Graduate Diploma in Professional and Clinical Veterinary Nursing

Programme Specification

1. Awarding institution	The Royal Veterinary College
2. Teaching institution	The Royal Veterinary College (University of London)
3. Programme accredited by	3 Graduate Diploma core module and 2 Graduate Diploma elective modules have received accreditation fromRoyal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) which can be counted towards the RCVS Diploma in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (DipAVN)
4. Final award	Graduate Diploma of the University of London
5. Programme Title	Graduate Diploma in Professional and Clinical Veterinary Nursing
6. Date of First Intake	June 2008
7. Frequency of Intake	Yearly in June
8. Duration and Mode(s) of Study	Minimum 20 months, part time, online/distance learning
9. Timing of Examination Board meetings	Yearly after end of year exams (June/July)
10. Date of Last Quinquennial Review	N/A
11. Date of Next Quinquennial Review	2013
12. Entry Requirements	Hold a Veterinary Nursing Certificate awarded by the RCVS, Be on the current RCVS List/Register of Veterinary Nurses, Have a minimum of one year post-qualification clinical experience, Successful completion of Contemporary Study Skills bridging module (assessment includes attendance of residential study week and completion of module assignments and assessment), Be employed in, or have agreed access to placement in a suitable* veterinary clinical environment, Have the support of their employing/supervising veterinary practice, who, will be required to: allow time and access for training and validate any workplace activities for practical elements of the course. *Suitable clinical environments must be general veterinary practices which are able to demonstrate a minimum of RCVS PSS tier 2 (or TP standard). A minimum of four full-time weeks per 20 credit elective module must be spent working in a directly relevant clinical setting (e.g. critical care unit if the Emergency and Critical Care Nursing module is taken). The course demands an excellent understanding of both written and spoken English language.

	Students will require a computer with broadband internet access.
13. UCAS code	N/A
14. JACS Code	D310
15. Relevant QAA subject benchmark group(s)	The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and Benchmark Statement for Veterinary Nursing, Veterinary Health Studies and Related Disciplines

16. Reference points

Quality Assurance Agency, The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority – Level descriptors for positioning units in the Qualifications and Credit Framework

Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) Accreditation Handbook for the Diploma in Advanced Veterinary Nursing

Benchmark Statement for Veterinary Nursing, Veterinary Health Studies and Related Disciplines

Veterinary Surgeons Act (1966)

Veterinary Nursing Occupational Standards Levels 2 and 3 (Lantra 2002)

Veterinary Nursing Professional Syllabus Levels 2 and 3 (2006)

RCVS Diploma in Advanced Veterinary Nursing Framework

RCVS Guide to Professional Conduct for Veterinary Nurses 2007

17. Educational aims of programme

The educational aims of the programme are to:

- Provide students with a sound understanding of the concepts and principles underpinning veterinary nursing practice and enable them to apply those principles more widely within the clinical context, to provide creative solutions in veterinary nursing care.

- Provide a learning environment to enable students to develop and apply analytical and problem-solving skills to reach sound judgements and to be able to communicate these effectively.

- Foster reflective, evaluative and lifelong approaches to learning and acquire the skills to successfully transfer learning approaches from one life situation to another.

- Provide opportunities for students to develop the skills required of an autonomous veterinary nurse practitioner; acting with increased responsibility in complex and unpredictable situations.

18. Programme outcomes - the programme offers opportunities for students to achieve and demonstrate the following learning outcomes.

The programme outcomes have references to the Benchmark Statements for Veterinary Nursing, Veterinary Health Studies and the QCA level descriptors for positioning units in the Qualifications and Credit Framework).

Learning outcomes: Knowledge and Understanding
On successful completion of the course, students will be able to demonstrate a comprehensive and detailed knowledge and understanding of:

1. The theory and principles that underpin veterinary nursing practice
2. The application and integration of theory and practice
3. The legal, ethical and professional issues that affects veterinary nursing practice
4. The developing role of the veterinary nurse within the veterinary team and profession
5. The basis of patient assessment, therapeutic intervention, and models of care
6. Evidence-based nursing and reflective practice

Learning Outcomes: Cognitive skills
On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Apply knowledge and understanding of the theory and principles underpinning veterinary nursing practice to provide creative solutions in care situations
2. Analyse and transform data, concepts and information to assess, prioritise and formulate care plans in the clinical setting, with minimum guidance
3. Assess complex problems and apply appropriate knowledge and skills to provide creative solutions in care situations
4. Critically evaluate evidence (reviewing reliability, validity and significance) to support conclusions and recommendations to the provision of veterinary nursing practice

Learning Outcomes: Generic skills
On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Interact and work effectively within the veterinary team and professional group
2. Negotiate in a professional context and resolve conflict
3. Reflectively evaluate and manage own learning and personal planning processes using a full range of resources
4. Select and manage information, competently undertake reasonable straight-forward research tasks with minimum of guidance
5. Recognise personal strengths and weaknesses in learning and clinical practice and take responsibility for own work, and reflect and critique self and practice to become a life-long learner
6. Engage effectively in debate in a professional manner and produce detailed and coherent project reports and case-management reports
7. Identify and define complex problems and apply appropriate knowledge and skills to help with resolution of the problem
8. Utilise a range of effective communication methods (oral, written and IT)
9. Learn independently and effectively

Learning Outcomes: Practical and/or professional skills and attributes
On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Operate in complex and unpredictable situations, selecting and applying appropriate skills from a wide range of innovative and standard techniques
2. Act autonomously, with minimal supervision or direction, within agreed professional, legal and local guidelines
3. Carry out practical skills with confidence and creativity to enhance the quality of care
4. Provide care for patients, responding appropriately to the patient's changing needs and any imposed limitations of the situation
5. Present information orally, in writing and, where appropriate, through the use of technology, to provide coherent and logical arguments in the support of decision-making
6. Support veterinary colleagues and other para-veterinary staff in clinical practice

Teaching/learning methods

Teaching, learning and assessment activities are aligned to ensure the objectives of the programme are clearly defined and that students have the opportunities to achieve these outcomes. Assignment tasks within each module help to establish the theoretical knowledge base and assessment activities are designed to enhance the learning process and help students to measure their own progress. All teaching, learning and assessment activities are designed to help students become actively involved in their learning and provide tools for them to identify and manage their learning to achieve the learning objectives to the best of their ability.

We recognise that each student's learning requirements are different and that they will change throughout their progression through the course. At the start of the programme, students are given structured guidance and learning support via on-line academic tutors and peer discussion boards. These facilitators provide feedback and hints for improving performance and learning. Discussion and sharing of learning points with others on the course is encouraged to help each learner develop his or her own understanding of the content.

As students progress through the programme, there will be increasing reliance on student-centred modes of learning, which will encourage and facilitate independent study and foster the development of a professional approach to lifelong learning.

Specific Teaching and Learning Activities

- Lectures
- Tutorials
- Seminars   Face to face
- Practical skills workshops   during residential study week
                                    for the Contemporary Study Skills Module

- On-line interactive lectures
- On-line peer discussion board
- On-line student presentations   E-learning activities via the VLE
- PDP (Personal/professional
  Development Planning

- Problem-Based Scenarios (PBS)
- Problem-Based Exercises (PBE)   Module assignments via the
- Extended Case Studies (ECS)   VLE
- Work-Based Directed Tasks (WBDT)

- Literature-based research
- Directed and self-directed reading

Assessment

The range of assessment strategies deployed on this course have been selected and managed to promote deep and effective learning, leading directly to an improved understanding and application of learning. All assessment tasks will be aligned to the module learning outcomes and will monitor integrative and extended understanding of the subjects.

Formative assessment activities are designed to enable students to assess their progress and help them identify and plan their further learning needs: dialogue between the student and their tutor and peers via on-line formative assessment and discussion, provides individualised feedback, to help reinforce good practice and importantly, help show where and how work can be improved.

Summative assessments are used at the end of each module and at the end of the programme to ensure that students demonstrate the baseline competencies required from the range of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the veterinary nurse practitioner at Graduate Diploma level.

Formative Assessment Activities throughout each module:

- Tutor Assessed Assignments   (PBS, PBE, ECS)
- Peer Assessed Assignments   (PBS, PBE, ECS)

- Participation in the on-line peer discussion board
- Delivery of on-line presentation
- Presentation of a selection PDP entries

- Tutor and supervisor assessed Work-based Directed Tasks
- Peer-assessed Objectively Structured Practical Examinations (OSPEs)

- On-line interactive assessments (MCQs, EMQs)

Summative Module Assessment Activities at the end of each module:

Unseen examinations:
- MCQs
- EMQs
- Short answer question papers

- OSPEs
- Viva Voce
- Project reports (PBS, PBE, ECS)

To be awarded the full Graduate Diploma in Professional and Clinical Veterinary Nursing, students must successfully complete and demonstrate satisfactory scores in the continuous formative assessment and summative assessment.

All course assignment work will be guided by and marked in accordance with marking schemes provided by the course.

19. Programme structures and requirements, levels, modules, credits and awards

Please see below table and attached chart for programme structure

Module	Level	Year	Credits	Comments
Contemporary Study Skills	6	1	10	Bridging module (Compulsory pre-requisite module). This module must be passed before the student registers for any of the modules below
Applied Clinical Nursing	6	1	20	Core module (pre-requisite Contemporary Study Skills)
Problem Solving in Veterinary Physiology	6	1	20	Core module (pre-requisite Contemporary Study Skills)
Professional Studies	6	1	10	Core module (pre-requisite Contemporary Study Skills)
Anaesthesia inc Analgesia	6	2	20	Elective module (pre-requisite CSS, and all core modules)
ECC inc Fluid Therapy	6	2	20	Elective module (pre-requisite CSS, and all core modules)
Surgical Nursing inc Wound Management	6	2	20	Elective module (pre-requisite CSS, and all core modules)
Diagnostic Imaging	6	2	20	Elective module (pre-requisite CSS, and all core modules)
Medical Nursing	6	2	20	Elective module (pre-requisite CSS, and all core modules)

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Pre-requisite Bridging Module   credits

Contemporary Study Skills	(L6)10

Core Modules

Applied Clinical Nursing	(L6) 20
Problem Solving in Veterinary Physiology	(L6) 20
Professional Studies	(L6) 10

Elective Modules

60 Credits from Elective Modules	(L6) 60

                              Total Credits Awarded   (L6) 120

Elective Modules

Anaesthesia incorporating Analgesia	(L6) 20
Emergency and Critical Care Nursing incorporating Fluid Therapy	(L6) 20
Surgical Nursing incorporating Wound Management	(L6) 20
Diagnostic Imaging	(L6) 20
Medical Nursing	(L6) 20

20. Work Placement Requirements (BVetMed and FdSc only)	Refer to entry requirements	25

ASSESSMENT	

21. Form of Examination	
22. Any requirements to be completed to permit entry to the examination	Please refer to Marking Scheme
23. Marking Criteria	
24. Allocation of Marks	
25. Any additional requirements	
26. Requirements to Pass Overall	
27. Consequences of Failure	
28. Classification	
29. Disclosure of Marks	
30. Dates of Examinations	
31. Date of production/revision	August 2009