

Candidate Brief



Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons

2023 and 2024 Appointments

Veterinary Nurse Council (VNC)

2 Lay Member Vacancies

1 for 2023

1 for 2024

May 2023

Managing Director

Sarah Thewlis

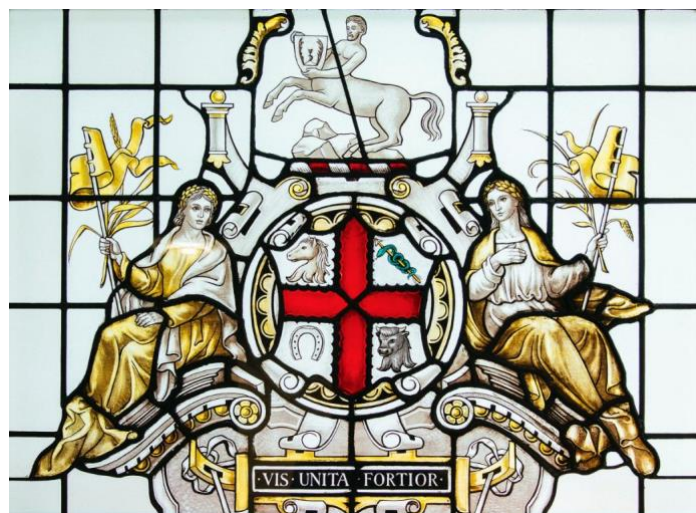
sat@thewlisgraham.com

Contents

1. Letter from Matt Rendle, Chair of VN Council
2. About the RCVS and the Veterinary Nurses committees
3. Person Specification
4. Conflicts of Interest
5. Eligibility
6. Remuneration: Loss of Earnings and Expenses
7. Timeline, Application Process and How to apply
8. Diversity Monitoring

Annex A: The Seven Principles of Public Life

Annex B: Code of Conduct for Council Members



Welcome from Matt Rendle Chair of VN Council



Dear Candidate,

I am delighted that you have expressed an interest in applying to be a lay member on the Veterinary Nurses Council of the RCVS. This is a very exciting opportunity to help support us in our long-term commitment to veterinary care.

The work of this Council is of incredible importance to the College. The roles of members of the Council include: setting standards for the training and education of persons wishing to be entered in the register of veterinary nurses, setting requirements in relation to registration and conduct of veterinary nurses and recommending to RCVS Council amendments to registration, discipline and conduct rules. This Council normally meets four times per year, in February, May, September and November.

Veterinary Nurses Council is also responsible for agreeing the Strategic Plan and recommending a budget and level of fees to the Finance and Resource Committee. They elect the Chair and Vice Chair, along with determining the composition of committees. Critically they must act in accordance with the public service principles set out in the Nolan Committee's First Report on Standards in Public Life, which include selflessness (acting solely in the public interest), integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

We are looking for people with relevant experience at a senior level, e.g., board level or equivalent. You must have understanding and knowledge of corporate governance, strategy and policy development, risk management and financial controls. Candidates will need to provide evidence in their application form of relevant knowledge and experience.

If this is an opportunity that appeals to you and you believe you have the required skills and knowledge plus commitment to the Nolan Committee's principles, we would very much like to hear from you.

For a confidential conversation with Thewlis Graham Associates who are managing the process, please contact Sarah Thewlis, Managing Director on 0207 850 4781 or email applications@thewlisgraham.com. Sarah will be happy to discuss this opportunity with you and answer any questions you may have.

Matt Rendle

Chair of VN Council

2. About the RCVS and the Veterinary Nurse Council and Committees

The RCVS was established in 1844 by Royal Charter to be the governing body of the veterinary profession. Its statutory duties are currently laid out in the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966. The College safeguards the interests of the public and animals by ensuring that only those registered can carry out acts of veterinary surgery.

We aim to enhance society through improved animal health and welfare. We do this by setting, upholding and advancing the educational, ethical and clinical standards of veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses.

The RCVS is an organisation of two parts:

A regulator,

with responsibilities set out in the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966:

- To maintain a Register of Veterinary Surgeons entitled to practice in the UK
- To regulate veterinary education and the standards required for inclusion on the Register
- To regulate professional conduct by producing advice, investigating concerns, and potentially removing names from the Register

A Royal College, with powers under the Royal Charter of 1844 and the Supplemental Charter of 2015:

- To award postgraduate qualifications, including Fellowships and Certificates
- To maintain a list of veterinary surgeons who are RCVS Specialists
- To inspect and accredit practice standards in accordance with the voluntary Practice Standards Scheme
- To support RCVS Knowledge and the development of veterinary science
- To provide a source of information and opinion on relevant veterinary matters.

In addition, we also:

- Register veterinary practice premises where veterinary medicines are stored or supplied, on behalf of the Veterinary Medicines Directorate
- Maintain a list of approved riding establishment inspectors



RCVS Knowledge

There is also a RCVS Charitable Trust, RCVS Knowledge, which operates as a separate charity established to promote and advance the study and practice of the art and science of veterinary surgery and medicine, by providing the RCVS Library and Information Service and a range of grants largely to support educational and research activities. <https://knowledge.rcvs.org.uk/home/>

Strategic Plan 2020-2025

The College has now developed its Strategic Plan for 2020-2025, which includes four ambitious themes: clarity, compassion, courage and conviction. These provide a structure via which the College will continue to change and develop, leading towards a vision that the RCVS will be a compassionate and proactive regulator, supporting confident veterinary professionals of which the UK can be proud.

The Strategic Plan was developed throughout the course of 2019 with input from stakeholders and the RCVS and VN Councils, key committees and College staff.

Publications

We keep in touch with veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses through a range of publications, including *RCVS News* and the annual report (*RCVS Review* and *RCVS Facts*).

From time to time, we also publish surveys and reports. All of these can be downloaded for free from our website – including archive copies from the past five years.

You can view these here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/news-and-views/publications/>

RCVS Council

Currently there are 34 members on RCVS Council: 18 elected members (all veterinary surgeons), one member appointed by each university with a veterinary school (Bristol, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool, London, Nottingham and Surrey), six appointed lay members and two appointed veterinary nurse members.

Further information on Council meetings can be found here:

<https://www.rcvs.org.uk/who-we-are/rcvs-council/council-meetings/>

RCVS Veterinary Nurses Council

The RCVS Veterinary Nurses Council was established in 2002 and replaced the Veterinary Nurses Committee. It has overall responsibility for all matters concerning veterinary nurse training, post qualification awards and the registration of qualified veterinary nurses. The Council comprise six elected and two

appointed veterinary nurses, two appointed veterinary surgeons (from RCVS Council) and four appointed lay members.

The full terms of reference can be found later on in this document.

VN Council meeting information can be found here: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/who-we-are/vn-council/vncouncil-meetings/>

There are at least four VN Council meetings per year, plus RCVS Day (our AGM and awards ceremony). Additional Council meetings may be called.

VN Council meetings are generally held in February, May, September and November. RCVS Day is generally the first or second Friday of July.

The next two VN Council meetings will take place on:

Wednesday 13 September 2023

Wednesday 15 November 2020 online

The meeting dates for 2024 have yet to be announced.

VN Council meetings often involve both a morning and afternoon session and members should expect to make the whole day available.

In addition, Council members may be asked to sit on a VN Council Committee or an RCVS committee, which generally sit three times a year.

Members may also be asked to join a working party on a particular issue, and there may be other College activities, such as Regional Question Time meetings which they may choose to attend. On average, therefore, VN Council members might expect to spend between eight to ten days a year on VN Council business.

The governance of the College

The RCVS exists primarily to represent the public interest, as distinct from the British Veterinary Association (BVA), which represents the profession. RCVS Council members are not there to represent the veterinary profession, although the elected veterinary members play a role in ensuring the views of the profession are reflected when policy is developed.

Veterinary nurses have their own Council, which includes elected veterinary nurses and appointed veterinary surgeons.

The functions of the Veterinary Nurses' Council as set out in the Supplemental Royal Charter 2015 and the RCVS delegation scheme 2015 are summarised as follows:

- To set standards for the training and education of persons wishing to be entered in the Register of Veterinary Nurses.

- To set requirements in relation to the registration and conduct of veterinary nurses and thereafter recommend to RCVS Council amendments to registration, discipline and conduct rules.
- To ensure compliance with the requirements of the relevant regulatory authorities relating to vocational qualifications in veterinary nursing.
- To establish and keep under review schemes for post qualification training and continuing professional development for veterinary nurses, and the outcomes to be achieved, with a view to recording an additional entry in the Register of Veterinary Nurses.
- To recommend to the Operational Board a budget and levels of fees to be charged.

In exercising its functions, the Veterinary Nurses' Council shall ensure that the welfare of animals and good veterinary practice are central to its work.



3. Person Specification

It is proposed to make the following appointments with effect – 1 in 2023 and 1 in 2024:

The VN Council – 2 x Lay Members

The normal term of office will be three years, with a maximum of three terms.

Personal Attributes:

Candidates will need to provide evidence in their application form of relevant knowledge and experience. In particular, we are seeking candidates with:

- Relevant experience at a senior (executive or non-executive) level e.g., board level or equivalent.
- Understanding and knowledge of corporate governance, strategy and policy development, risk management and financial controls.
- General understanding of and interest in professional regulation, the veterinary professions, consumer protection and animal health and welfare.

Criteria for Competence:

Competence	Evidence
Public interest and accountability	<p>Commitment to the Nolan Principles of Public Life</p> <p>Overriding commitment to promoting high professional standards</p> <p>Willing to maintain and uphold accountability</p> <p>A high level of probity, integrity, discretion and fairness and the ability to maintain confidentiality</p> <p>Able to uphold the principles of effective corporate governance</p>

Intellectual flexibility, sound judgement and motivation	<p>Thinks clearly, analytically and creatively</p> <p>Considers the bigger picture as well as detail</p> <p>Weights up other people's ideas</p> <p>Has own ideas</p> <p>Objective - able to analyse complex information and situations before reaching a conclusion Willing to modify thinking in the light of new information or dialogue</p> <p>High levels of motivation and a willingness to constantly review and improve performance</p> <p>Tests and probes constructively and effectively to achieve the best outcomes for the RCVS's regulatory and statutory functions</p>
Effective influencing and communication	<p>Can influence and persuade others using well-reasoned arguments</p> <p>Capacity to give and take advice</p>
	<p>Respects the views of others</p> <p>Debates cogently, using evidence to support views</p> <p>Open to change</p>
Strategic direction	<p>Capacity to develop the strategic aims and objectives of the RCVS, without being unduly influenced by individual interest groups</p> <p>Ability to reflect and review strategy direction in the light of evidence and feedback gathered during implementation.</p>

Effective team working	Ability to build constructive working relationships with a broad range of individuals working in different roles including fellow College Council and Committee members, staff and executive team and external experts and advisors.
-------------------------------	--

4. Conflicts of interest

Committee members will be required to declare any general conflict of interest of any relevant business interests, positions of authority or other connections with organisations relevant to the business of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and any conflict of interest that arises in the course of committee business.

5. Eligibility

There are a number of exclusions to eligibility to apply to be a Council member:

- Having an unspent conviction for a money laundering, bribery or terrorism-related offence, among others;
- Having ever been found to be in contempt of court;
- Having ever been removed as an officer or employee of a charity for misconduct or mismanagement;
- Being subject to notification requirements under sexual offences legislation (i.e., they are on the sex offenders register); or
- Being a “designated person” under anti-terrorist legislation.
- A lay person in this instance is someone who has not been on a veterinary register either as a vet or a veterinary nurse

6. Remuneration: Loss of Earnings and Expenses

Payments

- Committee members will be office holders, not employed by the RCVS. They will be entitled to a financial loss allowance based on the number of days or half days spent on College business.
- The limits for reimbursement of financial loss and travelling expenses are set by the RCVS Council.

Loss of Earnings

- Committee members are eligible to claim loss of earnings of, currently, £325 per day.

Allowances

- Committee members are eligible to claim reimbursement of overnight subsistence of up to £245 per night and economy rail or air fare or motor mileage.
- There is no stationery/computer consumables allowance.

Taxation

- For those in full or part-time employment, or those not in employment, the RCVS will deduct at tax at source as though the individual was on the RCVS payroll.
- Those who are self-employed, and have a consultancy, would be paid in full on an invoice from the consultancy, on the assumption that they pay any tax due themselves.

7. Timeline, Application Process and How to apply

Timeline

Dates	Activity
29 May 4pm	Closing date for applications
w/c 29 May and w/c 5 June	Interviews by Thewlis Graham Associates – via video call
w/c 19 June	Independent Selection Panel interviews – via video call
w/c 26 June	Candidates informed of outcome

Application Process

Members will be appointed to serve on the VNC only.

Thewlis Graham Associates will acknowledge all applications. These will be assessed against the criteria in the Person Specification and the people who best meet these will be invited for interview with Thewlis Graham Associates. These will be held via video interview.

Those candidates not invited to interview will be advised by email by mid June.

Longlisted candidates will be advised by email. After a consultation between the Independent Selection Panel and Thewlis Graham Associates a Shortlist will be drawn up and Shortlisted candidates invited for interview by the Independent Selection Panel. All candidates will be informed of the outcome following this date.

How to Apply

To apply for this role, please email in word format to applications@thewlisgraham.com the following documents quoting reference AA0501:

1. A comprehensive CV
2. A covering letter containing:
 - Declaration of interest: do you have any personal or business interests, positions of authority or other connections with organisations that might be relevant to the work of the RCVS VNC, and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest were you to be appointed?
 - Commitment to the seven principles of public life (see Annex A).
 - Confirmation of your fitness for eligibility (see section 5 above for clarification of this).
 - A cover letter (no more than 3 pages) on your sphere of professional activity, including which area or areas you have worked in during your career, including your understanding and knowledge of corporate governance, strategy and policy development, risk management and financial controls and your general understanding of and interest in professional regulation, the veterinary professions, consumer protection and animal health and welfare.

Plus:

3. **Completed professional references and social media form (link on microsite)**. The reference part of this asks for the name, job title, organisation, email address and mobile number of two professional referees. (Please note that referees will not be approached without your prior permission).

Please ensure that you include your mobile phone number and email address in your application. Do not hesitate to contact Claire Drummond on 020 7850 4781 if you have any queries.

Additionally, if you would prefer to receive this candidate brief in a more accessible format, please contact us.

Diversity and Inclusion Monitoring

Diversity and inclusion monitoring is independent of the recruitment process but please do send a completed form with your application. Thewlis Graham Associates is committed to monitoring and analysing diversity information so that we can ensure that our processes are fair, transparent, promote equality of opportunity for all, and do not have an adverse impact on any particular group.

The link to this form is here: [click here](#). If you have any problems with this, please contact Tracey on: tct@thewlisgraham.com.

Any information provided on this form will be treated as strictly confidential and will be used for statistical purposes only. It will not be seen by anybody directly involved in the selection process. No information will be published or used in any way which allows any individual to be identified.

Thank you.



Annex A)

The seven principles of public life

1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

2. Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

3. Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

5. Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

6. Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

7. Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Annex B)

Code of conduct for Council (and committee) members

Role of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS)

1. The RCVS has statutory and Royal Charter functions; and, through the RCVS Trust (also known as RCVS Knowledge), charitable functions. These are set out more fully in the Charter; the Veterinary Surgeons Act (VSA) 1966; and the Trust's Memorandum and Articles of Association. See:
<http://www.rcvs.org.uk/about-us/royal-charter-and-legislation>

Purpose of this Code

2. In order for the RCVS to command the confidence of all interested parties, it is necessary for the Council members to observe appropriate standards of conduct. The purpose of this Code is to help to ensure that high standards are met and that those who act in the name of the RCVS are beyond reproach in the way they conduct themselves and the business of the RCVS. The required standards are set out in this Code that applies to all members of Council upon appointment. Its provisions apply generally to those who sit on committees; sub-committees; working parties, etc.

Principles

3. In performing their duties, Council members should observe the seven principles of public life ('The Nolan Principles'); namely:

Selflessness: holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends;

Integrity: holders of public office should avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefit for themselves, their family or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships;

Objectivity: holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias;

Accountability: holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office;

Openness: holders of public office should be as open and transparent as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands;

Honesty: holders of public office should be truthful;

Leadership: holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

General guidelines

4. Council members are expected:

- a. To act in good faith;
- b. To treat others fairly, equally and with respect;
- c. To behave in a business-like and professional manner;
- d. To work collaboratively with colleagues/staff;
- e. To listen to and value the views of others.

5. Members should also lead by example and demonstrate the values that underpin the culture of the RCVS:

- Fairness;
- Openness;
- Understanding;
- Forward thinking;
- Accountability;
- Consistency.

Specific guidelines

6. Council members are responsible for ensuring that they have a clear understanding of their role and the role of the RCVS as set out in the VSA 1966, and the Royal Charters. Having been elected or appointed, they have a responsibility to make themselves available for meetings of the Council and any committees, sub-committees, working parties, etc., to which they have been appointed (unless they are unable, with good reason, to do so); and to be diligent in reading papers and giving appropriate consideration to issues to ensure that they are making decisions on a fully informed basis.
7. Council members should follow the principles of mutual respect in all their activities and be prepared to accept that others may have equally strong views in good faith that differ from their own. Council members must uphold high standards of courtesy and respect in all Council debates and meetings. Council members should treat colleagues with respect and not engage in any behaviour towards any colleague or member of staff that might reasonably be interpreted as discriminatory, bullying or harassment.

Collective responsibility

8. Council members are collectively responsible for the decisions, even if they have voted against, abstained from voting or were absent when the decision was made, and are expected to respect the collective decision.

Confidentiality

9. Council members must not disclose information that has been shared with them but designated by the RCVS as private or confidential.

Conflicts of interest

10. The '*Policy for managing conflicts of interest*' requires all Council members to file a Declaration of Interest; to keep it up to date; and to declare any additional interests as necessary at each meeting and generally to comply with the requirements of the policy.

Communication

11. Council members have a role in communicating with the public and the profession about what the RCVS does but should take care to ensure that what they say is accurate and consistent with established policies and procedures – if in doubt, they should consult the Communications Department. Any communication with the media on behalf of the RCVS must be discussed with the Communications Department in advance.
12. Council members have a responsibility to distinguish clearly when speaking or writing in any public forum, between the views of the RCVS and their personal views, or of any other organisation they may be affiliated with.

Enforcement

13. Complaints that an RCVS Council member has breached this Code of Conduct should be made at the earliest opportunity to the RCVS President /Registrar, in accordance with the '*Policy for Dealing with Complaints about Council Members*'.

Agreed by Council September 2017 to come into force when the new (Governance) Legislation Reform Order is passed.