OXFORD
BROOKES
UNIVERSITY

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

for the award of

Foundation Degree in Veterinary Nursing

Managed by the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

Delivered by Department/School of School of Animal & Land Management at Solihull College & University Centre

Date approved:	July 2017
Applies to students commencing study in:	September 2017

RECORD OF UPDATES

Date amended*	Nature of amendment**	Reason for amendment**

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Awarding body:	Oxford Brookes University
Teaching institution and location:	Solihull College & University Centre
Language of study:	English
Final award:	FdSc
Programme title:	Veterinary Nursing
Interim exit awards and award titles available:	Un-named Cert HE
Brookes course code:	SH38
UCAS code:	
JACS code:	D310
HECoS code:	See guidance note G2.2, section 1
Mode of delivery:	Full time, on campus
Mode/s and duration of study:	Full-time over 3 years Maximum duration 6 years
QAA subject benchmark statement/s which apply to the programme:	QAA Foundation Degree qualification benchmarks (2010) Subject Benchmark Statements; • Biosciences (2015) • Veterinary Nursing (2015)
Professional accreditation attached to the programme:	Provisional accreditation by Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) www.rcvs.org.uk as "License to practice" as a Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN)
University Regulations:	The programme conforms to the University Regulations for the year of entry as published/archived at: http://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/ FdSc regulations: https://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/current/specific/b1/

SECTION 2: WHY STUDY THIS PROGRAMME?

Oxford Brookes University's Foundation Degree in Veterinary Nursing, developed in collaboration with Solihull College and University Centre, is the first of its kind within the Greater Birmingham and Solihull area. It will help meet the national shortage of Registered Veterinary Nurses, and the expected increasing demand for them in the next 10 years. It enables students from the location to complete affordable, university level study from home, whilst also gaining a "license to practice" veterinary nursing qualification. Successful completion allows application to the register of veterinary nurses to become a Registered Veterinary Nurse (RVN).

The programme aims to support the learner to develop the full range of veterinary nursing knowledge, skills, competences and behaviours, as set out in the RCVS (Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons) 2016 standards, to enable graduates to meet all RCVS veterinary nurse registration requirements and to deliver a high level of veterinary nursing practice from the beginning of their careers. This will be underpinned by sound, clear understanding of scientific principles and theory. The programme will consider current issues and modern day best practice within veterinary nursing, enhancing students' abilities to become evidence-based veterinary nursing practitioners and/or to progress to allied professions.

The teaching team and Animal & Land Management (ALM) School has strong ongoing links with current veterinary professionals and practice ensuring the programme will remain contemporary and responsive to the changing needs of the profession. This also allows integration of veterinary guest speakers, their real life experiences and trips to a range of work places to be incorporated into college teaching enhancing learners' experience of their future profession and the allied industries.
Extensive, well-supported clinical placement learning experiences allow students to develop into confident, professional VNs who contribute fully and effectively to the veterinary team in a range of roles. The ALM School has a number of animal related and veterinary nursing programmes, so the students have opportunities to learn alongside future colleagues and other animal professionals, whilst also having small group, active learning with chances to really hone practical skills and develop confidence to share ideas and debate complex topics.

The programme aims to develop students who:

- are knowledgeable and industry competent in current, clinical veterinary nursing practices and animal welfare;
- have strong transferable skills and behaviours to allow progression into graduate managerial/ supervisory roles or allied, non-clinical careers;
- have the academic and scientific skills to study and appraise current veterinary nursing practice in light of well-founded evidence;
- have an awareness of the dynamic nature of veterinary science and nursing resulting from continual developments in research findings and applications;
- are able to make decisions and problem solve as responsible professionals and members of society;
- understand and have the capacity to engage in reflective & life-long learning to enhance their veterinary nursing practice and profession;
- demonstrate professional accountability.

The programme is supported by staff from a wide range of backgrounds including experienced veterinary surgeons and registered veterinary nurses, with strong links to veterinary practice, animal behaviourists and experts in animal welfare & ethics.

SECTION 3: PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of the programme, graduates will demonstrate the following Brookes Attributes (which have been mapped to RCVS Veterinary Nursing "license to practice" requirements):

3.1 ACADEMIC LITERACY

a. Explore the main scientific principles of animal behaviour, welfare, husbandry and veterinary ethics across a range of species, and applying these principles to ensure high standards of animal husbandry and veterinary nursing practice;

b. Select and apply knowledge of animal anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, disease, infection control and pharmacology to enable effective veterinary nursing practice for a wide range of medical and surgical conditions found in commonly kept UK pet species (and other species where appropriate);

c. Appraise current veterinary science and nursing practices in light of well-founded evidence and apply this to plan and deliver competent, humane nursing care, handling & restraint for a range of companion animal species (also fits 2);

d. Apply and maintain the requirements of appropriate legislation and professional codes of practice to veterinary nursing practices at all times;

e. Prepare for, support, carry out, record and report common diagnostic tests and procedures relevant to veterinary nursing, including radiographic and laboratory procedures safely and accurately and appraise the techniques used;

f. Establish effective support of anaesthetic protocols, assess the requirements of safe anaesthesia and how to minimize possible complications

3.2 RESEARCH LITERACY

a. Research, review, analyse, synthesise, evaluate and summarise subject-specific information from a range of sources;

b. Apply relevant, valid research and data to their nursing practice to inform decision making and demonstrate the development of effective evidenced-based veterinary nursing practice (also fits 1);

c. Select and apply appropriate statistical techniques to basic data sets.

3.3 CRITICAL SELF-AWARENESS AND PERSONAL LITERACY

a. Demonstrate confidence and flexibility as independent learners and the ability to be reflective, evaluating their own performance to enhance employability and their professional practice;

b. Work productively with others including patients, clients and colleagues, taking supportive roles as part of a multi-disciplinary veterinary team;

c. Manage responsibility for their own professional practice, in accordance with professional, ethical and legal frameworks, recognising their own abilities & limitations and their responsibilities in relation to patients, clients, society and the environment (also fits with 1 & 4);

d. Actively contribute and communicate ideas using a range of accepted formats, using appropriate technical, practical and subject-specific nomenclature and terminology.

3.4 DIGITAL AND INFORMATION LITERACY

a.   Use information technology to gather, interpret and integrate ideas and evidence to support academic and clinical work;

b.   Use digital and clinical veterinary equipment to enhance nursing practice skills and care (fits with 1 also);

c.   Demonstrate an understanding of the current and rapidly changing technologies used within the animal based industry to enhance animal welfare;

d.   Communicate ideas and findings, both verbally and in writing, with clarity in an appropriate manner for both clinical and non-clinical audiences including peers, colleagues, and clients;

e.   Engage productively with relevant on-line communities and explore alternative routes for the dissemination of knowledge.

3.5 ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

a.   Articulate the contributions of veterinary nursing, and veterinary science, in general, to the health and welfare of companion and non-companion animals and the effect of this on societies;

b.   Accommodate and be responsive to differences in attitudes towards animals and veterinary science and nursing between different cultures and sectors of society;

c.   Demonstrate a non-judgemental position in all aspects of their clinical work.

SECTION 4: CURRICULUM CONTENT & STRUCTURE

4.1 PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS:

Over the 3 year course of the FdSc in Veterinary Nursing students will study a minimum of 16 single module equivalents. In Year 1 there are 8 single modules (15 credits) studied and in Year 2 another 5 single modules will be completed with Year 3 allowing for completion of clinical placement and the remaining 3 single modules. Most modules run for a single semester, though some modules run over two semesters or a whole year.

Below is the structure for the programme: All modules are single 15 credit modules.

Year 1 study

Module code	Module Title	Module time frame		
		Semester 1	Semester 2	Clinical Practice (CP) 1
VN41	Anatomy & physiology for VNs		▓	
ABW42	Principles of Animal Behaviour		▓	
VN43	Veterinary Nursing Practice 1	▓		
VN44	Health, Infection & Infection Control	▓		
ABW45	Animal Biology	▓		
VN46	Principles of Nutrition for VNs		▓	
VN47	Professional & Academic Skills for VNs	▓	▓	▓
VN48	Practical Husbandry, Handling & Welfare	▓	▓	

Key

▓	Section of the academic year each module is running

Year 2 study

Module code	Module Title	Module time frame			
		Level 5 Semester 1	CP2	Level 5 Semester 2	CP3 (starting)
VN51	Pharmacy, Pharmacology & Fluid Therapy	▓			
VN52	Medical Nursing & Clinical	▓			

Module code	Module Title				
	Nutrition	▓			
VN53	Animal Breeding and Genetics for VNs	▓			
VN54	Surgical Nursing & Critical Care	▓			
VN55	Clinical & Theatre Practice		▓		
VN56	Diagnostics			started	
VN57	Anaesthesia			started	
VN58	Professional Practice			started	▓

Year 3 study

Module code	Module Title	Module time frame		
		CP3	**L5 Semester 3**	**OSCE prep and exams**
VN56	Diagnostics		▓	
VN57	Anaesthesia		▓	
VN58	Professional Practice	▓	▓	▓

Module Levels, Status and Coursework: Exam ratios

Code	Module Title	Credits	Level	Status	Coursework: Exam ratio
VN41	Anatomy & physiology for VNs	15	4	compulsory	50:50
ABW42	Principles of Animal Behaviour	15	4	compulsory	60:40
VN43	Veterinary Nursing Practice 1	15	4	compulsory	50:50
VN44	Health, Infection & Infection Control	15	4	compulsory	55:45
ABW45	Animal Biology	15	4	compulsory	50:50
VN46	Principles of Nutrition for VNs	15	4	compulsory	50:50
VN47	Professional & Academic Skills for VNs	15	4	compulsory	100:0

VN48	Practical Husbandry, Handling & Welfare	15	4	compulsory	100:0
VN51	Pharmacy, Pharmacology & Fluid Therapy)	15	5	compulsory	50:50
VN52	Medical Nursing & Clinical Nutrition	15	5	compulsory	100:0
VN53	Animal Breeding and Genetics for VNs	15	5	compulsory	100:0
VN54	Surgical Nursing & Critical Care	15	5	compulsory	100:0
VN55	Clinical & Theatre Practice	15	5	compulsory	100:0
VN56	Diagnostics	15	5	compulsory	100:0
VN57	Anaesthesia	15	5	compulsory	40:60
VN58	Professional Practice	15	5	compulsory	75:25

Assessments classified as coursework include in-class tests and practical assessments.

4.2 PROGRESSION AND AWARD REQUIREMENTS

All Level 4 modules are 15 credits and are compulsory, and thus a total of 120 credits along with clinical placement one (CP1) requirements (as detailed in CP handbook and module descriptors), must be passed to progress onto year 2 of the programme. If the programme is exited on completion of all Level 4 modules only an unnamed exit Certificate of Higher Education will be achieved.

All Level 5 modules are also 15 credits and compulsory. A total of 120 credits at Level 5 along with clinical placement requirements (as detailed in CP handbook and module descriptors) must be achieved to complete the FdSc in Veterinary Nursing.

The following modules must be passed to progress onto Clinical Practice 3 (CP3) of the programme:
VN51   Veterinary Nursing Practice 2 (pharmacy & fluid therapy)
VN52   Medical Nursing & Clinical Nutrition
VN53   Animal Breeding and Genetics for VNs
VN55   Clinical & Theatre Practice

NB. All elements of assessment for every module need to be passed, all modules need to be passed, and all professional requirements (below) met to successfully achieve the FdSc VN. There will be no compensation between parts of a module or between modules.

4.3 PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

To be in a position to apply for registration as an RVN with the RCVS all the following need to have been met and achieved:
- A minimum of 94 weeks in training – (a combination of time at college and in clinical placement)
- A minimum of 1800 hours learning experience documented within clinical practice (excluding holidays, sickness and another absences) (achieved as part of modules, VN47, VN55 & VN58)
- Achievement of all compulsory programme modules, 120 credits Level 4 and 120 credits Level 5
- Successful completion of the Nursing Progress Log (NPL) (achieved as part of Module VN58)

- Successful completion of the OSCEs end point assessment (achieved as part of Module VN58)

NB: It is the responsibility of the college to ensure it has enough placement opportunities for all students.

SECTION 5: TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

The FdSc Veterinary Nursing is broken up into blocks of time spent within college and 3 blocks of clinical placement spent within an approved veterinary nurse Training Practice. There is one clinical placement block per year, with the longest placement block starting at the end of Year 2 and finishing in the spring of the final year.

Completion of the FdSc Veterinary Nursing requires students to pass 16 modules: with eight completed in the first year, spread over two semesters, followed by the first clinical placement. Then five modules are completed in Year 2 along with the second clinical placement and three other modules are started in the second semester. These are completed after the final clinical placement. Once all other modular requirements have been completed and achieved the end point objective structured clinical exams (OSCEs) (the last part of the Professional Practice VN58 module) can be sat. Application for entry to the register of veterinary nurses, held by the RCVS, can be made once the OSCEs has been successfully completed.

Teaching methods are varied and informed by contemporary practice in science teaching in higher education within a college environment. All modules use the Solihull College's Virtual Learning Environment - Moodle (typically for locating course and module resources, but also for discussion forums, collaborative information gathering, journal logs and coursework submissions and feedback). Most modules use interactive lectures, classroom activities and practicals (totalling appropriately 42 hours minimum for most modules) to provide a framework for learning and to introduce the topic essentials and more difficult concepts. One module (Clinical and Theatre Practice) is completed whilst on placement and is supported via on-line resources. Practical work is a key feature of most modules, enhancing learning and enabling development of skills needed for a successful career. During college-time semesters approximately a third to a half of the time within college will be spent on practical work and the rest within the classroom covering theory.

Other teaching methods include seminar discussions or debates, one-to-one or small group tutorials, problem-solving workshops and on-line activities. Reflective learning is encouraged through use of self, peer and staff formative feedback on assignments, class work, reflective diaries and the nurse progress log. All these activities develop academic literacy, critical self-awareness and personal literacy.

The integration of contemporary technologies and practical facilities both at college and in practice, allow undergraduates to develop their academic and vocational skills to appropriate professional standards. Academic sessions are supported using the wide range of species and extensive practical animal facilities, including farm livestock, exotic and companion animals. In addition sessions are delivered using the purpose-built, science laboratories where students have access to practical activities such as dissections and have the opportunity to develop laboratory skills.

During clinical placement blocks students will work with a TP appointed Clinical Coach, who demonstrates skills and then supports the student to practise and develop competency in each RCVS skill and competency. The CC also supports recording of the skills and professional behaviour development. The College works closely with the CC and student during their time in placement and regularly audits the TP, CC and the student's progression. Through case study assessments and classroom discussion of individual student clinical experience integration of theory and practice can be completed.

Research literacy is widely taught and practised throughout the modules as learners develop their appreciation of evidenced-based veterinary nursing.

Development of active citizenship attributes will form a part of the core ethos of the programme and will be considered in detail in discussions and debates around ethical and welfare topics and when case studies and work experiences are discussed and reviewed. In particular time spent within clinical placement will enable the cementing of these and other professional attributes.

Summative assessments for modules are vocationally contextualised and usually are a combination of coursework and unseen assessment. Coursework assignments are diverse and develop research literacy and digital and information literacy and include reports, literature reviews, case studies, presentations, role play discussions, professional 1:1 discussions and workbooks. Whereas unseen assessments include formal examinations, which will be scheduled at the end of the module, and other unseen assessments including in-class tests and practical task assessments scheduled during the semester.

Assessment is aligned to the University Assessment Compact (https://www.brookes.ac.uk/aske/brookes--assessment-compact/)
, with deadlines for assignments and the NPL spread as much as possible across the college semesters and clinical placement blocks, ensuring that students' progress towards meeting programme outcomes while experiencing a balance of assessments within and between modules and equity in module workloads. Solihull College & University Centre is committed to providing students with clear assessment criteria, and useful and timely feedback on all of their work.

Discussions between programme staff have ensured that programmes are characterised by an appropriate breadth and depth of content that is informed by relevant benchmark statements, the requirements of the accrediting body and the latest research. The quality of academic provision for students is assessed regularly by programme teams, principally through the course's annual monitoring report and quality improvement plan, via student evaluations of each module, regular student questionnaires, programme quality board meetings, and through critical evaluation of the annual external examiner report. Dissemination and encouragement of good practice is facilitated through staff development activities, peer lesson observations, regular staff team meetings, and support from the Teaching and Learning Coaches at Solihull College and the OCSLD (Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development) at Oxford Brookes University.

The Brookes Assessment Compact is jointly prepared by students and staff of the University. It can be found at   https://www.brookes.ac.uk/aske/brookes--assessment-compact/

SECTION 6: ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAMME

6.1 ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Prior qualifications necessary for entry to the programme, including English language requirements.

Prior qualifications necessary for entry to the programme, including English language requirements can be found on the College website.

- **Minimum of two weeks work experience within a veterinary practice** (work experience within other animal-related placements will not be acceptable as an alternative to this), to be completed within two years of the proposed start date and **prior to interview.**
  NB. Interviews will not take place until this work experience has been completed

All applicants will be interviewed (telephone interviews are carried out for international applicants if they cannot attend in person). Offers of a course place are dependent on a successful interview and a strong UCAS application with an appropriate reference and evidence of completion of the two weeks work experience (a headed letter of confirmation from the Veterinary Practice Principal or Manager).

English Language Requirements.

Applicants whose first language is not English must also demonstrate that their level of English is acceptable, by achieving a score in a recognised test such as:

- British Council IELTS: normally minimum level 6.0 overall with a minimum of 6.0 in the reading and writing components;

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)

It may be possible, in certain situations, to gain accreditation of prior learning to enable students to enter the course with advanced standing or gain exemption from an element/ elements of the programme. This is assessed on an individual basis and is awarded in line with Oxford Brookes University's regulations on accreditation of prior learning, available at
https://www.brookes.ac.uk/regulations/current/core/a2/a2-5/

Notice of application for APL must be made at the time of application to the programme and will not be considered once accepted for the programme.

6.2 ADDITIONAL COSTS:

It should be noted that, on top of annual programme fees, there will be additional costs for equipment, clothing, trips, stationary and study resources. Further details are available on the course leaflet at
http://www.solihull.ac.uk/demographic/university-level-learner/course-category/animal-care-and-veterinary-nursing/

6.3 DBS AND OTHER PRE-COURSE CHECKS REQUIRED

All applicants will be screened for fitness to practice and a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be made. Securing and maintaining a place on the programme is subject to satisfactory fitness to practice and study and satisfactory DBS.

SECTION 7: PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

This programme is specifically designed, with RCVS accreditation, as a route to registration as a Registered Veterinary Nurse. During clinical placement time the clinical coach will be supporting and assessing relevant veterinary nursing behaviours, skills and competences gained. College teaching is supported by an experience team including veterinary nurses and veterinary surgeons and supplemented by visits to and guest speakers from the veterinary and allied professions.

A foundation degree in veterinary nursing also offers an excellent general university education and can provide a gateway to careers in animal management; animal welfare; animal behaviour; veterinary physiotherapy; and other professions allied to the veterinary industry such as with pharmaceutical companies, insurance companies, pet food companies, veterinary journalism and the media and leisure industry.

Graduates will have the opportunity to apply for the Oxford Brookes BSc (Hons) Animal Behaviour and Welfare or similar animal related top-up courses at other institutions. (Acceptance onto these courses is always subject to individual HE providers' admissions and APL policies).