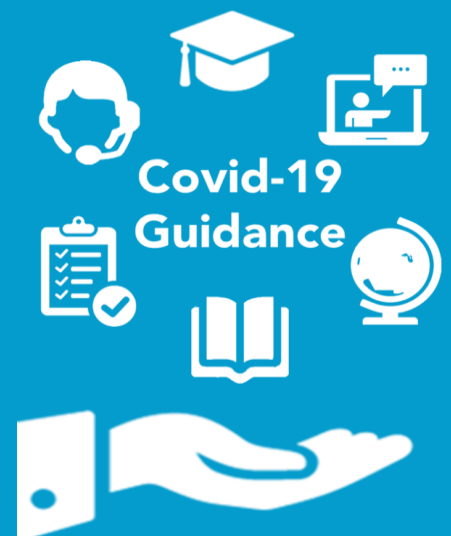


Veterinary Nursing Patient-based Assessment (VN-PBA) Examiner Standardisation

Update 3, 20.11.2020



Standardisation

The VN-PBA has been designed specifically by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) as an alternative examination to the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) to be used during the Covid-19 pandemic by an Awarding Organisation (AO).

Standardisation will be provided in the form of a rolling document following trends and disparities in examiner techniques.

Individual feedback will be provided via documents IQA process available on the Examiner Document Library.

Contact details

Should you have any questions, please contact our Lead IQA:

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20.11.2020 Standardisation points

Firstly, thank you for continuing to dedicate your time to completing the VN-PBAs and allowing candidates the opportunity to complete their qualification.

Kelly McGrath (IQA)

Standardisation activity findings

Examiner reflection on the recorded VN-PBA identified some common areas that are considered to be good practice:

Request a brief introduction to the cases

Use the name of the animal when selecting the case

Check the lighting and visual appearance before the beginning of the VN-PBA

The last section of the standardisation activity asked you to grade both domains three and five in relation to laboratory techniques. Please compare your given grades to the table below.

Domain	Grade	Grading parameter
3 - Clinical and Procedural Skills	Good	The evidence provided is deemed to be a clear 'Good'
5 - Health and Safety	Good	This domain was borderline 'Acceptable' and due to this those that gave this grade are still deemed within tolerance for this activity.

Setting up for a VN-PBA

There are still a few incidents of unclear audio quality within the samples viewed. Please could you ensure that you are doing everything that you can to provide a clear audio/connection for the candidate.

To prevent audio feedback, it is suggested that examiner two mutes their device and that headphones should be available to use if required.

Questioning type

When using probing questions, particularly for those candidates that are not forthcoming with explanations, please ensure that you are conscious not to fall into asking recall questions e.g. Can you give me an example of schedule two drugs?

Examiner Recording Forms

Please ensure that you are using the most up-to-date copy of the examiner recording forms as this prevents errors when processing results. In addition to this, prior to uploading the forms please check that a global score has been allocated and that all skills within each domain contain a grade.

As a reminder, each examiner has 3 calendar days from the date of the VN-PBA to upload their recording forms, this is to allow a quick turnaround of IQA and processing of results.

The below table shows the timescales we are working to for release of candidate results for Phase 2. If we do not have **all forms** submitted for candidates within each window, we will be unable to carry out this process within these timescales.

Phase/Batch	PBA date	Deadline for all IQA / tolerance checks	Internal results finalised	Target results to Walled Garden
P2 B1	02.11.20 – 13.11.20	19.11.20	23.11.20	25.11.20
P2 B2	14.11.20 – 27.11.20	03.12.20	07.12.20	09.12.20
P2 B3	28.11.20 – 11.12.20	17.12.20	21.12.20	23.12.20
P2 B4	12.12.20 – 18.12.20	04.01.21	11.01.21	13.01.21

Important: Any missing forms will result in us not being able to release results for all candidates within the window. Due to tight turnaround times, this will mean all their results will be added to the subsequent batch.

16.10.2020 Standardisation points

Submission of recording forms to QDP required

Please ensure that all PBA documents are uploaded within the 3-day window following PBA completion. There have been many candidates missing documents from September PBAs, and this has been seen again in the October sittings.

Moving into Phase 2 please ensure that documents are uploaded within the specified timeframes to ensure the Quality Assurance process can be carried out effectively and learner results can be released as per published timescales.

Time allowance

The VNPBA is designed to last 45 mins, there is a leeway of +/- 10% which has been agreed with the RCVS. With this in mind the total number of minutes that evidence can be collected for should not exceed 50 minutes.

Prior to planning PBA questions please ensure that you take into account any reasonable adjustments that may have been granted to the learner.

If you or the candidate experience technical difficulties which may include audio delay and/or visual distortion, then the accumulative time wasted can be added at the end of the PBA. There have been many occasions where the speaker feedback through multiple microphones has caused disruption and made the communication between examiner 1 and the candidate unclear. Please have headphones to hand as this and examiner 2 muting themselves can make a big difference.

VN PBA assessment/recording quality

To enable us to respond to any candidate concerns around quality of assessment communication, can we please request that in the 'Overall Summary' area of the 'Recording form' a summary of audio and visual assessment quality is captured and also whether you feel that this affected evidence gathering or candidate performance.

Document validity

There have been a couple of occasions where candidates have uploaded documents which have been questioned by the examiner for validity. When reviewing candidate supplementary evidence please check for omitted client information as well as redacted information, as this may be a sign that the document was created for the purpose of the PBA rather than original case documentation.

As ever, please use your professional judgement and contact the IQA who will check the document if you have any concerns.

Question preparation and construct irrelevant variance

For quality assurance purposes please ensure that all questions prepared are fully referenced to the DOS and you are mindful that further probing questions are asked in line with DOS application of knowledge. There have been a few occasions where particularly those questions used to probe candidate understanding have become unrelated/minimally related to the DOS.

Mandatory questions

If the evidence provided by the candidate includes an x-ray then this x-ray must be used for appraisal. In instances where the candidate has provided x-rays which are unclear or have poor resolution, please use the most appropriate bank x-ray image.

If the candidate has not provided an x-ray as part of their evidence, then a City & Guilds bank x-ray must be used and linked as closely as possible to one of the candidate's case studies.

When using instrument bank images examiners should again, where possible, closely link the chosen image to one of the candidate's provided case studies.

If the candidate states that the image is unclear, please ask them whether they would like examiner 2 to zoom in on any area of the instrument.

Setting up for a VNPBA

To enable the candidate to fully communicate during the assessment please ensure that both the visual and audio communication is clear.

To prevent audio feedback, it is suggested that headphones should be worn by examiners.

To ensure a clear audio connection, examiners should ensure that they are able to receive a stable WIFI or ethernet connection.

To ensure a clear visual for the candidate examiners should prepare the correct lighting in front of them, as lighting from behind creates a shadow on the face of the examiner.

Please remember that the expected appearance of an examiner is 'Business casual'.

GDPR – Data protection

There have been occasions where despite the GDPR checks from both the clinical coach and centre staff, GDPR breaches within SVN submission documents are still reaching examiners. Centres are now more aware of the need to thoroughly check documents prior to submission as this has caused a number of short notice PBA cancellations.

All documents must be reviewed by examiner 1 for personal/sensitive data. It has become apparent that during document scanning the underlying ink can become visible. **It has been decided that if the SVN has used thick black markers to redact the information then this, for Phase 1, is a sufficient attempt to redact personal/sensitive data and can be accepted.** This will, however, change for Phase 2 which will focus acceptance on the clear redaction of data.

Where an examiner identifies a breach in GDPR in the evidence provided, the following action will then be taken by City & Guilds:

1. The examiner must contact City & Guilds to notify us of the potential breach, informing us of the evidence we need to review.
2. A member of the City & Guilds team will check the evidence to confirm whether there has been a breach. Where confirmed, City and Guilds will then cancel the PBA.

Gaps in learner evidence

Where an SVN has not fully covered the DOS in the evidence provided, the examiner should choose to explore these areas further through questioning. Whilst the missing DOS cannot be signed off with NPL evidence, it is important that the examiner checks that the SVN competency shows a sufficient practical application of those DOS within the NPL logs.

Where learners have not included DOS evidence, examiners must link the questions to the most appropriate case study, for example, where learners have not included barrier nursing specifically but have identified the application of infection control then examiners should probe this particular case. If examiners have chosen cases which cover the majority of the DOS gaps, it is acceptable for examiners to ask one or two questions about another case without having to ask the learner to fully recap the case.

e.g. "In the case where you stated that you carried out infection control processes, could you tell me what you would have done differently if the patient required barrier nursing?"

Mandatory questions

If the evidence provided by the SVN includes an x-ray, then this x-ray must be used for appraisal. If the SVN has not provided an x-ray as part of their evidence then a City & Guilds bank x-ray must be used and linked as closely as possible to one of the SVN's case studies.

When using instrument bank images examiners should again, where possible, closely link the chosen image to one of the SVN's provided case studies.

Questioning type

The purpose of the professional discussion is to understand what an SVN has done and why. This allows you as an examiner to make a professional judgement on whether the SVN is practically competent. Examiners must not ask questions on theory specifics e.g. legislation dates or changes.

Examiner rapport

This is a new assessment which SVN's have not been able to fully train for and this can cause stress and increase anxiety, which in turn can affect their ability to recall information and therefore answer questions. It is important that as an examiner you support the SVN during the assessment, whilst not giving an indication of how you feel they have performed.

It is important to try and create a warm and interactive atmosphere. If an SVN becomes stuck on a question, you can ask them if they would like you to rephrase the question or return to the topic later in the discussion.

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