RCVS standards and procedures for the accreditation of veterinary degrees

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Chapter 1 - The legal basis for the recognition of veterinary degrees in the UK

Introduction

This documents sets out the RCVS's policy and procedures for the accreditation of veterinary degrees, which enables veterinary graduates who hold such degrees to be eligible to register with RCVS and practise in the United Kingdom. It covers procedures for UK and overseas schools. Although the procedures and process for UK and overseas schools may vary slightly, the accreditation standards that each are required to meet are the same.

The term "accreditation" is used here to mean the process by which veterinary degrees are approved by RCVS, or, in the case of UK degrees, by the Privy Council on the recommendation of RCVS, for registration (licensing) purposes.

UK veterinary degrees

It is a legal requirement that veterinary surgeons who wish to practise in the UK must be registered as members of RCVS. In order to register, applicants must either hold a registerable degree, or alternatively must pass the RCVS statutory membership examination. Graduates of UK veterinary schools that have been granted a 'Recognition Order' by the Privy Council are entitled to register automatically with RCVS.

Accreditation of a veterinary degree course from a UK university is officially given by the Privy Council which grants a "recognition order" to the degree. This is done after consultation with the Council of RCVS, which is in turn advised by its Education Committee, its sub-committees and panel of visitors.

Under Section 3 of the 1966 Act, those who hold a degree from a UK veterinary school which has received a recognition order are entitled to be registered as Members of RCVS. Members then have the right to practise veterinary surgery in the UK.

RCVS Council has a duty, under Section 5 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 (amended), to supervise courses of study followed by students training to be veterinary surgeons in the UK. RCVS has to be assured that

> "*the courses of study to be followed by students training to be veterinary surgeons and the standard of proficiency required for registration in the register shall be such as sufficiently to guarantee that persons registered in the register will have acquired the knowledge and skill needed for the efficient practice of veterinary surgery and will have satisfied the requirements of Article 38 of Directive 2005/36/EC[1], as read with Article 22(a) of that Directive;"*

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[1] Directive 2005/36EC has been amended, and must be read in conjunction with Directive 2013/55/EU

The Act allows RCVS to appoint visitors:

> *"…to visit the universities for which recognition orders are in force or are proposed to be made, and any other universities which for the time being provide or propose to provide courses leading to examination by the College, and to report on the courses of study, staffing, accommodation and equipment available for training in veterinary surgery and the other arrangements and facilities for such training."* (Section 5.2, Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966) and also to
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> *"…appoint persons to attend at examinations in any aspect of veterinary surgery at universities for which recognition orders are in force or are proposed to be made and to report to the Council as to the sufficiency of the examinations and as to such other matters relating thereto as the Council may require.*"(Section 5.3, VSA)

In addition to visiting universities, the Act allows RCVS to request other information from universities "*as to the courses of study and examinations leading to the degree to which the recognition order relates".*   Universities that are awaiting consideration for a Recognition Order must also "*furnish the Council with such information as may be so specified as to the courses of study preparing students for those examinations".*   Under this provision, RCVS is able to monitor standards at UK universities on a regular basis, not just through the formal process of visitations.

Effect of the European Directive on UK veterinary degrees

RCVS is bound not only by the Veterinary Surgeons Act, but also by European Directives on the mutual recognition of qualifications, Directive 2005/36/EC as amended by Directive 2013/55/EU, which set out minimum training requirements for veterinary surgeons throughout the European Union. RCVS must be assured that any qualification which it approves for registration purposes meets the minimum training requirements set out in the Directive*. (Annex 3 - EU Directive requirements for veterinary degrees)*

Graduates who hold a UK degree recognised for registration purposes by RCVS, and who have European Community rights, are also be entitled to practise in other European Union (EU) member states under the terms of the EU Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications

Non-accredited UK veterinary degrees

The Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966, Section 4, includes provision for veterinary graduates of UK universities that do not have a Privy Council Recognition Order (ie new veterinary degrees or existing degrees that have lost their recognised status.) The Privy Council may

> *"(a) after consultation with the Council of the College; and*
> *(b) if it is of the opinion that the training provided to students of veterinary surgery attending at that university satisfies the requirements of Article 38 of the directive 2005/36/EC…*
> *direct the College of hold examinations in veterinary surgery for the students…attending at that university; and any such student passing any such examination shall be entitled to be registered in the register and shall on being so registered become a member of the College.*

Any UK university that is considering offering a professional veterinary degree and applying to the Privy Council for a Recognition Order must liaise with RCVS concerning its plans for the course at an early stage, including submitting draft curriculum plans.   RCVS will make arrangements for one or more visits to inspect arrangements for the course and will discuss options for examinations. Depending on an evaluation of the curriculum and assessment arrangements, RCVS may either set a separate examination for students, or alternatively, may make arrangements for the joint examination of students with the university, through the appointment of RCVS External Examiners to oversee the assessment process. For more about the process for new schools, see *Chapter 3 - The RCVS accreditation process*.

RCVS and recognition of other European Union veterinary degrees

Under the terms of the European Directive, any EU citizen holding a veterinary qualification listed in the Directive is eligible to register as a Member of RCVS. Although RCVS is obliged to "recognise" for registration purposes a veterinary qualification listed in the EU Directive if it is held by a European national, RCVS does not directly accredit these degrees. Hence, the right to registration in the UK derived from the Directive is limited only to those veterinary surgeons who hold European Community rights. Graduates of European veterinary schools who do not hold EC rights, and where the degree has not been directly accredited by RCVS, are not eligible to register automatically and must take the RCVS statutory membership exam if they wish to practise in the UK.

Any EU veterinary school may voluntarily apply to RCVS for accreditation and, if accredited, all their graduates (ie. not only those with EC rights) would then be eligible for registration in the UK with the RCVS[1].

Evaluation visits to European veterinary schools are conducted on a voluntary basis by the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) in association with the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE). Visitation reports are considered by the European Committee on Veterinary Education (ECOVE) which grants either "EAEVE accredited" status to those schools that meet all its standards including quality assurance indicators, or "EAEVE approved" status to those that meet the minimum standards sufficient to satisfy the European Directive minimum training requirements.

Results of EAEVE evaluation visits are published on its website at www.eaeve.org, and EAEVE requires its member veterinary schools to publish the EAEVE evaluation report on their own school's website. EAEVE accreditation or approval does not have any legal status in the UK and does not affect the registration rights in the UK of graduates applying to be admitted to the RCVS Register under the terms of the EU Directive.

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[1] This does not guarantee employment rights in the UK which are subject to Government visa requirements for non EU citizens.

EAEVE's evaluation visits to UK veterinary schools are co-ordinated with those of the RCVS, and are usually run on a joint basis with up to three visitors nominated by EAEVE. RCVS ensures that its own accreditation standards are aligned with those of EAEVE.

The reports of visits undertaken jointly between RCVS and EAEVE are considered separately by each organisation. Decisions on accreditation/approved status are taken separately by each body.

Accreditation of degrees outside the UK and European Union

Section 6 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act covers the registration of "Commonwealth or foreign" practitioners. Council must be satisfied that such registrants have

> *"the requisite knowledge and skill to fit (them) for practising veterinary surgery in the United Kingdom"*. "*The Council, when deciding for the purposes of this section what standard of knowledge and skill is required to fit a person for practising veterinary surgery in the United Kingdom, must select a standard that is the same as, or exceeds, the standard of knowledge and skill that would be possessed by a person holding qualifications satisfying the minimum training requirements of Article 38 of Directive 2005/36/EC*"

In order to determine whether an overseas qualification meets the necessary standards, RCVS can either require a university to go through the RCVS visitation process or may work in collaboration with other overseas accrediting bodies, through joint visitation and mutual recognition agreements. No veterinary degree will be approved by RCVS for registration purposes unless it has been through an accreditation process, including a visitation, undertaken either by RCVS, or by RCVS working jointly with another body, or by another national accrediting body recognised by RCVS for the purpose. The first accreditation visit to an overseas veterinary school not previously recognised by RCVS should normally be undertaken wholly by RCVS.

See *Chapter 3 - The RCVS accreditation process -* for the policy on overseas degree accreditation.

Chapter 2 - Accreditation standards

Introduction

RCVS's principal aim in setting accreditation standards, and evaluating veterinary schools against them, is to ensure that university veterinary schools
- are well managed
- run sustainably
- have the appropriate resources (people, facilities and animals)
- provide an up to date professional curriculum
- provide appropriate support to students in their learning
- operate fair, valid and reliable assessment systems
- operate robust quality assurance and quality enhancement mechanisms.

This is what lies behind the details of the twelve accreditation standards set out below. Compliance with all the standards taken together provides an assurance that the veterinary degree meets the needs of the veterinary profession, and guarantees that its graduates "will have acquired the knowledge and skill needed for the efficient practice of veterinary surgery" to enable them to register as Members of RCVS.

To be accredited by RCVS, a veterinary degree must:
- meet all the twelve standards set out below
- ensure that students meet the RCVS Day One Competences by the time they graduate
- ensure the veterinary programme meets the requirements of the EU Directive (2005/36/EC, as amended by 2013/55/EU)
- comply with the RCVS policy for extramural studies
- comply with any other policies published by RCVS from time to time relating to veterinary education (eg. concerning the distributive model for veterinary clinical education).

Standard 1 - Organisation

1.1   The school must develop and follow its mission statement which must, as a minimum, embrace all the accreditation standards.

1.2   The school must have a strategic plan and an operating plan.

1.3   An accredited school of veterinary medicine must be a part of an institution of higher learning accredited by an organisation recognised for that purpose by its country's government. A school may be accredited only when it is a major academic administrative division of the parent institution and is afforded the same recognition, status, and autonomy as other professional schools in that institution.

1.4   The head of school or dean must be a veterinarian and must have control of the budget for the veterinary programme. There must be a veterinary surgeon(s) responsible for the

professional, ethical, and academic affairs of the veterinary medical teaching hospital(s)/clinic(s).

1.5   There must be sufficient administrative staff to adequately manage the affairs of the school as appropriate to the enrolment and operation.

1.6   The school must provide evidence that it manages concerns about, or risks to, the quality of any aspect of the veterinary programme.

Standard 2 - Finances

2.1   Finances must be demonstrably adequate to sustain the educational programmes and the requirements for the school to meet its mission.

2.2   Schools with other veterinary-related professional and non-professional (eg. veterinary nursing, animal science) undergraduate degree programmes must clearly report finances (expenditures and revenues) specific to those programmes separately from finances (expenditures and revenues) dedicated to all other educational programmes.

2.3   Resources allocation must be regularly reviewed to ensure it meets the requirements for accreditation of the professional veterinary degree.

2.4   Clinical services, field services, and teaching hospitals must function as instructional resources. Instructional integrity of these resources must take priority over financial self-sufficiency of clinical services operations. Clinics must be run as efficiently as possible, for example with transparent business plans, in order to set an example of good business practice for students.

Standard 3 - Facilities and equipment

3.1   All aspects of the physical facilities must provide an environment conducive to learning.

3.2   The veterinary school must describe a clear strategy and programme for maintaining and upgrading its buildings and equipment.

3.3   Lecture theatres, teaching laboratories, tutorial rooms, clinical facilities and other teaching spaces must be adequate in number and size, and equipped for the instructional purposes and must be well maintained. Students must have ready access to adequate study, recreation, locker and food services facilities.

3.4   Offices, teaching preparation and research laboratories must be sufficient for the needs of the academic and support staff.

3.5   Facilities must comply with all relevant jurisdictional legislation including health, safety, biosecurity and UK animal welfare and care standards.

3.6   The institutions' livestock facilities, animal housing, core clinical teaching facilities and equipment must:
- be sufficient in capacity

- be of a high standard and well maintained
- be fit for purpose
- promote best husbandry, welfare and management practices
- ensure relevant biosecurity and bio-containment
- be designed to enhance learning.

Clinical teaching facilities

3.7   Core clinical teaching facilities may be provided on campus and/or externally through a 'distributed' model. The school must ensure any hospitals and practices involved with core teaching must meet the relevant RCVS Practice Standards and (for UK schools) be accredited under the RCVS Practice Standards Scheme or to the relevant standard for the teaching undertaken at the establishment.

3.8   All core teaching sites (whether on campus or external) should provide dedicated learning spaces including adequate internet access.

3.9   The School must ensure students have access to a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic facilities, including but not limited to: pharmacy, diagnostic imaging, anaesthesia, clinical pathology, primary care settings, intensive/critical care, surgeries and treatment facilities, ambulatory services and necropsy facilities.

3.10   Operational policies and procedures must be posted for staff, visitors and students.

3.11   Appropriate isolation facilities must be provided to meet the need for the isolation and containment of animals with communicable diseases, and operated to provide for animal care in accordance with accepted modern methods for prevention of spread of infectious agents.

Standard 4 - Animal resources

4.1   Normal and diseased animals of various domestic and exotic species must be available for instructional purposes, either as clinical patients or provided by the institution. While precise numbers are not specified, the school must provide access to sufficient numbers of animals and quality of animal material to provide the necessary quantity and quality of animal husbandry and clinical instruction.

4.2   Schools must ensure that students are competent in animal handling relevant to the workplace learning and clinical work to be undertaken and that Health and Safety matters are briefed before the student begins their placement.

4.3   It is essential that a diverse and sufficient number of surgical and medical patients be available for the students' clinical educational experience including patients in primary care settings.

4.4   Experience can include exposure to clinical education at external sites, provided the school quality assures these clinical experiences and educational outcomes to at least the same standard as university owned facilities. Further, such clinical experiences should occur in a setting that provides access to subject matter experts at the appropriate level, reference resources, modern and complete clinical laboratories, advanced diagnostic instrumentation and ready confirmation (including necropsy). Such examples could include a contractual

arrangement with nearby practitioners who serve as adjunct faculty members and off-campus field practice centres.

4.5   The teaching hospital(s) must provide nursing care and instruction in nursing procedures. A supervised field service and/or ambulatory programme must be maintained in which students are offered multiple opportunities to obtain clinical experience under field conditions.

4.6   Under all situations students must be active participants in the workup of the patient, including physical diagnosis and diagnostic problem oriented decision making.

4.7   Medical records must be comprehensive and maintained in an effective retrieval system to efficiently support the teaching, research, and service programmes of the school.

Standard 5 - Information resources

5.1   Libraries and information retrieval are essential to veterinary medical education, research, public service, and continuing education. Timely access to information resources, whether through print, electronic media or other means, must be available to students and faculty. The library must be administered by a qualified librarian. The school must have access to the human and physical resources necessary for development of instructional materials.

5.2   The school must provide students with unimpeded access to learning resources which include scientific and other relevant literature, internet and internal study resources, and equipment for the development of procedural skills (e.g. models). It will demonstrate how the use of these resources is aligned with the pedagogical environment and learning outcomes within the programme, and have mechanisms in place to evaluate the teaching value of innovations in learning resources.

Standard 6 - Students

6.1   The number of professional veterinary degree students must be consistent with the resources and the mission of the school.

6.2   Veterinary schools should establish post-graduate programmes such as internships, residencies and advanced degrees (e.g., MSc, PhD), that complement and strengthen the professional programme.

6.3   Provisions must be made, by either the university or school, to support the physical, emotional and welfare needs of students. This includes, but is not limited to, learning support and counselling services, careers advice, and fair and transparent mechanisms for dealing with student illness, impairment and disability during the programme. This shall include provision of reasonable accommodations/adjustments for disabled students, consistent with all relevant equality and/or human rights legislation.

6.4   There must be effective mechanisms for resolution of student grievances (e.g. interpersonal conflict or harassment).

6.5   Mechanisms must be in place by which students can convey their needs and wants to the school.

6.6   The school must provide students with a mechanism, anonymously if they wish, to offer suggestions, comments and complaints regarding compliance of the school with the RCVS standards for accreditation. These materials must be made available to RCVS as part of the annual report.

Standard 7 - Admission and progression

University veterinary schools are in effect the initial 'gatekeepers' for the profession in that the majority of students who are admitted to a veterinary degree programme will be entitled to register to practise once they graduate. It is therefore very important to ensure that students are well informed before they are admitted, and that the school undertakes the initial selection process and makes ongoing progression decisions with a view to students' eventual status as veterinary professionals.

7.1   The selection criteria for admission to the programme must be consistent with the mission of the school. The number of students admitted must be consistent with the resources available to the school.

7.2   In relation to enrolment, the school must provide accurate information in all advertisements regarding the educational programme by providing clear and current information for prospective students. Further, printed catalogue or electronic information must state the purpose and goals of the programme, provide admission requirements and procedures, state degree requirements, present faculty descriptions, clearly state information on tuition and fees along with procedures for withdrawal, give necessary information for financial aid programmes, and provide an accurate academic calendar. The information must include the accreditation status of the degree course (whether by RCVS or other relevant accrediting bodies), and the requirements for eventual registration/licence, including fitness to practise.

7.3   The selection and progression criteria must be clearly defined, consistent, defensible, be free of discrimination or bias, and take account of the fact that students are admitted with a view to their entering the veterinary profession in due course.

7.4   An accurate description of the selection criteria and processes must be published and readily available to potential students. The school must regularly review and reflect on the selection processes to ensure they are appropriate for students to complete the programme successfully, including consideration of their potential to meet all the RCVS Day One Competences across the common UK domestic species.

7.5   Adequate training (including periodic refresher training) must be provided for those involved in the selection process to ensure applicants are evaluated fairly and consistently.

7.6   Potential students must be advised of the demands of the veterinary course and RCVS requirements for fitness to practise.

7.7   Factors other than academic performance should be considered for admission, with the aim of selecting students who will be capable of succeeding in a variety of fields within the profession.

7.8   The school must have a strategy for widening participation and engaging students from a variety of social backgrounds.

7.9   If not otherwise covered within the early part of the course, the entry criteria for the programme must include evidence that the student has a solid background in the chemical, physical and biological science and mathematics, in order to meet the requirements of the EU Directive on basic subjects.

Students with a disability

7.10   There must be clear policies and procedures as to how applicants with disabilities or illness will be considered and, if appropriate, accommodated on the programme, taking into account the requirement that all students must be capable of meeting the RCVS Day One Competences by the time they graduate.

Student Progression

7.11   The basis for decisions on progression (including academic progression and professional fitness to practise) must be explicit and readily available to the students. The school must provide evidence that it has mechanisms in place to identify and provide remediation and appropriate support (including termination) for students who are not performing adequately (including areas such as practical animal handling, client communication etc).

7.12   The school must have mechanisms in place to monitor attrition and progression and be able to respond and amend admissions selection criteria and student support if required.

Student Exclusion

7.13   Mechanisms for the exclusion of students from the programme, either for academic reasons or under fitness to practise procedures, must be explicit.

Appeals and misconduct

7.14   School policies for managing appeals against decisions, including admissions, academic and progression decisions, should be transparent and publicly available. The process for exclusion of students on any grounds must be explicit.

7.15   Policies for dealing with student misconduct and fitness to practise must be explicit.

Standard 8 - Academic and support staff

8.1   The institution must ensure that all staff are appropriately qualified and prepared for their roles.

8.2   The total number, qualifications and skills of all staff involved with the programme, including teaching staff, 'adjunct' staff, technical and support staff, must be sufficient and appropriate to deliver the educational programme and fulfil the school's mission.

8.3   Staff who participate in teaching must display competence and effective teaching skills in relevant aspects of the curriculum, regardless of whether they are full or part time, residents, interns or postgraduate students, adjuncts or off-campus contracted teachers.

8.4   Academic positions must offer the security and benefits necessary to maintain stability, morale, continuity, and competence of the academic staff. Academic staff should have a balanced workload of teaching, research and service depending on their role; and should have reasonable opportunity and resources for participation in scholarly activities.

8.5   The veterinary school must provide evidence that it utilises a well-defined, comprehensive and publicised programme for the professional growth and development of staff; including formal appraisal and informal mentoring procedures, especially for junior academic staff. Staff must have the opportunity to contribute to the school's direction and decision making processes.

8.6   The school must be able to demonstrate that it has a programme for staff development in tertiary teaching theory/practice, and how that programme is managed.

8.7   Promotion criteria must be clear and explicit. Promotions must recognise excellence in, and place equal emphasis on all aspects of teaching (including clinical teaching), research, service and other scholarly activities.

Standard 9 - Curriculum

9.1   The curriculum must be designed, resourced and managed to ensure all graduates have achieved the graduate attributes expected of a degree programme at level 7 in the European Qualifications Framework *(Annex 8 - Quality Assurance Agency level descriptor*), the minimum training requirements in the European Directive 2013/55/EU on the mutual recognition of professional qualifications, and the RCVS Day One Competences.

9.2   The learning outcomes for the programme must be explicitly articulated to form a cohesive framework.

9.3   Programme learning outcomes must be communicated to staff and students and:
- underpin and ensure the effective alignment of all content, teaching, learning and assessment activities of the degree programme;
- form the basis for explicit statements of the objectives and learning outcomes of individual units of study; and
- be reviewed, managed and updated to ensure they remain relevant, adequate and are effectively achieved.

Management

9.4   The school must have a formally-constituted committee structure (which includes effective student representation), with clear and empowered reporting lines, to oversee and manage the curriculum and its delivery. The committee(s) must,

- determine the pedagogical basis, design, delivery methods and assessment methods of the curriculum,
- oversee quality assurance of the curriculum, particularly gathering, evaluating, making change and responding to feedback from stakeholders, peer reviewers and moderators, and data from examination/assessment outcomes,
- review the curriculum at least every seven years and
- identify and meet teacher training needs for staff, maintaining currency of their skills and competence for future curriculum development.

Content

9.5   The curriculum should include the following:

- understanding of biological principles and processes of veterinary significance
- expertise in recognising and advising on normal animal structure and function, husbandry, behaviour, nutrition and feeding, reproduction and breeding, homeostasis, pathophysiology, agents of disease and the natural history and clinical manifestations of important animal diseases
- expertise in medicine, surgery, and anaesthesia applicable to a broad range of common species. Students must develop entry-level skills in physical examination and laboratory diagnostic techniques and interpretation (including clinical pathology, diagnostic imaging and necropsy), disease prevention, biosecurity, therapy (including surgery and pharmacotherapeutics), patient management and care (including primary care, intensive care, emergency medicine, surveillance and isolation procedures) for individual animals, herds, flocks and other populations
- knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and behaviours necessary to contribute, as a veterinarian, to promoting animal health and well being, within changing societal expectations
- clinical, epidemiological, pathophysiological and regulatory skills in management of animal diseases which are:
    - endemic to the UK and the EU
    - endemic to and of special consideration in the country in which the school is located;
    - exotic to the UK and the EU and which are currently regarded as being of concern as potential emergency animal diseases or diseases of global veterinary significance
    - significant emerging diseases
- entry level capability (to OIE standards) in preventive medicine/epidemiology, zoonoses, food safety and hygiene, regulation of animals and animal products, and management of the interrelationship of animals and the environment. This training must include experience in abattoirs.
- professional level problem solving skills in evidence-based diagnosis and clinical management, and data and information management skills

- capacity for professional communication; the ability to acquire information from the owners of animals by direct interaction as well as retrieval of archival data from medical records, communication with colleagues, regulatory bodies and clients
- skills in application of professional ethics, delivery of professional services to the public, personal and business finances and management. An appreciation of the breadth of veterinary science, career opportunities and relevant information about the veterinary profession
- self-management skills in identifying and meeting personal learning needs, maintaining well being and professional relationships.

Extra Mural Studies (EMS)

9.6   EMS must be an integral and structured part of the education and training of veterinary students. Veterinary schools must demonstrate how it is incorporated in the curriculum.

9.7   Evidence must be provided that extramural farm animal husbandry practical work is used within the curriculum to complement intramural studies to support students' attainment of comprehensive understanding of livestock and farm systems.

9.8   Intra-mural core teaching must be supported by extramural clinical studies.

9.9   There must be a system in place to enable EMS providers to provide feedback to the school on the performance of students during EMS and on the EMS programme.

9.10   There must be a member of the academic staff responsible for the overall supervision of all types of EMS, including liaison with EMS providers and ensuring all students secure required placements.

9.11   The school must have mechanisms in place to support students to take responsibility for their own learning during EMS, including preparing for placements, setting learning objectives in consultation with tutors, providing guidance on EMS from the university and RCVS, and maintaining a reflective log of their EMS experience.

Standard 10 - Assessment

The decision on whether students can progress and ultimately graduate is a serious matter as they are entering into a social contract with the public through entry to the profession. The decision must be based on appropriate assessment of the required broad range of professional and technical skills, knowledge, and attributes demanded of a professional. Assessment policies, methods, standards and quality assurance must be appropriate for admission to the veterinary profession.

Management

10.1   The institution must ensure that there is a clearly identified structure within the school showing lines of responsibility for the assessment strategy to ensure coherence of the overall assessment regime and to allow the demonstration of progressive development across the

programme towards entry level competence. The strategy must be underpinned by robust quality assurance mechanisms.

Policy and Regulation

10.2   The assessment tasks and grading criteria for each unit of study in the programme must be clearly identified, and available to students in a timely manner well in advance of the assessment.

10.3   Requirements to pass including the effect of barrier assessments must be explicit.

10.4   Mechanisms for students to appeal against assessment outcomes must be explicit.

10.5   The school must have a process in place to review assessment outcomes and to change assessment strategies when required.

Assessment methods and design

10.6   Programme learning outcomes covering the full range of professional skills and attributes must form the basis for assessment design and underpin decisions on progression.

10.7   Assessment must inform student learning and students must receive timely feedback.

10.8   Assessment load must be planned and managed to achieve appropriate workloads for students and staff.

10.9   Assessment strategies must allow the school to certify student achievement of learning objectives at the level of the programme and individual units of study.

10.10   Methods of formative and summative assessment must be valid and reliable and comprise a variety of approaches. Direct assessment of clinical skills (some of which may be on simulated patients), must form a significant component of the overall process of assessment in the clinical disciplines.

Assessment standards and quality assurance

10.11   There must be procedures in place to maximise the fairness, validity and reliability of assessment outcomes, including but not limited to academic peer review of assessment content, proofing of scripts, supervision and invigilation, maintenance of records and moderation processes.

10.12   Schools must have appropriate moderation processes in place to ensure parity within and between individual units of study, across the programme, with other institutions; and to ensure that each student is fairly treated.

10.13   The school must be able to demonstrate that there are appropriate measures in place to ensure that grades awarded reflect an appropriate standard of performance by students against the relevant learning objectives.

Standard 11 - Research programmes, continuing and higher degree education

11.1   The veterinary school must demonstrate significant and broad research activities of staff that integrate with and strengthen the veterinary degree programme through research-led teaching.

11.2   All students must be trained in scientific method and research techniques relevant to evidence-based veterinary medicine. All students must have opportunities to participate in research programmes.

11.3   Veterinary schools must provide advanced postgraduate degree programmes, internships, residencies and continuing education programmes that complement and strengthen the veterinary degree programme and are relevant to the needs of the profession and community. Programmes and the numbers of students in them must be commensurate with the facilities, clinical and other resources and staff.

Standard 12 - Outcomes assessment

Evaluation of outcomes is the most important source of information to a school about its success and its drive for continued enhancement of quality. However, in contrast to inputs, which are relatively easy to measure, outcomes assessment is more complex. It is easy to become confused by the fact that the same raw data can be repurposed to assess outcomes at the level of the school or at the level of the individual student. This means that everyone involved needs to be clear about the use of data and the presentation of results.

All schools with an established quality assurance and enhancement culture will evaluate outcomes at school, programme, module and individual student levels. This will be achieved through results in assessments, feedback forms of various types, surveys, publication counts and a host of other measures. Different schools will place emphasis on different measures, but a report on outcomes should include a matrix that employs a variety of different measures providing information relevant to the foci of the other standards. Repetition of the measures over an extended period (at least five years) will then demonstrate progress in each area. Specifically, evaluation of outcomes related to the veterinary programme, individual students (throughout their studies as well as at graduation) and employability must be included, but RCVS will expect schools to include other outcomes evaluations of their choice. In addition, evidence of quality assurance, together with both reactive and proactive quality enhancement will be expected.

12.1   In the interests of quality assurance and enhancement, the veterinary school must have mechanisms to gather data routinely to demonstrate that its institutional and educational objectives are being met.

12.2   Specifically, the school must provide evidence that:
  - its strategic goals are appropriate and that it is progressing towards achieving those goals

- it is complying successfully with its operating plan
- its veterinary programme is subject to internal and external evaluation and validation processes by long feedback loops (e.g. graduate destination surveys, employer surveys) in addition to the short loops (e.g. unit of study evaluations).

12.3 The school must provide evidence that all its graduates have (or for a new school, will have) achieved the programme's stated learning outcomes, including the level of competence required of an entry-level veterinarian (RCVS Day One Competence).

12.4 There must a system for students to keep a record of, and reflect on, their developing practical and clinical skills over the duration of programme. There must be evidence that such experience logs inform the learning and assessment process for individual students, and evidence that the school uses consolidated data to monitor the achievement of competence and experience levels of students across the programme as a whole.

12.5 There must be procedures to review the evidence of student experience and student achievement of Day One Competence, and demonstrate implementation of change on the basis of such review. Outcomes of the review process must be communicated to relevant internal and external stakeholders.

12.6 The school must have a strategy for the continuous improvement of the quality of the veterinary programme.

12.7 In the case of a school that has yet to produce graduates, evidence must be presented that provides RCVS with reasonable assurance that the school's programme outcomes will be achieved. Evidence must be available to show progress to date in achieving the desired outcomes in the programme, and the measures to be taken in the remainder of the programme to ensure their achievement by the completion of the veterinary degree.

Chapter 3 - The RCVS accreditation process

The RCVS accreditation process for veterinary degrees is based on a system of visitations (otherwise referred to as site visits), together with regular reviews of progress through annual monitoring reports provided by the university.

Summary of the process

Initial contact

Approximately one year before the accreditation of an established veterinary school is due to lapse, RCVS will contact the veterinary school to give notice of the forthcoming visitation. A date for the visit will be agreed by RCVS with the appointed chairman for the visit, in consultation with the veterinary school and (if the visit is to be undertaken jointly with other bodies) with other international accrediting bodies as appropriate. The veterinary school should at this stage start to prepare its self evaluation report (SER), which will provide the foundation for the visit.

Self evaluation report (SER)

The visit centres around the self evaluation report prepared by the school. Preparation of the SER should take place well in advance of the visit and enable the university to evaluate the extent to which it meets the standards, identify any weaknesses that need addressing, and put in place measures to address them. The SER will also provide factual information on the programme, facilities and staffing which the visitors will seek to validate during the visit. The SER should provide an honest evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses, containing concise and meaningful information. (For more information about the SER, see *Chapter 4 - Guidance for universities on preparing for a visitation* and *Annex 1 - Self evaluation report template*.)

Site visit

A full site visit will be undertaken approximately every seven years. RCVS may elect to undertake a full visit on a shorter timescale if significant changes are identified by annual monitoring reports, or if any new risks come to light during the normal cycle.

(For new UK veterinary schools and for overseas veterinary schools not previously accredited by RCVS, see further information below on policy and procedures.)

The aim of a site visit is to verify and supplement information presented in the SER.

The RCVS visiting team directs its activities initially through the Vice Chancellor of the University. All requests for information are made to the head of school's office. The programme of meetings will be negotiated with the head of school starting at least 3 months before the visit. Any additional meetings requested by the team during the visit are organised by the head of school's office.

At the start of the visit the head of school will provide an executive overview of the school, its progress since the last RCVS visit, proposed future developments and the present situation of the school and university.

Interactions between the visiting team and the school should have a collegial tone, be based on mutual trust and a desire to arrive at a full understanding of the current status of the educational programme of the school.

Each member of the visiting team is assigned areas of responsibility relating to one or more of the Standards by the chairman. Members of the visiting team may meet by teleconference before a site visit to provide the chairman with an opportunity to describe the format of the visit and, following discussion of the SER, discuss any items requiring further information. The visitors will meet immediately before the visit starts for team briefing and to plan for the week ahead.

Wherever possible, the visiting team will work as a group for the visit, to enable all of them to see the relationships between the various parts of the curriculum and the degree of integration. Near the start of a visit the team will tour all the site(s) used for core teaching and appraise the facilities. All meetings with staff and students of the veterinary school should include the full visiting team. Circumstances may arise which justify the chairman delegating specific tasks to a subgroup of the team.

The visiting team expects to meet groups of staff who represent a broad range of disciplines and levels of experience, extramural and any adjunct staff, students and external stakeholders. An opportunity is provided during the visit for any staff member or student to meet confidentially with the assessment team and to send confidential communications to the team by e-mail before or during the visit. The confidential session must be advertised by the school to staff and students beforehand, and the RCVS staff member's contact details provided so that individuals can communicate privately with the visiting team if they wish.

The programme is structured so that on-site changes are possible, including additional time to allow further consultation with key individuals and groups as required.

At the end of each day the visiting group will meet formally in private to discuss and report on the progress of the day's meetings.

Oral report

At the end of the visit, the site team holds a meeting with the head and senior staff of the school and then the vice chancellor of the university and provides a factual summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the school in relation to the RCVS standards. The visiting team makes no announcement concerning accreditation status, as this is a decision to be taken later by RCVS committees and Council.

Formal report

Within a month of completion of a visit, a draft report is prepared by RCVS education department and the chairman of the visitors, based on input from each of the visitors.

Each visitor is responsible for making an independent assessment and preparing an unambiguous statement on the adequacy of the school against the standard(s) for which they have responsibility. Visitors are provided with a template to assist with the compilation of their reports to ensure a consistent format and that no topic is omitted. The chairman has overall responsibility for the final report.

By the end of the site visit, all commentary and any proposed recommendations, suggestions and/or commendations must have been agreed by all the visitors. If any non-typographical adjustments are required after the conclusion of the visit, these should be circulated to all team members.

In the case of joint international visits, the report may contain appendices which are of relevance to particular accrediting bodies only. The relevant team members are responsible for their organisation's appendices in addition to any other assigned portfolios. Any conclusions relating to a particular accrediting body should be agreed by the relevant site team members. The final report, which will have been prepared by the 'home' accrediting body, should be sent to all the visiting team members, so that those visitors representing other accrediting bodies can sign off the report to their respective organisations

Each standard will be evaluated in a section of the report and each section may include a list of recommendations or suggestions. The report indicates ways in which the school complies, substantially complies or does not comply with the standard's requirements. Recommendations are written with enough information to be helpful to visitors on subsequent site visits as well as the current university administration.

The draft report is forwarded to the veterinary school which is invited to comment on its factual accuracy. Having regard to any school comments on accuracy, the chairman finalises the report. The report and associated recommendations are then considered by RCVS's Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee, which will confirm or amend any recommendations contained in the report.

The report is then sent to the Vice Chancellor of the university for formal comment and a copy of the final report is sent to all members of the site visit team.

The Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 specifies that, for UK schools, the university may, within the period of two months from the receipt of the report, "make observations on or objections to the report" to RCVS. The university is invited to comment to RCVS on its response to any recommendations in the report.

On receipt of the university's formal comments, the report and the university's comments are considered again by RCVS's Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee, which will then make a recommendation on accreditation status to RCVS's Education Committee, having taken the university's response into account.

RCVS visitation reports are published on the RCVS website.

Feedback

RCVS seeks feedback from the veterinary school and visiting team immediately after the visit. Questionnaires are sent to visitors and to the administrative contact at the school. Feedback is collated and reported to PQSC, which considers the views provided and makes appropriate recommendations to Education Committee should any changes be necessary.

Classification of accreditation

Options for decisions on accreditation of veterinary degrees are as follows:

a) **Accreditation for seven years** subject to the usual periodic reports. If periodic reports are satisfactory, re-accreditation will be subject to a visitation in the seventh year.

b) **Accreditation for a shorter period** if significant deficiencies are identified: accreditation will be subject to the deficiencies being addressed within a specified period and subject to satisfactory periodic reports. The RCVS will normally undertake a re-visit before the accreditation period expires to monitor progress in addressing any identified concerns. This may be a full re-visit covering all the standards (normally held over one week) or a more focussed re-visit that concentrates on progress with addressing specific deficiencies (which would normally be held over one or two days). Consideration of a shorter period of accreditation subject to conditions will apply where there are either a) one or more major deficiencies, or b) a series of lesser deficiencies which, taken together, could have a significant impact on students' education, but which are deemed to be rectifiable within a given period of time.

c) **Accreditation may be denied.** This category applies where the RCVS considers that the deficiencies are so serious that they are unlikely to be rectifiable within a reasonable period of time. It is, in effect, a final warning to a school that if urgent action is not taken RCVS will move to terminal accreditation.

d) **Terminal accreditation** may apply if the school is unable to meet RCVS's standards, and/or if a school voluntarily closes. The procedures for terminal accreditation must be followed by the veterinary school (see below). For previously accredited UK veterinary schools where accreditation is denied by RCVS, the final decision to revoke or suspend their Recognition Order would be made by the Privy Council (see below). For non-UK schools, if accreditation is denied for a programme that was previously accredited, the school may be placed on "terminal accreditation" and it will be the responsibility of the school to present an immediate plan to RCVS for approval showing how the deficiencies will be addressed to allow adequate progress of the existing students to meet RCVS Day One Competences.

e) **Accreditation is denied.** This option would be relevant where neither 'Accreditation may be denied' nor 'Terminal accreditation' would be applicable. It applies when RCVS considers that the deficiencies are sufficiently serious that the school should not receive accreditation. The RCVS will inform the veterinary school of its concerns and the grounds on which they are based. The veterinary school would be able to request a re-visit once it had addressed the deficiencies identified.

Unsatisfactory performance procedures

Where the RCVS considers, on the basis of periodic reports or other material available to it, that there may be cause to consider:

      a) the revocation of accreditation;

      b) the imposition of new or additional conditions on an existing accreditation; or

      c) a reduction in the current period of accreditation,

the following procedures will apply:

The RCVS informs the veterinary school of its concerns, the grounds on which they are based and requests a site visit to the school.

The review visit will be conducted by a team agreed by RCVS's Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee, normally comprising the chairmen of the previous visit and some members of the original visit team. Additional members with specific expertise may be appointed depending on the conditions set.

The team may recommend to the RCVS either:

      a) that the conditions on the accreditation are being met or are likely to be met in the near future;

      OR

      b) that the conditions on the accreditation are not being met and are unlikely to be met in the near future.

In the event of a favourable report, the RCVS may affirm the accreditation of the veterinary school for a specified period subject to satisfactory periodic reports.

In the event of an unfavourable report, the RCVS may:

      a) place further conditions on the accreditation. RCVS could specify actions to be taken or issues to be addressed by the veterinary school and/or further restrict the period of accreditation. A school with such conditions on its accreditation may apply for reinstatement of its full period of accreditation at any time subject to the normal procedures for review of accreditation,

OR

      b) withdraw accreditation from the veterinary school if it considers that the veterinary school is unable to deliver the course at a standard or in a manner compatible with the RCVS's requirements.

For a UK veterinary school, RCVS would recommend to the Privy Council that the university's degree Recognition Order should be revoked or suspended. The decision would be for the Privy Council to make, in accordance with Section 3 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act. Graduates would be entitled to continue to register as Members of RCVS in the meantime. In the event of the Privy Council agreeing

to suspend or revoke a Recognition Order, it may invite RCVS to set an examination for students on the course to enable them to register as Members of RCVS.

For overseas veterinary schools outside the European Union subject to terminal accreditation, any students admitted to the programme after the formal notification of terminal accreditation has been issued will not be eligible to register as RCVS Members on the basis of their veterinary degree. They will instead need to pass the RCVS statutory membership examination in order to practise in the UK.

Procedures for schools with the classification of Terminal Accreditation

The classification of terminal accreditation is intended to protect the interests of students who enrolled before accreditation was withdrawn. Terminal accreditation may continue no longer than necessary to protect the educational interests of such students. Provided the school complies with the conditions for terminal accreditation, students enrolled on the programme before terminal accreditation was assigned will be able to graduate with an accredited degree that will entitle them to register as Members of RCVS. If the school recruits students after terminal accreditation is assigned, those students will graduate with a non-recognised degree and may not be able to practise in the UK unless they sit the RCVS examination.

The head of the school and the Vice-Chancellor of the university are notified in writing of the classification of terminal status and the reasons for this.

During the first six months after the assignment of terminal accreditation, the school must submit a detailed plan describing how it will ensure that the educational interests of currently enrolled students will be met.

Each year that the school holds terminal accreditation status, the school will provide a detailed report to the RCVS describing how the plan is being followed and how it has been altered with respect to students who entered before terminal accreditation was assigned.

To maintain terminal accreditation status, the school must:
      a)   immediately cease enrolment of additional students;
      b)   commit resources adequate to complete the education of currently enrolled students;
      c)   ensure that deficiencies cited do not worsen.

During a period of terminal accreditation, representatives from RCVS may visit the school and report on whether the school is meeting the conditions for terminal accreditation. The reported information and that furnished in writing by the school will be considered by RCVS to determine if terminal accreditation should continue.

If a veterinary school on terminal accreditation fails to abide by this procedure, RCVS may terminate its accreditation immediately, such that no further graduates will be eligible to register with RCVS.

RCVS visitation appeal procedure

Scope of Appeals

1. This appeals procedure applies where an institution questions the formal outcomes of the accreditation process, where it can:

   - demonstrate that the outcome is not based on sound evidence, **and/or**

   - that published standards have not been correctly applied **and/or**

   - that published processes have not been consistently implemented.

2. No appeal will be entertained in respect of the individual comment(s) made by the visiting team and contained within the visitation report.

Definition of terms

3. In these rules:

   - "appeals panel" means a panel of the Committee constituted to hear an appeal;

   - "College" means the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons;

   - "Committee" means the Examination Appeals Committee;

   - "lay person" means a person who is not a veterinary surgeon or a registered veterinary nurse and has never been entitled to be registered as such;

   - "registrar" means the registrar of the College;

   - "the Council" means the Council of the College;

   - "formal outcome of the accreditation process" means the category of accreditation into which the institution has been placed **and/or** the period of accreditation that has been granted

   - "published standards" means the standards contained within the version of the "RCVS standards and procedures for the accreditation of veterinary degrees" that applies to the visit in question

   - "published processes" means the processes contained within the version of the "RCVS standards and procedures for the accreditation of veterinary degrees" that applies to the visit in question

Lodging of an appeal

4. An institution must inform the registrar of its intention to appeal not later than two weeks from receipt of the letter confirming the formal outcome of the accreditation process. The appeal must then be made in writing by the Dean or Head of School no later than six weeks from receipt of the letter confirming the formal outcome of the accreditation process.

Initial consideration of appeals

5. The first stage of the appeal process will involve a review of the process that had been followed by RCVS in reaching its accreditation decision, together with the argued basis for the appeal, by both PQSC at their next scheduled meeting. The Chair of the relevant visitation team may be asked to participate in the review process. The outcome of this review will be to either accept or dismiss the appeal. If accepted, Education Committee will review its original decision and may decide to amend it. It should be noted that acceptance of the appeal may not necessarily result in a change to the original decision.

6. An appeal will only be dismissed on one or more of the following grounds:

    - It relates to the individual comments made by the visiting team

    - It gives insufficient information to enable any judgement to be made

    - It is frivolous, vexatious or relates to a minor irregularity in the conduct of the accreditation process

    - It is unnecessary because deficiencies in the accreditation process have already been acknowledged and appropriate action taken

7. If the appeal is dismissed on any of the grounds mentioned, the institution may nevertheless elect to have the appeal considered by the Visitation Appeals Panel. The institution must pay a fee of £5000, but this will be refunded if the appeal is upheld.

Composition of the Committee

8. The Committee will be appointed from time to time by or on behalf of the Council. It will include veterinary surgeons, registered veterinary nurses and lay persons. Two members of the Committee will be designated by or on behalf of the Council as its Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

Visitation Appeals Panel

9. The Committee will act through panels when dealing with appeals. An appeals panel will consist of between three and five members of the Examination Appeals Committee chosen by the Chairman of the Committee and will include one person who is not a member of Council.

10. The panel will select its own Chair. All members must sign a declaration confirming that they have no conflict of interest with the appellant institution and a statement to indicate that they will strictly adhere to the "*RCVS standards and procedures for the accreditation of veterinary*

degrees" as well as the "*Policy on managing potential conflicts of interest for visitation team members"*.

11. The appellant institution will be provided with copies of any information, apart from legal advice, which is made available to the appeals panel and will be given a reasonable opportunity to comment and make any further representations before the panel considers the appeal.

12. The appellant institution has the right to nominate an observer to attend the meeting of the panel. An observer may respond to questions from the panel; however they will not have voting rights when it comes to decision making. The Chair of the visit team may also be requested to attend the meeting as an observer to assist with any points of clarification.

13. An appeals panel will not include a person who has been involved in the initial assessment of the appeal, had any involvement in the visitation to the appellant institution or has any personal connection with the appellant institution which might bring that person's independence or impartiality into question.

14. The proceedings of an appeals panel will take place in camera and will remain confidential after the conclusion of the appeal.

15. The appeals panel may:

    a. uphold the appeal and direct Education Committee to reconsider its decision

    b. uphold the appeal, but confirm that the decision should remain unchanged

    c. dismiss the appeal

16. Once the panel has reached a decision, by majority vote, its Chair will inform the registrar of its decision by submitting an adjudicating statement, including its reasoning. The registrar will arrange for the outcomes of the appeal to be communicated to the appellant institution, PQSC and Education Committee.

17. The decision of the panel shall be conclusive for all purposes.

18. Until the end of the appeal process, the visitation report will not be published and the appellant institution holds its current accreditation status.

Procedures for approving a new UK veterinary degree

The Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966, Section 4, includes provision for veterinary graduates of UK universities that do not have a Privy Council Recognition Order (ie new veterinary degrees or existing degrees that have lost their recognised status.) The Privy Council may
> *"(a) after consultation with the Council of the College; and*
> *(b) if it is of the opinion that the training provided to students of veterinary surgery attending at that university satisfies the requirements of Article 38 of the directive 2005/36/EC…*

direct the College of hold examinations in veterinary surgery for the students…attending at
that university; and any such student passing any such examination shall be entitled to be
registered in the register and shall on being so registered become a member of the College.

Any UK university that is considering offering a professional veterinary degree and applying to the Privy Council for a Recognition Order must liaise with RCVS concerning its plans for the course at an early stage. Draft curriculum and assessment plans must be submitted together with a timeline for implementation, plans for facilities, staffing and an indication of the intended student numbers.

RCVS will provide feedback to the university on the draft programme, in terms of whether it appears to meet the current RCVS standards and policies. Any obvious gaps will be identified, but it will be for the university to determine how such gaps might be rectified. RCVS can provide advice on its standards and accreditation processes, but does not offer any form of provisional approval at this stage, as it is not within its power to do so. Recognition, if granted, comes from the UK's Privy Council, on advice from RCVS.

RCVS will make arrangements for one or more full or short visits to evaluate the programme and will discuss options for examinations with the university. Depending on its evaluation of the curriculum and assessment arrangements, RCVS may decide either to set a separate qualifying examination for final year students or, alternatively, may make arrangements for the joint examination of students with the university through the appointment of RCVS External Examiners.

If it is agreed to appoint RCVS External Examiners and run a joint qualifying examination, the university will need to agree that the RCVS appointed External Examiners will have the final decision-making power over the eventual pass list, so that the examination may count as the RCVS qualifying examination for registration purposes.

Having consulted on the draft curriculum and delivery plans before the first student intake has started the programme, RCVS will aim to undertake its first full site visit when the programme has reached its third year in order to make an assessment of how the plans are working, and to evaluate the progress of the new school towards achieving the RCVS standards. A further full site visit will be undertaken during the programme's fifth year of operation, in order to make a recommendation to the Privy Council on recognition. Additional visits may be undertaken in the meantime by one or more RCVS visitors to observe examinations and other assessments.   Before each site visit, the school will need to submit a self evaluation report.

Graduates of UK university schools are not automatically entitled to RCVS membership until the degree has received the Recognition Order from the Privy Council, and this may take a number of months even after a positive recommendation from RCVS. In the absence of a Recognition Order, graduates will be able to register and practise in the UK only if they pass the RCVS qualifying examination (or joint examination overseen by RCVS External Examiners as described above). The university must ensure that students applying to join the course understand the status of the degree and that, whilst there is a route to registration for them, there is no automatic entitlement.

Accreditation of overseas veterinary degrees

To be considered for accreditation by RCVS, an overseas veterinary degree must satisfy the following:

- The programme must be compatible with the requirements of EU Directive 2005/36/EC (as amended by Directive 2013/55/EU).
- The level of clinical instruction must be comparable to that required of veterinary schools in the United Kingdom. Overseas veterinary degrees must meet the same accreditation criteria as UK schools; including the requirement for students to meet the RCVS Day One Competences by the time they graduate.
- The degree of the overseas veterinary school must be recognised as a professional veterinary qualification by the relevant authorities (government and/or veterinary licensing body) in its own region/country.
- The overseas veterinary school must normally have been producing graduates for at least five years or a sufficient number of its graduates must have submitted themselves for the RCVS statutory membership examination to allow a judgement of the standard of the overseas school to be reached.
- RCVS will appoint a team of visitors to undertake a formal visitation of the overseas veterinary school. Such a visitation will be at the expense of the overseas school. Before the visitation, the university must pay the RCVS accreditation fee applicable at the time of the application, as well as paying for full travel, accommodation and loss of earnings allowance for all the RCVS visitors, including business class air fares for flights of seven hours or more. Accreditation cannot be granted until RCVS's fees and costs have been reimbursed in full.
- The first accreditation visit to an overseas veterinary school not previously recognised by RCVS should normally be undertaken wholly by RCVS, although some joint working with another accrediting body may be considered, depending on the circumstances, at the discretion of RCVS's Education Committee.
- An overseas university whose veterinary degree is accredited by RCVS will be required to submit regular (usually annual) monitoring reports to RCVS. RCVS reserves the right to undertake further follow-up visits during the period of accreditation to ensure that any recommendations made are being implemented, and also to exchange quality assurance and monitoring information about the degree programme with the university's national accrediting body where applicable. Costs for any such follow-up visits will be charged to the university.
- The possibility of accreditation will only be considered following a formal application from the overseas veterinary school, on the basis of its acceptance of these criteria.

Consultative visits

The purpose of a consultative visit is to assess the overall compliance of a veterinary school with RCVS standards and to provide feedback to the school. A school may request a consultative visit in preparation for an accreditation visit from RCVS.

Consultative visits are advisory and the results are not published or made public. The consultative visit and accreditation visit processes are linked and consultative visits follow a similar process to that in place for accreditation visits.

Requesting a Consultative visit

The Head of the Veterinary School must write to the RCVS with a formal request for a Consultative visit. It should be noted that visits are scheduled at least 18 months in advance. RCVS will discuss the request for the visit through its Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee (PQSC) and will provide a formal response to the request, together with suggested dates for the visit.

The Consultative Visit Team

PQSC will recommend the appointment of a visiting team, to include a Chair and two additional visitors. PQSC's recommendations will be ratified by Education Committee. Names of visitors will be shared with the Head of the Veterinary School, who may ask for reconsideration of an appointment where a nominated visitor has a conflict of interest that cannot be managed during the visitation process. Education Committee has the final authority on the appointment of visitors to any given team.

Self-Evaluation Report (SER)

The SER must show how the veterinary school meets or plans to meet the RCVS Standards as described in Chapter 2.

The template for the SER is provided at Annex 1. The SER must be received by RCVS at least 2 months in advance of the visit and the precise date for its receipt will be specified on formal confirmation of the visit.

Consultative Visit Timetable

A consultative visit follows a very similar timetable to that of an accreditation visit. Whilst a final schedule will be agreed with the veterinary school on a case-by-case basis, a draft outline timetable is provided at Annex 9. It should be noted that, for consultative visits, Thursday is used for report writing and feedback will be provided to the Head of School on the Thursday afternoon. Visitors will depart following this feedback meeting.

Consultative Visit Report

The report of the consultative visit will follow a similar format to reports of accreditation visits, and will include comments, recommendations, suggestions and commendations. However, as these reports are not published, a more succinct style is used.

The report is signed off by the Chair of the visiting team and passed back to the veterinary school for a factual accuracy check. The report is then considered by PQSC, which provides feedback to the school and to Education Committee.

Fees for Consultative Visits

RCVS will charge a fee of £12,000 for a consultative visit. This covers the visit itself, together with up to 5 days for visit preparation. In addition, the RCVS will charge Loss of Earnings plus travel, subsistence and accommodation costs for the visiting team. This fee must be paid prior to the visit.

Chapter 4 - Guidance for universities on preparing for a visitation

Preparing for a site visit

The university should appoint a co-ordinator for the visit who will act as the main point of contact with RCVS during the preparation period.

The self evaluation report (SER)

The self-evaluation report is the cornerstone of the evaluation process. It should be the result of an in-depth review of the veterinary school and the education and training it provides to prepare its students to qualify to join the veterinary profession.

The main body of the SER is concerned with demonstrating how the school meets the accreditation standards. It should be concise, and be between 50-60 pages addressing all the Standards set out in *Chapter 2 - Accreditation standards*. Additional supporting information can be provided in more detailed annexes. It is recommended that preparation of the SER should begin about a year before the visit, and should involve key members of staff in its preparation.

A template and guidance on completing the SER is provided **at** *Annex 1 - Self evaluation report template.*

The SER must be submitted to RCVS **at least 2 months before the start of the visit**, and supplied in both electronic and hard copy printed format. The SER must be prepared in a format compatible with MS Word (NOT PDF format), and sent to RCVS electronically. Factual content from the SER may be reproduced in the final visitation report, so it is most important that all data provided is accurate.

Sufficient printed copies of the SER should be submitted for the visitors via RCVS – one copy for each visitor/observer attending the visit, plus 2 further copies). For visits conducted jointly with EAEVE, an electronic copy of the SER, plus 2 further printed copies must be sent to the EAEVE office.

Information to be provided in addition to the SER

The School is also required to provide the following material (not included in the 50-60 pages):
- A concise summary of major changes since the previous RCVS visit.
- A list of current academic and non-academic staff, their FTE, teaching responsibilities, qualifications and departmental affiliations, and (for UK schools) whether they are registered Members/Fellows of RCVS. (For overseas schools, indicate which staff are

registered/licensed veterinarians in the country/state concerned, and also which staff are Members/Fellows of RCVS) This staff list must be appended to the main body of the SER.

- A curriculum digest (handbook)
- A detailed timetable for each year of the programme
- A map of the institution
- References on the map to the various stages of, and a suggested route for, the visit to inspect the facilities, with floors clearly indicated
- Provide information about units of study and rotations throughout the programme:
    - Title, reference number, credit value (if appropriate), position in curriculum (year, semester), whether it is compulsory or elective
    - Formal description of the content of the unit of study; hours and modes of instruction

Online access to information

Online access for outlines of the programme and units of study (including subject title, credit point value where appropriate, semester and year of delivery, aims, learning outcomes, link to graduate attributes, staff teaching, hours, forms of delivery, assessment mode) should be made available to the visitors at least four weeks before the visit. These documents should also be made available in printed form in the visiting team's base room.

Materials to be available in the visitors base room

A meeting room should be identified to serve as the base room for the visitors during the site visit. It should be lockable, and allow the visitors sufficient privacy to hold confidential meetings if required. There should be internet access and wifi. A range of background documentation should be available in the room for the visitors to peruse during the visit, including the following:

- student handbooks
- examples of EMS reports (pre-clinical and clinical)
- any memoranda of understanding and contracts or governance documents relating to external teaching practices/distributed training sites
- school and hospital budgets and profit and loss statements as provided to the university
- strategic and business/operating plans
- reports of relevant internal and any external reviews
- detailed outcomes assessment reports, including data on student achievement of Day One skills and competences as recorded in the student experience log or other portfolio
- external examiner reports
- examination question papers, examination scripts, at different grading levels, course work and examiners reports and assessment summaries
- details of the composition, terms of reference, powers, reporting relationships, representation of relevant groups for all committees and delegated authorities relating to the veterinary programme

- CPD records for all Members/Fellows of the RCVS and all veterinary nursing staff. Members/Fellows of RCVS and veterinary nurses will be expected to be using the RCVS Professional Development Record and must have granted RCVS access to view their full records prior to the visit taking place. Hard copy of CPD records should be provided for all other veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses on the staff if not using the PDR.

Visit timetable

RCVS will liaise with the university nominated co-ordinator to agree the timetable at least three months before the visit. A sample visitation timetable is given in Annex 9. The timetable will need to include the following:

- Meetings with the school's senior team, other members of teaching staff, support staff (administrative, technical and nursing), undergraduate students, postgraduate students, interns, residents, and research staff. It would also help to be able to meet with some alumni and EMS providers if available.
- Meetings should be structured to address each of the RCVS standards in turn.
- Early in the programme (ie on the first, or first and second day), there should be tours of all the teaching facilities used by students, including lecture theatres, seminar rooms, laboratories, clinical skills labs, hospitals and teaching practices, farms and abattoirs.
- Where the programme includes off-campus facilities as part of the core curriculum ("distributed" training sites), time must also be allowed for visits to each of these sites.
- Meetings with students may be held informally over buffet lunches without staff present. Although the school may wish to invite representatives from each year group, and officers from the veterinary student society or students' union, any student should be free to attend to speak to the visitors and the sessions should be advertised beforehand so that students are aware that they can speak to the visitors if they wish.
- There should be a one hour slot in the programme for confidential one-to-one meetings for any students and/or staff who want to meet the visitors privately. This should be held in a place where the confidentiality of students/staff who chose to attend can be respected. This confidential session must be advertised by the school to its staff and students before the visit. The phone number and email address of the RCVS staff member supporting the visit will be provided for circulation within the school so that those who wish to speak to the visitors privately can confidentially book an individual slot, or arrange an alternative time to speak to the visitors. Staff and students may contact the RCVS staff member confidentially before or during the visit using the contact details provided by RCVS.
- There should be time in the programme for the visitors to consider supporting paperwork provided by the university during the visit, such as external examiner reports, assessment materials and scripts, detailed curriculum documentation, quality assurance paperwork, internal intranet resources, and staff CPD records. These materials should be available in a separate 'base' room to which the visitors should have access throughout the visit. Access to the university's intranet or other electronic resources should be provided for all the visitors in order that they can view the electronic/online teaching and learning resources as used by

students and staff. A link to such online resources may be provided to the visitors in advance of the visit.

- There should be time in the programme for the visitors, if they wish, to return to visit facilities of their choosing (on day three or day four), and/or to speak further to particular members of staff, to follow up on points discussed previously.
- The afternoon of day four (Thursday) should be left free for the visitors to meet in private and write their report.
- The visitors will meet together in private each evening at their hotel to discuss their findings.
- The university may arrange an informal dinner for visitors, staff and other university guests on one evening during the visit (preferably on day two or three), although this is not compulsory.
- On the final day, there should be time for the visitors to provide brief feedback to the Vice Chancellor of the University (or his/her chosen representative) and the head of the veterinary school.

Other arrangements

- For UK visits, RCVS will arrange hotel accommodation for visitors.
- For overseas visits undertaken by RCVS without the involvement of the local accrediting body, hotel accommodation should be booked by the university unless otherwise agreed with RCVS. Hotel accommodation should include a meeting room at the hotel where the visitors can hold their private meeting each evening.   The hotel must have internet/wifi access.
- For overseas visits undertaken jointly between RCVS and other accrediting bodies, hotel and travel will be arranged in accordance with the host accrediting body's usual protocol.
- Visitors are expected to make their own travel arrangements to the hotel from and to their home.
- The university is expected to provide daily transport for the visitors between their hotel and the university, and for all the tours of facilities.
- The university should provide name badges and any necessary security passes for all the visitors.

Fees for accreditation

UK visits

There is no accreditation fee charged by RCVS for visits to UK veterinary schools. RCVS covers the travel, accommodation and loss of earnings costs of its visitors to UK schools.

Where a UK visit is undertaken by RCVS jointly with other accrediting bodies (eg. AVMA, AVBC, EAEVE), the university will need to pay any fees and visitor costs charged by those accrediting bodies.

Overseas visits

RCVS will charge an accreditation fee to overseas veterinary schools to cover its administrative costs. The overseas university must also pay the travel and accommodation costs of the RCVS visitors, together with the applicable RCVS loss-of-earnings allowance for the period of the visit including travel time (which may be up to two days for long-haul visits.) Air fares for flights of 7 hours or more may be charged at 'business class' rate. RCVS will invoice the university for the costs and all such invoices must be settled in full before accreditation or continued accreditation can be confirmed.

Where an overseas visit is undertaken jointly with other accrediting bodies, and the 'home' accrediting body manages the organisation and administration of the visit, RCVS may charge a lower accreditation fee, in agreement with the accrediting body concerned. The university will be invoiced for the fee, the cost of the RCVS visitors' travel, subsistence and loss of earnings at the applicable RCVS Council rate.

The accreditation fee charged by RCVS[1] will cover the standard seven year period of accreditation, including receipt and evaluation of annual monitoring reports. However, if there is a need for a further site visit to take place in less than seven years (for example, to check on conditions placed on accreditation, or in the case of terminal accreditation), then RCVS reserves the right to charge the university an additional accreditation fee to covers its administrative costs, together with the travel, accommodation and loss of earnings costs of its visitors.

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[1] For up to date information on the applicable accreditation fees, please contact the Education Department at RCVS.

Chapter 5 - The visiting team

The appointment of visitors and composition of the visitor team

Visitors for a particular visit are appointed by RCVS Education Committee, following recommendations from its Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee (PQSC).

The visitors for any particular visitation will be chosen from a list of people previously agreed by PQSC. RCVS has an open invitation for applications from individuals who wish to be considered as visitors. (*See Annex 6 - Job description and person specification for RCVS visitors*). Visitors may also be selected from the visitor panels of other accrediting bodies, such as AVMA, EAEVE or AVBC.

For UK visits, RCVS puts together a team of people of up to six people (plus a student visitor where the visit is being conducted solely by RCVS) with the necessary combination of subject expertise, clinical and academic experience. If the visit is being conducted jointly with EAEVE, EAEVE may nominate up to three visitors, plus a student visitor. For visits run jointly with AVMA and AVBC, the team is agreed jointly between the accrediting bodies, with each body nominating an agreed number of visitors, depending on the location of the visit. The team for a visit undertaken jointly with other international accrediting bodies will usually be larger than for those undertaken by RCVS alone, in order that all relevant interests can be represented.

Where the visit is conducted without the involvement of EAEVE, a student visitor (min -1yr & max +2yr graduate veterinary student) will be nominated through the visiting team. Usual conflict of interest policies apply and the student must not have a connection with the institution being visited.

Between them, the team members will have a mix of expertise to cover the basic sciences, paraclinical and clinical sciences, food hygiene and public health, large and small animal clinical studies and professional knowledge. Two visitors normally cover the clinical subjects, of whom at least one must be a clinical practitioner.

The chairman is normally someone who holds, or who has recently held, a senior academic position and who understands the organisation and funding of universities and the complex requirements for veterinary education. However, if a chairman is appointed who does not have an academic background, then the team will include at least one other person with senior academic experience who can advise on such matters as university finance. A chairman of the visiting team must normally have already served as a visitor on a previous occasion.

In order to maintain a degree of separation between the functions of the visiting team on the one hand, and the decision making role of RCVS committees on the other, the chairman of the visitors for any particular visit should not also be the serving chairman of RCVS's Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee. If a member of PQSC or Education Committee has served as a visitor on a given visit, and is then present at the PQSC or Education Committee meeting at which the visit report is considered, they will not be allowed to vote on the report at the meeting. They may, however, be available to answer any points of clarification if required by the committee.

RCVS visitors attending an overseas visitation (whether conducted by RCVS alone, or jointly with another accrediting body) would normally be expected to have had previous experience as a visitor on a UK or EAEVE visitation.

The visiting team may also include observers, for example from other international accrediting bodies, and observers in a training role attending with a view to participating as a visitor at a future date.

For consistency and continuity, some members of the visiting team should have acted as visitors on other visitations. Full briefing will be provided to any new members of the visiting team before the visit, and this will be further reinforced during the initial, private meeting of the visitors before the start of the site visit.

During the visit, visitors are expected to take part as members of the whole team, considering all aspects of the programme's design and delivery, and not only those areas relating to their particular sphere of expertise. Each visitor will be designated as the 'lead' visitor for at least one of the standards, and as the 'second' for at least one other standard. They will be expected to lead the questioning for the standard on which they are designated the 'lead', and will work together with their paired 'second' visitor to draft the initial report on that standard. However, all visitors must also contribute towards the evaluation of the school against all the standards, contributing to the discussions and questioning as directed by the visit chairman.   The allocation of visitors to different standards as 'lead' or 'second' rapporteur is the responsibility of the chairman.

Conflict of interest policy

In order to ensure that all matters relating to the evaluation process for veterinary schools are conducted in a fair and objective manner, the RCVS applies its conflict of interest policy (*Annex 7 - Policy on managing potential conflicts of interest for visitation team members*).   Visitors should not be members of a visitation panel if they have graduated from, or been employed full time by the school being evaluated during the last 10 years. Nor should they have personal, family or business relationships with key personnel at the school being evaluated. If a member of the proposed visiting team has reason to believe that a conflict of interest might exist, he/she should seek the advice of the Education Department at the RCVS. Nominated visitors are asked to sign a declaration concerning any potential conflicts of interest.

The head of the school being visited has the right to challenge the appointment of any member of the visiting team and request that RCVS re-considers the appointment if he or she considers that any of the nominated visitors has a conflict of interest that cannot be managed during the visitation process. The head of school should write to the RCVS Education Department outlining their concerns no later than two weeks after receipt of the formal notification of the proposed visiting team. The Education Department will consult with the chairs of the RCVS Education Committee and Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee concerning a replacement visitor. Education Committee has the final authority on the appointment of visitors to any given team.

Guidance for chairmen

The chairman of the visiting team plays a key role in setting the tone for the visit, liaising with the university and other visitors in conjunction with RCVS staff, and ensuring that the visit is undertaken in accordance with RCVS policy. It is the chairman's responsibility to ensure that all the RCVS requirements are adequately addressed by the visitors, both during the visit itself and later in the written report. All written communication with the university concerning arrangements for the visit must be sent through the RCVS Education Department.

Before the visit, the chairman and the Education Department of RCVS will agree on the arrangements to be made for the visit, including the timing of the visit, the structure and balance of the visit programme, and the departments to be visited. The RCVS Education Department will liaise with the university concerning the timetable and arrangements for the visit on behalf of the chairman. The chairman and RCVS Education Department will allocate each of the standards to a primary and secondary rapporteur.

During the visit to the university, there will be meetings with the head of the school, the professorial and non-professorial staff and the students. The chairman will preside over all such meetings, although the chairman may invite the first & second rapporteur to take the lead on questions relating to their allocated standard(s). Other visitors may also ask questions, but the chairman must ensure that all such discussions remain focussed on the standard(s) in question, and that the session runs to time.

As a matter of courtesy to staff and faculty present, and to ensure that everyone's attention is focused on listening to the answers to visitors' questions, visitors are asked to refrain from using laptops or mobile devices during these meetings.

There will be a meeting between the visiting team and senior members and officials of the university at which the chairman will be the main spokesman for the visiting team.

The chairman is responsible for the compilation and presentation of the brief oral report at the conclusion of the visit to the Vice-Chancellor/Principal, and to the Head of School and other senior members of the university and faculty. This should be done following consultation with all members of the visiting team. No written report will be presented to the school at this time. Feedback to the university at this stage must be factual and referenced to the standards. It must not include any recommendation regarding accreditation status, as this would pre-empt the decisions on accreditation which will be made at a later date by the appropriate RCVS committee (and other accrediting bodies for joint visits) on consideration of the full visit report.

The chairman must be able to provide clear and consistent advice and guidance, to all members of his or her visiting team, on the interpretation of RCVS policies as they relate to UK veterinary training. This is important, not only for the guidance of visitors who may be new to UK visits but also for those with previous visitor experience, to ensure that advice given to the university is consistent, is in line with RCVS requirements, and does not go beyond the scope of RCVS's remit.

The chairman needs to be aware that all comments made by visitors during discussions with staff during the visit can have a lasting effect, sometimes unintentionally, even if they are not later reflected in the visitors' report. Individual 'hobby horses' must be guarded against at all times: a visitor's particular special interest, if allowed to predominate unduly, may risk unbalancing the entire visit. The chairman must guide his or her team accordingly, and ensure that visitors' comments during meetings with veterinary school staff are kept to the requirements under consideration, and that, in any contentious or 'grey' areas, an appropriate balance of views is reflected. Visitors should be advised not to hold private/social conversations with staff.

The chairman should emphasise to his or her team that, while Day One Competences are required of all schools, these competences can be acquired in collaboration with other veterinary schools and by a number of different educational and curriculum models. Visitors must avoid giving the impression that each school is required to cater for every special interest, so long as its graduates are all meeting RCVS's Day One requirements. Furthermore, the chairman should seek to encourage diversity of provision, for example by encouraging schools to develop 'tracking' arrangements for students and the sharing of resource between schools.

Visitors will all be expected to contribute towards the visit report, subject to the chairman's responsibility as editor for the final version, assisted by the RCVS Education Department. The chairman should be prepared to advise visitors on their individual draft reports.

The chairman, in consultation with the appropriate visitor and the RCVS Education Department, will be the final arbiter of corrections to factual points raised by the school.

The chairman may be required to attend any interim or follow-up visit taking place after the main visitation, or other follow-up meetings held at RCVS. For visits undertaken jointly with EAEVE, the chairman may also be invited to attend the meeting of the EAEVE/FVE joint committee (ECOVE) at which the report is considered.

Guidance for visitors

Visitors are required to conduct themselves professionally, courteously, and with the utmost respect for university staff, students, and other representatives of the school visited as well as fellow visitors.

Visitors must:

- Remember that the objectives of accreditation include verifying that a programme meets the agreed standards required for registration in the UK, creating goals for development and stimulating a general raising of standards among educational institutions, and involving the faculty and appropriate staff comprehensively in institutional evaluation and planning;
- Keep a positive attitude and not offer negative feedback or other criticism during the site visit;

- Remember that all materials, discussions, deliberations, and reports of the visit are confidential.
- Refrain from discussing the "state of a school" with anyone other than visitor team members and appropriate RCVS staff;
- Remain open-minded throughout the evaluation process;
- Carefully study the materials contained in the school's self evaluation report to acquire a basic understanding of the school and its operation;
- Be prepared for up to five and a half days of intense work with long evenings;
- Participate in the discussions, both with university administration and personnel, and in the team deliberations;
- Focus on and uphold the Standards of accreditation;
- Be alert at all times using all senses;
- Be on time for all functions;
- Be involved in all functions of the site visit;
- Dress in corporate/professional attire for all site visit activities; and
- Wear RCVS (or partner accrediting body) identification badges at all times.
- Remember at all times, the visitor team is a guest of the university.

Visitor team members must not:

- Bring any preconceived ideas about the school to the visit;
- Have a personal agenda regarding the school, its programmes, or people;
- Become separated from the team for any reason unless so assigned by the chairman;
- Become involved in a confrontation involving any issue of the visit;
- Compare schools or programmes, since each school and its programme will be unique and the RCVS is not attempting to diminish diversity among programmes or to hinder or impede innovation;
- Offer judgments on solutions to problems during the course of the visit; these activities are to be reserved for the exit interviews with the head of school and university senior management;
- Use laptops or mobile devices during meetings with faculty and staff.

Guidance for observers

Depending on the type of visit being undertaken, the visit team may include observers from other accrediting bodies, veterinary schools, and others who are attending in a training role. These two types of observers will have different roles on the team.

Observers from other accrediting bodies
For some visitations involving multiple accrediting bodies, there may be "observers" representing an accrediting body whose role is to act as an independent member of the visiting team – not as a subject expert who has responsibility for evaluating specific aspects of the course or facilities. In such cases, their role is to act as an auditor of the visitation process as a whole on behalf of their accrediting body. The observer is required to observe the proceedings and discussions during the visit and, at the conclusion, to report back to their parent body on the fairness of the process. The

observer may take part in discussions with faculty and students during the visit, and can contribute to discussions between the visitors. They may be called on, for example, to give guidance on interpreting the specific requirements of their parent accrediting body. They should not vote during meetings of the visitors on compliance with the standards. Their role, therefore, is essentially to enable their parent accrediting body to have confidence in the findings and recommendations of the visitors.

For joint international visits, it will have been agreed in advance and will be made clear to the university whether those attending from other accrediting bodies are there as full visitors, or observers.

Other observers

Other observers may be invited to attend a visit in a training role, or as a representative of another accrediting body that is not party to a mutual recognition agreement with RCVS. This will be by invitation from RCVS and with the agreement of the chairman and head of school concerned. Such observers will receive a copy of the school's self evaluation report before the visit, but are not expected to submit draft reports or comments, and will not vote in meetings discussing compliance with the standards. They will play a passive role during the visit, and are not expected to contribute to the discussions with school staff, unless otherwise agreed with the Chairman. They may contribute to the discussions between the visitors in private session, but must not inhibit or delay those discussions unduly. They must otherwise abide by the guidance set out above for visitors, in terms of attitude and professionalism whilst on the visit. RCVS will pay the travel and accommodation expenses of RCVS observers who are attending in a trainee role. All other observers attend at their own expense.

Visiting Team Modus Operandi

It is important that the university recognises that comments made during the visit about the status of the programme with respect to a specific standard are in no way a final determination. During the exit interview, the chairman of the visit team should emphasise that the comments made represent the majority view of the visiting team and will be considered as a recommendation by the RCVS Education Committee. The final decision on the status of each standard and the overall accreditation status will be made at a later date and rests solely with the RCVS, not the visiting team.

Each evening during the visit, the team meets and reviews the day's activities, capturing recommendations, commendations, and queries to be clarified the following day. The draft report of evaluation is updated and revised in the light of new information gained during the day. All members of the team attend the evening meetings. On the last evening of the visit, development of the draft report is completed and recommendations agreed upon. Each recommendation must be based on a "finding" noted at the end of one of the sections of the report. Each finding must be based on information contained in the "background' part of the section involved. The "background" section of the report will normally have been prepared beforehand by the RCVS (or other accrediting body) staff, based on information in the SER. The visiting team will need to verify that this background information is correct, and edit it accordingly based on their observations during the visit.

At the conclusion of the visit the team holds exit interviews with the head of school and with the Vice Chancellor/Principal of the institution to review its findings. The exit interview with the head of school and others of the head of school's choosing, completes the visitation of the university and precedes the exit interview with the Vice Chancellor and such other officers of the university administration that the Vice Chancellor may choose. The exit interview is a critical part of the site visit; therefore, all site team members will attend. In the absence of the Vice Chancellor, the team meets with his or her duly authorized representative. The chairman of the visitor team is responsible for developing and delivering the remarks for the exit interview. The team assists in preparing the outline for these remarks, and each member may be invited to comment on items concerning the sections of the report drafted by the respective member.

There is no place in accreditation for adversarial relationships. The school and the RCVS should proceed with the premise that both parties are dedicated to the common goal of quality in veterinary education. Interactions between the RCVS and the school should have a collegial tone, and be based on mutual trust and a desire to arrive at a full understanding of the current status of the educational programme of the school. The head of school and other administrative officers should be knowledgeable in the definitions of the various levels of accreditation status and the impact of the failure to meet one or more of the standards.

Administrative Notes for Visitors

During the period leading up to the visitation and until the report is finalised, it is important for visitors to keep in close touch with the Education Department at RCVS. Visitors who are in any doubt or difficulty regarding their visits should contact the Education Department as soon as any problem arises so that alternative arrangements can be made without delay.

The school will supply an electronic copy of the Self-Evaluation Report in a format compatible with Microsoft Office, as well as bound copies, and these will be forwarded to all visitors before the visit takes place. Most of the communication with RCVS, including circulation of draft reports, will be conducted by email or other electronic file-sharing system, so it is important that visitors have regular access to a reliable internet connection both before and after the visit. Visitors should bring a laptop with them on the visit so that they can draft their contribution to the report and share it with other team members.

RCVS will send each visitor their copy of the SER at least 6 weeks before the visitation. They must read it carefully as soon as it arrives and start to prepare their comments or queries on the areas they have been asked to consider, based on the data provided in the SER. Most items will of course need to be verified on site, but preparing a draft or outline report beforehand will save time during the visit, as well as helping to make the initial private meeting of the visitors productive. Visitors should also use this opportunity to identify any particular areas of concern arising from the SER where, for example, they think they might need further information or documentation during the visit. The visitors' comments/queries should be sent to the RCVS Education Department at least 4 weeks before the site visit takes place. In most cases, a teleconference meeting of the visitors will be

arranged in the weeks running up to the visit in order to compare notes on issues raised by the SER, and ensure that all visitors are clear on their respective roles.

During the visit, visitors must complete their section of the draft report and agree it with their secondary rapporteur and the chairman by the last day of the visit.

Travel and subsistence

All visitors are responsible for making their own arrangements for travelling to and from the hotel at the start and end of the visit. RCVS will pay all reasonable travel expenses for RCVS appointed visitors, normally at the rate of second class rail or economy flights. Business class air fares for overseas travel can be claimed for flights of 7 hours or more. Receipts must be provided for all expenses.

Travel arrangements between the hotel and the university during the visitation will be arranged by RCVS or the university.

For UK visits, the invoice for hotel accommodation and meals during the visit will be settled by RCVS. RCVS will pay the costs of RCVS appointed visitors, but the costs for visitors from other accrediting bodies may be passed on to the university, depending on the policy of that accrediting body. Visitors will be expected to pay the cost of any additional meals/drinks they may order, or other services such as personal telephone calls, unless otherwise agreed with RCVS in advance.

RCVS will pay a loss of earnings allowance for RCVS nominated members of visitation teams at the currently applicable RCVS Council rate. This will be paid following the visit on receipt of an invoice from the visitor's place of work. Visitors attending on behalf of another accrediting body should check with their parent body on its policy for paying loss of earnings, travel and subsistence.

Payment of loss of earnings allowance and other expenses will be contingent upon the visitor complying with the timetable for submission of their report.

Annex 1 - Self evaluation report template

General

The self-evaluation report is the cornerstone of the evaluation process. It should be the result of an in-depth review of the veterinary school and the education and training it provides to prepare its students to qualify to join the veterinary profession.

Preparation of the SER should begin well in advance of the visit – it is recommended that the process should start about one year before the visit takes place. It must be submitted to RCVS at least two months prior to the scheduled date of the visit.

The SER should be drafted by the school/faculty concerned with involvement and consultation with the key staff. The SER must be written in English.

The SER should be as concise and complete as possible. The use of unnecessary abbreviations, acronyms and unusual technical or administrative terms should be avoided.

Guidance on preparing the self evaluation report

The main body of the SER should be between 50-60 pages of text, with no more than 50 pages of support material.

The SER must be prepared in a format compatible with MS Word (NOT PDF format), and sent to RCVS electronically.

The visiting team will make a great deal of use of the information in the SER during their evaluation, so it is very important that the school makes every effort to ensure its accuracy and consistency. Factual content from the SER may be reproduced in the final visitation report.

Long, unnecessary lists of explanatory material should be excluded from the core of the report; details can be included as appendices, or provided during the visitation in the visitors' base room. Do not include excessive extracts from official texts. If any such texts are relevant, provide instead a link to where they can be found on a website.

The section, "Objectives" must include the institution's general objectives (teaching, research, service, continuing and postgraduate education), not detailed curriculum objectives, which should be dealt with in Standard 9 ("Curriculum").

In presenting timetables, a clear distinction should be made between hours per student and hours per teacher, to avoid ambiguity.

In Standard 11 addressing "Research", the information should focus on the involvement of undergraduate students in research.

It is important that:

- appendices should follow the outline of the core evaluation report
- the core report should include cross-references to the exact place in the relevant appendix of related material. (In the electronic copy of the SER, this can be achieved by using hyperlinks.)
- Information in the appendices must be carefully selected so that the report is not excessively lengthy and useful information is not swamped by large amounts of unnecessary detail.

In addition to the main chapters on the standards, introductory information is required as outlined below.

Dissemination of the SER

At least two months before the start of the visit, the school must send to RCVS enough printed copies of the SER for all the visitors/observers attending the visit, plus 2 further copies. These will be forwarded by RCVS to the visiting team. For joint EAEVE visits, the school must also send an electronic copy of the SER, plus 2 further printed copies, to the EAEVE office.

An electronic version must also be sent to RCVS in MSWord format (not a PDF).

The report must be made available to staff of the veterinary school.

The school should ensure that the people scheduled to meet the visiting team are familiar with the self evaluation report, particularly those parts that directly concern them.

The SER and the visitors' report on the school are considered confidential until the final report and university's response has been received by RCVS's Education Committee. At this point, the RCVS visit report will be published on the RCVS website, and copies forwarded (for UK schools) to the Privy Council, the Quality Assurance Agency, and to other partner accrediting bodies. (EAEVE may require the school to publish its SER on the university's website.)

SER Layout

The sections of the SER must be drafted in line with the guidelines and requirements set out below, with 14 sections/chapters and addressing the 12 standards.

(i)   Introduction
(ii)   Objectives
Standard 1 – Organisation
Standard 2 – Finances
Standard 3 – Facilities and equipment
Standard 4 – Animal resources
Standard 5 – Information resources
Standard 6 – Students
Standard 7 – Admission and progression
Standard 8 – Academic and support staff
Standard 9 – Curriculum
Standard 10 – Assessment
Standard 11 – Research programmes, continuing and higher degree education
Standard 12 – Outcomes assessment
Appendices as required

All standards must be addressed in the SER and all the questions in the template must be answered. If there is no activity in the school which corresponds to the question, state "not applicable". Challenges can arise when a school has certain unusual features. If the school has difficulty completing the template with data in the format requested, they may provide data in a different format to match the school's own structure/model. An explanation must then be provided as to why the data is provided in an alternative format.

In the event of difficulty in replying to a question or interpreting the requirements, please consult the RCVS Education Department (education@rcvs.org.uk).

For each standard, sub-divide the chapter as follows:
- factual information (lists, tables, numerical data, descriptions)
- comments
- suggestions for improvement - please add any suggestions for improvement in sequential order of importance.

Information to be provided in addition to the SER

The School should provide the following information (not included in the 50-60 pages):
- A list of current academic and non-academic staff, their FTE, teaching responsibilities, qualifications and departmental affiliations, and (for UK schools) whether they are registered Members/Fellows of RCVS. (Non-UK schools should indicate which staff are registered/licensed veterinarians in the country/state concerned, and also which staff are

Members/Fellows of RCVS). The staff list must be appended to the SER and sent to the RCVS at the same time as the SER.
- A curriculum digest (student handbook)
- A detailed timetable for each year of the programme
- Information about units of study and rotations throughout the programme:
    - Title, reference number, credit value (if appropriate), position in curriculum (year, semester), whether it is compulsory or elective
    - Formal description of the content of the unit of study; hours and modes of instruction
- A map of the institution
- References on the map to the various stages of, and a suggested route for, the visit to inspect the facilities, with floors clearly indicated.

i)   Introduction

Provide an outline of the main developments at the school since the last evaluation visit or, if there has not been a previous visit, in the period since the veterinary degree programme began.

It should cover:
- response to the recommendations of the last RCVS visit
- summary of main organisational changes
- brief summary of new policies relating to teaching
- list of new buildings and major items of equipment
- brief summary of main changes to the study programme
- brief summary of important decisions made by the management of the school, or by the authorities responsible for it
- brief summary of any changes in funding and major staffing changes
- brief summary of any major problems encountered by the school, whether resolved or not.

(ii)   Objectives

1. **Factual information**
Indicate the school's mission and official list of the overall objectives.
- Who determines the official list of objectives of the veterinary school?
- By what procedure is this list revised?
- Is there a permanent system for assessing the achievement of the school's general objectives? If so, please describe it. If there is no official list, please indicate the objectives that guide the school's operation.

2. Comments
In your view, to what extent are the objectives achieved?
What, in your view, are the main strengths and weaknesses/challenges of the school?

3. Suggestions for improvement
If improvements are required, please list your suggestions for change in order of importance.

Standard 1 – Organisation

> 1.1 The school must develop and follow its mission statement which must, as a minimum, embrace all the accreditation standards.
>
> 1.2 The school must have a strategic plan and an operating plan.
>
> 1.3 An accredited school of veterinary medicine must be a part of an institution of higher learning accredited by an organisation recognised for that purpose by its country's government. A school may be accredited only when it is a major academic administrative division of the parent institution and is afforded the same recognition, status, and autonomy as other professional schools in that institution.
>
> 1.4 The head of school or dean must be a veterinarian and must have control of the budget for the veterinary programme. There must be a veterinary surgeon(s) responsible for the professional, ethical, and academic affairs of the veterinary medical teaching hospital(s)/clinic(s).
>
> 1.5 There must be sufficient administrative staff to adequately manage the affairs of the school as appropriate to the enrolment and operation.
>
> 1.6 The school must provide evidence that it manages concerns about, or risks to, the quality of any aspect of the veterinary programme.

1.1 Factual information

- Name of the school
- Address, Telephone number, Email contact and Website address
- Title and name of Dean/Principal or Head of School
- Is the school within a university? If so, the main address of the university.
- Details of the authority overseeing the school and under which it operates
- Provide a copy of the strategic and operating plan of the school
- Provide a diagram of the administrative structures showing the school in relation to the university or overseeing authority.
- Provide a diagram of the internal administrative structure of the school (councils, committees, departments etc.).
- Describe briefly the responsibilities, constitution and function of the main administrative bodies (councils, committees, departments etc.).
- Describe briefly the mechanisms for staff and students to influence the school's direction and decision making processes.
- Indicate the involvement of external stakeholders in the school.
- Describe processes for the appointment of the senior officers of the school (Dean, Principal or Head, Pro-Dean, Directors, Heads of Department, etc)
- Explain how the school obtains and directs resources to achieve its mission.
- Who is responsible for the clinical teaching hospital?
- Who is responsible for any distributed teaching activities of the school?
- Describe organisational structures that ensure alignment of the veterinary programme, veterinary teaching hospital operations and university/school curriculum leaders to support student learning.
- Describe arrangements to ensure the continuity of core curricular partnerships.

1.2 Comments

- Comment on how the organisation of the veterinary school contributes to achievement of the school's mission.
- Comment on the effectiveness of the schools processes for managing risks to the veterinary programme.

1.3 Suggestions for improvement

- If improvements are required, please list suggested changes in order of importance.

Standard 2 – Finance

2.1 Factual Information

- Complete the tables below.
- Provide the full budget for the school. An explanation of the university funding model for the veterinary school must be provided as an appendix.

Expenditure

- This means the total expenditure made by the school itself and by other bodies on behalf of the school (e.g. the university).
  Specify the calendar year or academic year to which your information refers.
  Wages and salaries should include contributions (e.g. superannuation payments).
  The term "utilities" means water, electricity, gas, fuel, etc.
  Total expenditure should equal the sum of individual items, ie a + b + c + d = e.

Cost of training

- The breakdown of the cost of education is difficult because several headings of expenditure cover both teaching and research. For this reason, the cost of training calculated in the table is only part of the items of expenditure.

Annual direct cost of educating a veterinary student

The numerator comprises:

a1 - salaries of teaching personnel

a2 - salaries of support staff

b2 - expenditure relating to teaching

c1 - equipment relating to teaching

Cost   = $\dfrac{a1 + a2 + b2 + c1}{\text{number of students in undergraduate training}}$

Direct cost of training for a degree

This cost is obtained by multiplying the direct annual cost of training a student by the average number of years of training for a student.

Table 2.1: Annual expenditure of the school last 5 years

Area of Expenditure	This year N £	N -1 £	N -2 £	N -3 £	N -4 £
a. Personnel					
a.1 teaching staff					
a.2 support staff					
a.3 research staff					
Total for a					
b. Operating Costs					
b.1 utilities					
b.2 expenditure relating specifically to teaching					
b.3 expenditure relating specifically to research					
b.4 general operations (excluding the above)					
Total for b					
c. Equipment					
c.1 teaching					
c.2 research					
c.3 general (or common) equipment					
Total for c					
d. Maintenance of buildings					
e. *Total expenditure*					

Table 2.1.1:   Projected future expenditure of the school for next 5 years

Area of Expenditure	This year N £	N +1 £	N +2 £	N +3 £	N +4 £
a. Personnel					
a.1 teaching staff					
a.2 support staff					
a.3 research staff					
Total for a					
b. Operating Costs					
b.1 utilities					
b.2 expenditure relating specifically to teaching					
b.3 expenditure relating specifically to research					
b.4 general operations (excluding the above)					
Total for b					
c. Equipment					
c.1 teaching					
c.2 research					
c.3 general (or common) equipment					
Total for c					
d. Maintenance of buildings					
e. Total expenditure					

Table 2.1.2: Sources of expenditure for the veterinary teaching hospitals for last 5 years

Costs	This year N £	N -1	N -2	N -3	N -4
1. Salaries for support staff					
2. Salaries for teaching staff					
3. Maintenance of buildings and equipment					
4. Costs of consumable items, drugs, etc. incl. stock carried in-house					
5. Equipment costs & depreciation					
6. Costs of maintaining teaching animals					

Table 2.1.3: Projected future expenditure for the veterinary teaching hospitals in next 5 years

Costs	This year N £	N + 1	N + 2	N + 3	N + 4
1. Salaries for support staff					
2. Salaries for teaching staff					
3. Maintenance of buildings and equipment					
4. Costs of consumable items, drugs, etc. incl. stock carried in house					
5. Equipment costs & depreciation					
6. Costs of maintaining teaching animals					

Table 2.1.4: Cost of veterinary training for the last 5 years

1. Annual cost of training a veterinary student	this year (N)	N-1	N-2	N-3	N-4

2.2 Revenues

- As for expenditure, state the calendar or academic year.
- Indicate what financial support is provided directly by the central administration (eg maintenance, power, IT services, library etc).
- Only provide revenue for operational activities. Exclude revenue for capital projects or major renovations.
- Total revenue should be equal to the sum of revenues from different sources, i.e. a+b+c+d+e = f.
- Revenue from public sources (item a) can fluctuate. Please give the total of this revenue for the past five years in table 2.1.1.

Table 2.2.1: Annual revenues of the school for the last 5 years

Revenue Source	This year N £	N - 1	N - 2	N - 3	N - 4
a. revenue from the State or public authority					
b. revenue from private bodies					
c. revenue from research					
d. revenue earned & retained by the school					
d.1 registration/tuition fees from students					
domestic students					
international students					
d.2 revenue from continuing education					
d.3 revenue from clinical activities					
d.4 revenue from diagnostic activities					
e. revenue from other sources					
f. Total revenue from all sources					

Table 2.2.2: Projected future revenues of the school for the next 5 years

Revenue Source	This year N £	N + 1	N + 2	N + 3	N + 4
a. revenue from the State or public authority					
b. revenue from private bodies					
c. revenue from research					
d. revenue earned & retained by the school					
d.1 registration/tuition fees from students					
domestic students					
international students					
d.2 revenue from continuing education					
d.3 revenue from clinical activities					
d.4 revenue from diagnostic activities					
e. revenue from other sources					
f. Total revenue from all sources					

Table 2.2.3: Sources of revenue for the veterinary teaching hospitals for the last 5 years

Income sources	This year N £	N - 1	N - 2	N - 3	N - 4
1. Core funds from University					
2. Income from business activities					
3. Sponsorship from industry					
4. Benefaction and donations					
5. Grants for equipment					

Table 2.2.4: Projected future revenues for the veterinary teaching hospitals for the next 5 years

Income sources	This year N £	N +1	N +2	N +3	N +4
6. Core funds from University					
7. Income from business activities					
8. Sponsorship from industry					
9. Benefaction and donations					
10. Grants for equipment					

- What percentage of income from the following sources does the veterinary teaching school have to contribute to other bodies (university, etc.)?
    - clinical income
    - commercial consulting
    - research grants
    - other (please explain)

  Indicate the proportion of additional income that is retained within the institution in each case.
- Outline how the allocation of funding to the school is determined, and by what body. If the allocation of funds, or any significant proportion of it, is linked to a particular factor (e.g. student numbers, research output), please describe this.
- Please provide details of the funding model used and the areas that the school has to cover from its operating budget.
- Outline how the allocation of funds within the school is decided.
- Indicate how the basis for funding the school compares with those teaching other courses (e.g. whether veterinary training receives a higher budget weighting compared to other disciplines in the university).
- Describe briefly the mechanism(s) for funding capital expenditure (e.g. building work, major items of equipment), and how decisions are taken on this.
- Indicate whether students pay tuition/registration fees. If so, how much these are.
- How the fees are decided.
- How the funds are distributed.

2.3 Comments

Add any general comments that you feel would help the team evaluate the school's finances.

- Comment on any of the standards that are particularly difficult to fulfil in the present financial situation.
- What is your number one priority for the use of any increased funding?
- Comment on the degree of autonomy and flexibility available to the veterinary school in financial matters.

- Comment on the percentage of income from outside services that the veterinary school is allowed to retain for its own use, and on the extent to which loss of this income acts as a disincentive for the services concerned.
- Comment on the projected budget for the next calendar year and any financial changes anticipated over the next 5 years.

2.4 Suggestions for improvement

- If you are not satisfied with the situation, please list your suggestions for change in order of importance.

Standard 3 – Facilities and equipment

3.1 All aspects of the physical facilities must provide an environment conducive to learning.

3.2 The veterinary school must have a clear strategy and programme for maintaining and upgrading its buildings and equipment.

3.3 Lecture theatres, teaching laboratories, tutorial rooms, clinical facilities and other teaching spaces must be adequate in number and size, and equipped for the instructional purposes and must be well maintained. Students must have ready access to adequate study, recreation, locker and food services facilities.

3.4 Offices, teaching preparation and research laboratories must be sufficient for the needs of the academic and support staff.

3.5 Facilities must comply with all relevant jurisdictional legislation including health, safety, biosecurity and UK animal welfare and care standards.

3.6 The institutions' livestock facilities, animal housing, core clinical teaching facilities and equipment must:
- be sufficient in capacity
- be of a high standard and well maintained
- be fit for purpose
- promote best husbandry, welfare and management practices
- ensure relevant biosecurity and bio-containment
- be designed to enhance learning.

Clinical teaching facilities

3.7 Core clinical teaching facilities may be provided on campus and/or externally through a 'distributed' model. The school must ensure any hospitals and practices involved with core teaching must meet the relevant RCVS Practice Standards and (for UK schools) be accredited under the RCVS Practice Standards Scheme or to the relevant standard for the teaching undertaken at the establishment.

3.8 All core teaching sites (whether on campus or external) should provide adequate learning spaces including adequate internet access.

3.9 The School must ensure students have access to a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic facilities, including but not limited to: pharmacy, diagnostic imaging, anaesthesia, clinical pathology, intensive/critical care, surgeries and treatment facilities, ambulatory services and necropsy facilities.

3.10 Operational policies and procedures must be posted for staff, visitors and students.

3.11 Appropriate isolation facilities must be provided to meet the need for the isolation and containment of animals with communicable diseases and operated to provide for animal care in accordance with accepted modern methods for prevention of spread of infectious agents.

Factual information

3.1.1 Premises in General
- Describe the major functions of, or activities that take place in, the facilities used by the school.
- Provide an area map that indicates the principal facilities of the school and describe distance and travel time to any off-campus facilities.
- Describe the strategy and programme for upgrading and maintaining buildings and equipment.
- Describe health and safety measures in place in the premises used for learning and teaching.
- Describe the recreational, study, locker and food facilities available to students
- Describe the physical facilities that are available for staff use including recreational and food preparation facilities.

3.1.2 Premises used for theoretical, practical and supervised teaching

- The same room should not be entered under two or more headings, even if it is used, for example, for both practical and supervised work.

Table 3.1.2a: Premises for lecturing

Number of lecture halls								
Number of places per lecture hall								
Hall	no. 1	no. 2	no. 3	no. 4	no. 5	no. 6	no. 7	no. 8 etc.
Places	....	....	....	......	....	....	....	......
Total number of places in lecture halls:								

Table 3.1.2b: Premises for group work

Number of rooms that can be used for group work (supervised work)								
Number of places in the rooms for group work:								
Room	no. 1	no. 2	no. 3	no. 4	no. 5	no. 6	no. 7	no. 8 etc.
Places	....	....	....	....	....	......	....	...……
Room	no. 9	no. 10	no. 11	no. 12	no. 13	no. 14	no. 15	no. 16
Places	....	....	....	....	....	......	....	....
Total number of places in rooms for group work/supervised work:								

Table 3.1.2c: Premises for practical work

Number of laboratories for practical work by students + number of places per laboratory								
Room	no. 1	no. 2	no. 3	no. 4	no. 5	no. 6	no. 7	no. 8 etc.
Places	......	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Total number of places in laboratories:								

Table 3.1.3 Premises for animals

- Briefly describe the facilities for rearing and maintaining normal animals for teaching purposes. If the school has no farm of its own, explain the practical arrangements made for teaching subjects such as animal husbandry, herd health and the techniques of handling production animals.

Premises used for clinics and hospitals

- Briefly describe the facilities available within the clinics and hospital of the school and contracted (distributed) teaching practices and how the currency of standards is monitored.

Table 3.1.4 Places available for clinics and hospitalisation

Enter the number of animals that can be accommodated, not the number of animals used. If premises are used to accommodate different species of animal enter only once in the table.

Number of hospitalisation places for cattle	
Number of hospitalisation places for horses	
Number of hospitalisation places for small ruminants	
Number of hospitalisation places for pigs	
Number of hospitalisation places for dogs	
Number of hospitalisation places for cats	
Number of hospitalisation places for other species	
Number of animals that can be accommodated in isolation facilities:	
Small animals	
Farm animals and horses	

3.1.5 Diagnostic Laboratories and Clinical Support Services
- Briefly describe the facilities available for clinical pathology and diagnostic pathology.

  Central clinical support services
- Indicate the facilities available for clinical services (e.g. diagnostic imaging, anaesthesia, etc.)

3.1.6 Slaughterhouse Facilities
- Provide evidence that the school has access to appropriate slaughterhouse facilities, and that these facilities have the capability of meeting the teaching needs of the programme. Are there any factors, including seasonal operations, which may limit access by students? Provide evidence of continuity of availability.

3.1.7 Foodstuff Processing Unit
- Describe access that the school has to foodstuff processing units for teaching.

3.1.8 Waste Management
- Describe the systems and equipment used for disposing of waste material; cadavers, carcasses, biological waste of different types, excreta, etc.

3.1.9 Future Changes
- Outline any proposed changes in the premises that will have a substantial effect on the school, and indicate the stage which these have reached.

3.2 School comments

- Evaluate the adequacy of the veterinary school facilities and their maintenance.

3.3 Suggestions for improvement

- If you are not satisfied with the situation, please list your suggestions.

Standard 4 – Animal resources

4.1 Normal and diseased animals of various domestic and exotic species must be available for instructional purposes, either as clinical patients or provided by the institution. While precise numbers are not specified, the school must provide access to sufficient numbers of animals and quality of animal material to provide the necessary quantity and quality of animal husbandry and clinical instruction.

4.2 Schools must ensure that students are competent in animal handling relevant to the workplace learning and clinical work to be undertaken and that Health and Safety matters are briefed before the student begins their placement.

4.3 It is essential that a diverse and sufficient number of surgical and medical patients be available for the students' clinical educational experience including patients in primary care settings.

4.4 Experience can include exposure to clinical education at external sites, provided the school quality assures these clinical experiences and educational outcomes to at least the same standard as university owned facilities. Further, such clinical experiences should occur in a setting that provides access to subject matter experts at the appropriate level, reference resources, modern and complete clinical laboratories, advanced diagnostic instrumentation and ready confirmation (including necropsy). Such examples could include a contractual arrangement with nearby practitioners who serve as adjunct faculty members and off-campus field practice centres.

4.5 The teaching hospital(s) must provide nursing care and instruction in nursing procedures. A supervised field service and/or ambulatory programme must be maintained in which students are offered multiple opportunities to obtain clinical experience under field conditions.

4.6 Under all situations students must be active participants in the workup of the patient, including physical diagnosis and diagnostic problem oriented decision making.

4.7 Medical records must be comprehensive and maintained in an effective retrieval system to efficiently support the teaching, research, and service programmes of the school.

This chapter covers materials provided for students in pre- and para clinical subjects (eg. anatomy, animal handling/husbandry, necropsy, abattoir and public health, as well as clinical case loads.

Factual information

4.1.1 Anatomy
- Indicate the materials that are used in practical anatomy training and how these are obtained and stored.
- Indicate the nature of further animal use in teaching other basic subjects.

4.1.2 Pathology
Ratio: students/post-mortem animals (numerator = 1)

Number of students graduated in the last year = _____ = 1
_____   ____   ____

Number of cadavers necropsied

A sufficient number and species-balance of cadavers is required through necropsy to ensure that students have adequate training and practice to allow them to conduct a full systematic necropsy on any of the major domestic species.

Table 4.1: Number of necropsies over the past five years

Species		Number of necropsies undertaken					Estimated % of necropsies observed by or undertaken by veterinary undergraduate students in most recent full year
		Yr N	N-1	N-2	N-3	N-4	
Food-producing animals:	Cattle						
	Small ruminants						
	Pigs						
	Other farm animals						
Equine							
Poultry							
Rabbits							
Dogs							
Cats							
Other/exotic							

Note: *State the actual year

           ** Indicate species

           If there are necropsies performed outside the normal pathology accessions, include these in Table 4.1

- Indicate the nature and extent of any additional sources of material for the teaching of necropsies and pathological anatomy, including slaughterhouse material.
- Indicate the number of post-mortems by species that would be undertaken by a typical student during the course of their training

4.1.3 Animal Handling/Husbandry
- Indicate the availability of production animals for the practical teaching of students
  - on the site of the institution
  - on other sites to which the institution has access.

4.1.4 Food Hygiene and Public Health
- Indicate the availability of animals and products of animal origin for the practical teaching of students in food hygiene, inspection and technology.

4.1.5 Organisation of clinical services
- Describe the organisation of clinical services which the school uses to support student learning.
- Describe the mechanisms used to ensure that all clinical placements are supervised, well organised and subject to appropriate quality assurance processes.
- Provide evidence of systematic review and reflection (e.g. through assessment outcomes and student, staff and extramural practitioner feedback) on the effectiveness of the clinical educational experience.
- Outline the extent and responsibilities of distributed and off campus clinical teaching. Describe the planning, supervision, and monitoring of students; describe the contractual relationships with placement providers (including health and safety compliance). (Copies of contracts with external providers for core clinical teaching (distributive model) must be available for inspection confidentially during the visit.)
- Describe similarly any distributed, off-campus clinical placements that are used for non-core rotations.
- Demonstrate that off campus facilities used in core curriculum instruction:
    - are of a standard comparable to those in intramural facilities and meet those of national accreditation standards (e.g. RCVS Practice Standards)
    - are provided with dedicated learning spaces with access to university learning resources.
- Describe the respective roles of veterinary generalists and subject-matter experts in clinical instruction.
- Discuss how rotation group sizes affect students' clinical learning.

4.1.6 Case load
- Complete Tables 4.2 for the past two years. Data for earlier years should be available for the visitors during the visit. Summarise trends in case load for each main species group, and indicate if there have been any significant changes in case load and students' involvement in cases since the last visitation.
- Complete Table 4.4 for external placements for core rotations. Summarise any other formal external placements used for core teaching (e.g. SA practice, government services).
- Comment on the adequacy of patients (numbers, species, variety of cases) for the clinical teaching programme.
- Comment on the balance between first opinion and referral cases used for training students, and the extent to which students are involved in both types of case.

4.1.7 Development of students' skills
- Report in detail the internal and external clinical resources that are used across species for the development of Day 1 competences in
    - Anaesthesia, routine and referral surgery
    - Emergency and critical care
    - Primary and referral medicine
    - Clinical pathology, diagnostic imaging
    - Making and using medical records (including ambulatory services)
    - Veterinary business, client communication, ethics and professional practice during clinical rotations
    - Isolation procedures, safe chemotherapy, radiation therapy, pathogen surveillance

- Client complaints, and oversight of clinical morbidity/mortality.
- Provide evidence that students are active participants in the workup, care and clinical management of cases. Explain how the teaching value of each case is utilised.
- Demonstrate the following aspects of clinical teaching are in place :
    - small group clinical teaching by staff who have advanced clinical experience and a commitment to student learning
    - teaching methods that provide a supportive environment and encourage students (under staff supervision) to investigate cases in depth
    - opportunity for students to spend extended periods in discussion, thinking and reading to deepen their understanding of the case and its management
    - opportunity for students to perform or contribute to extended diagnostic work up and problem solving of complex cases, including referrals, that go beyond those typically encountered in practice
    - opportunity to understand and be involved in the full range of treatment options
    - encouragement for students to demonstrate skills in evidence-based and research-based clinical practice
    - formative and summative assessment of clinical and procedural skills.

Table 4.2 – Number of clinical cases involving students

4.2(a) – Production Animals

Production Animals	No. of cases in previous year involving undergraduate students											
	(a) Rec'd for consultation in school's clinics		(b) Number of hospitalised days		(c) Number of herd/flocks & average herd size		(d) Number of animals seen by students on farm/herd health visits (not including EMS)		(e) Estimate % of 1st opinion v. referral cases per species seen by students			
									1st op'n		Referral	
Last full year; Previous year	Yn	N-1	Yn	N-1	Y1	N-1	Y1	N-1	Yn	N-1	Yn	N-1
Cattle												
Small ruminants												
Pigs												
Food producing Rabbits & other production animals (specify)												
Poultry												

4.2(b) Companion Animals

Companion Animals	No. of cases in previous year involving undergraduate students									
	(a) Rec'd for consultation in school's clinics		(b) Number of hospitalised days		(c) Number of animals seen by students (not including EMS)		(e) Estimate % of 1st opinion v. referral cases per species seen by students			
							1st op'n		Referral	
Last full year; Previous year	Yn	N -1	Yn	N -1	Yn	N -1	Yn	N -1	Yn	N -1
Equine										
Dogs										
Cats										
Pet rabbits/ other/exotic (indicate species)										

Table 4.3: Herd health programmes

COMPLETE THIS TABLE SEPARATELY FOR EACH OF THE LAST 5 YEARS	Herd/flock health programmes provided through university owned animals		Herd/flock health programmes provided through private owned animals or government services	
	SITES (N) (Blank if none)	ANIMALS (N)	SITES (N) (Blank if none)	ANIMALS (N)
Dairy				
Beef Cow-Calf				
Beef feedlots				
Sheep				
Goat				
Pig				
Poultry				
Fish				
Horses				
Other				

Table 4.4: External placements

Placement name	Species	Duration of rotation	Rotations per year	Students per rotation	Patient numbers*	Core? y/n	Other comments**

*Patient numbers should be confined to the species that is the focus of the placement
** eg. whether there are embedded university staff at the placement

4.2 School Comments

4.3 School suggestions for improvement

Standard 5 – Information resources

5.1   Libraries and information retrieval are essential to veterinary medical education, research, public service, and continuing education. Timely access to information resources, whether through print, electronic media or other means, must be available to students and faculty. The library must be administered by a qualified librarian. The school must have access to the human and physical resources necessary for development of instructional materials.

5.2   The school must provide students with unimpeded access to learning resources which include scientific and other relevant literature, internet and internal study resources, and equipment for the development of procedural skills (e.g. models). It will demonstrate how the use of these resources is aligned with the pedagogical environment and learning outcomes within the programme, and have mechanisms in place to evaluate the teaching value of innovations in learning resources.

5.1 Factual information

- Briefly describe information resources, including library, information technology and the e-learning platform
- What access is available for students and staff to library and on-line information resources both on and off campus?
- Describe the relationship of the school and the central university in the provision of library, IT and e-learning services.
- Describe processes for evaluation of new technology for use within the teaching programme.
- Describe the use of learning aids such as simulations, mannequins and models.
- Describe the audiovisual and electronic learning media available to students and their role in supporting student learning and teaching in the programme.
- What support is available to the veterinary school for the design of on line learning materials?
- What IT facilities are available centrally, within the school and within the clinical training facilities?
- Describe the IT support for staff and students.

Table 5.1: Library statistics (5 year comparison)

Year	Current (N)	N-1	N-2	N-3	N-4
Total Budget					
Personnel					
Volumes held					
Number of paid-for journals					
Journal subscriptions (£)					
Acquisitions (Total)					

5.2 School comments

5.3 School suggestions for improvement

Standard 6 – Students

6.1   *The number of professional veterinary degree students must be consistent with the resources and the mission of the school.*

6.2   *Veterinary schools should establish post-graduate programmes such as internships, residencies and advanced degrees (e.g., MSc, PhD), that complement and strengthen the professional programme.*

6.3   *Provisions must be made, by either the university or school, to support the physical, emotional and welfare needs of students. This includes, but is not limited to, learning support and counselling services, careers advice, and fair and transparent mechanisms for dealing with student illness, impairment and disability during the programme. This shall include provision of reasonable accommodations/adjustments for disabled students, consistent with all relevant equality and/or human rights legislation.*

6.4   *There must be effective mechanisms for resolution of student grievances (e.g. interpersonal conflict or harassment).*

6.5   *Mechanisms must be in place by which students can convey their needs and wants to the school.*

6.6   *The school must provide students with a mechanism, anonymously if they wish, to offer suggestions, comments and complaints regarding compliance of the school with the RCVS standards for accreditation. These materials must be made available to RCVS as part of the annual report.*

- Describe briefly how the number of student places is determined, including the contributions of government funded/subsidised places, non-subsidised domestic places, and places for foreign students to the total.
- Describe any proposed changes in the number of students admitted annually and if applicable, describe how the school plans to accommodate these changes.
- List and describe student services (e.g. registration, teaching administration, mentoring, welfare, counselling, tutoring, peer assistance, clubs, organisations).
- Explain the processes for supporting students who are, or become, ill, disabled, of impaired performance.
- Explain the methods that are used for identifying and remediating failing students.
- Explain what the school does to support graduates obtaining employment.
- how applicants with disabilities or illness are considered and accommodated
- Describe the mechanisms for students to articulate their needs and wants to the school and how these influence school decisions.
- Describe the systems used on an ongoing basis to collect student suggestions, comments, and complaints related to the standards for accreditation.

Table 6.1.1: Numbers of veterinary students enrolled in the veterinary school

	This Year N	N -1	N – 2	N -3	N -4
Year Zero/foundation years if applicable					
First year					
Second year					
Third year					
Fourth year					
Fifth year					
(insert lines for any additional years)					
#Graduated					

Table 6.1.2: Numbers of non-veterinary undergraduate students

(If students on other courses, eg. veterinary bioscience, veterinary nursing) share any of the same resources as veterinary students, indicate their numbers here.

	This Year N	N -1	N – 2	N -3	N -4
First year					
Second year					
Third year					
(insert lines for any additional years)					
#Graduated					

Table 6.1 3: Veterinary applications, offers, acceptances

	UK/EU students		Overseas students		Total	
	A/P	O/A	A/P	O/A	A/P	O/A
Current year						
N -1						
N -2						
N -3						
N -4						

A/P = Applications/Positions available

O/A = Offers made/acceptances

Table 6.1.4: Postgraduate students, including interns and residents (head count)

Enter the number of postgraduate students (excluding graduate students on the core veterinary professional programme) in the veterinary school

	Interns (n)	Residents (b)	Resident +MSc (n)	Resident + PhD (n)	Other postgrad quals*	PhD
Current year						
N -1						
N – 2						
N – 3						
N – 4						

Enter each person in only one category

*eg. Diplomas, Masters, Postgraduate Certs.

6.2 School comments

6.3 School suggestions for improvement/change (if any)

Standard 7 – Admission and progression

7.1   *The selection criteria for admission to the programme must be consistent with the mission of the school. The number of students admitted must be consistent with the resources available to the school.*

7.2   *In relation to enrolment, the school must provide accurate information in all advertisements regarding the educational programme by providing clear and current information for prospective students. Further, printed catalogue or electronic information must state the purpose and goals of the programme, provide admission requirements and procedures, state degree requirements, present faculty descriptions, clearly state information on tuition and fees along with procedures for withdrawal, give necessary information for financial aid programmes, and provide an accurate academic calendar. The information must include the accreditation status of the degree course (whether by RCVS or other relevant accrediting bodies), and the requirements for eventual registration/licence, including fitness to practise.*

7.3   *The selection and progression criteria must be clearly defined, consistent, defensible, be free of discrimination or bias, and take account of the fact that students are admitted with a view to their entering the veterinary profession in due course.*

7.4   *An accurate description of the selection criteria and processes must be published and readily available to potential students. The school must regularly review and reflect on the selection processes to ensure they are appropriate for students to complete the programme successfully, including consideration of their potential to meet all the RCVS Day One Competences across the common UK domestic species.*

7.5   *Adequate training (including periodic refresher training) must be provided for those involved in the selection process to ensure applicants are evaluated fairly and consistently.*

7.6   *Potential students must be advised of the demands of the veterinary course and RCVS requirements for fitness to practise.*

7.7   *Factors other than academic performance should be considered for admission, with the aim of selecting students who will be capable of succeeding in a variety of fields within the profession.*

7.8   *The school must have a strategy for widening participation and engaging students from a variety of social backgrounds.*

7.9   *If not otherwise covered within the early part of the course, the entry criteria for the programme must include evidence that the student has a solid background in the chemical, physical and biological science and mathematics, in order to meet the requirements of the EU Directive on basic subjects.*

Students with a disability

7.10   *There must be clear policies and procedures as to how applicants with disabilities or illness will be considered and, if appropriate, accommodated on the programme, taking into account the requirement that all students must be capable of meeting the RCVS Day One Competences by the time they graduate.*

Student Progression

7.11   *The basis for decisions on progression (including academic progression and professional fitness to practise) must be explicit and readily available to the students. The school must provide evidence that it has mechanisms in place to identify and provide remediation and appropriate support (including termination) for students who are not performing adequately (including areas such as practical animal handling, client communication etc).*

7.12   *The school must have mechanisms in place to monitor attrition and progression and be able to respond and amend admissions selection criteria and student support if required.*

Student Exclusion

7.13   *Mechanisms for the exclusion of students from the programme, either for academic reasons or under fitness to practise procedures, must be explicit.*

Appeals and misconduct

7.14   *School policies for managing appeals against decisions, including admissions, academic and progression decisions, should be transparent and publicly available. The process for exclusion of students on any grounds must be explicit.*

7.15   *Policies for dealing with student misconduct and fitness to practise must be explicit.*

- Summarise the selection criteria for admission to the programme, including
  - pre-requisite subjects
  - minimum admission requirements
  - factors other than academic achievement used as admission criteria
  - measures to enhance diversity
  - alternative routes of entry into the programme (eg. Year Zero programmes; accelerated programmes for graduate entry).
- Give examples/links to materials/websites designed for applicants providing information on the programme, entry requirements and the selection process.
- Describe how the school reviews its admissions criteria and selection process.
- Comment on how successful the selection process is in meeting the mission of the school.
- Describe the school's policies for admitting and supporting students with disabilities.

7.1 Veterinary Student Progression and Attrition

- Describe the requirements (in terms of completing subjects and examinations) for progressing to a subsequent year of the course.
- Describe the procedures for the management of academic misconduct and fitness to practise and for the exclusion of students.
- Describe the mechanisms that the school has in place to identify and provide remediation and support for students whose performance is inadequate.
- Describe the policies for managing appeals against academic decisions, including admissions and progression decisions.
- Explain how this information is communicated to students.

Table 7.1.1: Attrition of veterinary students

Entering class	Total students	Relative attrition		Absolute attrition		Total attrition	
	n	Academic n (%)	Personal n (%)	Academic n (%)	Personal n (%)	n	%
N -5 (if required)							
N -4 (if required)							
N – 3							
N – 2							
N -1							
Current year							

Relative attrition: students who transfer to earlier years, transfer to another veterinary school.

Absolute attrition: students who leave and never return.

Students who intercalate are not included in this table.

Table 7.1.2: Average duration of veterinary studies

For students graduating in the current year (or immediate past year), how many have attended the programme for 4 – 10 years?

Duration of studies	Full course (n)	Advanced standing/accelerated programme (n)
4 years		
{complete lines for each year)		
10 years		
Average duration of study for students who graduated in the current year (or immediate past year)		

7.2 School comments

Comment on the following:

- the standard of the students starting the veterinary course
- any differences in the academic achievement of groups of students selected by different criteria
- the factors that determine the number of veterinary students admitted
- the adequacy of the facilities and teaching programme to train the existing number of veterinary students
- the progress made by veterinary students in their studies and the mechanisms that the school uses to support students who are not making satisfactory progress
- the percentage of veterinary students that will eventually graduate.

7.3 Suggestions for improvement

If improvements are required, please state in order of importance any suggestions regarding:
- the number of students admitted
- the drop-out percentage
- the average duration of studies

Standard 8 – Academic and support staff

8.1   The institution must ensure that all staff are appropriately qualified and prepared for their roles.

8.2   The total number, qualifications and skills of all staff involved with the programme, including teaching staff, 'adjunct' staff, technical and support staff, must be sufficient and appropriate to deliver the educational programme and fulfil the school's mission.

8.3   Staff who participate in teaching must display competence and effective teaching skills in relevant aspects of the curriculum, regardless of whether they are full or part time, residents, interns or postgraduate students, adjuncts or off-campus contracted teachers.

8.4   Academic positions must offer the security and benefits necessary to maintain stability, morale, continuity, and competence of the academic staff. Academic staff should have a balanced workload of teaching, research and service depending on their role; and should have reasonable opportunity and resources for participation in scholarly activities.

8.5   The veterinary school must provide evidence that it utilises a well-defined, comprehensive and publicised programme for the professional growth and development of staff; including formal appraisal and informal mentoring procedures, especially for junior academic staff. Staff must have the opportunity to contribute to the school's direction and decision making processes.

8.6   The school must be able to demonstrate that it has a programme for staff development in tertiary teaching theory/practice, and how that programme is managed.

8.7   Promotion criteria must be clear and explicit. Promotions must recognise excellence in, and place equal emphasis on all aspects of teaching (including clinical teaching), research, service and other scholarly activities.

8.1 Factual information

In completing the tables below, please note the following:

- staff who are allocated to the veterinary school, principally for teaching in the veterinary programme and financed by the university – these should be included as full-time equivalents (FTE)
- staff in the school who teach fewer than 10 hours per annum in the veterinary programme should NOT be included in staffing ratios
- staff in the school who are allocated to other programmes but also teach in the veterinary programme, including "research only" staff: these should receive a fraction of FTE according to the hours of veterinary teaching relative to other programmes in the school.
- staff outside the veterinary school (service departments) who teach in the veterinary and other university programmes should be allocated an FTE equivalent based on the relative size of the subject they teach.
- practitioners in off-campus contracted centres (distributed model) who are significantly engaged in clinical teaching, should be included as fractional FTE positions, based on the hours actively contributed to teaching.

Adjunct and visiting positions should generally not be included in FTE figures. However, where adjunct appointments are used, full details should be provided in this section, indicating the personnel, areas of teaching and number of teaching hours.

- **Full-time equivalents (FTE):** Posts can be occupied full-time or part-time. The number given should correspond to a total of full-time equivalents (FTE). For instance 10 full-time posts plus two part-time posts at 50% plus 1 part-time post at 80% should be given as a total of 11.8 FTE.
- **Teaching staff**: It is accepted that "teaching" staff will also do research.
- **Research staff**: This category includes academic personnel whose main task is to conduct research work, although they may participate in some undergraduate teaching.
- **Support staff**: This includes all posts, regardless of the work undertaken; - secretaries, administrators, technicians, librarians, veterinary nurses, animal carers, cleaners, etc.
- **Postgraduate students**: Interns and doctoral (Ph.D.) students should not normally be included in staff numbers. They fall into the category of "students", unless they are paid to provide regular structured practical and/or clinical training for a minimum of 10% and a maximum of 50% of their annual workload, and are supervised by the permanent staff.
- **Residents**: These can be included in teaching staff and allocated a fractional FTE based on their contribution to teaching. This fraction would not normally exceed 0.2.

If the above distinctions between different groups of staff are not appropriate for the school, make the best distribution possible between the suggested headings and add an explanatory note.

Table 8.1.1: Academic staff of the veterinary programme – numbers and qualifications

	Non-Veterinarians			Veterinarians					
							Veterinary Specialists		
	BSc only	MSc	PhD	BVSc or DVM only	MSc	PhD	Board Certified or Diploma holders	Board Certified / Dip holders & Masters degree	Board Certified / Dip holders & PhD
Dean/HoD									
Professor									
Associate Professor									
Senior Lecturer									
Lecturer									
Tutors/or equivalent									
Part time Faculty (less than 75% time)									
Totals:									
Total specialist vets:									
Total	*Non vets:*			*Vets:*					

Table 8.1.2: Support staff of the veterinary programme

Role	Technical staff FTE	Admin & other staff FTE
Responsible for the care and treatment of animals		
Responsible for the preparation of practical and clinical teaching		
Responsible for administration, general services, maintenance, etc		
Support staff primarily engaged in research		
Other		
Total support staff		

Table 8.1.3: Loss and recruitment of staff (both academic and clinical equivalent)

Provide data for the past five years

Rank/position	Number of Faculty lost	Discipline/Specialty	Number of Faculty recruited	Year
Total				

- Outline how the allocation of staff to the school is determined.
- Provide evidence that staff who participate in teaching display competence and effective teaching skills in relevant aspects of the curriculum.
- Outline how the allocation of staff to units within the school is determined.
- Describe policies designed to maintain a stable cohort of academic and support staff.
- Indicate whether there are difficulties in recruiting or retaining staff.
- Indicate whether the school employs additional staff from service income (e.g. using revenues from clinical or diagnostic work).
- Describe the rules governing outside work, including consultation and private practice, by staff working at the school.
- Describe the opportunities and financial provisions for academic staff to: a) attend scientific meetings; b) go on sabbatical/study leave.

- If there are long-term gaps in filling appointments, describe the arrangements to provide/cover those components of the programme. Estimate the percentage of core curricular content delivered in this way.
- Describe the processes for supporting and mentoring staff, especially junior academic staff.
- Explain the processes for the review and planning of staff performance, including the management of workload.
- Provide a concise summary of employment policies and processes and promotion policies and processes.
- Provide an estimate of the weightings assigned to teaching, research, service and/or other scholarly activities in the promotion criteria for academic staff.
- Describe the role of interns, residents and post-graduate students in teaching and assessing veterinary students.
- Provide a list of the 'secondary' roles of academic staff (committees, administrative positions etc)

8.2 School comments

8.3 School suggestions for improvement

Standard 9 - Curriculum

9.1   The curriculum must be designed, resourced and managed to ensure all graduates have achieved the graduate attributes expected of a degree programme at level 7 in the European Qualifications Framework, the minimum training requirements in the European Directive 2013/55/EU on the mutual recognition of professional qualifications, and the RCVS Day One Competences.

9.2   The learning outcomes for the programme must be explicitly articulated to form a cohesive framework.

9.3   Programme learning outcomes must be communicated to staff and students and:

- *underpin and ensure the effective alignment of all content, teaching, learning and assessment activities of the degree programme;*
- *form the basis for explicit statements of the objectives and learning outcomes of individual units of study; and be reviewed, managed and updated to ensure they remain relevant, adequate and are effectively achieved.*

Management

9.4   The school must have a formally-constituted committee structure (which includes effective student representation), with clear and empowered reporting lines, to oversee and manage the curriculum and its delivery. The committee(s) must:

- *determine the pedagogical basis, design, delivery methods and assessment methods of the curriculum,*
- *oversee quality assurance of the curriculum, particularly gathering, evaluating, making change and responding to feedback from stakeholders, peer reviewers and moderators, and data from examination/assessment outcomes,*
- *review the curriculum at least every seven years and*
- *identify and meet teacher training needs for staff, maintaining currency of their skills and competence for future curriculum development.*

Content

9.5   The curriculum should include the following:

- *understanding of biological principles and processes of veterinary significance*
- *expertise in recognising and advising on normal animal structure and function, husbandry, behaviour, nutrition and feeding, reproduction and breeding, homeostasis, pathophysiology, agents of disease and the natural history and clinical manifestations of important animal diseases*
- *expertise in medicine, surgery, and anaesthesia applicable to a broad range of common species. Students must develop entry-level skills in physical examination and laboratory diagnostic techniques and interpretation (including clinical pathology, diagnostic imaging and necropsy), disease prevention, biosecurity, therapy (including surgery and pharmacotherapeutics), patient management and care (including primary care, intensive care, emergency medicine, surveillance and isolation procedures) for individual animals, herds, flocks and other populations*
- *knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and behaviours necessary to contribute, as a veterinarian, to promoting animal health and well being, within changing societal expectations*
- *clinical, epidemiological, pathophysiological and regulatory skills in management of animal diseases which are:*
  - *endemic to the UK and the EU*
  - *endemic to and of special consideration in the country in which the school is located;*
  - *exotic to the UK and the EU and which are currently regarded as being of concern as potential emergency animal diseases or diseases of global veterinary significance*
  - *significant emerging diseases*
- *entry level capability (to OIE standards) in preventative medicine/epidemiology, zoonoses, food safety and hygiene, regulation of animals and animal products, and management of the interrelationship of animals and the environment. This training must include experience in abattoirs.*
- *professional level problem solving skills in evidence-based diagnosis and clinical management, and data and information management skills*

9.1 Factual information

- Provide a broad overview of the teaching programme, under the headings:
    - basic subjects
    - animal production,
    - clinical subjects,
    - food hygiene,
    - preventative medicine,
    - professional skills.

- Highlight any unusual or innovative aspects.
- Provide information about units of study and rotations throughout the programme:
    - Title, reference number, credit value, position in curriculum (year, semester), whether it is compulsory or elective
    - Formal description of the content of the unit of study; hours and modes of instruction
    - Learning outcomes of each unit of study (including EMS), and the alignment of these with the programme learning outcomes and the RCVS Day Competences.

- Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum as a whole.
- Describe major curricular changes that have occurred since the last full accreditation visit.

- Describe any plans for future curriculum changes.
- Describe the process used for curriculum evaluation and revisions and review (including identification of curricular overlaps, redundancies, and omissions).
- Describe processes for gathering, evaluating, making change and responding to feedback from stakeholders, peer reviewers and moderators, and data from examination/assessment outcomes.
- Outline the composition, reporting lines and remit of the formally-constituted committee that oversees and manages the curriculum and its delivery.
- Describe how the school identifies and meets teacher training needs for intramural and extramural staff and teachers.
- Identify the academic and support staff responsible for the overall supervision of EMS. Explain the processes for liaison with EMS providers.
- Outline the processes for approving students' choices of elective subjects.
- Explain any limitations on students' freedom to chose electives.
- Describe arrangements for teaching in abattoirs and premises for food production.

Table 9.1.1: Digest of units of study (hours)

Unit title	Unit #/ref	Credits	Lectures (1)	Tutorials Seminars/ Problem based learning (2)	Online & other (3)	Labs & Super-vised Practical (4)	Clinical (5)	EMS (6)	*Total*
Year 1									
Unit name									
Insert lines for each unit									
Year 2									
Unit name									
Insert lines for each unit									
Continue for each year of programme									

9.1.2: Digest of disciplines and subjects (student hours in course)

Subject	Lectures (1)	Tutorials Seminars/Problem based learning (2)	Online and other (3)	Labs & Super-vised Practical (4)	Clinical (5)	EMS (6)	*Total*
Basic subjects & sciences							
Anatomy, histology, embryology							
Biochemistry							
Biology, cell biology							
Chemistry							
Physiology							
Molecular biology							
Scientific method							
Biostatistics							
Genetics							
Epidemiology							
Immunology							
Microbiology							
Pathology, pathophysiology							
Pharmacology							
Pharmacy							
Toxicology							
Environmental protection and conservation							
Animal Production							
Agronomy							
Animal nutrition							
Animal husbandry & production, incl. aquaculture							
Livestock production economics							
Animal behaviour & behavioural disorders							
Animal protection & welfare							

Preventative vet medicine, health monitoring						
Reproduction & obstetrics						
Clinical subjects						
Anaesthesia						
Clinical examination & diagnosis						
Clinical pathology						
Diagnostic imaging						
Clinical medicine						
Surgery						
Therapeutics						
Emergency & critical care						
Exotic & epizootic disease						
Zoonoses & public health						
Government veterinary services						
Food hygiene						
Veterinary certification						
Regulation & certification of animal & animal products						
Food hygiene & quality						
Professional Knowledge						
Professional Ethics & behaviour						
Veterinary legislation						
Communication skills						
Practice management & business						
Information literacy & data management						

Table 9.1.3 – EMS

Set out in table form the recommended number of weeks that students are required, or advised, to undertake in EMS. Alternatively, if students have a free choice, explain briefly the school's policy on EMS

	Minimum duration	Year of programme
Production animal farm experience (pre-clinical)		
Companion animal preclinical experience		
Clinical – companion animal		
Clinical – production animal		
Clinical – other		
Food hygiene, abattoir		
Other (specify)		

Provide breakdown by species or nature of practice as appropriate to the school's requirements.

Table 9.1.4 – Clinical Rotations

	List of individual rotations	Duration	Year of programme
Core intramural rotations			
Core distributed rotations			
Elective rotations			
Other			

Provide breakdown by individual rotations

Standard 10 – Assessment

Management

10.1   The institution must ensure that there is a clearly identified structure within the school showing lines of responsibility for the assessment strategy to ensure coherence of the overall assessment regime and to allow the demonstration of progressive development across the programme towards entry level competence. The strategy must be underpinned by robust quality assurance mechanisms.

Policy and Regulation

10.2   The assessment tasks and grading criteria for each unit of study in the programme must be clearly identified, and available to students in a timely manner well in advance of the assessment.

10.3   Requirements to pass including the effect of barrier assessments must be explicit.

10.4   Mechanisms for students to appeal against assessment outcomes must be explicit.

10.5   The school must have a process in place to review assessment outcomes and to change assessment strategies when required.

Assessment methods and design

10.6   Programme learning outcomes covering the full range of professional skills and attributes must form the basis for assessment design and underpin decisions on progression.

10.7   Assessment must inform student learning and students must receive timely feedback.

10.8   Assessment load must be planned and managed to achieve appropriate workloads for students and staff.

10.9   Assessment strategies must allow the school to certify student achievement of learning objectives at the level of the programme and individual units of study.

10.10   Methods of formative and summative assessment must be valid and reliable and comprise a variety of approaches. Direct assessment of clinical skills (some of which may be on simulated patients), must form a significant component of the overall process of assessment in the clinical disciplines.

Assessment standards and quality assurance

10.11   There must be procedures in place to maximise the fairness, validity and reliability of assessment outcomes, including but not limited to academic peer review of assessment content, proofing of scripts, supervision and invigilation, maintenance of records and moderation processes.

10.12   Schools must have appropriate moderation processes in place to ensure parity within and between individual units of study, across the programme, with other institutions; and to ensure that each student is fairly treated.

10.13   The school must be able to demonstrate that there are appropriate measures in place to ensure that grades awarded reflect an appropriate standard of performance by students against the relevant learning objectives.

10.1 Factual information

- Provide an overview of assessment practice within the programme; provide evidence of mapping and alignment of the assessment tasks to programme and unit of study learning outcomes.
- Describe the methodology used for the assessment of clinical skills. What strategies are in place to ensure that every graduate has achieved the minimum level of competence, as prescribed in the RCVS Day 1 Competences, at the point of graduation?

- Explain how assessment:
    - supports quality student learning; supports student achievement of learning objectives at programme and unit-of-study levels
    - demonstrates progressive development towards entry level competence
    - underpins decisions on progression
    - is managed within appropriate workloads for students and staff
    - is accompanied by constructive and timely feedback to help guide student learning.
- Describe how the school's assessment strategy is developed, implemented and reviewed.
- Explain the procedures in place to ensure the fairness, validity and reliability of assessment outcomes, including moderation processes.
- Describe the process by which grades are awarded, including explicit requirements for barrier assessments.
- Explain how staff, including those in external placements, are trained in assessment.
- Outline the appeals process.

10.2 School comments

10.3 School suggestions for improvement

Standard 11 - Research programmes, continuing and higher degree education

11.1 *The veterinary school must demonstrate significant and broad research activities of staff that integrate with and strengthen the veterinary degree programme through research-led teaching.*

11.2 *All students must be trained in scientific method and research techniques relevant to evidence-based veterinary medicine. All students must have opportunities to participate in research programmes.*

11.3 *Veterinary schools must provide advanced postgraduate degree programmes, internships, residencies and continuing education programmes that complement and strengthen the veterinary degree programme and are relevant to the needs of the profession and community. Programmes and the numbers of students in them must be commensurate with the facilities, clinical and other resources and staff.*

11.1 Factual information

- Describe the postgraduate and research programme in the school with emphasis on:
    - the integration of research activities with the veterinary programme
    - the nature and level of participation of students from the veterinary programme in clinical and research training
    - the availability of clinical postgraduate training and appropriately qualified supervising staff.
- Describe the continuing education programmes provided by the veterinary school, their relevance to the needs of the profession and the community, the number of participants in each programme and the plans to continue and/or expand continuing education programmes.
- For schools offering RCVS CertAVP modules, provide data on modules offered, number of candidates enrolled, number of candidates passing modules.
- Describe the involvement of interns, residents and research students in student teaching. Outline any potential conflicts in relation to case management or completion of research.

Table 11.1.1 – Postgraduate clinical training (interns and residents)

Clinical discipline	No. of interns	No. of residents	Diploma or anticipated title
1.			
2.			
3. etc.			

Table 11.1.2 – Postgraduate programmes (include any external/distance learning courses)

Qualification (indicate discipline and/or dept)	No. of students on taught courses, incl. external/distance learning	No. of students by Research	Duration of training
Diploma/Specialist level			
1.			
2.			
3. etc			
Masters Level (incl. postgrad cert/dips)			
1.			
2.			
3. etc			
PhD/Doctorate level			
1.			
2.			
3.etc			
Other			
1.			
2.			
3.etc			

Table 11.1.3 – Continuing education courses provided by the school in the most recent year (state year)

Extend table as necessary.

Title of course	Number of participants	Course hours
add rows as required		

Table 11.1.4 – Summary of all research programmes in the veterinary school in past 3 years

	Total # academic staff	# academic staff involved in research who teach on the professional vet degree	Total research FTE	Externally funded research grants		Number of original peer-reviewed research publications
				Number	Value	
Year N						
Year N -1						
Year N - 2						

Table 11.1.5 – Summary of veterinary students' involvement in research projects

	# veterinary students undertaking a research project (indicate year of study)		
	# Year 3 students	# Year 4 students	#Year 5 students
Year N (most recent full year)			
Year N – 1			
Year N – 2			

(adjust the year of study as appropriate to the programme)

Table 11.1.6 – Numbers of veterinary students intercalating in last 3 years

	# students intercalating
Year N (most recent full year)	
Year N – 1	
Year N - 2	

11.2 School comments

11.3 School suggestions for improvement

Standard 12 - Outcomes assessment

12.1   In the interests of quality assurance and enhancement, the veterinary school must have mechanisms to gather data routinely to demonstrate that its institutional and educational objectives are being met.

12.2   Specifically, the school must provide evidence that:
- its strategic goals are appropriate and that it is progressing towards achieving these goals
- it is complying successfully with its operating plan
- its veterinary programme is subject to internal and external evaluation and validation processes by long feedback loops (e.g. graduate destination surveys, employer surveys) in addition to the short loops (e.g. unit of study evaluations).

12.3   The school must provide evidence that all its graduates have (or for a new school, will have) achieved the programme's stated learning outcomes, including the level of competence required of an entry-level veterinarian (RCVS Day One Competence).

12.4   There must a system for students to keep a record of, and reflect on, their developing practical and clinical skills over the duration of programme. There must be evidence that such experience logs inform the learning and assessment process for individual students, and evidence that the school uses consolidated data to monitor the achievement of competence and experience levels of students across the programme as a whole.

12.5   There must be procedures to review the evidence of student experience and student achievement of Day One Competence, and demonstrate implementation of change on the basis of such review. Outcomes of the review process must be communicated to relevant internal and external stakeholders.

12.6   The school must have a strategy for the continuous improvement of the quality of the veterinary programme.

12.7   In the case of a school that has yet to produce graduates, evidence must be presented that provides RCVS with reasonable assurance that the school's programme outcomes will be achieved. Evidence must be available to show progress to date in achieving the desired outcomes in the programme, and the measures to be taken in the remainder of the programme to ensure their achievement by the completion of the veterinary degree.

Evaluation of outcomes is the most important source of information to a school about its success and its drive for continued enhancement of quality. However, in contrast to inputs, which are relatively easy to measure, outcomes assessment is more complex. It is easy to become confused by the fact that the same raw data can be repurposed to assess outcomes at the level of the school or at the level of the individual student. This means that everyone involved needs to be clear about the use of data and the presentation of results.

All schools with an established quality assurance and enhancement culture will evaluate outcomes at school, programme, module and individual student levels. This will be achieved through results in assessments, feedback forms of various types, surveys, publication counts and a host of other measures. Different schools will place emphasis on different measures, but a report on outcomes should include a matrix that employs a variety of different measures providing information relevant to the foci of the other standards. Repetition of the measures over an extended period (at least five years) will then demonstrate progress in each area. Specifically, evaluation of outcomes related to the veterinary programme, individual students (throughout their studies as well as at graduation) and employability must be included, but RCVS will expect schools to include other outcomes evaluations of their choice. In addition, evidence of quality assurance, together with both reactive and proactive quality enhancement will be expected.

Information to be provided in the SER should include (but not be limited to) the following:

- Describe and provide evidence to show how the results of outcomes monitoring are used by the school to improve the educational programme.

Student outcomes
- Employment rates of graduates (within one year of graduation, and over longer periods if available)
- Demonstration of achievement of RCVS Day 1 competences
- Assessments of graduating final year students (e.g. external assessment through NAVLE if applicable, graduating class course evaluations of their experience etc.)
- Results of employer surveys to determine satisfaction with the school's graduates.

Institutional outcomes
- Describe how the school evaluates progress in meeting its mission (e.g. benchmarking with other institutions)
- Document significant indicators of the quality of the educational process (e.g. staff awards, staff perception of teaching resources, student satisfaction with the programme, teaching improvement benchmarks etc.)
- Results of surveys/analysis of outside opinion, including former students and other advisory/stakeholder groups, as to whether the school is achieving its objectives.

Professional competences
- Describe the intellectual, clinical, personal and business competences that students must achieve by the end of the degree and summarise the evidence gathered by the school to demonstrate that students have achieved these outcomes.

Other
- Summarise any other evaluations that the school/university has undertaken to measure the effectiveness of the veterinary programme in preparing students to enter the profession.
- Where data is available over a number of years, provide an indication of trends in the data.

12.2 School comments

12.3 School suggestions for improvement

EAEVE Indicators[1]

Introduction

1. Indicators are to be used in a non-prescriptive way in the evaluation of an establishment. They reflect its given situation at the time of the site visit, allowing for EAEVE some comparisons between establishments and the recognition of trends.

2. The indicators are calculated from data which are the means of the last three complete academic years, in order to smooth the annual variations and to avoid the 'Hollywood' syndrome (i.e. temporary improvements restricted to the period of the site visit).

3. In case of tracking (options), the relevant indicators (I4 to I20) are calculated for each track. A weighted average (which takes into account the number of students in each track) is also provided.

4. A specific indicator must not be interpreted in a strictly mathematical and isolated sense, but in the light of all other indicators and data. For instance, for a specific species, a low number of intra-mural patients may be compensated by a high number of extra-mural patients seen by students under the supervision of a staff member or otherwise qualified and quality assured veterinarians.

5. The recommended minimal values established by ECOVE are equal to the 20th percentile, i.e. the value below which 20% of the values from approved establishments are currently found. These minimal values do not serve as lower threshold levels but are interpreted as a complex set of data in the light of all other observations made.

6. The complete list of indicators is provided by the establishment in a standardised format at the end of the SER-1[2]. These proposed indicators are checked by the Coordinator during the site visitation and the copy validated by the team of experts is placed at the end of the Stage 1 visitation report (after the Executive Summary).

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[1] This version of the EAEVE indicators was approved by EAEVE's Executive Committee on 28 January 2015. The text is taken directly from the EAEVE document approved by ExCom.

[2] For RCVS visitations, the SER produced by the institution, and the resulting visitation report is a single volume.

List of indicators

Teaching capacity

I1: n° of FTE academic staff[1] / n° of undergraduate students[2]

I2: n° of FTE veterinarians[3] / n° of students graduating annually[4]

I3: n° of FTE technical staff[5] / n° of students graduating annually[4]

Types of training

I4: n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training[6]

I5: n° of hours of clinical training[7]

I6: n° of hours of FH & VPH training[8]

I7: n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in FH & VPH[9]

Patients available for intra-mural clinical training

I8: n° of companion animal patients seen intra-mural[10] / n° of students graduating annually[4]

I9: n° of food-producing animal patients seen intra-mural[11] / n° of students graduating annually[4]

I10: n° of equine patients seen intra-mural [12] / n° of students graduating annually[4]

I11: n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen intra-mural[13] / n° of students graduating annually[4]

Animals/herds/units available for extra-mural clinical training

I12: n° of companion animal patients seen extra-mural[14] / n° of students graduating annually[4]

I13: n° of food-producing animal patients seen extra-mural[15] / n° of students graduating annually[4]

I14: n° of equine patients seen extra-mural[16] / n° of students graduating annually[4]

I15: n° of visits of food-producing animal herds[17] / n° of students graduating annually[4]

I16: n° of visits of poultry and rabbit units[18] / n° of students graduating annually[4]

Necropsies available for clinical training

I17: n° of companion animal necropsies[19] / n° of students graduating annually[4]

I18: n° of food-producing animal necropsies[20] / n° of students graduating annually[4]

I19: n° of equine necropsies[21] / n° of students graduating annually[4]

I20: n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies[22] / n° of students graduating annually[4]

Indicators used only for statistical purposes

I21: n° of FTE specialised veterinarians[23] / n° of students graduating annually[4]

I22: n° of PhD graduating annually[24] / n° of students graduating annually[4]

Calculation of the indicators

All values represent an annual average calculated from the last 3 complete academic years. All values (except I22) concern the training of undergraduate veterinary students.

[1] Total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) academic staff in veterinary training (e.g. 100 persons employed full-time (100%) + 50 persons employed half-time (50%) + 10 persons employed quarter-time (25%) = 127,5 FTEs).
Post-graduate students who are registered for a specialised or doctoral degree (i.e. interns, residents, doctorandi or equivalent post graduate students) are not included in these figures unless they are paid to regularly perform structured practical and/or clinical training (for a minimum of around 10% and for a maximum of around 50% of their annual workload) and are supervised by the permanent staff (e.g. 10 residents employed half-time (50%) for clinical training of undergraduate students + 8 doctorandi employed quarter-time (25%) for practical training of undergraduate students = 7 FTEs).
Researchers, invited speakers, unpaid lecturers and other persons who only occasionally contribute to the training of undergraduate students are not included in these figures but should be reported for information in the SER.

[2] Total number of undergraduate veterinary students. These students have to be officially-registered in the database of the establishment.

[3] Total number of FTE veterinarians (DVM or equivalent degree) in veterinary training.

[4] Total number of graduate students. These students have to be officially granted of the veterinary degree *(sic)* (ie at least five years of full-time theoretical and practical study in agreement with the EU Directive) provided by the establishment being evaluated.

[5] Total number of FTE technical staff involved in veterinary training.

[6] Total number of hours of supervised practical (non-clinical) training. It includes *inter alia* laboratory experiments, microscopic examination of histological and pathological specimens, work on documents and idea-formulation without the handling of animals (e.g. assay work, clinical case studies, handling of herd-health monitoring programmes, risk assessment for VPH, computer-aided exercises), work on normal animals (e.g. physiology, ante mortem inspection), work on cadavers, carcasses and organs (e.g. dissection, post mortem inspection, food hygiene, necropsy).

[7] Total number of hours of supervised clinical training. This training strictly focuses on hands-on procedures by students, which include the relevant diagnostic, preventive and therapeutic activities in the different species. It concerns individual patients, herds and production units and normal animals in a clinical environment.
Propaedeutic, diagnostic, therapeutic and surgical hands-on activities on cadavers, organs and animal dummies are also classified as clinical training but may not replace the hands-on training on life patients. Simply observing the teacher doing clinical tasks is not considered as clinical training.

[8] Total number of hours of theoretical and practical training in food hygiene (FH) and veterinary public health (VPH).

[9] Total number of hours of extra-mural practical training in FH & VPH (e.g. slaughterhouses, meat inspections, VPH institutes).

[10] Total number of companion animal (dogs and cats) patients seen at the teaching hospital/clinic. Each patient has to be officially recorded in the database of the hospital.

[11] Total number of food-producing animal (except equids) patients seen at the teaching hospital/clinic. Each patient has to be officially recorded in the database of the hospital and has to be individually examined/treated by at least 1 student under the supervision of at least 1 member of staff.

[12] Total number of equine patients seen at the teaching hospital/clinic. Each patient has to be officially recorded in the database of the hospital and has to be individually examined/treated by at least 1 student under the supervision of at least 1 member of staff.

[13] Total number of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet patients seen at the teaching hospital/clinic. Each patient has to be officially recorded in the database of the hospital and has to be individually examined/treated by at least 1 student under the supervision of at least 1 member of staff.

[14] Total number of companion animal (dogs and cats) patients seen extra-mural (e.g. dispensaries). Each patient has to be officially recorded in the database of the hospital and has to be individually examined/treated by at least 1 student under the supervision of at least 1 member of staff.

[15] Total number of food-producing animal (except equids) patients seen extra-mural (e.g. ambulatory clinics). Each patient has to be officially recorded in the database of the hospital and has to be individually examined/treated by at least 1 student under the supervision of at least 1 member of staff.

[16] Total number of equine patients seen extra-mural (e.g. training centres). Each patient has to be officially recorded in the database of the hospital and has to be individually examined/treated by at least 1 student under the supervision of at least 1 member of staff.

[17] Total number of visits of food-producing animal herds.

[18] Total number of visits to poultry and rabbit units.

[19] Total number of post-mortem examinations carried out on whole carcasses of companion animals (dogs and cats).

[20] Total number of post-mortem examinations carried out on whole carcasses of food-producing animals (except equids).

[21] Total number of post-mortem examinations carried out on whole carcasses of equines.

[22] Total number of post-mortem examinations carried out on whole carcasses of rabbits, rodents, birds and exotic pets.

[23] Total number of FTE specialised veterinarians in veterinary training. The specialised veterinary status must be officially recognised by the relevant National accreditation body and/or by the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS).

[24] Total number of graduate students who are officially granted a third cycle degree (PhD or equivalent doctoral degrees in agreement with the relevant EU directives).

RCVS footnote: EAEVE publishes a set of "Recommended values" for its indicators which are published on its website www.eaeve.org. To see the most up to date values, please refer to http://www.eaeve.org/esevt/indicators.html

Annex 2 - RCVS Day One Competences

This edition of the Day One Competences was approved by RCVS's Education Committee on 5th February 2014.

RCVS Day One Competences

1. This document sets out the minimum essential competences that the RCVS expects all veterinary students to have met when they graduate, to ensure that they are safe to practise on day one, in whichever area of the profession they start to work.

2. Competence is a concept that integrates knowledge, skills and attitudes, the application of which enables the professional to perform effectively, including being able to cope with contingencies, change, and the unexpected. The RCVS has adopted as a definition of competence in a job "*the ability to perform the roles and tasks required by one's job to the expected standard*"[1]. The standard of competence expected at any given time will "*vary with experience and responsibility and take into account the need to keep up to date with changes in practice*". Competence is therefore a relative term, and increasing levels of competence will be expected throughout the professional's career.

3. Defined in this way, there is an important difference between 'competence' and 'skills'. An example of a competence would be "perform aseptic surgery correctly". This may include a number of associated skills such as scrubbing up, excising small tumours and cysts, routine castration, suturing etc, which would be recorded in the student's experience log as evidence of developing competence. The more generic "competence" requires more than just acquisition of technical skills: it involves applying relevant knowledge, and having the confidence and ability to transfer what has been learnt to a variety of contexts and new unpredictable situations.

4. 'Day One Competence' is the minimum standard required for registration with the RCVS and is the starting point for a variety of roles in the veterinary profession. After graduation, ongoing professional development will be needed in whichever field the new graduate decides to enter, and some roles may require postgraduate training and further qualifications (eg. pathology, government regulatory work, specialist clinical practice).

5. All new graduates in clinical practice should continue their development throughout the Professional Development Phase (PDP) until they reach 'Year One Competence'. Beyond this, they may wish to take postgraduate certificates, and seek accreditation as an RCVS Advanced Practitioner to demonstrate mastery in their field of interest. Those who want to specialise later in their careers will need to aim for a European Diploma to be accredited as RCVS and European Specialists.

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[1] "Developing the Attributes of Medical Professional Judgement and Competence", Michael Eraut & Benedict du Boulay, University of Sussex, 2000. www.sussex.ac.uk/Users/bend/doh/reporthtml.html; www.sussex.ac.uk/Users/bend/doh/

6.	**A new graduate who has achieved day one competence should be capable and confident enough to practise veterinary medicine at a primary care level on their own, while knowing when it is appropriate to seek direction from more experienced colleagues. New graduates are likely to need more time to perform some procedures. Support and direction from more senior colleagues should be available.** The amount of support and assistance needed by a new graduate should tail off over time, as they continue their development throughout the Professional Development Phase and work towards their 'year one competence'. The measure for achievement of 'year one competence' is that they are "*able to perform a range of common clinical procedures, or manage them without close supervision, in a reasonable period of time and with a high probability of a successful outcome[1]*".

7.	Achievement of day one competence is necessary but not sufficient for a graduate to qualify for registration to practise in the UK. In addition to day one competence, all new graduates will have acquired a range of graduate-level attributes during their university degree course. These attributes include academic and professional capabilities as befits the award of a professional qualification at Masters[2] level of the national qualifications framework. Benchmarks for this are set in the UK by the Quality Assurance Agency which oversees standards in UK universities.

8.	The new veterinary graduate must be fully conversant with and abide by the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct and its associated guidance, covering:

- professional competence
- honesty and integrity
- independence and impartiality
- client confidentiality and trust
- professional accountability.

These principles, and compliance with the professional responsibilities set out in the *Code*, must underpin all their work as veterinary surgeons. The latest version of the *Code* and supporting guidance can be found on the RCVS website www.rcvs.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/.

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[1] "Guidance on the Professional Development Phase", RCVS, August 2012
[2] The Quality Assurance Agency sets the level descriptors and benchmarks for higher education qualifications in the UK. Masters degrees are placed at level 7 in the framework for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and at level 11 in the framework for Scotland. This equates to the European 'Bologna' framework for higher education, where Masters degrees are placed within the 'second cycle' of higher education. Details of the framework of levels can be found on the QAA website, www.qaa.ac.uk and at www.qaa.ac.uk/assuringstandardsandquality/qualifications/Pages/default.aspx

9. The day one competences below are set out under the broad headings of:

    - General professional skills and attributes
    - expected of newly qualified veterinary surgeons
    - Practical and clinical competences expected of new veterinary surgeons
    - Underpinning knowledge and understanding

    This last section is an indicator of the extent of knowledge, but of course can never be a fully comprehensive list.

10. There are many ways in which these competences can be learnt and assessed, but the RCVS leaves the decisions on the details to universities, subject to periodic accreditation visits. Universities are responsible for developing the day one competence of their students and ensuring that they have met the competences by the time they graduate. They are greatly assisted in this by the practising arm of the veterinary profession, which provides extra-mural work placements so that students can practise applying these competences in the workplace.

11. The RCVS has developed an online Student Experience Log (SEL), which includes a list of procedures and skills that students may cover during their degree course, both in intra-mural rotations in university clinics, and also in extra-mural placements[1]. The skills in the SEL are not all day one skills – some may go beyond what might be expected at day one – but the SEL can be used by the student to keep a record of the practical and clinical skills they have covered in order to guide their learning. The SEL can be used by UK universities to judge whether a student has gained a good balance of experience before they graduate.

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[1] The SEL is one component of the RCVS Professional Development Record (PDR). After registering with the RCVS, new graduates progress to the PDP component of the PDR to record their year one competence. The CPD component of the PDR can be used by all members of RCVS to record their ongoing professional development plans and achievements.

RCVS Day One Competences

	General professional skills and attributes expected of newly qualified veterinary surgeons	
	Competence	**Guidance**
1	**Be fully conversant with, and follow the *RCVS Code of Professional Conduct***	The RCVS Code of Professional Conduct *is available on the RCVS website at www.rcvs.org.uk/vetcode.*
2	**Understand the ethical and legal responsibilities of the veterinary surgeon in relation to patients, clients, society and the environment.**	*To abide by the principles in the* Code of Professional Conduct, *veterinary surgeons need to be able to make professional judgements based on sound principles. They must be able to think through the dilemmas they face when presented with conflicting priorities and be prepared to justify the decisions they make.* *As well as decisions relating to individual patients, animal groups, populations of animals and clients, veterinary surgeons must take account of the possible impact of their actions beyond the immediate workplace, for example, on public health, the environment and society more generally.*
3	**Demonstrate a knowledge of the organisation, management and legislation related to a veterinary business.**	*This includes:* • *knowing one's own and the employer's responsibilities in relation to employment, financial and health and safety legislation, the position relating to non-veterinary staff, professional and public liability* • *awareness of how fees are calculated, of income, overheads and other expenditure involved in running a veterinary business* • *ability to work with various information systems in order to effectively communicate, share, collect, manipulate and analyse information* • *importance of complying with professional standards, protocols and policies of the business* • *knowledge of legislation affecting veterinary businesses, such as the disposal of clinical waste and safety of medicines.*

	Competence	Guidance
4	**Promote, monitor and maintain health and safety in the veterinary setting; demonstrate knowledge of systems of quality assurance; apply principles of risk management to their practice.**	*This includes knowledge and explanation of the procedure for reporting adverse incidents and the procedures for avoiding them. It also includes following safe practices relating to the dangers in the workplace.*
5	**Communicate effectively with clients, the public, professional colleagues and responsible authorities, using language appropriate to the audience concerned.**	*Effective communication includes effective listening and responding appropriately, both verbally and non-verbally, depending on the context.*
6	**Prepare accurate clinical and client records, and case reports when necessary, in a form satisfactory to colleagues and understandable by the public.**	*Patient records should be clear enough that they can be referred to by others and (if written by hand) legible, avoiding idiosyncratic abbreviations or jargon, so the case can be taken over by another professional for ongoing treatment if necessary.*
7	**Work effectively as a member of a multi-disciplinary team in the delivery of services.**	*The team may include veterinary nurses, practice managers, technicians, farriers, nutritionists, physiotherapists, veterinary specialists, meat hygiene inspectors, animal handlers and others. The veterinary surgeon should be familiar with and respect the roles played by others in the team and be prepared to provide effective leadership when appropriate.*
8	**Understand the economic and emotional context in which the veterinary surgeon operates.**	*Veterinary surgeons need to be resilient and confident in their own professional judgements to withstand the stresses and conflicting demands they may face in the workplace. They should know how to recognise the signs of stress and how to seek support to mitigate the psychological stress on themselves and others.*

	Competence	Guidance
9	**Be able to review and evaluate literature and presentations critically.**	*New graduates must be able to appreciate the difference in value to be attached to different sorts of literature and evidence, for example, recognising commercial and other forms of bias.*
10	**Understand and apply principles of clinical governance, and practise evidence-based veterinary medicine.**	*More guidance on clinical governance is included in the supporting guidance to the* [Code of Professional Conduct.](#) *It includes critically analysing the best available evidence for procedures used, reflecting on performance and critical events and learning from the outcome to make changes to one's practice.*
11	**Use their professional capabilities to contribute to the advancement of veterinary knowledge, in order to improve the quality of animal care and public health.**	*The veterinary surgeon must think beyond the immediate case in hand, and take up opportunities to contribute to the processes of continuous improvement. This may include clinical audit, case discussions, research and adding to the evidence base for others to draw on in the future.*
12	**Demonstrate ability to cope with incomplete information, deal with contingencies, and adapt to change.**	*Veterinary surgeons must be able to manage cases and make decisions where there is incomplete or unclear data. It is not always possible to run a full set of tests or range of diagnostic procedures which may preclude the investigation of the 'perfect' case. They need to be able to adapt their approach to fit changing circumstances, know how to cope appropriately with contingencies and the unexpected, and identify appropriate options for further diagnosis, treatment and/or referral, should a case require it.*
13	**Demonstrate that they recognise personal and professional limits, and know how to seek professional advice, assistance and support when necessary.**	*Veterinary surgeons undertaking procedures on patients must at all stages in their careers be competent in their performance, or be under the close supervision of those so competent until such time as they can act alone.*

	Competence	Guidance
14	Demonstrate a commitment to learning and professional development, both personal and as a member of a profession actively engaged in work-based learning. This includes recording and reflecting on professional experience and taking measures to improve performance and competence.	*It is a requirement of the* RCVS Code of Professional Conduct *that veterinary surgeons must maintain and develop their knowledge and skills relevant to their professional practice and competence. New graduates must be prepared to* take part in the RCVS Professional Development Phase (PDP) *and be ready on graduation to make the transition to being an independent learner responsible for their own professional improvement and development. This includes being able to reflect, learn, and share information gained with others.*
15	Take part in self-audit and peer-group review processes in order to improve performance.	*Veterinary surgeons must regularly review how they are performing in their day to day professional work, and play an active part in performance appraisal. New graduates in clinical practice must take part in the* RCVS Professional Development Phase *and keep a record of their continuing progress until they have met the year one competence level.*

Practical and clinical competences expected of new veterinary surgeons	
Competence	**Guidance**
16 Obtain an accurate and relevant history of the individual animal or animal group, and its/their environment	

	Competence	Guidance
17	**Handle and restrain animal patients safely and humanely, and instruct others in helping the veterinary surgeon perform these techniques.**	*Safety applies not only to the animal, but also to others nearby. The new veterinary surgeon should be able to make a rapid risk assessment of all procedures as duties are performed, as dangers may appear in situations that initially appear to be safe. They should be prepared to take a range of measures including adaptation, seeking assistance or retreating from the task until safety measures can be put in place.*
18	**Perform a complete clinical examination**	*A complete clinical examination is not always required or appropriate in practice. Whilst the new veterinary surgeon should be able to perform a complete examination, they should know when it is appropriate to adapt their examination to the circumstances.*
19	**Develop appropriate treatment plans and administer treatment in the interests of the patients and with regard to the resources available.**	*This includes being able to tailor a treatment plan when there may be financial or other constraints, whilst prioritising the welfare of the patient(s), whether for an individual animal or the group.*
20	**Attend all species in an emergency and perform first aid.**	*The new graduate must be able to perform basic first aid, and know when and how to call for assistance from others if called to deal with an animal outside their immediate area of competence or where there are potential risks to health and safety. This involves being able to make a rapid risk assessment of the situation and taking appropriate action to protect the health and safety of themselves and those around them.*
21	**Assess the physical condition, welfare and nutritional status of an animal or group of animals and advise the client on principles of husbandry and feeding.**	*This applies to commonly presented cases and would not be expected to include advanced advice for complex cases.*

	Competence	Guidance
22	**Collect, preserve and transport samples, select appropriate diagnostic tests, interpret and understand the limitations of the test results.**	*New graduates are expected to have a working knowledge of relevant tests for the condition under investigation. They should seek assistance to interpret results when appropriate.*
23	**Communicate clearly and collaborate with referral and diagnostic services, including providing an appropriate history.**	
24	**Understand the contribution that imaging and other diagnostic techniques can make in achieving a diagnosis. Use basic imaging equipment and carry out an examination effectively as appropriate to the case, in accordance with good health and safety practice and current regulations.**	*This competence includes taking images of diagnostically-useful quality, as well as the safe use of the equipment (eg ionising radiation regulations) in accordance with best practice ('ALARA' principle – as low as reasonably achievable). 'Basic' equipment includes, for example, x-ray, ultrasound and endoscopes, but a new graduate would not be expected to perform an MRI or CT scan. New graduates should be able to interpret common findings and know when to refer or seek more experienced interpretation if appropriate.*
25	**Recognise suspicious signs of possible notifiable, reportable and zoonotic diseases and take appropriate action, including notifying the relevant authorities.**	*This involves identifying the clinical signs, clinical course, transmission potential (including vectors) of pathogens associated with common zoonotic and food-borne diseases and transboundary animal diseases.*

	Competence	Guidance
26	**Apply the RCVS Twelve Principles of Certification.**	*The [Principles of Certification](#) are described in the supporting guidance to the* Code of Professional Conduct*, available on the RCVS website. New graduates must be familiar with the Principles and follow the RCVS supporting guidance.*
27	**Access the appropriate sources of data on licensed medicines.**	
28	**Prescribe and dispense medicines correctly and responsibly in accordance with legislation and latest guidance.**	*New graduates must understand the requirements of the Cascade in prescribing. In particular, when prescribing or using antimicrobial agents, care must be taken to minimise the risk of antimicrobial resistance.*
29	**Report suspected adverse reactions.**	*The veterinary surgeon should follow the Veterinary Medicines Directorate procedures for reporting.*
30	**Apply principles of bio-security correctly, including sterilisation of equipment and disinfection of clothing.**	*This applies to all areas of veterinary practice. All veterinary surgeons must maintain high standards of biosecurity at all times in order to minimise the risk of contamination, cross-infection and accumulation of pathogens in the veterinary premises and in the field.*
31	**Perform aseptic surgery correctly.**	*The new graduate must appreciate the requirement for asepsis during procedures, and be able to perform simple, elective surgeries within the limitations of their experience, in an aseptic fashion.*
32	**Safely perform sedation, and general and regional anaesthesia; implement chemical methods of restraint.**	
33	**Assess and manage pain.**	*The new graduate should be able to score and evaluate pain.*

	Competence	Guidance
34	**Recognise when euthanasia is appropriate and perform it humanely, using an appropriate method, whilst showing sensitivity to the feelings of owners and others, with due regard to the safety of those present; advise on disposal of the carcase.**	
35	**Perform a systematic gross post-mortem examination, record observations, sample tissues, store and transport them.**	*The new graduate should be aware of the limitations of such investigations, and the potential for conflict of interest where the veterinary surgeon has previously been involved with the case. It is important that they are able to differentiate between normal and abnormal, and that good quality records and samples are taken for further investigation by a pathologist if necessary.*
36	**Perform ante-mortem inspection of animals destined for the food-chain, including paying attention to welfare aspects; correctly identify conditions affecting the quality and safety of products of animal origin, to exclude those animals whose condition means their products are unsuitable for the food-chain.**	*Not all graduates will work in food-animal practice, but the ability to undertake a health and welfare assessment is an important competence, and is required of all new graduates to comply with European and OIE international recognition requirements. Further postgraduate training will be needed before the new graduate can take up official veterinarian duties.*
37	**Advise on, and implement, preventative programmes appropriate to the species and in line with accepted animal health, welfare and public health standards.**	*New graduates will need to be able to assess health and welfare records (and production records where appropriate) and implement health plans. This does not only apply to production animals but is important for any kept animals, particularly those kept in groups.*

Underpinning knowledge and understanding

In order to be able to undertake their professional duties effectively, new veterinary graduates will need a breadth of underpinning knowledge and understanding of the biological, animal and social sciences and laws related to the animal industries. This will include, but is not restricted to, the following:

- Understanding of, and competence in, the logical approaches to both scientific and clinical reasoning, the distinction between the two, and the strengths and limitations of each.

- Research methods and the contribution of basic and applied research to veterinary science.

- The structure, function and behaviour of animals and their physiological and welfare needs, including healthy domestic animals, captive wildlife and laboratory-housed animals.

- A knowledge of the businesses related to animal breeding, production and keeping.

- The aetiology, pathogenesis, clinical signs, diagnosis and treatment of the common diseases and disorders that occur in the common domestic species in the UK.

- Awareness of other diseases of international importance that pose a risk to national and international biosecurity.

- Legislation relating to animal care and welfare, animal movement, and notifiable and reportable diseases.

- Medicines legislation and guidelines on responsible use of medicines, including responsible use of antimicrobials and anthelmintics.

- The principles of disease prevention and the promotion of health and welfare.

- Veterinary public health issues, including epidemiology, transboundary epizootic diseases, zoonotic and food-borne diseases, emerging and re-emerging diseases, food hygiene and technology.

- Principles of effective interpersonal interaction, including communication, leadership, management and team working.

- The ethical framework within which veterinary surgeons should work, including important ethical theories that inform decision-making in professional and animal welfare-related ethics.

Annex 3 - EU Directive requirements for veterinary degrees

All professional veterinary degrees offered in the European Union are required to meet certain 'minimum training requirements'. These are set out in Article 38 of the EU Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications (Directive 2005/36/EC, as amended by Directive 2013/55/EU), as follows:

> *The training of veterinary surgeons shall comprise a total of at least five years of full-time theoretical and practical study, which may in addition be expressed with the equivalent ECTS credits, at a university or at a higher institute providing training recognised as being of an equivalent level, or under the supervision of a university, covering at least the study programme referred to in point 5.4.1 of Annex V.*

> *Training as a veterinary surgeon shall provide an assurance that the professional in question has acquired the following knowledge and skills:*

> *(a) adequate knowledge of the sciences on which the activities of a veterinary surgeon are based and of the Union law relating to those activities;*

> *(b) adequate knowledge of the structure, functions, behaviour and physiological needs of animals, as well as the skills and competences needed for their husbandry, feeding, welfare, reproduction and hygiene in general;*

> *(c) the clinical, epidemiological and analytical skills and competences required for the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of the diseases of animals, including anaesthesia, aseptic surgery and painless death, whether considered individually or in groups, including specific knowledge of the diseases which may be transmitted to humans;*

> *(d) adequate knowledge, skills and competences for preventive medicine, including competences relating to inquiries and certification;*

> *(e) adequate knowledge of the hygiene and technology involved in the production, manufacture and putting into circulation of animal feedstuffs or foodstuffs of animal origin intended for human consumption, including the skills and competences required to understand and explain good practice in this regard;*

> *(f) the knowledge, skills and competences required for the responsible and sensible use of veterinary medicinal products, in order to treat the animals and to ensure the safety of the food chain and the protection of the environment."*

Annex V.4.1 of the Directive (reproduced below) sets out the study programme for veterinary surgeons. This Annex first appeared in the 1978 version of the Directive, and was reproduced

unchanged in the 2005 edition. It remains un-amended in the 2013 Directive, although there are now provisions in the new Directive to update the Annex in order to reflect developments and advances in sciences and the profession.   For the time being, the text below remains in force.

Annex V.4.1 of the Directive sets out the study programme for veterinary surgeons:

The programme of studies leading to the evidence of formal qualifications in veterinary medicine shall include at least the subjects listed below.
Instruction in one or more of these subjects may be given as part of, or in association with, other courses.

A. Basic subjects
— Physics
— Chemistry
— Animal biology
— Plant biology
— Biomathematics

B. Specific subjects
a. Basic sciences:
— Anatomy (including histology and embryology)
— Physiology
— Biochemistry
— Genetics
— Pharmacology
— Pharmacy
— Toxicology
— Microbiology
— Immunology
— Epidemiology
— Professional ethics
b. Clinical sciences:
— Obstetrics
— Pathology (including pathological anatomy)
— Parasitology
— Clinical medicine and surgery (including anaesthetics)
— Clinical lectures on the various domestic animals, poultry and other animal species
— Preventive medicine
— Radiology
— Reproduction and reproductive disorders
— Veterinary state medicine and public health
— Veterinary legislation and forensic medicine
— Therapeutics
— Propaedeutics

c. Animal production

    — Animal production

    — Animal nutrition

    — Agronomy

    — Rural economics

    — Animal husbandry

    — Veterinary hygiene

    — Animal ethology and protection

d. Food hygiene

    — Inspection and control of animal foodstuffs or foodstuffs of animal origin

    — Food hygiene and technology

    — Practical work (including practical work in places where slaughtering and processing of foodstuffs takes place)

Practical training may be in the form of a training period, provided that such training is full-time and under the direct control of the competent authority, and does not exceed six months within the aggregate training period of five years study.

The distribution of the theoretical and practical training among the various groups of subjects shall be balanced and coordinated in such a way that the knowledge and experience may be acquired in a manner which will enable veterinary surgeons to perform all their duties.

Annex 4 - RCVS EMS Policy and Guidance

The value of EMS

1. There is wide consensus on the enduring value of EMS – not just in terms of its contribution to the veterinary undergraduate course, but also to the many practices who feel they benefit from the injection of new ideas from students and the opportunity to contribute to the professional development of the next generation of veterinarians.

2. Although there is no direct equivalent of EMS elsewhere on mainland Europe or in the USA, and there is no requirement for EMS within the EU Directive setting out the minimum training requirement for veterinary surgeons, the UK's system is often looked on with envy by veterinary colleagues in other countries, and there are some moves elsewhere in Europe to develop a similar system. The UK's EMS system is an excellent example of how universities and practices can collaborate in the training of the next generation of veterinary surgeons, and should not only remain as a key feature of veterinary education but should continue to be strengthened and improved.

3. Furthermore, there is an increasing emphasis within UK higher education on work-based learning, which is seen as a way to improve the employability of graduates and to increase the involvement of employers in HE. [1] "Employer engagement" and "employability" are key government themes for HE, and these have been features of veterinary education in the UK for over 70 years. The veterinary profession should be seen as an example for other sectors of how employers and the universities can work together for mutual benefit, and for the good of the profession at large.

4. There are strong educational reasons why EMS should continue to be an integral part of the veterinary degree. It provides students with an unrivalled opportunity to gain real-life work experience that enhances their university-based studies. Whilst the universities are responsible for teaching the skills that students need to practise when they first graduate, (the 'Day One Competences'), it is on EMS placements that students can further practise the animal handling and clinical skills that they first learn at university, as well as build up their experience of dealing with clients and with members of the veterinary team. New graduates are therefore able to 'hit the ground running' having developed their Day One competences whilst on EMS placements during their degree course. EMS helps students to prepare for work, and introduces them to the important concept of lifelong learning and reflective practice which then continues after graduation through the Professional Development Phase and ongoing CPD. As the veterinary degree is a professional qualification, EMS constitutes an important component that helps to distinguish the qualification from other academic science degrees.

5. EMS provides educational benefits for students with periods of veterinary work placements interspersed with their university-based studies. The timing of EMS placements is important as

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[1] Dept for Innovation, Universities & Skills, "Higher Education at Work – High Skills: High Value", April 2008.

the experience that students gain during placements informs and reinforces their learning during the core curriculum.

6.   EMS placements not only help to develop Day One Competences, but they also provide students with valuable complementary experience in contexts that cannot be replicated within the university. Students benefit from being exposed to veterinary work in real-life commercial and other working environments. Working within the time constraints and financial pressures of every-day veterinary practice is seen as an invaluable part of the undergraduate course and this must continue to be the main focus of EMS for the majority of students.

Aims of EMS

7.   The aims set out below reinforce the flexibility to tailor EMS to fit the individual student and get away from the idea that placements should always cover a breadth of species for each student.

EMS Aims

Work placements should be undertaken in a range of veterinary-related contexts to allow students to gain an appreciation of the breadth of the veterinary role and how veterinary medicine and science operates in "real-life" and commercial environments. Specifically, placements should enable students to:

- develop their animal handling skills across a range of common domestic species
- develop their understanding of the practice and economics of animal management systems and animal industries
- appreciate the importance of herd health and the epidemiological approach to production animal work
- develop their understanding of practice economics and practice management
- develop their understanding and gain further experience of medical and surgical treatments in a variety of species
- develop communication skills for all aspects of veterinary work
- expand their experience to those disciplines and species not fully covered within the university
- appreciate the importance of animal welfare in animal production and in the practice of veterinary medicine
- gain experience to help them appreciate the ethical and legal responsibilities of the veterinary surgeon in relation to individual clients, animals, the community and society
- gain experience of a variety of veterinary working environments.

Time spent on EMS

Pre-clinical EMS

8.   The term "pre-clinical EMS" is used to refer to that period of EMS undertaken in the early part of the veterinary course, when students gain experience of animal husbandry and animal handling across the common domestic species as well as the animal and food industries. Some universities refer to this as animal husbandry EMS; others call it pre-clinical EMS or other variants. The term "pre-clinical" EMS is used here purely for the sake of simplicity, accepting that some universities may wish to adopt different terminology.

9.   Twelve (12) weeks should be devoted to pre-clinical EMS. Students need to develop their handling skills and husbandry knowledge for a variety of species, as well as develop their communication skills with animal owners and others and this must remain an essential component of the early years of the veterinary degree course. It is also an important grounding for veterinary public health education.

10.   For the majority of students it is important that this pre-clinical EMS experience is undertaken after they have started the veterinary course so that it builds on and complements other teaching in the early years. In particular, students will need to have received a thorough briefing on health and safety matters before going on placements.

11.   Universities may wish to consider granting exemptions on a very exceptional basis (for example for students who have considerable animal handling experience gained on a previous course at tertiary level). However, any time saved by allowing exemption in one particular area would be well spent on developing skills in other areas, such as gaining experience on different types of farms, at other animal handling facilities, or at food production facilities.

12.   The priority should be for pre-clinical EMS placements to provide the student with all the necessary handling skills and husbandry experience of common domestic species that they need to master before they progress to the clinical components of the course. This continues the concept expressed in previous RCVS guidance which said that "animal husbandry EMS should be designed to meet the individual needs of the student." Universities should provide sufficient resource to assess individual student learning needs, allowing as much flexibility as possible to meet these needs, rather than students merely ticking boxes as evidence of time-serving.

Clinical EMS

13.   Twenty-six (26) weeks should be devoted to clinical EMS placements and clinical EMS should be phased and structured so that there is more flexibility to allow students to select placements that match their areas of interest as well as the university's curriculum.

14.   Universities should take advantage of the significant flexibility in the balance that can be achieved between different types of placement. This will help avoid a climate of "box ticking"

with students attending placements merely to meet the requirements, rather than seeing all their placements as a positive contribution to their learning.

15. Whilst it is essential that all students gain appropriate experience across all the common domestic species to meet their Day One Competences, universities must not rely solely on EMS placements to provide this experience. Universities must take primary responsibility for delivering the Day One Competences, and where these need to be covered in placements outside the university, such external placements should be seen as part of the core curriculum and should be quality assured, controlled and monitored accordingly, just like any other part of the intra-mural course. Where placements are being used to deliver essential 'Day One' teaching that is not being covered within the university, such placements should not be seen as falling within the category of EMS with which this paper is concerned.

16. Clinical EMS should comprise two phases:

- **"Preparatory EMS" of around 6 weeks, to be undertaken when pre-clinical EMS has been completed. During this period students should undertake at least three different types of placements to experience a range of veterinary work**.

   This phase will help them prepare to make decisions about the type of placements to undertake during the next, practical phase of EMS. As a student's clinical skills are still undeveloped in year 3, the amount of hands-on clinical work that is reasonable for them to undertake during early EMS placements is limited, and this can sometimes prove frustrating for both the student and the placement provider. The focus during this phase of EMS should instead be on observing how practices work, and gaining experience to help select an appropriate 'base' practice or area of practice for the next phase of EMS. This is not to rule out practical hands-on work during this phase – on the contrary, students will learn best by doing, rather than just by seeing, but the limits of their ability at this stage need to be appreciated by all parties.

- **"Practical EMS" should follow on from preparatory EMS, and should comprise the remaining 20 weeks to be undertaken during the later clinical years.**

   For their practical EMS, students should be able to select the areas of practice they wish to focus on, and should be encouraged to find a "base" practice where they can spend a significant part of this final phase of their EMS, returning at different intervals until they graduate. This will help students to build a relationship with the practice, and help the practice to get to know and trust the student. In this way, the opportunities offered by the placement can be maximised for both parties.

17. The number of weeks that should be spent in a base practice, and the number of weeks that should be spent on different types of placement (eg. on research or lab based placements) or with different species have not been specified. This should be left to the individual student after a discussion with their clinical tutor at the university to identify their changing learning needs and career aspirations. However, the university has the over-riding responsibility to ensure that Day One Competences have been covered adequately for each student, either through

external placements (the 'distributed model') or through other intra-mural rotations at the university. Universities must provide sufficient resources to enable individual "tailoring" of student learning to be agreed and reviewed at regular intervals.

18.   Wherever possible, students should be discouraged from selecting a base practice or booking up EMS placements for particular species too far in advance. This is difficult to regulate as many students want to book well ahead to secure their preferred placement. However, not only might they change their minds about the areas on which they want to focus, but booking too far in advance blocks placements for others unnecessarily. It would help if practices were discouraged from accepting bookings too far ahead, as this may limit choices when students and their tutors are planning future placements to match the student's educational needs. The exception to this would be that of a student seen during their preparatory EMS who would then like to book several return practical EMS visits throughout their remaining time as a student.

EMS and Veterinary Public Health

19.   The practical component of understanding food hygiene and gaining experience of full-throughput abattoirs should not be delivered solely through *ad hoc* EMS placements. To improve the quality of learning in this area, visits to fully commercial abattoirs and other meat processing plants, which form an essential part of teaching in veterinary public health for all students, must be part of the core curriculum and should not be left to EMS.

20.   The use of small in-house abattoirs such as those at Nottingham and Bristol could be effective if used to introduce students to the processes involved in a controlled manner. RCVS strongly supports collaboration and sharing of facilities for abattoir training between universities. But this must be supplemented by external visits, coordinated by the university as part of the core course and possibly organised in small groups, to commercially run full-throughput red and white meat abattoirs, cutting and processing plants. This will help ensure that all students see a variety of meat production processes and, with more direction and control provided by the university, may help facilitate the development of closer links between the industry and the university for the mutual benefit of each. Continued collaboration between the veterinary schools, the Government Veterinary Surgeons team and the Veterinary Public Health Association is important.

21.   Those students who wish to spend further elective time focussed on public health (which of course is far broader than just meat hygiene) should be encouraged to undertake relevant EMS placements within the industry, including time with an OV and in abattoirs, as well as other placements such as with the VLA, Defra, Animal Health, and food production facilities.

Communication

22.   For EMS to be effective, all parties – veterinary schools, practices and students – have a part to play and communication and exchange of information between veterinary schools and practices, between students and practices, and between students and their university tutors is

important. Adding RCVS into the equation with its statutory duty to set and monitor standards for veterinary undergraduate education means that there are four principal parties involved if EMS is to be delivered effectively: students, universities, practices and other placement providers, and the RCVS.

23.   In general EMS is considered by all involved to be of immense value and should not be diminished, but there is room for improvement by all parties to ensure that EMS continues to be an effective part of veterinary education and contributes to the development of the profession more generally. All have a part to play if EMS is to be strengthened, and the roles and responsibilities of all four parties are set out below.

Students

24.   Students must take responsibility for their own learning during EMS. This includes preparing properly before each placement, setting themselves learning objectives for each placement in consultation with their tutors, taking into account the RCVS Day One Competences. They must be familiar with the guidance provided by their university and RCVS for EMS. They should also communicate effectively and in a professional manner with the placement provider before, during and after the placement. The EMS 'Driving Licence' developed by Edinburgh and RVC will be very useful preparation for placements. Students should check that their placement provider has received all the relevant paperwork and guidance relating to EMS and, if they haven't, then either provide the practice with a copy, or email them with an on-line link so they can find it easily.

25.   Students must keep their EMS records up to date, and must keep a proper record of their experience during EMS, using the logbooks, learning diaries or databases provided by their university. They must discuss their EMS records and progress with their clinical tutor(s), reflect on what they are learning and see their EMS experience as an integral part of their education.

26.   There is already plenty of guidance for students on how they should behave whilst on EMS placements, including the EMS 'Driving Licence' and the BVA EMS Guides, 'Making the most of EMS – a student guide' and 'Making the most of EMS: a guide for providers of EMS'. The key issue is that students must recognise that they have important responsibilities as "nearly professionals" when undertaking EMS and that their attitudes and behaviour have an effect on their own career, and also reflect on their university and the veterinary student body more widely.

Universities

27.   Universities must allocate sufficient staff resources to EMS to ensure that it is administered, coordinated and monitored effectively, as befits a 38 week component of the veterinary degree. They must ensure that there is ongoing liaison with all the various placement providers, ensure that staff are available to discuss learning objectives prior to each placement, gather feedback on students with those providers, and ensure that students are maintaining their EMS

experience records and learning diaries. They must also ensure that such records are discussed with clinical tutors. It is recommended that timetabled tutorial sessions are built into the course to facilitate this.

28. Responsibility for coordinating EMS within the university is not a task that can be undertaken by a single individual, especially when that individual has other teaching, clinical or administrative demands on their time. Universities must have a single named EMS coordinator to oversee EMS within the university and to liaise with practices and other organisations, including the RCVS. But, to ensure EMS continues to be delivered effectively and to do justice to the enormous contribution provided by the rest of the profession through placements, the universities must ensure that there are adequate staff resources to support EMS.

29. There must be a comprehensive recording system for students to log and reflect on their EMS experience and this must form an integral part of formative assessment during the degree course. Such a log could be combined with other records that demonstrate students' progress in achieving Day One Competences; it need not necessarily be used exclusively for EMS. Students must be made aware of the importance of keeping accurate and up to date notes on their progress.

30. To meet this need, the RCVS makes available to UK universities the Student Experience Log (SEL) which is one of the components of the RCVS online Professional Development Record (PDR). Where a university is not using the RCVS SEL, then a similar system of equivalent scope and functionality should be provided by the university, so that a comprehensive record of students' practical and clinical experience can be maintained and monitored by staff at the veterinary school, including clinical tutors.

31. Universities must take primary responsibility for delivering the Day One Competences, and where these need to be covered in placements outside the university, such placements should be seen as part of the core curriculum – not as EMS - and should be quality assured, controlled and monitored accordingly, just like any other part of the intra-mural course (see RCVS requirements for Universities implementing a 'distributed' veterinary clinical education model, February 2008).

32. The 2009 student finance regulations in England allow students to apply for long course loans where attendance over 30 weeks and 3 days is required. The extra loan is paid for 52 weeks where attendance is required on a course for 45 weeks or more. Although such extended loans are means-tested, they would provide access to significant extra funds to help some students defray the expense of undertaking EMS. Although this is not a complete solution to the problem of alleviating students' financial problems as it will add to graduate debt, it is still worth exploring as a means of providing additional funds to those students most in need. As EMS is a mandatory and integral part of the veterinary degree course, it is recommended that universities should together explore the possibility of defining some parts of their degree course as a "long course", and publicise this information to students to enable them to take advantage of the increased student loan available.

33.   Bearing in mind that practices receive no financial remuneration for their contribution to the training of veterinary students, universities should consider offering EMS providers discounted and/or preferential access to some services, facilities and/or CPD provided by the university. This will help to strengthen links between practices and universities, bringing benefits to both sides. Whilst these recommendations have financial implications for the universities, it should be recognised that it could cost them considerably more to try and replace EMS completely by in-house or university-owned provision, if indeed it ever could be replicated.

Practices

34.   It is recognised by all that veterinary practices and other placement providers make a very important and highly valued contribution to veterinary education through their involvement with EMS. This altruistic attitude to education is a great credit to the profession and is something that should continue to be nurtured. When undertaking its review of EMS in 2009, the RCVS working party heard from many contributors about the benefits to practices of taking students, not only in terms of recruitment opportunities, but also of having insight into the latest thinking within the veterinary schools. It was reported that students who were near the end of their degree and who had built a relationship with a practice were often able to act as an additional pair of hands within the practice and thus were not always perceived as a drain on practice staff time.

35.   To improve the experience of EMS for both the practice and the student, it is recommended that practices identify named individual(s) to act as EMS contact for students and the university, and that some time is set aside for entry and exit interviews with students at the beginning and end of each placement. Each student should arrive at the placement with a set of objectives they're hoping to meet, and it will save time and make the placement more productive for both parties if these can be briefly discussed with the student at the outset. Practices should then not be inhibited from providing honest feedback to and about the student, and should contact the university's EMS coordinator if they want to discuss a particular student in more detail.

36.   Practices should check they have access to the latest guidance on EMS provided by the BVA and the universities and on the RCVS website. The student should be able to give them a copy or point them to the online guidance if necessary. Guidance published on the RCVS website summarises the curriculum for each university and gives further general guidance for practices.

RCVS

37.   It is RCVS's responsibility to monitor that EMS is being delivered effectively as part of the university degree. Accreditation visits will include evaluation of arrangements for EMS, including discussion with tutors and students, and with practices offering EMS work placements, to determine how successfully EMS is coordinated by the school. RCVS may, on occasion, also undertake separate audits of EMS arrangements including liaising with placement providers.

38.   RCVS has developed and provides the online Student Experience Log for UK universities to use, so that students can record all the practical and clinical skills and procedures they observe or undertake, either on EMS placements or during intramural rotations. The SEL is one part of the three-part RCVS Professional Development Record (PDR) system. Part 2 is for new graduates to record their achievement of 'Year One Competences' as part of their Professional Development Phase, and Part 3 consists of an online CPD recording system available for all RCVS registered veterinary surgeons. The PDR encourages users not only to record what they have done, but also to reflect on their performance and develop plans to address their ongoing training and development needs.

Summary

1.   Twelve weeks should be devoted to pre-clinical EMS and it should be designed to meet the individual needs of the student. (paragraphs 8 – 12)

2.   The way clinical EMS is phased and structured should change: there should be flexibility to allow students to select placements that match their areas of interest as well as the university's curriculum. (paragraphs 13 – 18)

Clinical EMS should comprise two phases:

- Preparatory EMS of *about* 6 weeks, to be undertaken when pre-clinical EMS has been completed. During this period it is suggested that students should undertake at least three different types of placements to experience a range of veterinary work.

- Practical EMS should follow on from this preparatory EMS phase, and should comprise the remaining 20 weeks to be undertaken during the later clinical years.

3.   Visits to fully commercial abattoirs and other meat processing plants, which form an essential part of teaching in veterinary public health for all students must be seen as part of the core curriculum and should not be left to EMS. (Paragraphs 19 – 21)

4.   Collaboration and sharing of university facilities for abattoir training between universities must be complemented by external visits, coordinated by the university as part of the core course and possibly organised in small groups, to commercially run full-throughput red and white meat abattoirs, cutting and processing plants. (Paragraphs 19 – 21)

5.   Students must take responsibility for their own learning during EMS. This includes preparing properly before each placement. Students must keep their EMS records up to date, and must keep a proper record of their experience during EMS, using the logbooks, learning diaries or databases provided by their university. They must discuss their EMS records and progress with their clinical tutor(s), reflect on what they are learning and see their EMS experience as an integral part of their education. (paragraphs 24 - 26)

6.   Students should ensure that their placement provider has a copy of the relevant documents and guidance on EMS.   (paragraphs 24 – 26)

7.   Universities must allocate sufficient staff resources to EMS to ensure that it is administered, coordinated and monitored effectively, as befits a 38 week component of the veterinary degree. (paragraphs 27– 28)

8.   There must be a comprehensive recording system for students to log and reflect on their EMS experience and this must form an integral part of formative assessment during the degree course. (paragraph 29) If the RCVS Student Experience Log is not used for this purpose, a system of similar scope and functionality should be provided by the university.

9.   Universities must take primary responsibility for delivering the Day One Competences, and where these need to be covered in placements outside the university, such placements should be seen as part of the core curriculum – not as EMS - and should be quality assured, controlled and monitored accordingly, just like any other part of the intra-mural course. (paragraph 30)

10.   Universities should together explore the possibility of defining some parts of their degree course as a "long course", and publicise this information to students to enable them to take advantage of the increased student loan available. (paragraph 31)

11.   Universities should consider offering EMS providers discounted and/or preferential access to some services, facilities and/or CPD provided by the university. (paragraph 32)

12.   Practices should identify named individual(s) to act as EMS contact for students and the university, and ensure that some time is set aside at the beginning and end of each placement for entry and exit interviews with students. (paragraph 34)

13.   Practices should check they have access to the latest guidance on EMS provided by the universities, RCVS and the BVA. The student should be able to give them a copy or point them to the online guidance if necessary. (paragraph 35)

This edition of the EMS policy and guidance was initially approved by RCVS in November 2009, and updated in 2014 to reflect the development of the SEL.

Annex 5 - "Distributed" veterinary clinical education models

Introduction

1. This document supplements guidance and requirements set out in the "RCVS standards and procedures for the accreditation of veterinary degrees" and should be read in conjunction with that document.

2. The term 'distributed' model is used here although it is recognised that there is no single model for distributed teaching, but rather a spectrum of possible arrangements. This guidance applies where a veterinary school delivers 'core' clinical teaching, or other essential components of the veterinary degree course (ie. the 'Day One Competences') on sites not owned by the university and/or through organisations/people that are not administratively part of the university.

Distributed teaching and EMS

3. In some circumstances, the term 'distributed' may extend to some placements that have previously fallen under the heading of Extra Mural Studies (EMS). If the clinical training provided on a particular EMS placement is considered by the university to be a mandatory part of the course not otherwise provided by the university, then it should be treated as a core component falling under the 'distributed' model, rather than being counted as EMS. Although EMS is an integral part of the veterinary degree course as a whole, its function should be more properly understood as being *complementary* to the main programme, extending the students' range of experience and helping to consolidate their skills and knowledge, rather than providing core training and experience *ab initio*. It is on this understanding that the quality assurance and assessment of EMS placements can be undertaken on a rather less formal basis. All other placements providing core distributed teaching must meet all the relevant accreditation standards.

General principles

4. Veterinary schools implementing any type of distributed teaching will need to be able to demonstrate how the degree course as a whole meets all the RCVS/EAEVE criteria for accreditation, regardless of where the teaching takes place.

5. The university must designate to RCVS which sites it considers as primary instructional sites to be used to deliver core/essential teaching, and must identify which parts of the curriculum are to be covered at those sites.

6. During RCVS/EAEVE visitations, the visiting team will need to inspect at least a representative sample of off-campus teaching sites and interview the staff involved there in teaching and assessing students, in the same way that university-based staff are interviewed.

Specific requirements for off-campus distributed teaching sites

Finances and contractual arrangements

7. External organisations and any off-campus clinical sites selected by the school to provide core teaching should receive appropriate financial or other 'in-kind' remuneration from the school to ensure that students receive on-site supervised instruction.

8. There should be a formal written contract or signed agreement between the university and the organisation concerned setting out expectations on both sides, to ensure that standards will be maintained for the duration of the students' training. Such contracts or agreements should include reference not only to resources and staffing, but also to the need for compliance with anti-discrimination policies, data protection, grievance procedures and communications channels for reporting problems on both sides.

9. There must be evidence (eg. through contracts with each site/organisation) that there are sufficient places available in total to match the training needs of the student intake. For the avoidance of doubt, the availability and timing of placements should be such that students can attend all the necessary placements without having to miss other essential parts of their course.

10. Taken as a whole, arrangements with off-campus sites/organisations should be secured sufficiently far in advance to ensure stability of provision for students over successive cohorts during the period of accreditation. The university must have suitable contingency plans to cover any possible shortfalls.

Staff

11. Staff (whether directly employed by the university or not) who provide core teaching and/or who are involved in assessing students at distributed sites must be fully competent and experienced in the curriculum subject area concerned, ideally holding a relevant postgraduate qualification (eg, RCVS Certificate or Diploma, European Diploma, etc.).

12. They must be adequately trained in principles of teaching and assessment, and receive on-going training and support from the university to enable them to keep up to date with best practice teaching and learning strategies, and with university assessment policies and procedures.

13. There should be clarity within the agreements made with off-campus organisations or individuals about the teaching and assessment time commitment for staff not employed by the university.

14. Staff not directly employed by the university who are involved in teaching for more than 10 hours per year may be included in the university's staff-student ratio returns to RCVS/EAEVE provided their teaching time is covered by a contract/agreement with the university. They must be individually listed by name in the university's annual data returns to RCVS indicating

what their teaching commitment is. (The calculation for the ratio should be made on the basis of the proportion of time which they spend teaching compared with the time an average full-time teacher devotes to teaching, eg. if the average workload is 600 hours per year per lecturer, and the external lecturer teaches undergraduates for 60 hours per year, this is counted as 0.1 FTE.)

15. If staff employed by the university are seconded to, or located at off-campus sites or other non-university owned facilities, or if they spend the majority of their time there, there should be arrangements to ensure that they can continue to be part of the collegiate community, including access to the university and veterinary school's normal communication channels. This is in order that their career path and general academic interests (including research involvement) are not disadvantaged by geographical separation from the academy.

Facilities

16. The facilities and equipment at off-campus veterinary clinics, practices and hospitals used for distributed teaching must meet the applicable national standards or codes, including compliance with all relevant legislation. In the UK, practices and hospitals **must** be accredited through the RCVS Practice Standards scheme at the level most appropriate to their area of activity, or to the relevant standard for the teaching undertaken at the establishment.

17. In countries without any defined national standards or codes for veterinary practices, clinics or hospitals, all off-campus facilities and equipment used for teaching students must be well maintained, and must implement high standards of health and safety, animal welfare and biosecurity. Ongoing compliance must be regularly reviewed by suitably qualified university staff or others. Facilities attended by students must be of a high standard and preferably 'state of the art'.

18. Distributed clinical sites where students spend a significant amount of their time should provide dedicated learning spaces including access to computers with a high speed internet link, or a Wifi connection, so students can access the university's on-line library and other e-learning facilities. Additionally, a range of relevant text books should also be available for student reference, over and above the 'standard practice library' relating to the practice's core species interests, if not otherwise readily available electronically.

The teaching and learning environment

19. Core clinical teaching in off-campus sites should be provided in an environment that promotes best practice of veterinary medicine and surgery.

20. Where core teaching is provided in private practices or other commercial environments, time should be allowed for students to investigate and follow up at least a proportion of cases in depth. There should be opportunities for students to discuss and reflect upon cases with their practice-based teachers, to develop their problem-solving skills and gain experience of

evidence and research-based medicine, notwithstanding the commercial constraints present in a private practice.

21. Across the programme as a whole, students should have opportunities to perform or contribute to extended diagnostic work up and problem solving of complex cases, including referrals, which go beyond those routinely encountered in first opinion practice.

22. Students should be given the opportunity to demonstrate understanding of the full range of treatment and surgery options, including some at the forefront of veterinary clinical research and speciality practice together with an ability to appropriately select and advise on the best treatment options.

Assessment

23. Staff at off-campus sites, who are not employed by the university, but who are involved with the **summative** assessment of undergraduate students, must be identified by name to RCVS/EAEVE. All staff involved with undergraduate student assessment must be trained in assessment issues. Those who are new to the role and who are still undergoing training, must be fully supported by the university, and their assessments double marked by experienced examiners for at least one academic year, or as otherwise specified by the university's own quality assurance procedures.

24. Any summative assessments undertaken at off-campus sites must be subject to thorough monitoring under the university's quality assurance procedures. All the university's policies on assessment and examinations (including protocols on exam security and confidentiality) which apply to university-owned facilities must apply equally to all distributed sites.

Quality Assurance and Monitoring

25. The university must implement robust quality assurance and monitoring procedures to ensure that teaching and assessment undertaken at distributed sites continues to meet the required standards. This must include
    - regular site visits by veterinary-qualified university staff
    - feedback from students on the quality of instruction and coverage of the learning objectives
    - feedback from teaching staff at the site.

26. Sufficient monitoring visits must be undertaken by veterinary qualified staff to ensure that appropriate student services are provided, that physical facilities are adequate and the educational programme is being delivered appropriately.

27. Where numerous off-campus sites are employed by the veterinary school to deliver the veterinary curriculum, there must be effective co-ordination between them, led by the university/veterinary school, to minimise the risk of fragmentation across the curriculum and to ensure consistency of approach from the student's perspective.

28. Representatives from all distributed sites/organisations should be included on key veterinary school committees, and involved wherever possible in discussions on curriculum planning, teaching and learning, and assessment planning.

Information and student support

29. The university must take steps to ensure that the educational objectives to be covered at each site are clearly explained and understood by students, teachers and site coordinators alike.

30. Students should be provided with sufficient information about the distributed sites they are required to attend, including any local protocols, the communication channels available to them to report problems or grievances, and other background information that will help them settle quickly.

31. Students must be provided with information on how to contact their personal tutors or other university welfare staff during times when they are off campus.

32. Students must be made aware of their responsibilities when attending off-campus sites, particularly where they are dealing with clients and other members of the public. For all off-campus clinical training sites in the UK, site coordinators and students must be aware of their position under the "Practice by Students Regulations[1]". When dealing with clients and other members of the public at off-campus clinics, their status as students must be clear to all.

(This policy was first approved by RCVS's Education Policy & Specialisation Committee, 13 February 2008, and updated in 2014 to strengthen references to the Practice Standards Scheme.)

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[1] The Veterinary Surgeons (Practice by Students) (Amendment) Regulations 1993 identify two categories of student, full time undergraduate students in the clinical part of their course and overseas veterinary surgeons whose declared intention is to sit the MRCVS examination within a reasonable time. The Regulations provide that students may examine animals, carry out diagnostic tests under the direction of a registered veterinary surgeon, administer treatment under the supervision of a registered veterinary surgeon and perform surgical operations under the direct and continuous supervision of a registered veterinary surgeon.

The College has interpreted these as follows:

a. 'direction' means that the veterinary surgeon instructs the student as to the tests to be administered but is not necessarily present

b. 'supervision' means that the veterinary surgeon is present on the premises and able to respond to a request for assistance if needed

c. 'direct and continuous supervision' means that the veterinary surgeon is present and giving the student his/her undivided personal attention

Annex 6 - Job description and person specification for RCVS visitors

The following description of the visitor's role, and the 'person specification' is provided to all those who apply to be considered as RCVS visitors. Applicants are invited to describe in writing how they meet the person specification. Applications are considered by the chairmen of RCVS's Education Committee and its Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee (PQSC). The names of those deemed to meet the requirements are passed to PQSC for endorsement and inclusion on the list of possible visitors. The team of visitors for any particular visit is put together in consultation with the chairman of PQSC and chairman of the visitation panel, confirmed by PQSC and ratified by Education Committee.

Setting and monitoring the standards for veterinary education is a key responsibility of the RCVS. The RCVS defines the competences that need to be met by the new veterinary graduate, and specifies the requirements for veterinary degree courses to be approved for registration purposes. The RCVS undertakes formal visitations to universities to ensure that veterinary degree standards are being maintained, and for UK universities, reports its recommendations to the Privy Council. For a veterinary degree to be approved for registration purposes by the College, the course must meet RCVS standards as well as UK and European Directive requirements on the recognition of professional qualifications. Visit reports are also passed to the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), which carries out quality assurance monitoring of UK higher education institutions on behalf of the English and Scottish funding councils.

Visiting team

For a visitation undertaken solely by RCVS the visiting team for a UK university would normally consist of six experts (including the chairman), plus a student, and observers from AVBC and/or AVMA), plus a member of staff from the RCVS.

For an overseas visitation conducted solely by RCVS, the same team composition will apply as in the UK.

For an overseas visitation conducted jointly with another accrediting body, the size of the visiting team will vary, depending on the arrangements agreed with the partner accrediting body. RCVS would normally appoint one or two visitors for a joint visitation being undertaken overseas in collaboration with AVMA and/or AVBC. RCVS visitors attending an overseas visitation would normally be expected to have previous experience as a member of a visiting team.

For visitations in the UK undertaken jointly with EAEVE, EAEVE normally appoints three visitors. For joint visitations undertaken with AVMA and/or AVBC, RCVS will normally appoint up to two visitors.

The visiting team may also include observers, for example from other accrediting bodies, or a head of school attending by invitation of the host university, or newly appointed RCVS visitors attending in a training role.

Broad areas of expertise to be covered by the visiting team

The panel of visitors will normally be constituted to cover the following subjects:
- veterinary basic sciences
- animal production
- veterinary public health and food hygiene
- clinical studies – one visitor to cover companion animal clinical studies and one to cover large/production animals. One of the two clinical visitors must be a veterinary surgeon in practice.
- At least one of the visitors should have significant experience within a HE environment.
- One of the visitors should be a student (either an undergraduate or a current postgraduate)

Key tasks for a visitor

- Work as a member of a team of experts reviewing and making recommendations to RCVS on the standard of veterinary education and training at universities offering, or seeking to offer, approved degrees.
- Following agreed RCVS evaluation standards and procedures, review the university's self evaluation report before the visit, submit draft comments to RCVS before the visit, and take part in any required training and/or pre-visit meetings or teleconferences.
- Attend the site visit (usually allowing up to five and a half days) to the university to review the curriculum, teaching methods and facilities.
- Act as first rapporteur in reviewing one or more of the standards and chapters of the university's self evaluation report, and second rapporteur for one or more other standards, and contributing to the final report in the visitor's own area of expertise.
- Submitting to RCVS a draft report on the allocated standards and areas of expertise by the end of the visit.
- Comment on drafts of the overall report before submission to RCVS committees.
- If agreed with the chairman of the panel, to attend the university to observe examinations and report to RCVS accordingly.
- Attend further follow-up meetings/visits if required and comment on subsequent follow-up reports as necessary.

Visitor training

RCVS offers training days to all members of the site visit team, including new visitors and observers. These one day events usually take place around a month before the site visit and use the institution's self-evaluation report as the basis for teaching about the standards and procedures of a visitation. This day also gives experienced visitors a chance to refresh their knowledge about how the visitation

process works, as well as drawing out queries and questions about the self-evaluation report that the team will want to explore during the visitation. No new team member can attend as a visitor unless they have attended a training session or a briefing meeting prior to the visit. New members of a visit team must also normally have attended a visit as an Observer to gain experience before being appointed as a full member.

Time commitment

Preparatory reading time: the visitor must allow time to consider the university's full self evaluation report (often around 100+ pages) and to prepare their initial written comments and queries - usually around 6-8 weeks before the visit.

Visit: usually 5.5 days (Sunday afternoon – Friday inclusive), with the formal proceedings at the university starting on the Monday. (Need to allow up to 6 days away from home). Each day is a full day, from 8.00am through to late evening. The visiting team has a meeting every evening after visiting the university during the day as well as a working dinner. In some instances, one or more of the visitors may also be asked to attend the university at a later date to observe the final degree examinations.

Report writing: reports are drafted during the week of the visit, but the visitor must also allow time to consider and comment on the full draft visitation report after the meeting. Draft reports need to be turned round very quickly.

Expenses

Travel and accommodation expenses are paid by RCVS. For overseas visits, these costs will be passed on to the university concerned.

RCVS appointed visitors may claim reimbursement for their loss of earnings at the currently applicable Council rate for the time spent on the site visit on submission of an invoice from their place of work.

Visitors are asked to find the most cost effective means of travel, such as lower cost rail fares or flights booked in advance, or budget airfares where available. Visitors undertaking visits overseas which involve a flight of seven hours or more may claim for business class air fares.

Receipts must be provided for all travel and subsistence expenses before costs can be reimbursed.

RCVS visitors "person specification"

FACTORS			CRITERIA
Education and professional qualifications	**Essential**	**A1**	Hold a degree registerable with the RCVS (except for visitor in Veterinary Basic Sciences), or be a currently licensed veterinarian in good standing in another jurisdiction acceptable to RCVS
		A2	PhD (mandatory for visitor in Basic Sciences)
	Desirable	**B**	Postgraduate qualification
	Desirable	**D1**	Familiarity with RCVS requirements for veterinary education
		D2	Knowledge and experience of current international veterinary standards in the professional subject area
		D3	Published in a peer reviewed or other journal
Specific aptitude and abilities	**Essential**	**E1**	Ability to interpret a large amount of complex information
		E2	Ability to identify significant issues from complex data
		E3	Good problem solving abilities
		E4	Good English writing skills
	Desirable	**F1**	Experience of curriculum development
		F2	Familiarity with budgets and financial statements
		F3	Diplomacy in dealing with sensitive issues
Interpersonal skills	**Essential**	**G1**	Ability to provide constructive criticism
		G2	Good interviewing skills
		G3	Ability to work in a team
		G4	Ability to facilitate discussion to reach conclusions
		G5	A courteous manner in verbal communications
		G6	Absolute discretion in confidential matters
Special factors	**Essential**	**I**	Good professional standing

Annex 7 - Policy on managing potential conflicts of interest for visitation team members

In order to ensure that all matters relating to the approval of veterinary degrees by the RCVS are conducted in an objective manner, it is important that any potential conflicts of interest (on the part of visitors and committee members called to consider visitation reports) are avoided as far as possible, or carefully managed where complete avoidance is not practicable.   Visitors' reports are first considered by the Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee (PQSC) which makes recommendations to Education Committee. This statement therefore covers not only visitors, but also members of those committees called upon to consider visitation reports.

Criteria used when selecting visitors

1.   When forming its visitation panels, RCVS needs to appoint visitors who, between them, have the necessary combined expertise to form an objective and informed judgement about the standard of veterinary education and training at a university. When the team is appointed, a number of variables are taken into account: there must be an appropriate balance of expertise covering basic sciences, animal production, food hygiene and clinical studies; one or more visitors must have experience at a senior level of managing a veterinary school; at least one member must be a clinical practitioner, and at least one of the team must have an appreciation of veterinary research. Team members may be nominated by the European Association of Establishments of Veterinary Education (EAEVE), and some may be visitors in other jurisdictions, such as the AVBC and AVMA. Most members of the team must have had previous experience as a visitor, either in the UK or elsewhere. Furthermore, visitors need to be available to devote at least 5 continuous days to the visit, in addition to further time spent preparing for the visit and contributing to the subsequent report.

Impartiality

2.   In appointing visitors to particular teams, RCVS places a strong emphasis on the need for impartiality, and expects all its visitors to act objectively and professionally at all times. Guidance to this effect is included within the notes provided to visitors. However, the need to demonstrate independence and impartiality must be balanced against the equal need for particular expertise within the team. This can sometimes present difficulties for a small profession such as the veterinary profession, and especially so for academics who network widely with fellow experts on a national and international basis.

Conflicts of interest

3.   With so many factors to be taken into account in putting a team together, it is not always possible to avoid the appointment of visitors with no previous history of involvement with a particular university. In putting teams of visitors together, RCVS seeks to minimise the possibility of individual conflicts of interests or any perception of bias, to ensure that the team as a whole can be seen to reach a fair and impartial view of degree standards.

4. The person specification for visitors is published on the RCVS website with an open invitation for Members to apply to join the list. New appointments to the list of visitors are considered by the chairman of PQSC and the chairman of Education Committee and must meet all the essential criteria in the person specification. All new visitors, once appointed to a particular visitor team, receive training in the visitation process. Briefing meetings for visiting teams are held before each visit to ensure that the visit is only focussed on the published accreditation standards and not on any other wider extraneous matters. Appointments to a particular visiting team are considered by PQSC and confirmed by Education Committee. Visitors are only appointed for an individual visit but, subject to satisfactory performance, may stay on the list to be available for future visits.

5. Those with a very close and/or recent association with a university being visited would be ruled out as a visitor for that university. In other more marginal cases, where there is potential for a conflict of interest whether actual or perceived (see below), visitors must declare their interest or possible interest in advance. They must complete a Declaration (section B of attached form) and send it to the Education Department, which will consult with the chairman of PQSC and the Registrar in the event of any relevant interest becoming apparent. They may be asked to step down from the team or alternatively the chairman of the visiting team will be asked to ensure that any actual or potential conflict is made known to the other visitors, so that this can be taken into account during visitors' meetings. The membership of a visiting team is made known to the university being visited at least 6 months before the visit takes place. The university may also raise an objection to RCVS to a nominated visitor on the grounds of a conflict of interest and request that the visitor be replaced on the visiting team.

6. Depending on the nature of the interest, a visitor may be asked during the visit to step back from taking part in some meetings with university staff (eg. if they have an association with a faculty member) or from reporting on particular topics (eg. on research, if their involvement has been research related). In this way, any potential conflicts of interest are disclosed and managed during the visit and in the drafting of the subsequent report. In addition, it should be noted that all RCVS Council Members must abide by RCVS's Code of Conduct for Managing Potential Conflicts of Interest and must complete a standard 'declaration of interest' form which is held by the College and updated annually.

7. Committee members with a close and/or recent association with a university under consideration will need to declare their interest to the chairman of the meeting, and may be asked to withdraw from discussions on the visitation report. Representatives of the university concerned will be asked to withdraw from the meeting when their report is being discussed. They may, however, be present for part of the meeting if the committee requests clarification on points of fact.

8. Potential conflicts of interest involve official, professional, or personal relationships which may, or could reasonably be viewed as influencing or impairing the visitors' judgements. These may include, but are not limited to:
    - recent collaborative research, teaching or service interests with a key administrator or faculty members of the university being visited

- having been employed by, or having recently applied for employment with the university being visited
- having provided consultancy advice on accreditation matters for the university being visited – either voluntarily or for a fee
- having published statements or opinion which could be perceived as evidence of bias
- having a close family relationship with a key member of the university being visited
- having a financial or other personal interest in the outcome of the visitation.

Declaration

9.	All visitors are asked to complete and sign the visitors conflict of interest declaration form (see below), either confirming that they have no conflicts of interest, or alternatively declaring any they believe to be relevant, and return it to the Education Department at RCVS before the visit takes place.

Visitors conflict of interest declaration

Name of visitor:_____

University to be visited: _____

Year of visit: _____

 Please complete either section A, or section B as appropriate:

A

I confirm that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, I have no current conflict of interest that would, or could be perceived to affect my duties as a visitor.

Signature:_____

Date: _____

B

I wish to declare the following interests which could be seen as leading to a possible conflict of interest. I understand that these will be discussed with the chairman of PQSC before my appointment as a visitor is confirmed. *(Continue on a separate sheet if necessary)*

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Annex 8 - Quality Assurance Agency level descriptor

In addition to RCVS accreditation requirements, and EU Directive requirements, UK veterinary schools must also abide by the UK's Quality Assurance Agency's level descriptors for degrees at level 7, as well as the QAA subject benchmark statement for veterinary science. The professional veterinary degree is placed at level 7, Masters level, of the England, Wales and Northern Ireland Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), and at level 11 of the Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland (FQHEIS) which is part of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF).

The extract below is taken from the QAA "UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Part A: Setting and maintaining academic standards", October 2014[1].

"Descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 7 on the FHEQ and SCQF level 11 on the FQHEIS: master's degree

The descriptor provided for this level of the frameworks is for any master's degree which should meet the descriptor in full. This qualification descriptor should also be used as a reference point for other qualifications at level 7/ SCQF level 11 on the FQHEIS, including postgraduate certificates and postgraduate diplomas.

Master's degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:
- *a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice*
- *a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship*
- *originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline*
- *conceptual understanding that enables the student:*
  - *to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline*
  - *to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.*

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:
- *deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences*
- *demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level*
- *continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.*

And holders will have:
- *the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:*
  - *the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility*
  - *decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations*

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[1]. http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/qualifications-frameworks.pdf (accessed 5Feb2015)

        o   *the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.*

Much of the study undertaken for master's degrees is at, or informed by, the forefront of an academic or professional discipline. Successful students show originality in the application of knowledge, and they understand how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research. They are able to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, and they show originality in tackling and solving problems. They have the qualities needed for employment in circumstances requiring sound judgement, personal responsibility and initiative in complex and unpredictable professional environments.

Master's degrees are awarded after completion of taught courses, programmes of research or a mixture of both. Longer, research-based programmes may lead to the degree of MPhil. The learning outcomes of most master's degree courses are achieved on the basis of study equivalent to at least one full-time calendar year and are taken by graduates with a bachelor's degree with honours (or equivalent achievement).

Master's degrees are often distinguished from other qualifications at this framework level (for example, advanced short courses, which often form parts of continuing professional development programmes and lead to postgraduate certificates and/or postgraduate diplomas) by an increased intensity, complexity and density of study. Master's degrees, in comparison to postgraduate certificates and postgraduate diplomas, typically include planned intellectual progression that often includes a synoptic/research or scholarly activity.

Some master's degrees, for example, in science, engineering and mathematics, comprise an integrated programme of study spanning several levels. Such programmes typically involve study equivalent to at least four full-time academic years in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and five in Scotland. Of this, study equivalent to at least one full-time academic year is at level 7 of the FHEQ/SCQF level 11 on the FQHEIS and the final outcomes of the qualifications themselves meet the expectations of the descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 7/level 11 in full. Study at bachelor's level is integrated with study at master's level and the programmes are designed to meet the qualification descriptors in full at level 6 of the FHEQ/SCQF level 10 on the FQHEIS as well as those at level 7 of the FHEQ/ level 11 of the FQHEIS. Such qualifications are often termed 'integrated master's' as an acknowledgement of the prior period of study at lower levels (which typically meets the expectations of the descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 6/level 10).

First degrees in medicine, dentistry and veterinary science comprise an integrated programme of study and professional practice spanning several levels. While the final outcomes of the qualifications themselves typically meet the expectations of the descriptor for a higher education qualification at level 7/level 11, these qualifications may often retain, for historical reasons, titles of Bachelor of Medicine, and Bachelor of Surgery, Bachelor of Dental Surgery, Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine or Bachelor of Veterinary Science, and are abbreviated to MBChB or BM BS, BDS, BVetMed and BVSc respectively. The use of the title 'Dr' by medical doctors is a historical abbreviation for the profession; it does not indicate a qualification at doctoral level."

Annex 9 – Sample visitation timetable

Please use this draft as a basis for creating your visitation timetable. You are free to amend as necessary in order to suit your staff/students' availability.

Sunday

Time	Activity
15.00	Visitors arrive at hotel
16.30 – 18.30	Visitors private meeting

Monday

Time	Activity
08.30 – 09.00	Visitors private meeting
09.00 – 09.30	Welcome, meet Senior Management Team & Dean
09.35 – 10.15	**Standard 1** – Organisation
10.15 – 10.30	Comfort break – coffee/tea
10.35 – 11.30	**Standard 2** – Finances
11.35 – 12.55	Tour of school buildings
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch with first, second and third year students
14.00 – 16.15	Tour of school buildings
16.15 – 16.30	Comfort break – coffee/tea
16.30 – 17.30	**Standard 3** – Facilities and equipment
17.30	Visitors depart for hotel
19.30	Informal dinner for visitors with staff and university guests

Tuesday

Time	Activity
08.30 – 09.00	Visitors private meeting
09.00 – 10.30	**Standard 9** – Curriculum
10.30 – 10.45	Comfort break – tea/coffee
10.45 – 11.45	**Standard 10** – Assessment
10.50 – 12.00	**Standard 12** – Outcomes assessment
12.00 – 13.00	Lunch with fourth and fifth year students
13.00 – 17.30	Visit external partners/abattoir/off-site practices/charities
17.30	Visitors depart for hotel

Wednesday

Time	Activity
08.30 – 09.00	Visitors private meeting
09.00 – 09.55	**Standard 4** – Animal resources
10.00 – 10.30	**Standard 5** – Information resources
10.30 – 10.45	Comfort break – coffee/tea
10.45 – 11.40	**Standard 6** – Students

11.45 – 12.45	**Standard 7** – Admission and progression
12.45 – 13.00	Comfort break
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch with interns/residents/PhD students/research students
14.00 – 14.40	**Standard 8** – Academic staff (junior)
14.45 – 15.30	**Standard 8** – Support staff
15.30 – 15.45	Comfort break – tea/coffee
15.45 – 16.45	**Standard 11** – Research programmes, continuing and higher education
16.45 – 17.30	Visitors private meeting
17.30	Visitor travel to hotel

Thursday

Time	Activity
08.30 – 09.30	Visitor private meeting
09.30 – 11.00	Confidential sessions (to be advertised in advance to staff and students)
09.30 – 13.00	Review base room materials. Chance to revisit any areas necessary.
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch with alumni and employers
14.00 – 17.30	Report writing. Chance to revisit any areas necessary.
17.30	Visitors travel to hotel

Friday

Time	Activity
09.00 – 09.15	Visitors private meeting
09.15 – 09.45	Visitors feedback to Dean/Head of School
10.00 – 10.30	Visitors feedback to Vice Chancellor
11.00	Visitors depart

Annex 10 - Accreditation rubric for visitors

This checklist is for the use of the visitors during the visitation.

	STANDARDS	Compliant	Minor Deficiencies	Major Deficiencies	SER page reference
1.	**ORGANISATION**				
1.1	Mission statement	☐	☐	☐	
1.2	Strategic & operating plan	☐	☐	☐	
1.3	Part of an institution of higher learning	☐	☐	☐	
1.4	National institutional accreditation	☐	☐	☐	
1.5	Relationship between school and parent institution	☐	☐	☐	
1.6	Qualifications and responsibilities of the dean incl. budgetary control	☐	☐	☐	
1.7	Qualifications of those responsible for professional /ethical/academic matters in teaching hospital(s)/clinics	☐	☐	☐	
1.8	Sufficient effective administrative staff to manage the school adequately	☐	☐	☐	
1.9	Evidence of management of concerns or risks to the quality of the veterinary programme	☐	☐	☐	
2.	**FINANCES**				
2.1	Adequacy of financial support for professional teaching programme and the mission	☐	☐	☐	
2.2	Delineation of funding and impact of ancillary undergraduate programs	☐	☐	☐	
2.3	Regular review of finances	☐	☐	☐	
2.4	Clinics/hospitals function as instructional resources	☐	☐	☐	
2.5	Clinics/hospitals run efficiently with transparent business plans	☐	☐	☐	
3.	**FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT**				
3.1	Physical environment conducive to learning	☐	☐	☐	
3.2	Programme for maintenance & upgrading	☐	☐	☐	
3.3	Adequacy of teaching facilities	☐	☐	☐	
3.4	Study & service areas for students	☐	☐	☐	
3.5	Adequacy of offices, teaching prep. areas and research laboratories	☐	☐	☐	

3.6	Facilities comply with H&S, biosecurity, welfare standards	☐	☐	☐	
3.7	Adequacy of livestock facilities, & animal housing	☐	☐	☐	
3.8	Adequacy of on-campus clinical teaching facilities	☐	☐	☐	
3.9	Adequacy of off-campus/distributed core clinical teaching facilities	☐	☐	☐	
3.10	Adequacy of diagnostic and therapeutic services	☐	☐	☐	
3.11	Operational policies and procedures posted for staff, students and visitors	☐	☐	☐	
3.12	Adequacy of isolation facilities	☐	☐	☐	
4.	**ANIMAL RESOURCES**				
4.1	Adequate range of animals available for teaching (normal vs. diseased, in- vs. out-patient, field service, ambulatory, herd health)	☐	☐	☐	
4.2	Diverse and sufficient surgical/medical patients for student clinical teaching, incl. primary care cases	☐	☐	☐	
4.3	Standard and quality assurance of education at external sites	☐	☐	☐	
4.4	Nursing care & instruction provided; student involvement in ambulatory/field programmes	☐	☐	☐	
4.5	Students' involvement in health- care management of patients (& involvement with clients)	☐	☐	☐	
4.6	Adequacy of medical records system	☐	☐	☐	
4.7	Students competent in animal handling relevant to their learning prior to placements	☐	☐	☐	
5.	**INFORMATION RESOURCES**				
5.1	Adequacy of information retrieval resources	☐	☐	☐	
5.2	Access to information resources on and off campus (including distributed sites)	☐	☐	☐	
5.3	Librarian is qualified, support personnel are available	☐	☐	☐	
5.4	Internet widely available, including in libraries	☐	☐	☐	
5.5	Support for development of instructional materials	☐	☐	☐	
5.6	Alignment of information resources to teaching programme and systems to evaluate effectiveness of innovations	☐	☐	☐	

6.	STUDENTS				
6.1	Appropriate student body (size and representation) given mission and resources	☐	☐	☐	
6.2	Adequate post-grad programs	☐	☐	☐	
6.3	Student support & welfare services, incl. careers advice	☐	☐	☐	
6.4	Mechanisms to resolve student grievances	☐	☐	☐	
6.5	Student input to school	☐	☐	☐	
6.6	Student Complaint policy and procedure	☐	☐	☐	
7.	ADMISSION & PROGRESSION				
7.1	Selection criteria & numbers admitted consistent with mission	☐	☐	☐	
7.2	Course adverts clear & comprehensive	☐	☐	☐	
7.3	Student selection & progression criteria are fair, transparent & appropriate	☐	☐	☐	
7.4	Selection criteria & processes clear & accessible; reviewed for relevance, & take account of RCVS D1Cs	☐	☐	☐	
7.5	Training provided for those involved in selection	☐	☐	☐	
7.6	Potential students advised of demands & FtP requirements	☐	☐	☐	
7.7	Non-academic achievement admission criteria	☐	☐	☐	
7.8	Strategy for widening participation	☐	☐	☐	
7.9	Academic entry requirements	☐	☐	☐	
7.10	Policies for students with disabilities	☐	☐	☐	
7.11	Explicit progression policy, with remediation	☐	☐	☐	
7.12	Attrition/progression monitored	☐	☐	☐	
7.13	Explicit policies for exclusion	☐	☐	☐	
7.14	Transparent & accessible appeals policy	☐	☐	☐	
7.15	Explicit policies on misconduct & fitness to practise	☐	☐	☐	
8.	ACADEMIC & SUPPORT STAFF				
8.1	Staff appropriately qualified and prepared	☐	☐	☐	
8.2	Appropriate numbers of staff to deliver the programme and mission	☐	☐	☐	

8.3	All teaching staff display competence & teaching skills	☐	☐	☐	
8.4	Promotion and retention policies	☐	☐	☐	
8.5	Performance review procedures	☐	☐	☐	
8.6	Staff development in tertiary teaching available	☐	☐	☐	
8.7	Promotion criteria recognise teaching & other activities	☐	☐	☐	
9.	**CURRICULUM**				
9.1	Curriculum consistent with QAA level 7 descriptor, EU reqs and RCVS D1Cs	☐	☐	☐	
9.2	Explicit coherent learning outcomes	☐	☐	☐	
9.3	Learning outcomes communicated to staff/students, reviewed, managed & updated	☐	☐	☐	
9.4	Regular (min 7 yrly) review and management (revision)	☐	☐	☐	
9.5	Management of the curriculum by committee with clear reporting lines and responsibility as set out in 9.4. Chapter 2. Regular meetings incl. student representation	☐	☐	☐	
9.6	Curriculum covers items listed in 9.5. Chapter 2.	☐	☐	☐	
9.7	EMS is integral and structured part of programme.	☐	☐	☐	
9.8	Farm animal husbandry EMS complements core training	☐	☐	☐	
9.9	Core clinical training is complemented by clinical EMS	☐	☐	☐	
9.10	Feedback systems for EMS providers	☐	☐	☐	
9.11	EMS coordinated by member of academic staff	☐	☐	☐	
9.12	Mechanisms to support students to take responsibility for own learning, incl. reflective logs & objective setting.	☐	☐	☐	
10	**ASSESSMENT**				
10.1	Assessment strategy well managed	☐	☐	☐	
10.2	Assessment tasks & grading criteria explicit in advance of tasks	☐	☐	☐	
10.3	Requirements clear to students	☐	☐	☐	
10.4	Explicit appeals procedure	☐	☐	☐	
10.5	Review processes for assessment strategy	☐	☐	☐	

10.6	Full range of professional skills & attributes covered by assessment design	☐	☐	☐	
10.7	Assessment informs student learning	☐	☐	☐	
10.8	Assessment loads planned to achieve appropriate workloads for staff & students	☐	☐	☐	
10.9	Assessment at programme and unit level	☐	☐	☐	
10.10	Valid & reliable assessments, with direct assessment of clinical skills a significant component	☐	☐	☐	
10.11	Effective assessment management incl. record keeping	☐	☐	☐	
10.12	Quality control of assessment outcomes with peer review of the process etc.	☐	☐	☐	
10.13	Moderation processes in place	☐	☐	☐	
10.14	Grades awarded appropriately	☐	☐	☐	
11.	**RESEARCH PROGRAMMES, CONTINUING & HIGHER DEGREES**				
11.1	Adequate integration of research in the professional programme	☐	☐	☐	
11.2	Active student participation in research	☐	☐	☐	
11.3	Breadth & quality of school research programme	☐	☐	☐	
11.4	Provision of postgrad degrees, postgrad clinical training programmes & CPD	☐	☐	☐	
12.	**OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT**				
12.1	Mechanisms in place to gather data which show institutional and educational objectives are being met. Trends analysed	☐	☐	☐	
12.2	Strategic goals are appropriate and progress towards these is being made	☐	☐	☐	
12.3	Veterinary programme subject to internal and external evaluation by long and short feedback loops	☐	☐	☐	
12.4	New graduates have the scientific knowledge, skills and ability to provide entry level care upon graduation (RCVS D1Cs)	☐	☐	☐	
12.5	Procedures to review the evidence of student experience and achievement of RCVS D1C	☐	☐	☐	
12.6	Use made of student experience logs by students, and by school to monitor experience	☐	☐	☐	

12.7	Direct and indirect measures of student learning outcomes are used to evaluate clinical competence	☐	☐	☐	
12.8	School can demonstrate assessment of the quality of the veterinary programme	☐	☐	☐	
	Students have mastered Clinical Competences at entry level (to OIE standards):				
12.9	1. Patient diagnosis, appropriate use of clinical resources, record management	☐	☐	☐	
12.10	2. Treatment planning and referral	☐	☐	☐	
12.11	3. Anaesthesia, pain management, patient welfare	☐	☐	☐	
12.12	4. Basic surgery skills, experience, case management	☐	☐	☐	
12.13	5. Basic medicine skills, experience, case management	☐	☐	☐	
12.14	6. Emergency and intensive care case management	☐	☐	☐	
12.15	7. Health promotion, disease prevention/biosecurity, zoonosis, food safety	☐	☐	☐	
12.16	8. Client communication, Professional & ethical conduct	☐	☐	☐	
12.17	9. Critical analysis of information and research	☐	☐	☐	
12.18	Evidence that monitoring of student achievement of RCVS D1C affects programme reviews	☐	☐	☐	
12.19	Evidence of a continuous quality improvement strategy	☐	☐	☐	
12.20	Annual and cumulative NAVLE scores (where appropriate)	☐	☐	☐	
12.21	Student attrition rates with reasons	☐	☐	☐	
12.22	Employment rates of graduates	☐	☐	☐	

Final visitor team evaluation

How well does the programme comply with the standards?

STANDARDS		**Compliant** No factors exist that compromise current compliance; or, if not addressed, may compromise future compliance.	**Minor Deficiencies** Minor deficiencies have minimal or no effect on student learning or safety. The deficiencies are correctible in 1yr.	**Major Deficiencies** Major deficiencies have more than minimal impact on student learning or safety.
1.	Organisation	☐	☐	☐
2.	Finances	☐	☐	☐
3.	Facilities and equipment	☐	☐	☐
4.	Animal resources	☐	☐	☐
5.	Information resources	☐	☐	☐
6.	Students	☐	☐	☐
7.	Admission & progression	☐	☐	☐
8.	Academic & support staff	☐	☐	☐
9.	Curriculum	☐	☐	☐
10.	Assessment	☐	☐	☐
11.	Research, continuing & higher degrees & CPD	☐	☐	☐
12.	Outcomes Assessment	☐	☐	☐