

Programme Specification and Curriculum Map

Programme Specification:



**Middlesex
University**

1. Programme title	Veterinary Nursing
2. Awarding institution	Middlesex University
3. Teaching institution	Middlesex University/ College of Animal Welfare
4. Programme accredited by	Middlesex University
5. Final qualification	BSc (Hons) Veterinary Nursing
6. Academic Year	September 2008
7. Language of study	English
8. Mode of study	Full time

9. Criteria for admission to the Programme

Admissions will be responsible for ensuring that prospective students meet the RCVS Pre-entry requirements.

All applicants must meet the minimum student veterinary nurse enrolment requirements as required from time to time by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS).

Currently the RCVS require a minimum of 5 GCSEs grades A to C in English Language, mathematics, one science plus two other subjects.

Equivalent subjects will be considered on a case by case basis.

In addition to meeting the RCVS minimum student veterinary nurse enrolment requirements applicants must also meet the University's minimum entry requirements for the programme. These are:

Two A levels at grade C or above; one of which is expected to be Biology although another science subject such as Chemistry would be favourably considered. These should equate to 240 UCAS tariff points, of which 160 tariff points must come from two 6 unit awards; or

Five C's at Scottish Highers to include English, mathematics and a science; or

Five C's at Irish Higher, to include English, mathematics and a science; or

BTEC National Diploma in a science subject at Distinction: Distinction: Distinction; or

SQA Higher national Diploma; or

Vocational Double award – 160 tariff points; or International Baccalaureate - minimum of 28 points

For more information on UCAS tariffs please refer to the UCAS website at www.ucas.com.

Equivalent qualifications to any of the above will be considered.

Prospective applicants who are over 21 years of age and meet the minimum RCVS entry requirements but do not hold further qualifications but who can show high levels of ability and experience within the veterinary care sector, are also invited to apply.

International students are most welcome. Applicants holding foreign qualifications are required to have proof of competence in the English Language by holding either the ESOL qualification or IELTS at a minimum score of 7.0 plus equivalent qualifications in order to meet the RCVS minimum enrolment requirements for student veterinary nurses plus the University's programme entry requirements. All offers made to overseas applicants are made subject to acceptance by the RCVS at the time of enrolment as a RCVS student veterinary nurse.

All applications are considered on their individual merits.

Candidates are required to have completed a minimum of two weeks work experience in a veterinary practice before commencing the programme. Written references will be required.

Admission Criteria – Top Up Pathway

All Top Up students must either be RCVS Listed or Registered Veterinary Nurses at the time of commencing the programme. Students currently undertaking foundation degrees or Higher National Diplomas in veterinary nursing are also welcome to apply.

Top Up students will undertake an individualised degree programme progressing from their existing veterinary nursing qualification by selecting modules that will allow them to progress from level 1 to level 3.

Not all students will be required to take all modules. The choice of modules to be taken will depend on when the RCVS qualification was achieved and the professional experience gained since qualification.

Students are awarded credits for their prior accredited education and/or experience which may result in certain module exemptions. Overall, in order to achieve a BSc degree in veterinary nursing the student must be able to present, for the degree to be awarded, a total of 360 credits from the completed programme modules and some from accredited prior learning eg the VN qualification; VN Diploma, and other examples such as a Certificate in Management, a degree in animal science, a teaching qualification, etc.

Veterinary Nurses who hold the RCVS veterinary nurse certificate will be automatically accredited with 120 credits at level 1. Veterinary Nurses who also hold a VN Diploma awarded by the RCVS will also receive 60 credits at Level 2 making a total of 180 credits. Experienced veterinary nurses may seek accreditation of prior and work based learning. The maximum credit awarded cannot exceed 180 credits for one single student.

10. Educational aims of the programme

The broad aims of the programme reflect both its academic and professional nature that will equip graduates for employment as Veterinary Nurses. At the end of the programme students will be:

- Safe, competent, reflective veterinary nurses who will be eligible for entry onto the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons' Register of Veterinary Nurses.
- Critical thinking individuals who can enhance the standing of the Veterinary Nursing Profession by subject-specific education to BSc (Hons) level.

The programme aims to enable the student to:

- Develop analytical and problem-solving approaches to the holistic assessment, planning and implementation of veterinary nursing care illustrating understanding of the evidence informing the care of a range of species
- Demonstrate an array of practical skills and techniques required in the implementation of veterinary nursing care
- Practice in a range of veterinary setting
- Become a reflective practitioner
- Develop the skills required for autonomous practice, decision making and team working in a veterinary environment
- Demonstrate competency in line with the LANTRA Veterinary Nurse 2006 Occupational Standards for entry to the List as a Veterinary Nurse
- Engage with life-long learning, develop transferable skills to enhance their Veterinary nursing role and maintain their continued personal and professional development

11. Programme outcomes* - the programme offers opportunities for students to achieve and demonstrate the following learning outcomes. The highest level at which these programme outcomes are to be achieved by all graduates is shown in the curriculum map section.

A. Knowledge and understanding

On completion of this programme the successful student will have knowledge and understanding of :

1. Theoretical concepts underpinning professional Veterinary Nursing practice and nursing knowledge
2. Anatomical, biomedical and physiological principles related to animal health and caring
3. Research processes and evidence based practice
4. Current issues in Veterinary Nursing and the requirements of the professional role of the nurse
5. Specialist areas of Veterinary Nursing
6. Major issues affecting veterinary practice
7. Leadership skills

Teaching/learning methods

Students learn knowledge and understanding through doing, reading, listening, acting, constructing presenting and evaluating own methods of study e.g. learning styles

Assessment

Students' knowledge and understanding is assessed by coursework, unseen exam, work report, reflective journal, performance, dissertation and peer review

B. Cognitive (thinking) skills

Teaching/learning methods

Students learn cognitive skills through

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professional situations and problems 2. Value the need for an holistic approach to nursing practice 3. Identify and classify principles and ideas in new texts and situations 4. Integrate concepts in support of a well structured argument 5. Integrate theory with professional practice 6. Evaluate theory, process, solutions and outcomes critically and effectively 7. Application of appropriate knowledge and skills; at the threshold of professional competence 	<p>application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation and problem solving</p> <p>Assessment Students' cognitive skills are assessed by: coursework, unseen exam, work report, reflective journal, performance, dissertation and peer review</p>
<p>C. Practical skills</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Selection of appropriate Veterinary Nursing interventions 2. Analysis and interpretation of data 3. Demonstrate leadership in tackling and solving problems 4. Competently teach and assess junior students in basic care 5. Competently demonstrate a repertoire of nursing skills (ref NVQ level 2 & 3 RCVS VN Standards) 6. Communicate effectively with clients, colleagues and others 	<p>Teaching/learning methods Students learn practical skills through doing, acting, constructing and presenting</p> <p>Assessment Students' practical skills are assessed by: external practical examination, observation, internal verification, peer review</p>
<p>D.4. Graduate skills On completion of this programme, the successful student will be able to demonstrate a range of graduate skills including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communication 2. Teamwork 3. Personal and Career Development 4. Effective Learning 5. Information Technology 6. Numeracy 	<p>Teaching/learning methods Students have a structured approach to the development of graduate and transferable skills throughout their programme, with transferable skills applied and implicit modules within VET 1602 Introduction to Professional Practice, VET 1603 Nursing Theory and HSS 2222 Approaches to Health and Social Care Research</p> <p>Assessment Assessed formatively and summatively using a variety of methods including portfolio development, presentations, coursework, practice assessment, drug calculations</p>

12. Programme structure and requirements, levels, modules, credits and qualifications

12.1 Overall structure of the programme

This course is studied over four years full time. 50% is University based and 50% is work based in Veterinary Practice.

Study progresses through three levels. The programme comprising 3 or 4 modules per year, commencing in September each year. Each module has a credit value of 30 credits (with the exception of double weighted 60 credit modules). A module represents approximately 300 hours of student learning, endeavour and assessment including approximately 60 hours direct classroom contact. Modules are accessed at three levels, levels 1, 2 & 3, 120 credits must be gained at each level.

The programme may be accessed by Veterinary Nurses at Certificate level, who “Top up” with 120 level 1, 120 level 2 and 120 level 3 credits; or by Veterinary Nurses with a Diploma in Surgical Nursing who “Top up” with 60 level 2 and 120 level 3 credits. Students with professional registration accessing the programme to “Top up” to degree level may access the programme in years 2, 3 or 4 on a part-time or full-time basis. Full-time requires the student to undertake 120 credits per year or part-time 30 credits per year.

The modular structure of the programme for each of the above routes to the BSc (Hons) Nursing award is detailed overleaf.

Each module has a credit value of 30 credits, although some of the practice modules may carry a larger credit value. The programme structure for each year is published in the Programme Handbook. A Module Handbook is issued at the beginning of each module.

The programme is made up of core and elective modules. Core modules are those modules which are compulsory and must be studied, whilst the elective modules may be studied as a free choice over which the student has autonomy. Elective modules provide an opportunity for students to study a subject that interests them and it may or may not be connected with their programme.

An innovative feature of the course is the approach to shared learning with different health professionals, including veterinary medicine, nursing and biomedical sciences. A distinctive feature of the course is the significant period of clinical practice, designed to assist in developing and demonstrating Veterinary Nursing clinical skills.

There are full-time and part-time step off points which are clearly identified within the programme handbook. Both the full-time and Top Up pathway have been clearly outlined in the handbook with the appropriate practice arrangements for students to gain practical experience.

Compensation: Students cannot be compensated for any practice related or science based module.

The professional body (Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons) requires an element of unseen examination for all modules where the VN Syllabus/Occupational Standards are to be assessed. This has been included with the assessment strategy (by ensuring that there is either an unseen examination or OSCE ((Objective Structured Clinical Examination)) style assessment as part of the summative assessment) for all Veterinary Nurse and Science related modules.

Transferable Skills have been included within the Level 1 modules Introduction to Professional Practice and Veterinary Nursing Theory. Further development of these skills occurs in HSS 2222 Approaches to Health and Social Care Research and Preparation for Professional Practice VET 3612.

12.2 Levels and modules. This section should contain a more detailed description level-by-level of the programme structure, modules and credits. All modules should be categorised as compulsory or optional.

Level 1		
COMPULSORY	OPTIONAL	PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS
Students must take all of the following: VET 1600 Animal Science I VET 1601 Veterinary Nursing Theory VET 1602 Introduction to Professional Practice VET 1603 Veterinary Nursing Practice		

Level 2		
COMPULSORY	OPTIONAL	PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS
Students must take all of the following: VET 2603 Animal Science II VET 2600 Veterinary Pathology VET 2601 Pharmacology for Nursing Practice HSS 2222 Approaches to Health & Social Care Research		

Level 3		
COMPULSORY	OPTIONAL	PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS
<p>Students must take all of the following:</p> <p>VET 3600 Surgical Nursing</p> <p>VET 3601 Infection & Immunity</p> <p>VET 3611 Reflection on Professional Issues in Veterinary Nursing</p> <p>VET 3610 Management & Business</p> <p>HSS 3330 Proposition Module</p> <p>VET 3612 Preparation for Professional Practice</p>	<p>Students must also choose at least one from the following:</p> <p>Elective Modules</p> <p>Equine Nursing VET 3603</p> <p>Specialist Surgical Nursing VET 3606</p> <p>Animal Behaviour & Training VET 3605</p> <p>Nursing Exotics & Wildlife VET 3604</p>	

12.3 Non-compensatory modules. Modules may additionally be designated non-compensatory.	
Module level	Module code
1	VET 1600 Animal Science I
1	VET 1601 Veterinary Nursing Theory
1	VET 1602 Introduction to Professional Practice
1	VET 1603 Veterinary Nursing Practice
2	VET 2600 Veterinary Pathology
2	VET 2601 Pharmacology for Nursing Practice
2	VET 2603 Animal Science II
3	VET 3600 Surgical Nursing
3	VET 3601 Infection & Immunity
3	VET 3610 Management & Business
3	VET 3612 Preparation for Professional Practice

14. Information about assessment regulations

Assessment schedules and programme regulations will be published in the Programme Handbook, so that the student has a clear indication of the assessment criteria and retrieval mechanisms.

For some modules, students will be taught with others from a range of different programmes so that they will gain a broader experience of student life, although for tutorials they will be in smaller, vocationally specific groups. They will also be encouraged to set up small discipline-specific groups for peer support and to study and learn from each other.

Students will be eligible for entry onto the professional register of Veterinary Nurses, held by the RCVS, on successful completion of their programme which incorporates the Level 2 and 3 2006 VN Occupational Standards, the RCVS VN portfolio and the required practice hours of 2450 over 70 weeks.

Where there is more than one component to a module assessment, students are required to achieve a Grade 16 or above in each component in order to pass the module.

In order to progress to each year, students must meet the attendance requirements of the programme, and students accumulating sickness or absence exceeding 10 days per year may be discontinued or deferred.

Students will not normally be able to self defer or proceed without having passed each of the practice components of the programme (i.e. clinical modules cannot be compensated).

The students will be required to keep their RCVS Veterinary Nursing Portfolio and will be encouraged to identify areas for further learning and personal development. It will also be emphasised to students that their education does not end at graduation but that professional development must be ongoing. With effect from September 2007 Registered Veterinary Nurses will be required to complete 45 hours CPD over three years.

Students will have the opportunity to be involved with programme developments. Each module leader will obtain written feedback from students through module evaluation. The Board of Studies Committee will enable students to have their views heard and there will be student representation on the Board.

Successful completion of a portfolio of evidence is a pre-requisite for entry into subsequent practice modules at a point in the programme when resit results will be available, thereby affording students the opportunity for one resit of each examination while continuing on their programme of study. It should be noted that, while the professional qualifications are at Levels 2 & 3, the modules in which the content is embedded are delivered and assessed at the level of study indicated by the first number of the module code.

The Veterinary Nurse Level 2 & 3 Occupational Standards will be assessed during practice placements, using the Candidate Portfolio, the Candidate Clinical Tool and by independent (OSCE style) assessments carried out in practice based modules. This will be regularly reviewed by the Placement Officer (Internal Verifier) and during independent assessments organised by the Practical Skills Instructor.

15. Placement opportunities, requirements and support (if applicable)

Student Support in Practice Placements - Placement Officer

A veterinary nurse lecturer from The College of Animal Welfare, who holds the Internal Verifier TDLB D34 or V1 qualification, will fulfil a number of key functions in supporting the students' educational experience in practice. They will:

- Provide support and advice to Assessors in carrying out their role;
- Ensure Assessors are familiar with the programme, providing updates as necessary;
- Ensure Assessors understand their role in supervision of the students at the different stages of the programme;
- Provide an initial point of contact within the programme, dealing with specific questions or difficulties relating to the programme;
- Carry out internal verification of assessment.
- Visit the student at least once during each placement block.

Each student will be supported by a clinical assessor in the practice (A Listed Veterinary Nurse or Veterinary Surgeon who holds either the Assessor Award D32/33 or A1 unit).

16. Future careers: how the programme supports graduates' future career development (if applicable)

On successful completion of the programme students are eligible to enter on to the Professional Register for Veterinary Nurses maintained by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. They must have completed 2450 practice hours over a period of 70 weeks in addition to completing their course.

17. Specialised support for learning (if applicable)

Students will have access to the full range of Student Support Services of the University. These include: student counselling, Students' Union, University Chaplaincy, disabilities and special needs services, English Language and Learning Centre, sports and recreation facilities, Accommodation Office, Occupational Health Service, careers advice and International Office.

Each student will have a personal tutor allocated to them for their 4 year programme. They will support them with their academic studies and their portfolio development.

The Programme Leader will maintain a watching brief regarding the support of the students and deal with problems, should they arise. This mechanism will allow for proactivity rather than reactivity, and facilitate the early detection of potential/actual problems.

18. JACS code (or other relevant coding system)

(Programme Code: D1B7 BSc/VNurs)

19. Relevant QAA subject benchmark group(s)

Nursing/Veterinary Nursing

20. Reference points

On successful completion of the BSc (Hons) Veterinary Nursing Programme, students will have completed all of the expected learning outcomes, embracing the QAAS 2000 and incorporating the four areas of skills development:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Employability skills, including key skills, lifelong learning and reflection skills
- Higher cognitive skills, including problem solving
- Veterinary Nursing clinical skills

Learning activities are planned to facilitate the development of all of the skills on an incremental basis. The RCVS VN Professional Syllabus and LANTRA Occupational Standards 2006, set out the levels of practical competence and theoretical knowledge necessary to practice as a qualified veterinary nurse. Students who have reached this standard, and who have successfully completed the necessary 2450 practice hours and able to evidence the occupational standards at Level 2 and 3, will be eligible to enter the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons' Register of Veterinary Nurses.

The programme aims will be achieved by progression through the programme of modules, which offer theory and practice modules in a progressive, cumulative and systematic manner.

Documents which have informed this programme include the:

- RCVS VN 2006 Syllabus, which has been reviewed and updated since the programme was last re-validated in 2003
- 2006 LANTRA VN Occupational Standards
- Benner Assessment Tool
- Schools Assessment Policy
- Collaborative Charter
- Middlesex University QAAS Procedures Handbook, London MU
- Middlesex University Guide and Regulations, London MU
- Subject Benchmark Statements (2005), HE Institutions
- University Student Charter
- Middlesex University and School (HSS) Learning and Teaching Policy and Strategy
- Middlesex University Regulations

The programme specification is a means of providing information on the programme for prospective students. In designing this programme, challenges were encountered in devising a module framework which meets the University academic requirements and also those of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. The RCVS currently has a professional requirement of 2450 practice hours over 70 weeks. Several practice modules have been included in the programme structure to accommodate the practice hours.

21. Other information

Students who do not fulfil the RCVS VN requirements will be awarded a BSc in Animal Health.

Please note: this specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information can be found in the student programme handbook and the University Regulations.