

Wednesday 12 August 2020



Veterinary Nursing Newsletter

Dear Centre,

Welcome to our newsletter containing important updates regarding our Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing qualifications.

Please forward this onto all staff involved in delivery and assessment, including Training Practice staff.

Quality assurance changes

We have now ceased to use our High Priority Qualifications team email address for Vet Nursing centres.

We will now use VeterinaryNursing@cityandguilds.com for all matters relating to quality assurance activities, OSCEs and the VN-PBA. This provides a single point of contact for centres and EQAs.

Currently, all EQA activities for Vet Nursing will continue remotely until further notice.

Vet Nursing Quality team

E: VeterinaryNursing@cityandguilds.com
T: 0300 303 5352 (Option 2, option 3)

Update on VN-Patient Based Assessment

City & Guilds remains committed to ensuring learners who intended to complete their OSCE assessments before 31 July are given the opportunity to undertake the VN-PBA.

We requested the RCVS extend the ability for candidates to take the alternative assessment (VN-PBA) beyond 31 July. However, were informed that a decision would not be reached until September. We therefore have no plans to extend the PBA any further.

We also requested the RCVS reconsider the requirement for the delivery of the PBA by two examiners. This would have allowed us to significantly increase capacity of the PBA and support your learners. The RCVS declined our request, citing that it was *"not possible to achieve sufficient reliability with this type of assessment methodology using only one examiner"*. We therefore continue as planned.

Updated timelines

We have revised our timeline for Phase 1 and Phase 2 delivery of the PBA which you can find on our website [here](#). Please make sure you review the new dates as some have changed. We have also confirmed the outstanding dates for Phase 2 and added provisional results dates for both phases.

We will do our best to stick to these dates, however they may be subject to further changes, dependent on circumstances outside of our control.

Evidence submission portal

It has not been easy finding a secure platform to operate the PBA at such short notice without significant investment or changes to existing systems. However, we are pleased to announce we will be using a version of our Learning Assistant portal for candidate case reports and other supplementary evidence. This will open to centres for Phase 1 on Friday 21 August 2020. You will receive your login details early morning of the Friday, with a copy of the portal guidance.

When you log in, you will need to upload the required evidence for each candidate. The case study must be uploaded as one document, and the supplementary evidence should be one piece of evidence per case study that is clearly labelled. Further guidance is available in our FAQs [here](#).

Please ensure all candidate evidence is uploaded by the published deadline, otherwise candidates will not be entered for the PBA. Our examiners will then access the candidate evidence via the portal.

The candidates entered on the portal will be accepted as the final confirmation of entry.

Assessment dates and times

We have now confirmed the provisional dates and times for Phase 1 assessment to all centres. If you have not responded to the email, please do so urgently. Unfortunately, we are unable to offer flexibility around available dates.

GoToMeeting

We will be using GoToMeeting to host the PBA discussions between our examiners and your candidates. The VN-PBA booking confirmation will include a unique link to the session which must be passed on to the relevant candidate. This will allow them to access their PBA session.

It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure the unique link is shared with the candidate at the earliest convenience, or no later than one week from the date of the PBA event. This will allow them to carry out the pre-checks in advance of attending their session.

Please note, no other notifications will be issued prior to this. Therefore, the candidate must be encouraged to note the PBA event date and time in their own personal calendar.

Sessions will be recorded, and candidates must ensure they have access to a suitable location for the assessment with a camera and stable internet connection. Identity checks will be performed at the start of each session using a valid photo ID (passport, driving licence or ID with 'PASS' logo). An environment check will be performed to confirm that the candidate is not accessing prohibited materials or support.

Covid-19 Hub

Don't forget we have a dedicated Covid-19 web page for Veterinary Nursing where we will continue to upload all materials for the PBA. This includes the timelines for Phase 1 and 2, centre documents and a list of FAQs. Click on the link below for more.

Covid-19 Veterinary Nursing Hub

Update on OSCE assessments

Over the past few weeks, City & Guilds has carefully reviewed our ability to deliver OSCEs over the coming months. Due to several factors and significant uncertainty, we made the difficult decision to cancel the September OSCE series.

In the anticipation that centres will wish to inform students of the alternatives, we are notifying you of our intention to form recognition agreements with alternative Awarding Organisations (VetSkill and CQ) which would allow candidates to complete the OSCE assessment with an alternate AO and then claim the result and overall qualification with City & Guilds.

We anticipate that this will be available for legacy (7457-03/13) and new (7457-33/43) qualifications across the Diploma. This will be in addition to the requirement for apprentices to complete the OSCE as part of the end-point assessment with an End-point Assessment Organisation.

Part of our rationale behind this decision is to support a flexible, coherent, and simple approach for mixed cohorts of learners. We also believe the other AOs offer a more adaptable approach to their OSCEs which would be better suited to your learners moving forward, especially following the delays from Covid-19.

We have already started discussions with VetSkill, CQ and the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS), to confirm how this will work and to ensure we remain compliant. We are working hard to ensure an agreement is in place later this year.

It is important to emphasise that these agreements are subject to approval from the RCVS and the regulator Ofqual.

Unfortunately, we cannot consider alternative recognition agreements, such as OSCEs carried out at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Further updates on the regulatory approval and centre guidance will be shared as soon as possible.

Covid safe OSCEs

As part of the planning for Covid safe OSCEs, we are working with our current hosting venues to identify suitable dates to run these events, in line with Government guidelines.

To minimise the risk to both candidates and our examiners, we will be offering a reduced number of entries per window, per location. This does mean that we are unable to provide the level of flexibility previously offered for the allocation of candidates to their nearest centres, within any given window.

We also recognise that candidates are spread across the UK which will bring additional challenges for travel arrangements, local lockdowns and last-minute changes to advice issued by the Government.

Guidance will be provided to centres later in the year on the requirements, including those for social distancing, appropriate PPE etc.

Provisional OSCE dates for 2020:

- **Thursday 29 October to Sunday 01 November**
(Results available on or before Monday 21 December 2020)
- **Friday 27 November to Sunday 6 December**
(Results available on or before Monday 11 January 2021)

Once dates are agreed and venues secured, we will notify centres and open for bookings on the Walled Garden.

OSCE learner priority

We recognise that both City & Guilds and centres have a duty to ensure candidates disadvantaged by Covid-19 can complete their assessments as soon as possible. Throughout this process, we have always strongly recommended centres encourage candidates enter the alternative assessment (PBA) wherever

possible. However, we recognise that this assessment is not for everyone.

We'd like to get your views on how we prioritise learners for the OSCE windows in October and November and have agreed with the BVNA that this can form part of the discussion at the next VN Educator Meeting on Tuesday 18 August. A representative from City & Guilds will be available during the session and will be happy to answer any other queries or concerns afterwards.

It's important to recognise that we still face significant challenges in delivering the OSCE to the volumes of learners required. We continue to do everything we can to allow maximum flexibility, but centres should recognise that we will have a significant backlog to clear.

OSCE Price increases

For several years, we have continued to run OSCEs at significant loss per learner, with only small increments to the fee since 2015. Due to Covid-19 and the additional financial burden placed on our organisation, we cannot continue to absorb these losses.

In addition, we also anticipate based on current learner volumes for the PBA, that we will make a loss delivering this mitigation approach in its current format.

We therefore need to inform you that we will be increasing our OSCE price from October 2020 as follows:

Series	Fee
October OSCE series	£286.82 per learner
November OSCE series	£286.82 per learner
2021 OSCE series	£304.70 per learner

It should be noted that the increase for October and November is at a level where City & Guilds still intends to make a marginal loss.

The price for the VN-PBA remains on the existing structure, as these learners would have intended to enter their OSCE in March or June:

Series	Fee
VN-PBA Phase 1	£225.70 per learner
VN-PBA Phase 2	£225.70 per learner

Training Practices (TPs), Clinical Coaches (CCs) and Assessment Sites

As an approved City & Guilds centre to deliver Veterinary Nursing qualifications (7457) you are required to update our records periodically of all information regarding Training Practices (TPs), Clinical Coaches (CCs) and Assessment Sites to meet with City & Guilds and RCVS requirements. This log consists of 3 tabs; Contact Details, Assessment Sites and TP and CC Log.

Centre details

This tab needs to be completed with the details and contact information for the centre's Quality Contact and the nominated Head of Centre for Vet Nursing. This is the person that the RCVS and City & Guilds will correspond with for the qualification so this information must be accurate. It is acceptable for the centre's nominated Head of Centre and Quality Contact to be the same person but both sections will need to be completed in full.

Assessment sites

The assessment site log must record **all** locations, other than the TPs, where the 7457 Veterinary Nursing qualification is delivered and/or assessed. If the main centre address is also a location where the qualification is delivered, then this will need to be recorded in the section as an assessment site.

We provide this information directly to the RCVS. It must be accurate and include **all** locations where delivery and/or assessment takes place.

TP and CC Log

This tab must include the details of the TPs and CCs associated with your centre in relation to the 7457 Veterinary Nursing qualification.

Please find the link to the template form [here](#). All tabs must be completed in full. Please note that this is an RCVS and City & Guilds requirement and should this information not be received it may affect your qualification approval status.

Please return this information to VeterinaryNursing@cityandguilds.com by **Friday 2 October 2020**.

Vet Nursing Quality team | Quality Delivery

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A City & Guilds Group Collaboration