



# STRATEGIC PLAN RVC TO 2021

## INTRODUCTION

The Royal Veterinary College (RVC) has a unique heritage in the English-speaking world of over two centuries of innovation and leadership in veterinary medicine. Recent decades have seen us make many advances and we were the first veterinary school in the world to achieve full accreditation by the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) and the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), and full recognition by the UK's Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS), as well as a reciprocal arrangement between the RCVS and the Australasian Veterinary Boards Council Inc (AVBC).

The RVC is committed to the three pillars of its mission; to education, to the discovery and translation of new knowledge and to the delivery of optimal clinical care and opinion. Above all, the RVC seeks to push back the frontiers of what is possible in veterinary medicine and its associated sciences.

The lessons of history tell us that success is the prize but not the goal and the pursuit of excellence is a superlative that is difficult to define. As a consequence, the contents of this strategic plan, through which we lay our path until 2021, identify activities to which we will commit, the objectives on which we will focus and the broad metrics by which we expect to be judged.

We do all of this in the knowledge that, although progress is stepwise and incremental, the changing landscape of higher education and the challenges facing animal and human health require that, in each area, at least part of our mission must be paradigm shifting if we are to remain leaders in our field. If our strategy is to be successful, our enduring endeavour must be to make the RVC the place of choice to study and work and the place from which clinical care and advice are viewed as being of the highest quality and value.

At the heart of RVC life are our people; without them we are nothing and it is for this reason that this plan commits us as an organisation to the wellbeing and satisfaction of both students and staff. We exist because we educate and our primary focus must be our students. However, it is the quality of life of the community as a whole that will define our success and we must make this the bedrock of our aspirations.



**Stuart WJ Reid, CBE**  
Principal



## PURPOSE

Our charitable purpose is to advance higher education and research for the public benefit with particular focus in the art and science of veterinary medicine and surgery, biological and biomedical sciences and related subjects.

## VISION

Our vision is to be the place of recommendation for education, clinical care, research, expert opinion and employment in veterinary medicine and related biological and biomedical sciences.

## MISSION

Our mission is to deliver inspirational leadership and excellence in veterinary medicine, biological and biomedical sciences research and education by embracing the aspirations of our talented staff and students and meeting the diverse and dynamic needs of society through innovative scholarship and pioneering clinical activity.

## VALUES & BEHAVIOURS

Our values are those of professionalism and commitment manifest in a caring, compassionate culture and environment that speaks to others of our respect for our heritage, our dedication to quality and innovation, our support for each other, and our devotion to the advancement of knowledge and the alleviation of suffering.

## BEHAVIOURS

Our professional behaviours in both work and self-management are defined under the following headings: managing self and personal skills; delivering excellent service; finding innovative solutions; embracing change; using resources; providing direction; developing self and others; working with people; and achieving results.

## CORE STRATEGIC THEMES

- Our Learning and Teaching
- Our Student Experience
- Our Research and Innovation
- Our Clients and Patients
- Our People

## CROSSCUTTING THEMES

- Enhancement of our international engagement and impact
- Development of, and support for, a diverse and inclusive community
- Creation of an environment that supports the wellbeing of our staff and students

## STRATEGIC ENABLERS

- Our Financial Sustainability
- Our Professional Services





# **THEME ONE**

## **OUR LEARNING AND TEACHING**



# To be global leaders in the delivery of high-quality, relevant programmes in veterinary education and associated subjects.

## OUR AIMS

The RVC, already one of the largest institutions in the world with a focus on veterinary education, will continue to expand, innovate and consolidate its portfolio of programmes targeted at those involved in the creation and delivery of veterinary, biological and biomedical science and services.

### We will:

- Innovate in the provision of inclusive, flexible undergraduate and postgraduate education to prepare our students to meet the needs of a 21st century workplace and the changing needs of the professions.
- Provide a portfolio of inclusive, flexible, internationally and industry-relevant postgraduate programmes in veterinary and biological and biomedical sciences.
- Provide inclusive, flexible, internationally and industry-relevant continuing professional development courses for veterinarians, veterinary nurses and other members of the veterinary team.
- Establish sustainable strategic partnerships that will extend our impact in veterinary science and animal health locally, nationally and internationally.
- Achieve and maintain accreditation at the highest international level.

### Measures of success:

- Fully mapped curricula for all programmes.
- Completion of the curriculum review of the BVetMed and the introduction of a new curriculum for the 20/21 intake.
- Completion of our planned cycle of periodic review and improvement for all of our educational provision.
- Approval of international collaborations that will have clear benefits for the RVC, its partner organisations and wider society.
- Attainment of full accreditation with the full range of national and international accrediting bodies (EAEVE, RCVS, AVMA, AVBC, RSB).
- Being recommended by our students as a place of innovative and relevant learning and teaching.





# THEME TWO

## OUR STUDENT EXPERIENCE





# To work in partnership with our students to provide them with an educationally, socially and culturally enriching experience.

## OUR AIMS

We aim to provide our students with a journey that is stimulating, challenging, supportive and productive from the outset. We aim to nurture our students' creativity and to educate them in the disciplines required to encourage independent thought that is grounded in a sound knowledge base. We also aim to inspire our students and ensure they understand that focused effort, a growth mind-set and the ability to manage their own wellbeing will be central to significant achievement in academia, in employment and as confident global citizens.

### We will:

- Work with our Students' Union to continue to build a diverse and inclusive student body and a supportive, international educational environment where the student experience is paramount.
- Work with our Students' Union to make a community where our students and staff work together to ensure professionalism, mutual respect and collegiality are at the core of all our activities.
- Provide a high-quality portfolio of national and transnational educational programmes, which result in RVC graduates being recognised throughout the world as highly employable individuals with an embedded spirit of enquiry, committed to, and talented in, self-directed learning.
- Develop a flexible, functional and optimised work and study environment, such that our support services, facilities and technological infrastructure enhance every aspect of our students' educational, cultural and social experience.
- Further develop the culture of the RVC community ensuring that RVC alumni are supported and connected with the College throughout their lives and able to contribute their expertise and open their networks to current and future students around the world.

### Measures of success:

- A significant increase in the diversity of the student body through increased recruitment of international students and those from under-represented groups and the provision of successful systems supporting both retention and attainment.
- A revised, relaunched and adopted RVC Student Charter.
- The development of transnational educational programmes which will deliver the RVC experience and education to students across the globe.
- The completion of all planned aspects of our programme of work to enhance both the Camden and Hawkshead campuses to provide an optimal environment in which our students can achieve their potential.
- The collation and analysis of robust data on the impact of improvements to infrastructure and support services on student success, progression, attainment and wellbeing.
- Being recommended by our students as a place where the student journey is enjoyable, supportive and amongst the best in the sector.






# **THEME THREE**

## **OUR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION**





# To deliver relevant, useful and economically sustainable research programmes of international significance and impact to the animal health and comparative biomedical sector in the context of One Health.

## OUR AIMS

We are a research-led organisation where our research informs our teaching and clinical practice. Founded on high quality science, we aim to maximise the impact of our research for the benefit of our stakeholders and for the betterment of animal and human health and welfare. We will foster collaboration across disciplines and provide an environment that maximises the potential of all of our academics and ensures they conduct their research to the highest ethical standards. Our basic science and our One Health and comparative biomedical approaches will be integrated with translational opportunities that we will exploit, as appropriate, to the benefit of wider society.

### We will:

- Develop a cross-cutting theme of quantitative biology and advanced data analysis approaches.
- Invest in a leadership position within One Health research in low and middle-income countries.
- Through strategic partnerships with industry and academia, enhance our position as a leading veterinary institution working on global challenges addressing Strategic Development Goals.
- Exploit the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, engage with industry, and commercialise intellectual property where appropriate.
- Manage our innovation space for SMEs in London's Knowledge Quarter, consolidating our position as London's leading provider of this support for industry and investing in infrastructure to support integrative whole animal research.
- Build on VetCompass to establish partnerships with clinical veterinary practices that enables clinically applied interventional research to be conducted on a significant scale.

### Measures of success:

- A significant increase in the number of grants where advanced data analysis is required and the number of publications employing advanced data analysis approaches.
- The appointment of global leaders in our key strengths and the implementation of clear and identifiable succession planning.
- The attainment of Global Challenges Research Fund, Newton, and Bill and Melinda Gates Grand Challenges funding with partners in low and medium-income countries.
- The development of international research projects, networks and partners for joint PhDs.
- Enhanced levels of third stream funding and industry partnerships, including the continued success of London Bioscience Innovation Centre.
- Increased number of large scale clinical trials and clinical research and development programmes, run in partnership with industry.
- Being recommended by our research stakeholders as a place of scientific excellence.





# **THEME FOUR**

## **OUR CLIENTS AND PATIENTS**





# To provide outstanding and compassionate clinical care and contribute to the continuous advancement of knowledge and skills in clinical practice.

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## OUR AIMS

Our aim is for the RVC to be recognised as an international centre of reference for clinical practice, with high levels of student and employee recommendation, professional endorsement and strong demand for our clinical services. We will achieve this by ensuring first-opinion and specialist clinical services, along with our advanced diagnostic laboratories, offer access to the highest quality veterinary care and professional advice. Through a transdisciplinary team approach, driven and supported by our research and the pursuit of evidence-based veterinary medicine, we will aim to deliver our educational objectives effectively, efficiently and sustainably.

### We will:

- Establish the RVC as not only a centre of excellence in primary care in all species but also an internationally recognised educational leader in this field.
- Review our clinical processes and levels of professional support to ensure we attain the highest standards of veterinary clinical practice, governance and operational efficiency.
- Promote transdisciplinary clinical teamwork and personal professional development in all our hospitals.
- Attain the highest standards of customer and client experience while engaging with our students as professional colleagues and contributing positively to their wellbeing.

### Measures of success:


- Being recognised as a world-leading centre of reference for veterinary clinical excellence, meeting or exceeding all relevant accreditation standards for clinical provision.
- The delivery of expanded clinical provision across species, including shelter medicine and accessible care, for both our own undergraduate teaching programmes and those of other veterinary institutions.
- The recruitment and retention of clinical staff of the highest international calibre who work synergistically and contribute to the advancement of the clinical sciences through service, research and delivery of Continuing Professional Development.
- The generation of income through the commercial aspect of our clinical provision sufficient to contribute to ensuring sustainability of our clinical aspirations.
- Being recommended by our clients, our students and the profession as the first choice for clinical care and world-class, advice, education and training.



# THEME FIVE

## OUR PEOPLE





# To be the international employer of choice for those seeking to work in the veterinary, biosciences, One Health and higher education sectors.

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## OUR AIMS

We aim to be the employer of choice by focussing our attention on the major indicators of staff contentment and developing our abilities to recognise worth, reward contribution across the College and work to the RVC's values and behaviours. We are committed to the creation of an inclusive, diverse and effective professional working community.

### We will:

- Attract and retain the best talent from around the world by creating and maintaining an inclusive, welcoming and supportive working environment which celebrates and harnesses diversity.
- Engage, consult and develop our staff, enabling them to take ownership of their own career progression, and to realise their full potential.
- Implement schemes that seek opinion and assess contentment in all staff and then act on the results of these opinions.
- Increase our focus on communication and feedback across the College ensuring that the strategic and operational direction of the RVC is clear to all.
- Identify and implement specific measures to promote the health and wellbeing of staff.
- Invest additional resources in developing current and future managers.

### Measures of success:

- The development, communication and implementation of action plans to address areas of concern through the engagement of all staff.
- Attainment of staff engagement measures at or above sector benchmarks.
- The adoption of staff wellbeing within an institutional framework to benefit both staff and students.
- A demonstrable and productive investment in leadership and management development.
- The adoption and embedding of RVC values and behaviours in both policy and practice.
- Being recommended by our staff to prospective staff as a goal-oriented, caring and supportive employer.



## WALTER PLOWRIGHT

On graduating from the RVC in 1944 Walter joined the Royal Army Veterinary Corps and had postings to the Middle East, Kenya and North Africa. It was this experience that convinced him to spend his career studying infectious diseases of animals. Soon after demobilisation Walter joined the Colonial Veterinary Service, in which he made major contributions to the understanding and control of several infectious diseases. Walter's major contribution was the development of a tissue-culture-adapted attenuated indigenous vaccine, and seeing it adapted into practical use. This vaccine has been the key to the global eradication of this disease, only the second disease after smallpox to be eradicated worldwide and the first animal disease. This was a massive contribution to agriculture and humanity and was recognised by the award of the World Food Prize. Walter was also made a Fellow of the Royal Society.

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## GLADYS KALEMA-ZIKUSOKA

Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka graduated from the RVC as a veterinarian and founder of Conservation Through Health Care, an organisation dedicated to the coexistence of gorillas, other wildlife, humans, and livestock in Africa. She was the first wildlife veterinary officer and was the star of the film *Gladys, the African Vet*. In 2009, she won the World Food Prize for her conservation work. In 2018, she became a National Geographic Explorer.

## LIZ BONNIN

Liz completed a Masters in Wild Animal Biology with the RVC and Zoological Society of London in 1995. During her studies she set up a research project in Nepal to study tigers, coming first in her class. As she completed her final year, Liz decided to pursue her passion presenting science. She was hired to present *Being Green the Theory* BBC's popular science magazine show, which went for eight series. Liz has since worked on various science and nature history programmes, including *Drowning in Plastic*, a BBC minute documentary on ocean plastic pollution, *Galapagos*, a series documenting a scientific expedition to the archipelago, and the BBC's award-winning *Big Blue Live* from Monterey Bay. She regularly presents *Habitus*, including special on *The Threat of Venus and Remnants World*, where she delves into the latest science and technology set to transform the planet, and several science awareness programmes ranging from *Super Smart Animals* to *Animals in Love* in 2007, which saw Liz travel the length and breadth of the globe to investigate the scientific animal behaviour, cognition and emotional intelligence.

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Serious  
SCIENCE  
ABOUT  
SINCE 1791

# STRATEGIC ENABLERS



## OUR FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

In support of our mission and objectives we will ensure our financial sustainability by:

- Robust and transparent financial planning, underpinned by prudent and informed budgetary assumptions, which support the efficient and effective use of our resources to deliver value for money.
- Generating sustainable operating cash flow to invest in our infrastructure and facilities, ensuring they remain fit-for-purpose.
- Augmenting current income streams and proactively identifying new ones, where these deliver an appropriate financial contribution.
- Exercising robust cost control, making use of strategic procurement, and containing our exposure to costs over which we have restricted control.
- Optimising our borrowing arrangements to support capital investment, containing debt service costs and limiting exposure to market movements.
- Managing our cash flow to ensure sufficient funds are on hand to support business operations while investing surplus balances to maximise investment returns within specified risk parameters.
- Actively monitoring and seeking to mitigate financial risk through robust policies and practices.

## OUR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

In order to enable our core mission and thematic aspirations our Professional Services will endeavour to:

- Inform and influence a culture of working in proactive partnership suited to a modern organisation.
- Attract, recruit and retain the right staff through effective engagement.
- Inform and deliver agreed targets for sustainability through data quality, capability and evidence based decision making.
- Build and protect RVC's reputation with relevant audiences.
- Create flexible, resilient and fit for purpose systems, services and facilities.
- Support the wellbeing of our students and staff through developing a framework that promotes healthy behaviours and activities.

# MAKING IT HAPPEN

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**Join us in making the vision a reality, share in our success and be part of the community that is the Royal Veterinary College.**

This extended strategy requires college-wide commitment. If we are to succeed and if we are to achieve our aim of being recommended by each stakeholder group, either internal or external, all of the activities must be underpinned by a financially secure and sustainable infrastructure and a professional, accountable and responsible working environment. A sustainable future for the RVC as a distinctive specialist institution will require targeted growth in a competitive but unstable marketplace and this will be achieved through greater agility and adaptability and a strong commercial edge. We will augment our financial resources through stakeholder partnerships, including our alumni and our clients, developing our network of friends and maximising philanthropic support.

We will continue to invest and take pride in our campuses, facilities and services in order to provide attractive, stimulating and sustainable environments to enhance both student and staff experience. We are refreshing and replacing our capital stock in a strategic fashion, matching new build to our aspirations and creating a organisation that is fit for purpose and enhances our local communities.

We will implement and assure strategic and transactional improvements resulting from modernisation of policies and processes which place greater reliance on integrated IT systems, and we will work with our colleagues in the federation of colleges of the University of London, as well as our other academic neighbours.



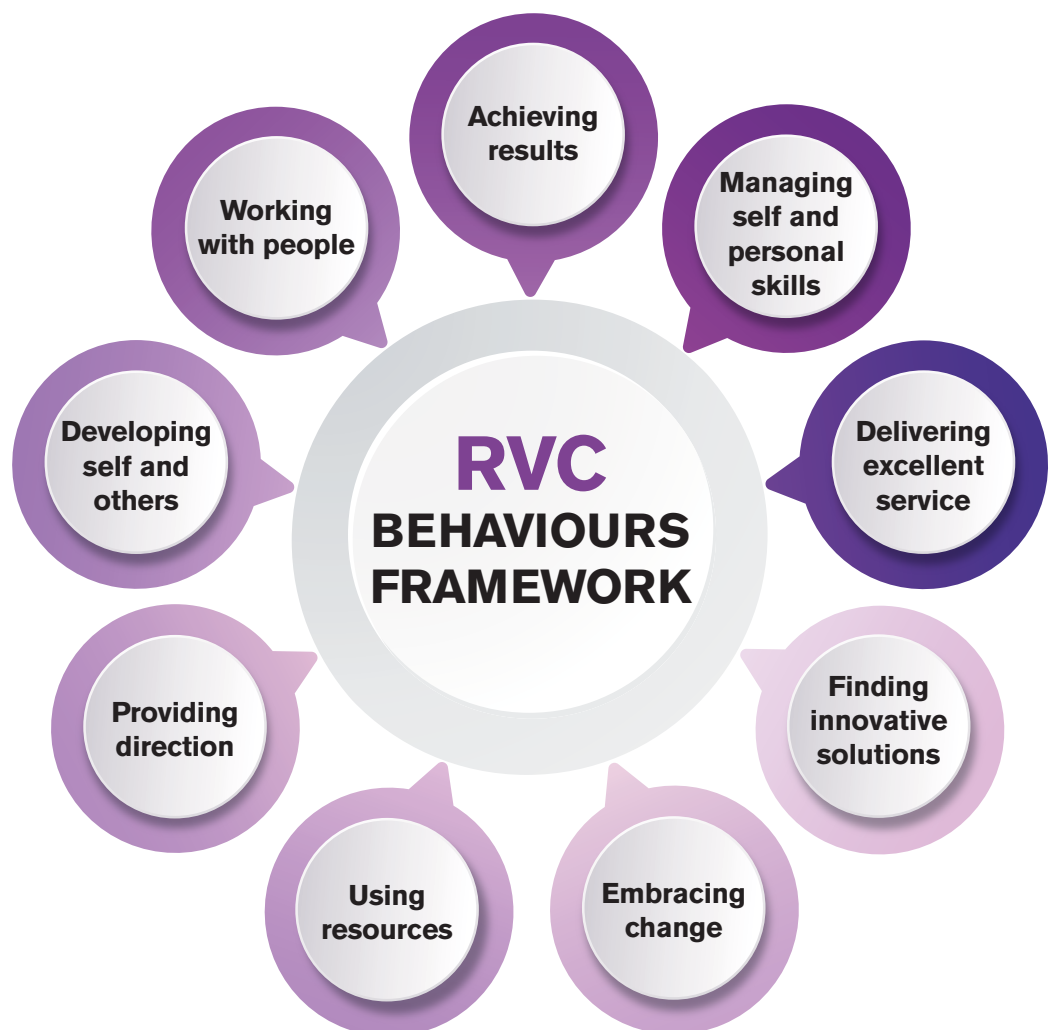
Above all, we will ensure that the RVC is managed in a financially sustainable manner. With three to five year budget horizons and targets for cash reserves that will allow us to adapt to the sea-changes that are occurring in the funding of Higher Education. Robust cost control, value for money and strategic procurement will be critical.

However, as our strategy makes clear, we must continue to innovate in this next phase of the RVC's history. The future demands not only that we augment our current income streams, but also that we develop new ones. We will continue to invest in our clinical operations, maximise the benefits of our restructured Professional Services Division, expand and improve our educational and research provision and implement the significant investment

in our facilities and our new approach to the provision of first-opinion veterinary experience.

Our charge is to continue to deliver this vision and we will do so by ensuring an enabling risk-management culture pervades our endeavours. In this way, the RVC will build on the strong foundations of the past 228 years as we embark on the next.

We will deliver our mission in a culture that is caring and compassionate and where our professionalism and our passion for advancing health and welfare through education, knowledge discovery and clinical service are obvious to all. Join us in making the vision a reality, share in our success and be part of the community that is the Royal Veterinary College.





### **LONDON CAMPUS**

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### **HERTFORDSHIRE CAMPUS**

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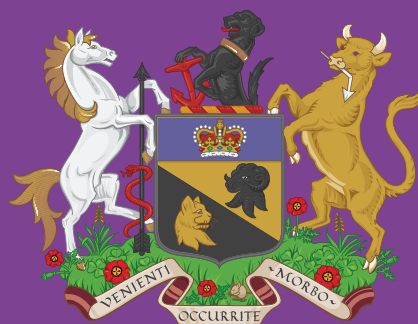




## **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

The RVC is committed to best practice in all aspects of corporate governance, and follows the Good Governance principles as defined in the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) Code of Governance and as expected by the our staff, our students, our clients and our regulators. The RVC is a registered higher education provider and an exempt charity regulated by the Office for Students.

Further details of our Corporate Governance arrangements can be found on our website at [www.rvc.ac.uk/governance](http://www.rvc.ac.uk/governance).



## ROYAL VETERINARY COLLEGE

Established in 1791, the RVC is the UK's longest standing veterinary college – with a proud heritage of innovation in veterinary, biological and biomedical science, clinical practice and education.

[www.rvc.ac.uk/strategicplan](http://www.rvc.ac.uk/strategicplan)