

Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons
Christopher Tufnell
President
Belgravia House, 62-64 Horseferry Road, London SW1P2AF
United Kingdom

Bern, 26 October 2018

Subject: Membership of RCVS in ENQA

Dear Mr. Tufnell,

I am pleased to inform you that, at its meeting of 17 October 2018, the Board of ENQA took the decision that RCVS is in compliance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015) and thus fulfils the membership criteria according to article 6, paragraph 1 of ENQA's rules of procedure.

The Board would like to use this opportunity to provide an articulation regarding standard 2.5 Criteria for outcomes, where its opinion differs from that of the panel. The Board notes that there is sufficient evidence that criteria for outcomes are based on explicit and published criteria and applied consistently and fairly. Therefore, in the opinion of the Board, the standard 2.5 can be considered as substantially compliant.

Furthermore, the Board emphasises the need for the agency to give more attention to ESG standard 3.4 Thematic analysis, where the Board expect RCVS to follow the recommendations of the panel and develop a clear concept and plan for analysing and publishing general findings of RCVS' external quality assurance activities.

The Board would like to receive a follow-up report containing RCVS's reactions to all recommendations within two years of its decision, i.e. by October 2020.

The Board also encourages RCVS to take advantage of the voluntary progress visit – a new enhancement-led feature in the review process. The visit would take place in about two years' time from this decision. The ENQA Secretariat will be in touch with you in about a year's time to discuss this possibility. The costs of this visit have already been included as part of the review fee and are non-refundable except for the travel costs of the experts. More information about the progress visit can be found in the Guidelines for ENQA Agency Reviews. If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact the ENQA Secretariat.

Please accept my congratulations to RCVS for the positive review outcome and I look forward to fruitful future cooperation.

Yours sincerely,



Christoph Grolimund
President

Annex: Areas for development

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As outlined by the review panel, RCVS is recommended to take appropriate action, so far as it is empowered to do so, on the following issues:

ESG 3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

RCVS is recommended to add a more comprehensive QA policy to the next strategic plan or develop a separate QA policy document that would help stakeholders outside the RCVS to understand the aim and scope of the agency's QA activities. Additionally, the agency is recommended to engage students from both veterinary surgeons and nurses programmes to the decision-making bodies of the RCVS.

ESG 3.4 Thematic analysis

RCVS is recommended to develop a clear concept and plan for thematic analysis. Next, the agency is recommended to set clear roles and responsibilities among staff members for analysing and publishing general findings of RCVS' external quality assurance activities.

ESG 3.6 Internal quality assurance and professional conduct

RCVS is recommended to apply a systematic approach for collecting feedback and align the procedures at accreditations of VS and VN degrees whenever possible.

ESG 2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance

RCVS is recommended to develop VN accreditation methodology closer to the one of VS, and through this increase the focus of IQA in VN reviews, with special attention to student-centred learning, also in VN reviews.

ESG 2.4 Peer-review experts

At VN accreditation, the agency is recommended to pursue the widening of review pools and avoid relying too heavily on the senior staff of RCVS.

ESG 2.5 Criteria for outcomes

Accreditation decisions should be confinable and justifiable. Therefore, RCVS is recommended to consider whether the complex system of decision-making could be simplified; and make the option "Full accreditation for a shorter period" more precise.