

Veterinary Practice Training Newsletter



# TP Times

February 2024

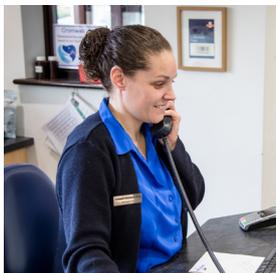


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Off-The-Job Hours



The Art of Client  
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VN07/08/09 VTEC  
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## WELCOME BACK...

After a 12 year break (is it really that long?!), we are really excited to be back producing TP Times. We originally started TP Times in 2007 after seeing a need for a newsletter/magazine that was aimed specifically at those working in veterinary practice that were involved in the training of veterinary nurses; both students and those supporting them – after all training is most definitely a team effort. Soon after, there became more standardised training for veterinary care support staff and, since then the wider veterinary team such as veterinary receptionists and practice managers, so our new look TP Times aims to contain articles that are of interest to the whole veterinary practice community.

As always, if there are articles or any other items that you wish to see, please let us know ([tptimes@kaw.ac.uk](mailto:tptimes@kaw.ac.uk)) as we really want this magazine to be full of information that is useful to you, whatever your role in the practice team.

## VETLIFE OPENS UP ITS MEMBERSHIP TO NON-CLINICAL STAFF

Vetlife (a charity that provides independent, confidential and free help to those in the veterinary community) has opened up its associate membership to non-clinical staff within the veterinary profession for the first time in its history. This includes anybody working within the veterinary industry such as receptionists, practice managers and administrative staff.

Members, known as 'Friends of Vetlife,' actively contribute to the charity through regular donations. Vetlife plays a crucial role in providing support to the veterinary community through its Helpline, Health Support, and Financial Support services. Over the past few years, the demand for these services has seen a remarkable increase, and the charity relies heavily on the generosity of donors and those who contribute regularly to meet this growing demand and sustain its essential work. No form of membership is required to access any of Vetlife's support.

Vetlife President James Russell said: "Becoming a friend of Vetlife is an important way that people can show their support for our charity. As we have already stated, you do not need to be a friend of Vetlife to access any of our services, but by becoming a Friend, you are making a meaningful contribution to us keeping those services available for our whole community. We are only here because of our supporters, so thank you to you all."

Those wishing to support Vetlife can become a Friend from £2.10 per month [here](#).



## LOOKING TO ADVERTISE IN TP TIMES?

We have a limited number of advertising opportunities with competitive rates.

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## RCVS ACADEMY LAUNCHES NEW COURSE TO SUPPORT VETERINARY PROFESSIONALS WITH CLIENT CONFIDENTIALITY ISSUES

The RCVS Academy, a free digital learning platform for the veterinary professions, has launched 'Client confidentiality,' a new course which offers support and guidance to the veterinary team for situations where they feel it's necessary to disclose confidential information without a client's consent.

Deciding to breach client confidentiality is often an uncomfortable and difficult decision for the veterinary team. Veterinary teams may encounter situations where they feel there is sufficient justification to breach confidentiality and disclose information to the relevant authorities. This could be due to public interest, animal health and welfare, or other legal reasons.

Designed with the RCVS Standards and Advice team, the 'Client confidentiality' course will help the veterinary team identify the steps to take when deciding whether or not to make a disclosure. Learners will explore three interactive scenarios throughout the course, giving some examples of situations where it may be justified to disclose information and how to go about this.

The course takes around one hour to complete and is free to access via the RCVS Academy ([academy.rcvs.org.uk](http://academy.rcvs.org.uk)) using My Account login details.

## XL BULLY BAN NOW IN FORCE

Following a rise in attacks and fatalities caused by XL Bully dogs, the Government has now added the XL Bully breed to the list of dogs banned under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 in England and Wales. Owners of XL Bully dogs in England and Wales must either apply for a Certificate of Exemption, or have it euthanised by an RCVS-registered veterinary surgeon, by 31 January 2024.

From 31 December 2023, in England and Wales it is against the law to sell, abandon, give away or breed from an XL Bully dog. It must be muzzled and kept on a lead at all times in public. From 1 February 2024, it will be a criminal offence to own an XL Bully dog in England and Wales unless it has a Certificate of Exemption.

Dealing with a sudden increase in euthanasia cases may have a significant impact on the morale and wellbeing of the veterinary team. Anyone finding this situation difficult to cope with should seek support, either from colleagues, or from an organisation such as [Vetlife](#).

There is more advice and information for practices on the [RCVS website](#).



## CHANGES TO THE RCVS PRACTICE STANDARDS SCHEME

From 1 January 2023, there are some changes coming to the RCVS Practice Standards Scheme (PSS), including updates to the Core accreditation standards, the PSS rules and the fees – find out what this means for your practice and read the full guidance on the [RCVS website](#).

## RCVS LAUNCHES LARGEST AND MOST COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF THE UK VETERINARY SECTOR

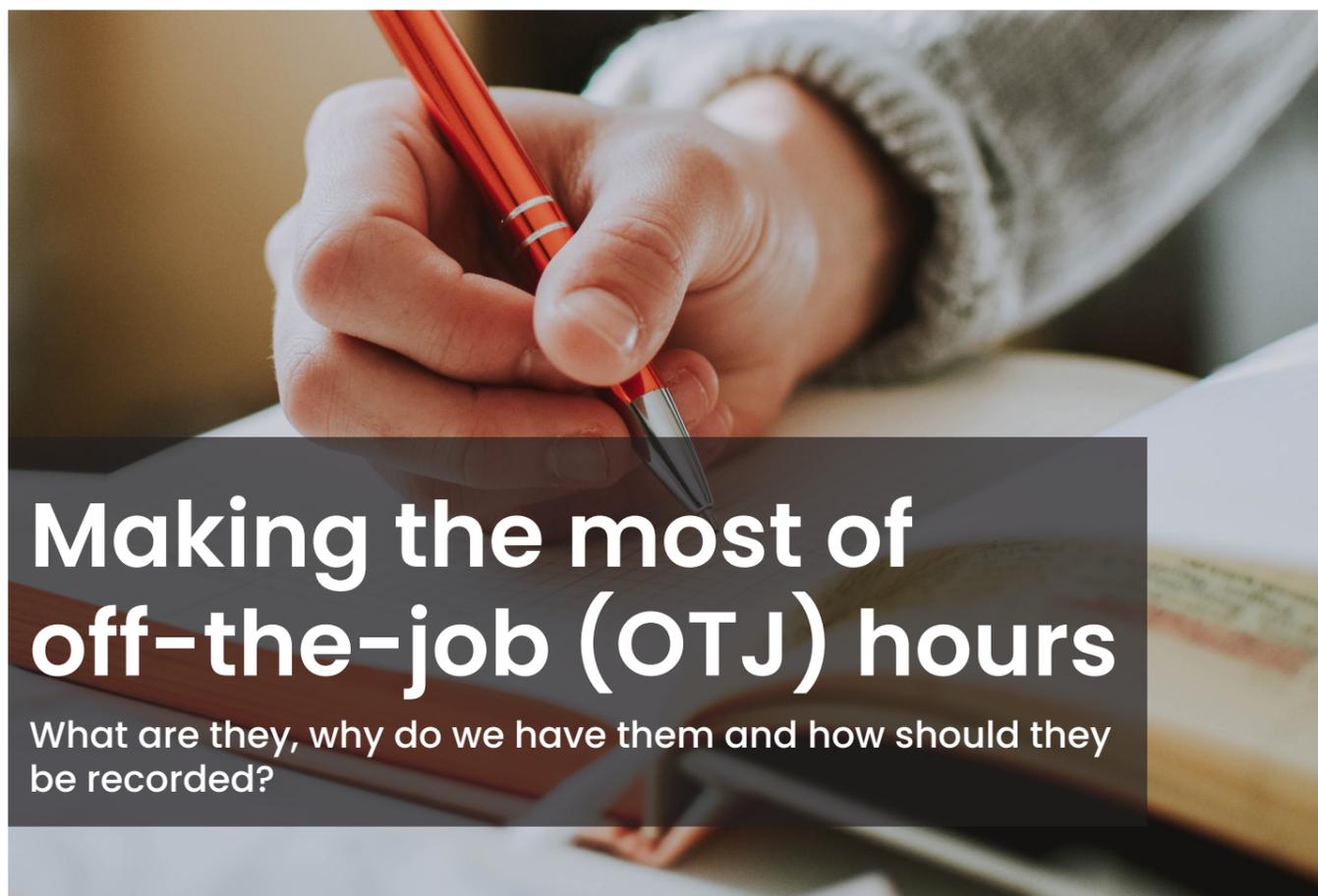
Last month, the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) launched its Surveys of the Professions, the largest and most comprehensive study of the UK veterinary sector, which will be used to inform strategy and policy for years to come.

The two surveys, for veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses respectively, ask the professions a wide range of questions covering everything from what they do in a typical working day, to career aspirations, to levels of mental and physical wellbeing. They are confidential and anonymous.

The surveys are conducted every four to five years and aim to provide information and data that is used to inform the strategic direction of the RCVS, as well as individual policies. The surveys' results are also used by other organisations such as the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA), its agencies and other veterinary bodies and stakeholders.

The surveys have been sent to all veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses. The deadline for completing the survey is Friday 16 February 2024. Please have your say.





# Making the most of off-the-job (OTJ) hours

What are they, why do we have them and how should they be recorded?

By Emily Mathias VCA RVN C-SQP  
Distance Learning Tutor, The College of Animal Welfare

*Employers, clinical supervisors, mentors, and students are often puzzled by off-the-job (OTJ) hours; about the relevance of them to the course being undertaken, but also, about their purpose and how they should be recorded. Firstly, OTJ hours are a requirement that are relevant to all apprenticeship learners.*

## A brief history of apprenticeships



Apprenticeships can be traced back as far as the 1500's in medieval Britain where skilled craftsmen were allowed to take on up to three apprentices for up to seven years, in order to train them in their craft.

By the 1800's apprenticeships began to stipulate

that apprentices should be educated in reading, writing and arithmetic – skills which are still instilled in all apprentices even now. 1878 saw the establishment of City & Guilds, which was founded in order to protect and promote a standard in education.

During the 1900's conscription to the war effort saw a decrease in the uptake of apprenticeships, this invoked the introduction of an interrupted apprenticeship which encouraged people to sign up to apprenticeships knowing they could return when the war was over. In 1964, the Industrial Training Act was introduced which raised funds from employers through levies and grants – another concept which is still used today.

Fast-forward to 2020 and the government introduced new levy funding meaning that larger employers pay an apprenticeship levy that helps to fund apprenticeship training.

The provision of funding by the government is related to the regular and accurate recording of OTJ hours as it provides evidence of the training taking place in the working environment and is a government and awarding organisation requirement.

## What are OTJ hours?

According to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), OTJ hours reflect the personal learning development an apprentice must complete throughout their training period. These hours can take place at the apprentice's place of work but

must be outside of their normal job role during their normal working hours.

OTJ training can be classified into three main areas:

**Theory** – OTJ hours attributed to theoretical enhancement can be achieved through the attendance of lectures (both virtual and in person), online learning and other training such as manufacturer lunch and learns.

**Practical** – Practical training involves tasks that do not fall within the apprentice's normal job role, this can be achieved through shadowing a colleague, mentoring or visiting another practice to view different standard operating procedures, for example.

**Learning support** – Learning support is time spent researching and writing assessments and allows the learning of new theoretical knowledge as a learner writes their obtained knowledge into their own words.

Other examples of what may be counted at OTJ hours include: tutorial support, portfolio or NPL work, revision, webinars, and other CPD such as attendance at relevant congresses.

## How to benefit from the use of OTJ hours

OTJ hours create a period within the day/week where a learner is fully committed to their learning, but what does this mean for clinical supervisors, mentors and employers? OTJ hours are the opportunity to train a learner in new skills, allowing them to fulfil their job role to a higher standard but also to acquire new skills which can streamline processes making them more efficient, confident, and capable in achieving the task they have been trained in. Learning can take place through assessment writing or through studying for their course, but can also be achieved through practical training; both forms of OTJ training are beneficial for the learner and employer alike by broadening a learner's understanding and fulfilling their training agreement.

## What are knowledge, skills and behaviours?

Knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) form the structure of any animal related qualification and ensure the apprentice has the necessary proficiencies to join a profession which requires high standards of each of these components. The KSBs that apprentices learn during their OTJ hours helps them to apply

what they have learnt in their course materials into the job role for future success and understanding.



## How to support a learner in achieving their OTJ hours

Firstly, you can support a learner by setting a regular rota where they can take their OTJ hours. Some employers will opt for allowing the apprentice a single day off the rota each week (a minimum of six hours if the apprentice is working full time) where the learner can use this time for training and writing assessments. Alternatively, some employers will give a regular time each day of the week such as an hour after lunch. It is beneficial for the employer to know where the learner is up to with their OTJ hours as this will give an indication of course progress and the progress of their timeline for completion. Should a learner fall four weeks behind their target, the apprentice may have their course progress paused until their OTJ hours are up to target. It is important to ensure the learner and mentor have regular tutorials where they can check on OTJ hours and feedback to the employer of any short fallings.



When recording OTJ hours, they should be detailed, they should not repeat, and they should always show new learning or training. They should be well written in full sentences and should be easy to read and follow to the extent that someone who has no role in the industry can understand what has been learnt.

## To summarise...

In conclusion, OTJ hours are a structured and compulsory feature of an apprenticeship, they should be thought of with positivity as an opportunity to acquire new knowledge, to complete assessments and research, and to explore areas external to the apprentice's current job role. Employers, supervisors, and mentors play an important role in the regulation of OTJ hours and the achievement of the apprenticeship, so an understanding of the requirements is vital to ensure the veterinary practice and learner alike benefit from their optimal use.

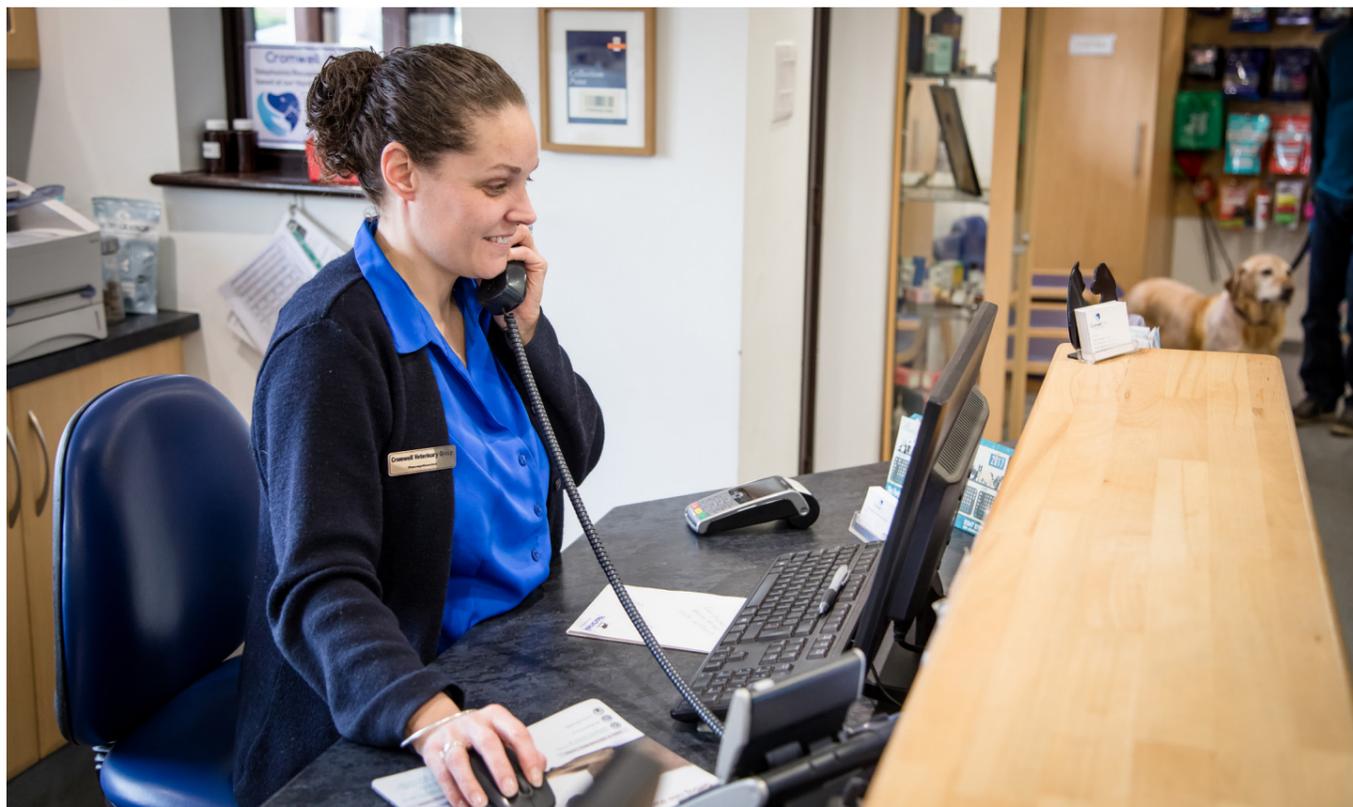
## References

*The Long and Winding History of Apprenticeships (2021).* <https://www.fenews.co.uk/fe-voices/the-long-and-winding-history-of-apprenticeships/> (Accessed: December 1, 2023).

*20% off-the-job training explained (no date).* <https://onefile.co.uk/explore/20-off-the-job-training/> (Accessed: December 1, 2023).

# MASTERING THE ART OF CLIENT COMMUNICATION: A GUIDE FOR VETERINARY RECEPTIONISTS

*As the first point of contact, veterinary receptionists play a pivotal role in shaping the client experience, and effective communication is at the heart of this responsibility. It can be a tough job, so we have put together a quick guide to help you manage client expectations, handle sensitive situations and approach your role with confidence.*



## 1. Establish a connection

Building a strong rapport with clients is the foundation of effective communication. Personalise your interactions by using the client's and pet's names, and show genuine interest in their wellbeing. Smile, maintain eye contact, and employ positive body language to create a welcoming atmosphere.

## 2. Cut the jargon

Avoid veterinary jargon that may confuse or overwhelm clients. Instead, use simple language to explain medical terms and procedures. Imagine you are explaining the situation to a friend who is not familiar with veterinary terminology. Clarity is key to ensuring understanding and building trust.

## 3. Actively listen

Make a conscious effort to actively listen to the concerns and questions of pet owners. Give them your undivided attention, eliminate distractions, and repeat and clarify information as needed. Reflective listening helps ensure that clients feel heard and understood, fostering a stronger connection.

## 4. Educate and inform

Empower clients with knowledge about their pets' health. Visual aids such as diagrams or models can be used to explain where needed. Provide written information, including leaflets or printouts, to reinforce verbal instructions and serve as a reference for clients at home.

## 5. Address financial concerns

Discussing financial matters can be delicate, but it's crucial for managing client expectations. Provide detailed estimates of costs, including potential additional expenses in advance and ensure clients have a means to pay. Offer information on payment plans or financing options to help clients manage their financial responsibilities without compromising their pets' wellbeing.

## 6. Handling sensitive situations

As a veterinary receptionist, you will encounter situations that require a delicate touch on a frequent basis. When delivering difficult news, choose an appropriate setting, use a gentle tone, and provide emotional support. Offer resources such as information on grief counselling or support groups that can help clients cope with challenging circumstances.

## 7. Embrace technology

Explore the benefits of technology to enhance communication. Email or text reminders of appointments or vaccinations can prevent time wasting and help keep pets in good health. Email newsletters can help strengthen relationships with clients and provide important information to them and keep them up to date with details of any special offers or new services.

## 8. Keep learning

Ongoing training and development for yourself and your team is super important. Communication workshops or webinars can enhance your skills and confidence, but there are many other ways to keep learning and growing; reading magazines or books, exploring online articles and practicing role-playing scenarios to prepare for challenging conversations, can ensure that you're well-equipped to handle any situation that may arise.

In conclusion, as a veterinary receptionist, your role goes beyond administrative tasks; you are a vital part of the client experience. Effective communication requires empathy, compassion, and a commitment to continuous improvement. We hope that some of these tips help you to create a positive environment that benefits both pets and their owners.



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# CAW NEWS

This section is specifically aimed at training practices/clinical supervisors and students who are associated with/study at The College of Animal Welfare. Whilst some of the information may be relevant to students training with other providers, you should always follow the guidance of your own provider as not all information is transferable.

## Revision Sessions for Student Veterinary Nurses

Small group End Point Assessment (EPA) professional discussion revision sessions are now available to book for CAW student apprentice veterinary nurses via the VLE.

To book, navigate to the Mock Professional Discussion Booking section on the VLE and click on the revision sessions icon. You can then select which type, and what date, of revision session you would like to book from there.

## Updated Clinical Supervisor Training

The College of Animal Welfare initial training for clinical supervisors was updated last year. The initial training must be completed by clinical supervisors when they are supporting a student veterinary nurse for the first time, or supporting a student that is studying a different course to one that they have not supported a student through before, e.g. BSc or Diploma, Legacy or VTEC.

If you believe that you need to undertake the initial training please ask your IQA which training course you should complete, as it will depend on what cohort your student will be in.

Once you have completed the initial clinical supervisor training, you must complete standardisation training within six months of your initial training, then annually after that. The clinical supervisor standardisation area on the VLE is packed full of free training modules that you can access and count towards your CPD hours.

## MEET THE CAW PRACTICE SUPPORT OFFICERS!

Our team of Practice Support Officers (PSOs) provide support to our training practices and veterinary nurse students on placement throughout the UK. They have regular contact with practices, clinical coaches, and students and, in addition, approve new training practices and carry out inspection and support visits. Meet the team below:

### Carolina Muley

Before joining CAW as a Practice Support Office, I was head nurse at an equine practice. My favourite part of my job is knowing I am a part of a team that supports students in reaching their goals to become a RVN.

When I am not working I am driving my son around the country to his ice hockey games. In my spare time, I enjoy riding and caring for my horses.



### Tracey Purnell

I qualified as an RVN in 2008 and worked at a Veterinary Hospital in Staffordshire, then completed a degree in Bio-Veterinary Science at Harper Adams University in 2011. I have worked in VN education since March 2012. Previous to joining CAW, I was a lecturer/IQA at a land based college in Staffordshire. My favourite aspect of the role is visiting students in practice during their clinical placements.

I live in Shropshire with my husband, 2 children & 3 cats.

### Stef Green

I have been a Practice Support Officer at CAW since January 2022, as well as working in practice as an RVN. I qualified as a veterinary nurse in 2008 and work in a busy small animal hospital. I love my dual role and the variety it brings, especially meeting people and seeing their practices. I have a passion for student training and helping the next generation of RVNs.

I have 2 ginger cats, Rupert and Leonard who are regular trouble makers especially in their old age.



### Danielle Lough

I qualified as an RVN in 2011 and having worked in various mixed practices I started working with CAW in September 2017 as a full time IQA based in the Edinburgh centre.

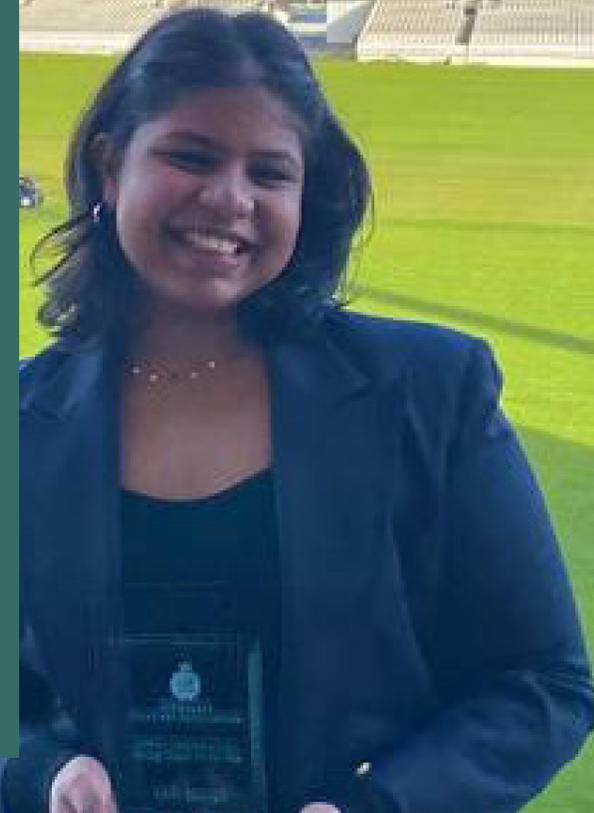
In May 2021, I moved to referral practice but stayed on with CAW as a PSO. I currently spend a few evenings a week mostly moderating e-Portfolio. I really enjoy this role as student support is something that I really love doing.

## BSc VN STUDENT HONOURED WITH YOUNG CRICKET COACH OF THE YEAR AWARD

In December, BSc Veterinary Nursing student Adithi Banerjee was recognised for her outstanding achievements in cricket with the Young Cricket Coach of the Year award; the award was presented by the Middlesex Cricket Association at the Lords Stadium in the annual Middlesex Coaching awards. The ceremony took place in the home dressing room at Lord's, with just five coaches being recognised overall, highlighting the incredible efforts of those who have gone above and beyond in coaching.

In particular, Adithi was recognised for making a difference and passing on her enthusiasm for the game as well inspiring the next generation of players. Not only has Adithi qualified as an ECB Level 1 Coach, she has also helped to coach the girls at this year's London Youth Games and is working towards achieving her ECB Level 2 qualification, all alongside her studies as a BSc Veterinary Nursing student.

Well done Adithi, from everyone at CAW!



## REMEMBER TO REFLECT!

A reminder to all registered veterinary nurses (RVNs) that the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) now require all CPD to be reflected on.

The ICPD platform now includes a section for RVNs to be able to reflect on CPD undertaken to show what you have learnt, how it relates to your training needs and the impact that it has had on you as a professional, or on your practice. If you reflect on your CPD and conclude you didn't learn anything, this can still be helpful as it can help you plan what you will do differently in the future.

The ICPD homepage now displays two progress bars: one tracking the number of completed CPD hours achieved and one showing how many of the total hours have been reflected on. Once the number of required CPD hours has been recorded and reflected on, a message will appear to notify you that you are CPD compliant.



If you are a clinical supervisor supporting a student veterinary nurse, when you send your CPD record to your IQA it will be checked for both the number of hours undertaken, and those reflected on, so it is advised that you complete your reflection as you record your hours; that way you can ensure that you are compliant. If you are a The College Animal Welfare (CAW) clinical supervisor and are struggling to work out how to download your CPD record from the ICPD app, please contact your IQA for a handy guide on how to do this.

For more information on CPD reflection visit the [RCVS website](https://www.rcvs.org.uk).

## ASK AN IQA!

Do you have a question about for one of the CAW IQAs? Maybe you are unsure about what species of animal can be used in your assignment, or want to know if spelling and grammar will be considered when your work is being marked... Whatever your question, please email it to us at [tpetimes@caw.ac.uk](mailto:tpetimes@caw.ac.uk) and we will get it answered for you!



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# Unlocking Your Potential

Life skills for success

By Chloe Mead  
Learning Support Assistant, The College of Animal Welfare

*When we begin a programme of study or start a new job, it is natural to become very focussed on our academic work or employment as we try to do our best to succeed both academically and professionally. It is important, however, that we don't forget to give time to other aspects of our life that can have a huge impact on our ability to succeed or even just cope with the other day to day pressures of life. In this article we consider some of the barriers we may face and ways in which we can try to overcome them in order to establish a better sense of ourself and our abilities.*

## Building Self-Esteem and Confidence

A healthy amount of self-esteem is necessary to have the self-confidence to meet life's challenges and participate in things you find enjoyable and rewarding. If you, or someone you know, suffers with low self-esteem, some of the following strategies can really help:

- **Embrace Physical Activity:** Regular physical activity can foster positivity and help you reach your potential. Physical activity is not just about keeping your body fit and healthy; it can have a profound effect on your mental health. If you struggle to motivate yourself, consider planning and incorporating it into your routine. The subsequent benefits of regular exercise: energy, focus, and motivation to name a few, are priceless.
- **Engage in Team Activities:** Examples include sports, role-play, board games, and book clubs.

Progress can significantly improve your self-esteem, not only through skills development but also through a sense of belonging. In recognising your strengths, commitment, and enthusiasm, you can help others identify theirs.

- **Try Something New:** There are no rules or expectations when trying something new, despite what we may believe. Trying something new can be overwhelming when you do not feel capable or able to succeed. Try changing the narrative when trying something new. Instead of 'I want to complete this', try 'I want to have fun doing this'.

## Personal Development and Growth

Personal development and growth go beyond academic or career achievement. Below are suggestions for cultivating self-development and growth:

- **Set Personal Goals:** This is a powerful tool to help you decide what you want and how to get it. You should consider setting both short-term and long-term goals. Again, the focus does not need to be on education or work, it can be something in your personal life, perhaps relating to a relationship or a hobby. When setting goals, review their feasibility as setting unattainable goals may have the opposite effect.
- **Reflect:** In education or work, we are encouraged to reflect on our achievements, our mistakes, and any areas for progress. The same can be done in our personal lives. Take the time to reflect on a book you have read or a podcast you have listened to. Take the time to think critically about the things you hear, see, and do.

- **Volunteer:** Volunteering can have a tremendous impact on our self-development and growth. Contributing to community service or important causes can give you a sense of accomplishment and responsibility.

## Nurturing Mental Health

Statistics show that there is an increasing number of mental health difficulties in the UK. The Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey: Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing, England, 2014 found that 39% of adults aged 16-74 with conditions such as anxiety or depression, surveyed in England, were accessing mental health treatment, in 2014. This figure had increased from their last survey when the figure was 24% (an updated survey is due imminently). If you, or someone you know, is struggling with mental health, the following may help:

- **Practice Mindfulness and Meditation:** Mindfulness is a state in which you are fully present in the moment. It is a means to consider deeply your thoughts and feelings without judgement. If you are struggling to motivate yourself, consider diarising time for mindfulness or meditation. Whilst early morning meditation is considered best, night-time meditation has its benefits too, so pick a time that works for you.
- **Spend Time in Nature:** We often find that we have everything we need inside, so much so that time outside in the fresh air is neglected. Nature has a calming effect which can reduce anxiety or stress. There is also the added benefit of exercise when walking through a park or hiking which can improve your mental health.
- **Limit Electronic Usage:** In today's modern world, when you look around you will often see individuals glued to their phones. Make time to socialise with friends or family and engage without the use of electronics or social media. Talking in person with someone rather than texting can reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness.
- **Practice Self-Care:** Tailor self-care practices to your preferences, whether it's maintaining a balanced diet, staying hydrated, getting sufficient sleep, or indulging in activities that bring you joy such as a bubble bath, reading a book, a spa day, a long walk, or seeing friends.

The following organisations can be contacted for mental health support:

[Vetlife](#) provide independent, confidential and free help to everyone in the veterinary community experiencing mental health difficulty.

[The Mind Matters Initiative \(MMI\)](#) aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of those in the veterinary team.

## Enhancing Retention and Focus

Retention enables you to recall information and apply it wherever applicable, perhaps in an exam

or a real-life situation. Whether in education or employment, if you find it hard to retain information and focus, try some of the following:

- **Focus on active learning.** Passive learning such as reading or listening has its limitations. Active learning requires a degree of engagement which helps you retain what you have learnt. Active participation enables the brain to make connections it often cannot by simply reading or listening. To take this more hands-on approach, take notes, ask questions, create resources or handouts, and take part in demonstrations.
- **Make a meaningful connection** with whatever it is you would like to retain. When things are meaningful they are easier to remember. If confronted with a hypothetical situation, such as when in an exam, relate it to something in real-life or attempt to personalise it, make it relevant to you.
- **Favour a little and often approach.** Cramming is often ineffective and comes with added stress and pressure. Take time to review information and consolidate what you have learnt. Increased frequency is also beneficial. A few times a week for a short period is better than once a week for a long period.
- **Teach someone else.** If you can teach others what you know it reinforces what you have learnt. Articulating what you know to others in a way they understand is an effective way of solidifying your understanding and it benefits those you are teaching too - a win-win situation.

Embark on this journey of self-discovery armed with these life skills, and watch as you not only overcome barriers but also thrive in all aspects of your life.



# Launch of the VN07/08/09 VTEC Synoptic Assignment

By Jessica Walsh RVN Cert Ed VI  
Lead Internal Verifier, The College of Animal Welfare

*Please note that this article is specifically aimed at student veterinary nurses studying the VetSkill VTEC Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing with The College of Animal Welfare (CAW). There may be parts that are useful to students studying this qualification with other training providers but please refer to any guidance provided by your own provider.*

The College of Animal Welfare are excited to announce that January marked the launch of the VN07/08/09 VTEC Synoptic Assessment for the January 2023 cohort.

This is the third and final assignment and comprises of two separate elements: a reflective case log and an academic essay. A word count of 250 – 500 words is set for each of the reflective case studies and a further word count of 2500 words (+10%) is set for the academic essay.

Both elements are assessing knowledge of medical nursing care and support, principles of veterinary nursing care and surgical nursing and patient care.

## Reflective case log

For this task, you are required to produce a reflective case log containing a minimum of five reflective patient case studies, which should be kept over a minimum period of six months.

The reflective patient case studies should be a narrative of patient cases that include the following:

- Discussion of the impact of common impairments on the hospitalised patients
- Descriptions of long-term nursing care of the chronic medical patient and the importance of

the veterinary team approach

- Descriptions of the nursing considerations for patients with reduced mobility

A range of patient cases should be selected, covering a minimum of two different species, and including at least two patients that have required hospitalisation for differing chronic medical conditions. You will have the opportunity to further expand on these two patient case studies within the academic essay. Writing the essay learning outcomes relevant to these cases at the same time as the reflective logs, is to be encouraged.

Reflection on the nursing care undertaken, and any nursing care plans and bundles utilised, is expected within this case log.

Each reflective case study should be presented in the template shown below.

VetSkill VTEC Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing (Companion Animal) VSVN016

VN07/08/09 Synoptic Assignment Reflective Case Log Template

Learner Name	Learner VetSkill ID			
Case log number (1-5)	Date(s) of nursing care intervention(s)	Case ID	Veterinary Surgeon's diagnosis	
Weight (Kg)	Species/Breed	Age		
Summary of Nursing Care and Considerations				
Reflection				
Learner Declaration				
I have produced the work I am submitting for assessment myself. I have not copied the work of other learners, nor allowed other learners to copy my work. I have referenced any text and images from printed materials and/or from the internet where I have used these in my work.				
Signed				
Print name				
Date				

## Academic essay

For this task, you are required to produce an academic essay that should include the following:

- Descriptions of the long-term nursing care of the chronic medical patient. You will be required to expand on the two patient case studies hospitalised for chronic medical conditions used within your reflective case log. You must include your nursing experience and involvement with these patients in practice, and describe the importance of the veterinary team approach
- Explanations of animal rehabilitation therapy planning and techniques
- Summaries of the psychological needs of hospitalised patients
- Discussion of the factors that will affect the home care management of patients with chronic conditions
- Descriptions of the considerations for home care planning and discharge of the post-operative patient
- Descriptions of the role of nurse clinics in veterinary practice
- Explanations of the role of the veterinary nurse in post-operative checks

You must use examples from your own practice and experience of nursing care throughout this academic essay to support your explanations.

In addition to the two chronic medical patient case studies that you include in this essay, you may also wish to expand on some of the other patient cases included within your reflective log.

## Clinical supervisor preparation

We would encourage all clinical supervisors to have a discussion with their student to identify cases that fit the assessment brief and to consider and reflect on the following: What went well/bad? What could be improved? How did the experience make them feel? Why was it done in that way? What did they learn? What will they implement/do differently? Why was the NCP chosen? Was it beneficial/detrimental? Why? Link to evidence base.

We hope that all students will enjoy reflecting on their nursing care and recognise how their nursing skills have developed. You will have an opportunity to submit two reflective logs to gain feedback prior to the final submission date.

If you are a CAW student and have any assignment related questions please contact Jessica Walsh (Lead Moderator/Verifier) on [jessica.walsh@caw.ac.uk](mailto:jessica.walsh@caw.ac.uk) or Virginia Fletcher (Deputy Moderator/Verifier) on [vfletcher@caw.ac.uk](mailto:vfletcher@caw.ac.uk).

## Does your practice have equipment that is no longer needed?

The College of Animal Welfare would be very grateful of any donations to help with student training...

- Anaesthetic machines
- E/T tubes
- Anaesthetic circuits
- Out-of-date fluid bags
- Centrifuges
- Autoclaves (do not need to be working)
- Microscopes
- Drip pumps

If you have any equipment you think could help, please contact Frank Taylor ([ftaylor@caw.ac.uk](mailto:ftaylor@caw.ac.uk)) or Alison Simpson ([asimpson@caw.ac.uk](mailto:asimpson@caw.ac.uk)).



# JUST FOR FUN...

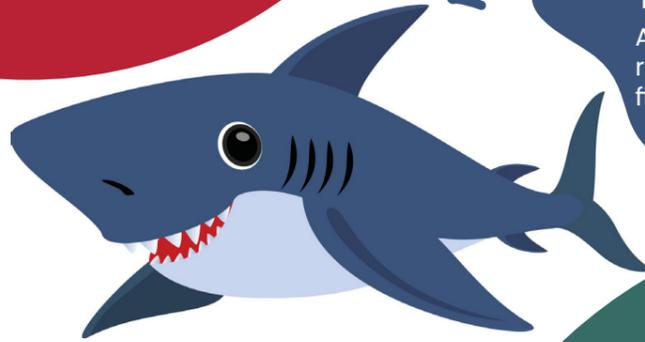
Answers to the fun questions can be found at the bottom of the page.

## PRIZE COMPETITION – WIN A PLACE ON A CAW CONGRESS!

To be in with a chance of winning this month's prize, a free place on one of The College of Animal Welfare's 2024 online congresses of your choice (details can be found on pages 18 and 19), simply solve the anagram below to give the scientific name of a parasite and enter the answer on our [competition entry page](#), by Friday 8 March 2024.

### COLIN FELTS HEADPIECES

Entries will be drawn on the Monday 11 March 2024. The winning entrant will be notified by email, good luck! Terms and conditions can be found on the competition entry page.



### TOP TIP!

A good way to remember that dorsal refers to the back, is to think of the dorsal fin that is located on the back of a shark!

## True or False?

1. The term 'blepharospasm' means blinking. True or false?
2. Patients with renal disease require a reduced potassium diet. True or false?
3. The average gestation period of a bitch is 53 days. True or false?
4. The amino acid, Taurine, is required in the diet of cats, but not dogs. True or false?
5. The term 'epistaxis' is used to describe a nosebleed. True or false?



## MNEMONIC OF THE MONTH

Never Let Monkeys Eat Bananas

- Neutrophils (65%)
- Lymphocytes (25%)
- Monocytes (6%)
- Eosinophils (3%)
- Basophils (1%)

Do you struggle to remember the most to least prominent white blood cells in a sample? This catchy mnemonic can help!

## What am I?

1. I am the small, bone segments forming the toes and digits in a dog's paw. I provide support, aid movement, and facilitate balance. Each toe/digit contains three of me (proximal, middle, and distal).
2. I am a vital organ involved in digestion and blood sugar regulation. I produce enzymes for nutrient breakdown and insulin to regulate glucose levels. Positioned near the small intestine, I play a crucial role in maintaining overall metabolic balance.
3. I am the building blocks of proteins, essential for the structure and function of cells and tissues. I play a vital role in processes like protein synthesis, enzyme function, and metabolic regulation in living organisms.
4. I am a fibrous protein that forms the structural basis of tissues such as hooves, hair, and the outer layer of the skin. I am a durable and insoluble protein that provides strength and protection, contributing to the integrity of external structures.

## Have a go...

If you learn best by seeing things in action, then our 'Have a go' series is for you! Each issue we will have a new practical activity that you can have a go at – all you will need is a few simple items and some enthusiasm!

In this issue we look at replicating digestion! You will need some **cream crackers**, a **banana**, some **orange juice**, a **zip lock bag**, a **pair of tights** and a **cup/bowl**.

### Step 1

Mix the crackers and banana with orange juice (to mimic stomach acid) in a ziplock bag (stomach).



### Step 4

Squeeze the food through the 'small intestine' using peristalsis and releasing the useful nutrients into the body.



### Step 3

Empty the food into tights to mimic the transfer of food from the stomach going into the small intestines.



### Step 2

Use rhythmic segmentation to break the food down.



### Step 5

Give the tights an extra squeeze to replicate fluid drawn out in the large intestine leaving the waste products ready to be excreted.



# CPD & Events



## 8 February

### Rehab Congress

A one day virtual event focussed on veterinary rehabilitation.

- Rehabilitating the Cranial Cruciate Patient
- Post-Op Management of the Neuro Patient
- Feline Rehabilitation: Where to start
- Physiotherapeutic techniques: Effective support and care in the inpatient setting
- Weight management support for rehab

[BOOK A PLACE ONLINE](#)

## 11 April

### Rabbits & Small Furrries Congress

A one day virtual event that explores the care of rabbits and small furrries in veterinary practice.

- Rabbit breeds – When appearance affects health and welfare
- Rabbits – Pain and Analgesia

- Rabbits and Furrries – Behaviour
- Small Rodent Pre, Peri and Post Anaesthesia Protocols
- Dealing with Rats and Mice in Practice

[BOOK A PLACE ONLINE](#)

## 2 May

### Head Nurse Congress

Head Nurse Congress is an event solely focused on head veterinary nurses and practice managers – exploring all aspects of the roles; from the many different responsibilities, to the challenges that are faced on a daily basis.

You'll get the chance to listen to a variety of relevant lectures from expert industry speakers and gain valuable CPD.

[BOOK A PLACE ONLINE](#)

## 12 June

### Behaviour Congress

A one day virtual event aimed at those working in veterinary practice

looking to develop their knowledge of animal behaviour

- The Emotional Experience: Changing perspectives on behaviour
- What has happened to all the Pandemic Puppies?
- Rabbits
- Cat Friendly Nurse Clinics
- An overview of the Dog Friendly Clinic Scheme

[BOOK A PLACE ONLINE](#)

## 3 July

### Clinical Coach Congress

A one day virtual congress dedicated to supporting clinical coaches and those involved in veterinary nurse training. It is recognised by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) as clinical coach standardisation, meaning it is, not only, the ideal opportunity to learn from fellow clinical coaches and expert industry speakers, but it will also provide up to 7 hours of CPD.

[BOOK A PLACE ONLINE](#)

## 12 September

### Advanced VN Congress

A one day virtual congress that explores advanced professional practice, focusing on advanced veterinary nursing skills and knowledge. The full agenda will be available shortly.

[BOOK A PLACE ONLINE](#)

## 16 October

### Wildlife & Exotics Congress

A one day virtual event that explores the care of wildlife and exotic species in veterinary practice. If you are looking to develop your knowledge in this area, or are passionate the care of these animals and want to immerse yourself in talks to inspire you, this congress is for you. The full agenda will be available shortly.

[BOOK A PLACE ONLINE](#)

## 6 November

### VCA Congress

This one day virtual event is focused on those working in the veterinary care field – exploring all aspects of the roles; from the many different responsibilities, to the challenges that are faced on a daily basis. You'll get the chance to listen to a variety of relevant lectures from expert industry speakers and gain valuable CPD/

[BOOK A PLACE ONLINE](#)

## 5 December

### Nutrition Congress

A one day virtual event that focuses on animal nutrition, taking a close look at different diets, strategies and nutritional requirements. This congress offers 7 hours of CPD and aims to increase your knowledge and confidence in a variety of nutritional topics.

[BOOK A PLACE ONLINE](#)

## CAW ALUMNI DISCOUNT!

Have you studied with The College of Animal Welfare (CAW) before? If so, did you know you may be entitled to the CAW Alumni rate, meaning you **can attend any of the CAW one day congresses for just £75+VAT!**

To request the CAW Alumni code to enter at the checkout please email [events@caw.ac.uk](mailto:events@caw.ac.uk)

## VALENTINE'S DAY CPD SALE

# 50% OFF

## CONGRESSES BOOKED AND PAID FOR ONLINE

Book online on  
**14 February  
2024** using  
the code...





# Working as a veterinary nurse lecturer...

The College of Animal Welfare

*If you are interested in becoming a lecturer but are unsure about what it involves or how to get started, then read on... In this article we look at what the role involves, what the initial induction process and training is like, what progression opportunities there are, and try to cover some of the most frequently asked questions about working for The College of Animal Welfare.*

## What is it like to be a lecturer?

To be a great lecturer you must have a genuine enthusiasm and passion for veterinary nursing. You should enjoy helping people learn and inspiring them to grow as a person and achieve their potential.

As well as spending time in the classroom teaching, you will prepare lessons and learning materials, carry out tutorials, mark student work, develop and examine students' practical skills, and write reports and liaise with clinical supervisors.

## But I don't have a teaching qualification...

Whilst a teaching qualification is an advantage when applying for a lecturing role, it is not essential. Many of our lecturers come to us straight from veterinary practice and follow our internal training programme that is designed to provide you with the skills and confidence to succeed.

Within your first year you will be encouraged to undertake a nationally recognised and professional lecturing/teaching qualification that will be funded

by the College. We will aim to have you confidently trained as quickly as possible to start your journey in teaching and will support you in every aspect of the role.

Regular appraisals and team meetings will allow you to develop your own abilities and work closely with your colleagues.

*"As corny as it sounds, there is no typical day. Just the same as no two students are the same then equally no class is the same, no lesson the same and no challenge the same. This job definitely brings variety"*

**Dr Nina De Franco BVMS MSc MCMi MRCVS**  
Regional Head of Veterinary Studies

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What requirements do I have to meet to become a lecturer?

You will need to be either a veterinary surgeon or a registered veterinary nurse, preferably holding a degree. In addition, relevant student support or teaching experience gained as a clinical coach, in voluntary or work shadowing capacity is useful, but not essential.

### When will I start teaching?

We will aim to get you 'up and running' as soon as we feel you are ready and, of course, you feel comfortable and confident within the role.

### What hours will I have to work?

Standard hours for teaching staff are 8:30am-4:30pm with an half an hour lunch break; however, these hours only act as a guide due to the

demanding nature of the role, and part-time hours are considered.

### Are there any other opportunities for lecturers with the College?

We are passionate about providing staff, who wish to progress in their role, the opportunity to do so where possible. We encourage staff to study new academic qualifications as well as take regular CPD.

In addition, we have our own internal programme for nurturing and encouraging talent for future roles in areas such as management and course development.

### What is the time frame for completing my professional teaching qualification with CAW?

You must complete a Level 3 Education and Training, or equivalent, qualification within your first year, but you will have up to five years in which to gain a full qualification.

### How often do you recruit?

As a large organisation with multiple centres around the UK, recruitment opportunities for lecturers come up on a relatively frequent basis. However if we are not recruiting at the current time, please do express your interest with our HR team, by emailing [jobs@caw.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@caw.ac.uk) or by [signing up to our email job alert list](#).

## Want to experience lecturing first hand?

If you are interested in becoming a lecturer and would like to shadow a lecturer for a day to get more of an idea about whether the job is for you, contact Rachel Batten, Human Resources Manager at CAW, on 01480 422060 / [rbatten@caw.ac.uk](mailto:rbatten@caw.ac.uk).

# JOBS @ CAW

## Veterinary Nursing Lecturers

Due to the continued growth of the College we are seeking additional lecturers at our Huntingdon, North London and Leeds centres.

Whether you have taught before, or are wanting a change in career, our induction programme will support you with our internal training programme.

Within your first year you will be encouraged to undertake a nationally recognised and professional teaching qualification. We will aim to have you confidently trained as quickly as possible to start your journey into teaching. You will have a mentor who will be able to point you in the right direction and we will support you in every aspect of your role.

## Internal Quality Assurer

Are you ready for a new challenge? Do you enjoy supporting others to develop their skills and confidence? Are you a confident communicator and passionate about raising standards of veterinary nurse training? If so, we might have the perfect opportunity for you!

Due to the continued growth of the College we are looking to increase our team involved with supporting training practices and their students both in the workplace and in the college environment based at our North London centre.

The ideal candidate will be friendly, professional, self-motivated, well organised, have excellent communication skills, enjoy working as part of a team yet be able to work independently.



## Interested?

To request an application pack, please contact: Rachel Batten, Human Resources Administrator, on [jobs@caw.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@caw.ac.uk).

[Sign up to receive new job alerts here.](#)

*The College of Animal Welfare is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people. All successful applicants will undertake a DBS Check.*



**Level 3  
Diploma in  
Veterinary  
Nursing**



**Blended or  
face to face  
learning options**



**Intakes  
throughout  
the year**



**Companion  
animal and  
equine pathways**



**Apprenticeship  
options**



**Contact us**

01480 422060

[admin@caw.ac.uk](mailto:admin@caw.ac.uk)

[www.caw.ac.uk/vn](http://www.caw.ac.uk/vn)