



Subject Benchmark Statement: Veterinary Nursing

The Basics

This summary is designed to provide a short and accessible overview of the Subject Benchmark Statement for Veterinary Nursing for students, employers and academics. It is not intended to replace or alter the Subject Benchmark Statement, which should be referred to in the design and approval of courses and when any further detail is required.

Subject Benchmark Statements describe the nature of study and the benchmark academic standards expected of graduates in specific subject areas, and in respect of particular qualifications. They provide a picture of what graduates in a particular subject might reasonably be expected to know, do and understand at the end of their course or programme.

Subject Benchmark Statements are presented in four sections. Section 1 outlines the contextual information - providing the operational landscape, and boundaries, of subject discipline. This includes consideration of the ways in which the discipline addresses wider social goals, specifically in relation to: equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI); the requirements of disabled students; education for sustainable development (ESD); and enterprise and entrepreneurship.

Section 2 covers distinctive features of the course, including curriculum design, partnership arrangements, flexibility of delivery, progression and ongoing monitoring processes. Section 3 explains any features relevant to teaching, learning and assessment activities for the subject. Section 4 describes the benchmark standards of achievement reached by all graduates with a bachelor's degree with honours in the subject, with some subjects also including achievement at master's level.



Why study a degree in Veterinary Nursing?

As a subject discipline, Veterinary Nursing provides a science-based degree with a strong vocational focus, which equips graduates with the skills and knowledge to be ready to undertake the role and apply to register with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) as a Registered Veterinary Nurse from the point of graduation.

Veterinary nurses aim to improve the health and welfare of animals in their care and enhance their quality of life while minimising pain and suffering. They provide a high standard of professional service and care, based on a sound knowledge of the patient's condition and its individual needs.



What are the main teaching and learning approaches in Veterinary Nursing?

Teaching and learning approaches develop student veterinary nursing knowledge and understanding across a range of patient species and subjects, dependant on their chosen pathway. Veterinary nursing students will develop a range of clinical, technical, personal, and professional skills and behaviours in both the classroom and veterinary practice settings.

The aim of student learning is a reflective and critical approach to the application of knowledge and skills. Students will develop the ability to learn independently, through a student-centred mode of learning and teaching, to foster a professional approach to lifelong learning.

Research and evidence-based practice will contribute to developing the knowledge and evidence base for the profession. Students will be able to critically appraise published research, implement relevant research findings into practice, and engage in research and knowledge exchange activities.



How are students assessed?

The assessment of Veterinary Nursing courses includes a mix of methods that are accessible to disabled students and students from varying educational and cultural backgrounds within different learning situations.

Assessment methods should test the wide range of knowledge and skills required by a Registered Veterinary Nurse and should help prepare students from day one in clinical practice. Formative assessment will allow for feedback on performance throughout the course, while summative assessments ensure that the students meet academic and professional requirements. Assessment of competence is determined in partnership between academic and clinical staff, ascertained during periods spent in a suitable clinical environment - which is an integral aspect of all RCVS accredited Licence to Practise courses.

Where individual students may be disadvantaged by particular assessment methods, reasonable adjustments to those assessments are considered in discussion with the student concerned, while ensuring fairness across the full cohort. The procedures used for assessment cover the subject knowledge (breadth and depth), abilities and skills developed through the degree course.



Benchmark Standards

The minimum threshold standards that a student will have demonstrated when they are awarded an honours degree in Veterinary Nursing are outlined on **page 13-20** of the Subject Benchmark Statement. The vast majority of students will perform significantly better than the minimum threshold standards. Each higher education provider has its own method of determining what appropriate evidence of this achievement will be and should refer to [Annex D in The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies](#). This Annex sets out common descriptions of the four main degree outcome classifications for bachelor's degrees with honours - 1st, 2.1, 2.2 and 3rd.

The full statement was developed by subject experts drawn from across the sector. Details of the Advisory Group can be found on **page 23** of the full Statement.

Read the full Subject Benchmark Statement

The [full Subject Benchmark Statement](#) is available on the QAA website.



Subject Benchmark Statements are published in QAA's capacity as a membership organisation on behalf of the higher education sector.

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Southgate House, Southgate Street, Gloucester GL1 1UB

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Tel: 01452 557000 Web: www.qaa.ac.uk