, the Chair of the Committee.
41. The Committee may request any employee or member to attend a meeting to assist with its discussions on any particular matter or to provide any information it may reasonably require in order to fulfil its remit. All employees and members shall co-operate with any reasonable request made by the Committee.
42. The Committee may ask any or all non-members to withdraw for all or part of a meeting if it so decides. In such an instance, the Chair shall ensure that a proper record is made of the meeting.
43. The senior representatives of external audit shall have free and confidential access to the Chair of the Committee. At least once a year, the Committee shall provide an opportunity to meet privately with the external auditors. College staff will not be present during these confidential meetings.
44. The Committee may investigate any activity within its terms of reference. It may seek any information it requires from any employee and all employees shall co-operate with any request made by the Committee.
45. The Committee may obtain legal or other independent professional advice and secure the attendance of external advisers with relevant experience and expertise if it considers this necessary, within the budget approved by the Council. The CEO and/or Registrar shall ensure that appropriate secretariat support is provided to the Chair and Committee.

Remit relating to accreditation functions of the College

46. The Committee will receive assurances that the quality assurance work undertaken by the College in relation to the accreditation of veterinary degree programmes and veterinary nursing educational institutions is operating in accordance with its published procedures. This process of assurance is also designed to contribute to compliance with the requirements for membership with the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) that 'Agencies should have in place processes for internal quality assurance related to defining, assuring and enhancing the quality and integrity of their activities'. This will be achieved by:
 - a. At the beginning of each calendar year, the Committee will be provided with a work plan, detailing the accreditation visitations that are scheduled for the forthcoming year;
 - b. Brief progress reports against this work plan will be provided as a standing item at each meeting of the Committee. These reports will also highlight any major concerns or issues that had arisen as a result of quality assurance activities conducted in the period covered by the report;

- c. An annual report will be produced at the end of each calendar year. This will be presented to the Committee together with the work plan for the next calendar year. The annual report would be expected to include:
 - i. Confirmation that quality assurance activities have been completed in line with the work plan, or reasons for any variation;
 - ii. Actions that have been taken or that are planned as a result of discussion by committees;
 - iii. Actions that have been taken or that are planned as a result of feedback from stakeholders (visitors/universities); and,
 - iv. Trends and themes identified in information presented year on year.
47. Findings of the Committee arising from assurances received on the quality assurance activities of the College in relation to veterinary degree programmes and veterinary nursing educational institutions shall also be circulated to the Primary Qualifications Subcommittee (PQSC), Education Committee and the Veterinary Nurses Education Committee.
48. The Committee may choose to invite attendance from representatives of Education Committee and VN Education Committee for the purpose of receiving assurances on quality assurance activities undertaken by those Committees.
49. Where an appointed member of the Audit and Risk Committee is also involved with the education quality assurance activities of the RCVS, they shall not be permitted voting rights on any issues discussed however they may remain present at the meeting for points of clarification.

Finance and Resources Committee and Audit and Risk Committee Joint meeting

50. The Finance and Resources Committee and Audit and Risk Committee meet formally once per year in May. The chair shall alternate between the Treasurer and the Chair of ARC for this joint meeting, and each committee must be quorate in its own right, although it is acknowledged that there are likely to be several people who sit on both committees.
51. The Terms of Reference for this meeting are as follows:
- a. to discuss the audit finding report with the auditors;
 - b. to discuss the financial elements of the annual report with the auditors;
 - c. to assure themselves of the reliability of the content of the narrative elements of the annual report via discussion with the executive team;
 - d. to assure themselves that the College remains a going concern and to make a recommendation to Council on this basis; and,

- e. to recommend the annual report and accounts to Council.

52. This meeting relates to the following parts of the individual committees' Terms of Reference.

53. For ARC: the committee shall review the annual financial statements, focusing particularly on:

- a. Disclosures relevant to the terms of reference of the Committee;
- b. Changes in, and compliance with, accounting policies and practices;
- c. Unadjusted misstatements in the financial statements;
- d. Major judgmental areas; and,
- e. Significant adjustments resulting from the audit.

54. For FRC:

- a. Conducting financial modelling of Management Accounts; and,
- b. Managing the assets and investments of the College.

Charter Case Committee

55. The Charter Case Committee shall deal with matters referred to it by the Preliminary Investigation Committee or the Veterinary Nurses Preliminary Investigation Committee and decide whether a warning (confidential or public) would be appropriate.

Disciplinary Committees

56. The Disciplinary Committee shall be constituted in accordance with Schedule 2 to the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966. The Veterinary Nurses Disciplinary Committee shall be constituted in accordance with the Veterinary Nurse Conduct and Disciplinary Rules 2014.

Education Committee

57. The Education Committee shall set the policy for undergraduate and postgraduate education and training of veterinary surgeons and determine the requirements for those seeking registration, for the award of qualifications under the Charter, for continuing professional development, and for recognition as RCVS Advanced Practitioner and RCVS Specialist.

58. Under normal circumstances Council members will form the majority on non-statutory committees, but on Education Committee (and the Primary Qualifications Subcommittee (PQSC)) a minimum of one third and a maximum of one half of members will be co-opted external members with education expertise, for example, Heads of the Veterinary Schools or other veterinary school staff members. Two students will also sit on the Education Committee (and two

on PQSC). In addition, the Chairs of the Education Subcommittees and a member of the Officer Team will sit as non-voting observers.

59. The Committee shall develop and keep under review education and training requirements for registration, and in particular shall:
- a. Define Day-One Competences and advise on the content of the veterinary undergraduate curriculum;
 - b. Oversee the approval process and ongoing monitoring of veterinary degrees and international memoranda of understanding, considering subcommittee reports on appointment of accreditation panel members, accreditation event reports, follow-up reports and annual monitoring reports from veterinary schools, subcommittee reports on overseas degrees from other accrediting bodies or the College, and subcommittee reports on operation of the statutory membership examination; and,
 - c. Make recommendations to Council on any change in approved status concerning registrable degrees, on the regulations governing the statutory membership examination and on the regulations governing practice by students.
60. The Committee shall develop and keep under review policy for continuing professional development, initial eligibility and revalidation of Advanced Practitioner and Specialist status, and postgraduate training and qualifications, and in particular shall:
- a. Define Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs) for, and monitor, the VetGDP;
 - b. Set the requirements for and monitor continuing professional development within the profession;
 - c. Develop and maintain a framework of College postgraduate awards, receiving reports from subcommittees on the standards for College-awarded certificates and fellowships by thesis, examinations and accreditation of other recognised postgraduate qualifications as part of the framework;
 - d. Define the requirements for RCVS Advanced Practitioner and RCVS Specialist status, receiving reports from subcommittees on the maintenance of lists for Advanced Practitioners and Specialists; and,
 - e. Recommend to Council amendments to the certificate rules.
61. The Committee shall recommend fees to the Finance and Resources Committee for all related activities, for example, fees for synoptic examinations, application and annual fees for Advanced Practitioners and Specialists, together with reviewer remuneration; fees for Statutory Membership exam candidates and remuneration for examiners; remuneration for accreditation panel members and reviewers of Advanced Practitioners and Specialist applications.

Examination Appeals Committee

62. The Examination Appeals Committee shall deal with appeals relating to the conduct of examinations administered by the College.

Finance and Resources Committee

63. The Finance and Resources Committee shall be responsible ensuring the finances, resources and framework of the College governance system is fit for purpose, thus enabling the Council and committees to deliver against the College's objects. It shall comprise the Treasurer (Chair), nominated representatives from Education, Standards, Advancement of the Professions, Professional Conduct Liaison and Registration Committees and VN Council, together with two lay members of Council and two veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse members of Council (ie two in total). The CEO, Registrar, Director of People and Director of Operations will be non-voting members.
64. The representatives from the Committees will be selected by the Committee as soon as possible after RCVS Day and will hold the role for a three-year period or until they come off the Committee that they are representing, or off Council.
65. It shall make recommendations to Council as appropriate.
66. It will be chaired by the Treasurer, and its functions will include, but not necessarily be limited to:
- a. Presenting an annual budget to Council for approval;
 - b. Review recommended proposed fee changes;
 - c. Laying down procedures for budgeting and financial control;
 - d. Conducting financial modelling of Management Accounts;
 - e. Approving expenditure from the Discretionary Fund, according to the financial controls;
 - f. Seeking the approval of Council for expenditure from the College's reserves;
 - g. Managing the assets and investments of the College;
 - h. Working with the executive team to ensure management of organisational risks, maintenance of a risk register and delivery of appropriate internal audit reviews, with oversight provided by the Audit and Risk Committee;
 - i. Overseeing the appointment of professional advisers to the College, over £75,000 (excluding Auditors);

- j. Having an overview of resource demands, and approval of any new initiatives meeting the threshold outlined in the financial controls;
- k. Acting as Project Board for substantive projects, where applicable under the project protocol, unless another dedicated group exists;
- l. Approving rates of travelling and subsistence expenses, and remuneration for work carried out on the College's behalf;
- m. In consultation with the APC and the Fellowship Board, deciding fees for application and ongoing membership of the Fellowship;
- n. Advising Council on corporate governance matters, including the terms of reference and composition of committees (but not individual membership);
- o. Approving the setting up of subcommittees, working parties and other such bodies, and determining their composition (but not individual membership), by considering proposals made by sponsoring committees, Officers or senior staff members (Council to ratify members of long-term groups as part of the annual cycle, sponsoring committees to agree terms of reference);
- p. Approving the disbanding of subcommittees, working parties and other such bodies, as appropriate;
- q. Taking oversight on people resources within the organisation to ensure efficient delivery of activities, with a focus on role numbers, engagement, recruitment and retention; and,
- r. Keeping under review the rules and arrangements for Council elections (the operation of the annual elections themselves being overseen by the Registrar, as returning officer).

Nominations Committee

67. The Nominations Committee will propose who will be awarded College honours and awards (recommendations will be ratified by Council and, for the VN Golden Jubilee Award, VN Council).

68. It will comprise:

- a. Two members of the Veterinary Nurses Council, one with an educational background and one clinical
- b. Three veterinary members of RCVS Council, covering small animal, equine, large animal and public health sectors (or sourced from outside Council if necessary)
- c. A Veterinary Schools Council appointed member of RCVS Council
- d. The Chair of the Mind Matters Taskforce

- e. The Chair of the Fellowship Science Advisory Panel
- f. The CEO (Chair)
- g. The Director of Advancement of the Professions

69. The Terms of Reference of the Committee are to:

- a. Review nominations for the College honours and awards and make recommendations to Council and VN Council (for the Golden Jubilee Award) for winners;
- b. Periodically to make recommendations to Council for any changes to the range of awards to bring the list up to date, align with strategic priorities and discontinue any awards that are no longer receiving good quality nominations;
- c. Make recommendations to Council for any significant changes to the awards process;
- d. Direct the executive team to make changes that are more operational; and,
- e. Consider whether it is appropriate to make nominations for external awards, including National Honours, and make relevant recommendations to Council.

Preliminary Investigation Committees

70. The Preliminary Investigation Committee shall be constituted in accordance with Schedule 2 to the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966. The Veterinary Nurse Preliminary Investigation Committee shall be constituted in accordance with the Veterinary Nurse Conduct and Disciplinary Rules 2014.

Professional Conduct Liaison Committee

- 71. The Professional Conduct Liaison Committee shall include the chair of the Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC), the chair of the RVN Preliminary Investigation Committee (RVN PIC), the chair of the Disciplinary Committee (DC), at least two members of Council one of whom is a member of the Officer Team, the chair of Standards Committee (SC). The member of the Officer Team to undertake the role of chair of the (liaison) committee for a three-year term, usually incoming Junior Vice-President in the year that the role becomes vacant.
- 72. The Professional Conduct Liaison Committee shall serve as a channel for communication between the Preliminary Investigation, Charter Case and Disciplinary Committees and Council, discussing policy issues in connection with the supervision of professional conduct. It will also oversee the work of the Veterinary Client Mediation Service (VCMS), and review reports about any Private Prosecutions the College may take. Its activities will include the following:

- a. Periodically reviewing the working methods of both the Professional Conduct team and the relevant committees, including the setting and monitoring of key performance indicators and monitoring processes;
- b. Monitoring costs and resources related to the committees, the VCMS and private prosecutions;
- c. Arrangements for the recruitment of members of the statutory committees (with the relevant Chair consulted in the process of specifications being drawn up), including deciding the membership of the independent selection panel and overseeing the process (final decision on successful candidates to be ratified by Council), appraisal of their performance and the process for selection for chairs;
- d. Arrangements for the appointment of legal advisors (including legal assessors) in connection with the professional conduct function; and,
- e. Facilitating a 'feedback loop' between DC and CCC decisions, outcomes of the PIC and RVN PIC, the SC and the VCMS.

73. The ProfCon Liaison Committee shall also monitor the impact of the protocol for private prosecutions against unqualified individuals, which commenced on 1 April 2023.

Registration Reviews and Appeals Committee

74. The Registration Reviews and Appeals Committee shall deal with reviews of refusal of registration to the RCVS Register of Veterinary Surgeons and appeals against refusal of registration to the RCVS Register of Veterinary Nurses and refusal of recognition of professional qualifications or failure to notify an applicant of a decision to recognise professional qualifications. This does not include appeals against restoration decisions made by the Disciplinary Committee or Veterinary Nurse Disciplinary Committee, the results of any examination administered by the College or of any assessment carried out by the College for the purpose of any qualification awarded by the College.

Registration Committee

75. The Committee shall comprise the President, Vice-Presidents and Treasurer of the College, together with two veterinary members of Council, a veterinary nurse member to be appointed by Veterinary Nurse Council (VNC), and a lay member of Council or VNC. The Committee shall be chaired by one of the Officers of the College, who will chair for a three-year term. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Registrar, and Director of Operations shall attend and participate in the meeting but shall be non-voting members.

76. The Committee shall be responsible for activities relating to the registration of veterinary and veterinary nurse members of the College (and, in due course, other Associate members of the College) and will provide and make recommendations to Council and/or VNC on matters relating to registration as appropriate.

77. Responsibilities will include but are not limited to:

- a. Reviewing and monitoring the implementation of the provisions of the Veterinary Surgeons Act (VSA) 1966 related to the registration of veterinary surgeons; (in conjunction with the Education Committee as appropriate);
- b. Reviewing and monitoring the implementation of the provisions of the Veterinary Nurse Registration Rules related to the registration of veterinary nurses; (in conjunction with VNC);
- c. Reviewing and monitoring the policies and procedures relating to registration and publication of the Register;
- d. Advising in relation to the creation of new categories of Associate members of the RCVS;
- e. Keeping under review data relating to Find-A-Vet;
- f. Monitoring registration activities (including trends in Registration for both veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses);
- g. Monitoring reports from relevant Appeal panels, ie
 - the Examination Appeals Committee;
- h. Considering applications for Temporary Registration in accordance with the VSA 1966; and,
- i. Reporting to Council on a regular basis summarising the work that comes under its purview (usually via the minutes of its meetings).

Specialist Recognition and Advanced Practitioner Appeals Committee

78. The Specialist Recognition and Advanced Practitioner Appeals Committee shall determine appeals relating to recognition of Specialists and Advanced Practitioners after reviewing the original papers considered by the first instance panel, subcommittee or committee.

Standards Committee

79. The Standards Committee shall provide advice and guidance on the professional conduct of veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses, including, but not limited to:

- a. Publishing a Code or Codes of Professional Conduct, subject to the approval of the Council;
- b. Publishing as necessary advice on professional conduct;
- c. Responding to professional conduct issues raised by the RCVS Council, Veterinary Nurses' Council or any committee of the RCVS;

- d. Responding to requests for advice from members of the profession and the public, as agreed by the chair; and,
- e. Overseeing the development of the RCVS Practice Standards Scheme by the Practice Standards Group, making recommendations to Council as appropriate, and considering appeals from the Practice Standards Scheme Review Group.

Veterinary Nurses' Council

80. The Veterinary Nurses' Council shall consist of the following members:

- a. Six veterinary nurses practising or living wholly or mainly in the United Kingdom, elected by ballot of all veterinary nurses, conducted substantially in accordance with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Council Election Scheme 1967 (as amended), with the necessary adaptations;
- b. Two veterinary nurses to be appointed by the Veterinary Nurses' Council;
- c. Two veterinary surgeons, to be appointed by the Veterinary Nurses' Council in consultation with RCVS Council;
- d. Four lay members to be appointed by the Veterinary Nurses' Council.

81. The term of office of elected and appointed members of the Veterinary Nurses' Council shall be three years in each case, and one-third of the elected members shall retire in rotation each year, being eligible for re-election if still qualified to serve. A member elected or appointed to fill a casual vacancy shall serve the unexpired portion of the predecessor's term of office.

82. Members of the Veterinary Nurses' Council shall serve a maximum of three successive terms and after which they will be eligible to re-stand for election or be re-appointed after a gap of two years.

83. The quorum for meetings of the Veterinary Nurses' Council shall be seven members, which must include four veterinary nurse members, one veterinary surgeon member and one lay member.

84. The Chair and up to two Vice-Chairs of the Veterinary Nurses' Council shall be elected by the Veterinary Nurses' Council, by secret ballot. The Chair will be either an elected or appointed veterinary nurse. The election of the Chair shall be confirmed by the RCVS Council.

85. The term of office of the Chair shall usually be three years and Vice-Chair(s) shall serve for either one or three years, with the outgoing Chair normally serving one year as Vice-Chair.

86. The Veterinary Nurses Council was established in 2002, and the Supplementary Royal Charter confirms its functions shall encompass the regulation of the profession of veterinary nurses.

87. The Veterinary Nurses' Council shall, in addition to those functions specified in the Supplemental Royal Charter:

- a. Set standards for the training and education of persons wishing to be entered into the Register;
- b. Set requirements in relation to the registration of veterinary nurses;
- c. Set standards for the conduct of veterinary nurses;
- d. Maintain the register of veterinary nurses;
- e. Recommend to the Finance and Resources Committee a budget and levels of fees to be charged; and,
- f. Recommend to the Council amendments to the rules relating to the registration, conduct and discipline of veterinary nurses.

88. In exercising its functions, the Veterinary Nurses' Council may delegate responsibility for matters related to veterinary nurse education, both licence to practise and post registration awards, to the Veterinary Nurse Education Committee.

89. The Veterinary Nurses' Council shall ensure that the welfare of animals and good veterinary practice are central to its work.

Other groups with delegated responsibilities

90. In addition to the abovementioned Committees, the following groups of individuals are tasked with oversight and/or delivery of specific areas of activity.

Chairs of standing committees

91. In addition to leading the work of their respective committees, the chairs of the standing committees (excluding the independent Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee and the chair of the ProfCon Liaison Committee, which is a co-ordinating role) will usually meet with the Officer Team and senior staff members prior to each Council meeting to discuss the running order and presentation of papers, if they have papers on the agenda. They will also provide advance notice of major decisions likely to be put before Council at future meetings, in order to enable the flow and time management of those meetings.

Officer Team

92. The Officer Team comprises the President, Junior Vice-President, Senior Vice-President and Treasurer, who are elected by the Council according to the election rules.

93. The Officer Team will meet on a regular basis with senior staff in order to discuss relevant matters, with a focus on external meetings, media management, communications and stakeholder relationships. The Chair of the Veterinary Nurses' Council will be invited to attend meetings of the Officer Team.

94. The Officer Team will also act as the **Remuneration Subcommittee**. The Remuneration Subcommittee meets annually to decide a policy on how the budget allocated to staff salaries, as agreed by Council as part of the budget-setting process, should be allocated, for example, what percentage should be allocated to salary increases and what to bonuses. It does not look at individual staff salaries, which is the role of the Senior Team, apart from the remuneration of the CEO, which is considered by the President in line with the aforementioned policy. The Subcommittee consists of the Officer Team, with the following staff members attending in a non—voting capacity: Directors of People and Operations, Registrar and CEO.

Senior Team

95. The purpose of the Senior Team is to enable Council to set the strategic direction and oversee governance of the RCVS, and to enable the College staff team to deliver.
96. The Senior Team comprises the RCVS Departmental Directors and is led by the CEO, who takes responsibility for delivery of the RCVS strategic plan, as agreed by Council, and the day-to-day running of the College.
97. The Senior Team meets regularly, and a summary of points raised is communicated to departmental teams. The CEO chairs these meetings, and the Executive Director of RCVS Knowledge is invited to sit as observer.
98. The key responsibilities of the Senior Team are as follows:
- a. Support and advise the Officers (President, Vice-Presidents and Treasurer), Council and committee members in the development and delivery of the Strategic Plan;
 - b. Ensure delivery of the Strategic Plan and keep Council regularly updated on progress against time, budget and intended impact;
 - c. Enable understanding of the RCVS purpose and Strategic Plan throughout the organisation and to ensure continual, coherent and consistent communication;
 - d. Create an environment in which our people can deliver, learn and thrive;
 - e. Ensure the effective and efficient day-to-day direction and management of the organisation in line with key functions as a Royal College and regulator;
 - f. Propose and manage the College budget ensuring the most effective use of resources;
 - g. Recommend Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and service standards, and review activities against these, making adjustments to procedures and resources as applicable in association with the relevant Committee Chairs;

- h. Utilise the collective wisdom and expertise of the Senior Team and wider organisation by collaborating to exploit synergies and advance our organisational priorities;
- i. Ensure appropriate mitigations against risk, keeping the organisational and departmental Risk Registers up to date and report regularly to the Audit and Risk Committee;
- j. Horizon-scan for opportunities and threats, building networks to understand, for example, research and best practice from other similar organisations both at home and overseas, and act on this information appropriately; and,
- k. Identify and consider issues and activities for communication to the wider organisation, professions and public.

[Approved by Council 4 June 2026]