Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice
C-VGP.3 Veterinary General Practice –
Professional Responsibility and Practice

Module Outline

Module Leader:

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Enrolment guidance

You will analyse your performance in the skills and knowledge required of your role as a professional within a practice environment; consider the tools and methodologies appropriate to the management of yourself as a professional veterinary surgeon, your interactions with both clients and practice team members and your role in the success of the practice both financially and operationally. You will design and undertake a small project to achieve impact upon a specific issue of relevance to your practice.

Coverage of this module may be integrated with others, particularly other B and C modules. All candidates will normally have completed A-FAVP.1 Foundations of Advanced Veterinary Practice module, and at least one of the practice B modules, before undertaking a C module, although candidates can choose to work through modules in a different order if you wish. In whichever order modules are tackled, compliance with best practice for all the topics covered by module A-FAVP.1 will be expected whenever these are appropriate in C modules. For example, awareness of, and compliance with, all relevant legislation, welfare and ethical principles will be required throughout.

The C-VGP.3 Professional Responsibilities & Practice module can be used towards both the CertAVP and the Veterinary Primary Care designated certificate, the CertAVP(VPC).

You are advised to plan a structured programme of continuing professional development to help you achieve your objectives. Involvement in ‘learning sets’ and networks of other candidates working towards the same or similar modules is encouraged; this could be initiated by the candidates themselves via RVC Learn. The RCVS considers that candidates will need advisers/mentors to support them through the certificate.
Aim

The objective of the module is to enable you to develop a clear overview of the theory and practice of professional responsibility as it relates to the veterinary primary care practitioner. You will demonstrate the ability to analyse their performance within these areas and implement change and improvement within their practice environment highlighting issues that arise; actions taken to overcome these issues as well as reflecting on their future development needs and their strategy to achieve them.

Learning outcomes

After successful completion of this module you will have achieved the following learning objectives:

1. You will have considered the core competences of their role as a professional within the practice environment in three areas: management of one’s self, management of others and management of results. You are expected to take due regard and consideration of the ‘ten guiding principles’ for professional conduct as identified by RCVS. You will have obtained feedback from others (peers, supervisors and fellow team members/employees/reportees) on their performance against these competences as a basis for identifying their strengths and development needs.

2. You will have undertaken a critical career review and personal profile to identify their preferred choices in career progression and to design and put into effect strategies to address their development needs for future roles and to further develop their effectiveness within their present role.

3. You will have undertaken a review of management tools and methodologies appropriate for professional work as a veterinary primary care practitioner and will evidence their critical application of a number of these tools through a small workplace project designed to improve performance in areas of concern or development for the practice where you work.
Assessment

- A reflective commentary of no more than 3,000 words
- A workplace project of no more than 3,000 words
- A final reflective essay of 1,000 words

For candidates taking support, the specific approach to learning, teaching and assessment will be negotiated with you and your employer to meet individual professional development and/or organisational development needs. In all cases, learning achievement will be assessed in relation to the specified and approved module learning outcomes.

You will also submit (but not included in the word count):
- Standard supporting items
- References should be inserted immediately after the piece of work to which they relate
- Appendices containing relevant evidence and
- A Personal Profile
- A Critical Career Review
- Feedback from Others
- Bibliography
- Glossary of terms
- Extracts from a learning diary

Assessment timetable

Work may be submitted at any time during the year and should be submitted as a single portfolio. It will be assessed within approximately 8 weeks of receipt.

Assessment weighting

- Reflective commentary and audits 50%
- Project 50%
- Reflective essay 0%
Learning support

There are two learning routes available to you:

1. Full learning support
2. Standard support (assessment only)

Vet Learning is a “Not for Profit” CIC Company dedicated to the recognition and development of Veterinary Primary Care skills. The majority of the directors were involved in the original research for the CertAVP and Vet Learning is responsible for the creation of the primary care modules that are currently available. We have been providing post-graduate learning experiences since the introduction of the CertAVP more than a decade ago.

The Veterinary Primary Care Modules are challenging and postgraduate learning from within practice is not easy. Our experience over many years is that candidates can struggle with postgraduate learning, need help in understanding what it’s about, how it fits into your practice working life, how it can help you to develop your professional practice into something better.

For these reasons we always encourage that support be taken, it saves time, effort and encourages a richer learning experience with more predictable outcomes. We provide below details of the fully supported and assessment only routes and, in either case, you are invited to free orientation meeting when you register for a module.

Full learning support

To encourage optimal learning and beneficial effects within your practice Vet Learning offer a six-month module learning support package. Please note that the Clinical Audit and Coaching and Mentoring modules may take a little longer and additional support is available if required.

The module package costs £990 and includes:

- Course orientation
- Introduction to work-based learning, standard supporting items and reflective writing. Online workshop and manual (manuals not available to assessment only candidates).
- Module specific online workshop and manual.
- Unlimited (within reason) 1-2-1 support throughout, by either module leader or learning advisor. You are never left alone and working in isolation.
- Formative assessment – a unique opportunity to present your work about three months before final submission. It is assessed by a single assessor who will provide substantive feedback to support the development of the work and help you plan for your final submission
- Membership of online learning community (if available)

To enrol, email info@vetlearning.org. You can convert to Full Learning Support at any time.
Standard support (assessment only)
The assessment only route involves demonstrably meeting the RCVS learning outcomes (available on www.rcvs.org.uk) within the framework described in the relevant module outline.

Standard support is provided to aid self-directed learning and to provide easy access to published material and this is detailed below. Formative feedback will not be given to assessment only candidates.

Standard learning support for all candidates
You will be given a username and password which will allow you to log on to 4 different systems:

1. RVC Learn (http://learn.rvc.ac.uk/)
   - For each module there are learning outcomes, module outline and additional useful material relevant to the module.
   - Access to discussion forums that are used by all CertAVP candidates as well as RVC tutors. The forums can be used to discuss any topic relevant to the CertAVP Veterinary Primary Care C modules or simply to find out who else is out there!
   - Access to presentations from the CertAVP Induction Day.
   - Access to the RVC online library. This is invaluable when researching literature for writing up case reports. This means that (with rare exception) all journal articles that you want to view can be downloaded to your PC with a few mouse clicks. This includes original research articles as well as review articles and case reports. IT and Library support is available for this facility (email library@rvc.ac.uk or helpdesk@rvc.ac.uk).
   - There are also several CPD courses run each year at the RVC that support some of the learning outcomes for many C modules. CertAVP candidates receive a 20% discount on RVC CPD courses – please contact the CertAVP office for further details.

2. RVC Intranet (https://intranet.rvc.ac.uk)
Access to all information available to all RVC students and employees, for example, news, events, policies, committees, services, Library, IT helpdesk, etc.

3. Athens (http://www.openathens.net/)
A huge amount of any library’s information is now available online, e.g. electronic journals, e-books and databases. ‘Athens’ is a system used by UK universities for controlling access to these type of online services and with your username and password, you can access many of a library’s online databases, electronic journals and e-books seamlessly.

4. Webmail (https://webmail.rvc.ac.uk)
You are given an RVC email address, which is compulsory to use for CertAVP communication and submission of work.
The Vet Learning Primary Care Modules are assessed holistically and to do so effectively we need to know something about you and your particular situation.

The standard supporting items (SSI’s) should be completed and placed immediately after the contents page of your portfolio.

Some of the components of the SSI’s will be very familiar to you (CV and job description), they give us a picture of you and what you do. Some may be less familiar (SWOT and reflective CPD record) which are designed to challenge your reflective thinking and reflective writing accordingly in preparation for your work in this module.

If you have completed this work within the last twelve months for another module you may update, cut and paste your previous submission here. If you have not completed these items **within the last twelve months** then they should be completed afresh.

**Curriculum Vitae**
This is a traditional CV which should be completed in a style of your choice. Cutting and pasting an existing up to date CV is acceptable.

**Job description**
This is a traditional job description that should be completed in a style of your choice. Employer supplied job descriptions often do not reflect accurately what you do and we would like you to provide an accurate job description of what YOU do.

Reflecting on this often brings a realisation of the breadth and importance of your role and can be empowering.

**SWOT**
As reflecting on your job description has given you the opportunity to reflect on your role, so a SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) exercise gives you the opportunity to reflect on how you fit into that role.

Be honest, write reflectively* and in about 750 words paint a picture of how you see yourself NOW. We would encourage you to revisit this after the module and, perhaps, a year or two later.

**Reflective CPD record**
This is the most challenging exercise in that it will give you the opportunity to practice reflective writing* before you get to the work that you will be assessed on.
Look back on your professional career and the CPD that you have done over the last few years (maximum 5). Rather than just listing dates and course titles, try to identify what you learned from each experience and consider how valuable or otherwise it was.

We are not looking for dry facts but rather awareness, perception and critical comment. You might look at either the Kolb or Honey and Mumford learning cycles for guidance. Essentially:

- What happened?
- What were your reflections/feelings about it?
- How did you make theoretical sense of it?
- How did you take the learning forward?

There is no fixed word count for this item but we suggest you aim at no more than about 1,000 words.
Reflective commentary

The reflective commentary of no more than 3,000 words builds on your learning from practice and the tools and theories available to the veterinary general practitioner.

Critically reflect upon factors that impact on your success in practice, methods you use in measuring success. Consider as examples issues arising from areas such as practice management, leadership, project management, and marketing.

You will find it very helpful to use your “learning diary” to document issues which arise, the resources you draw upon e.g. literature and documented examples, the development of your expertise and your analysis and the learning that ensued.

Project

Your project report is the central core of your submission. It should be a max 3,000 word description of your project on the application of theory and approaches to understanding and application of an approach to addressing an issue or development within the practice.

Learning diary

You should keep a learning diary to record your reflections as you progress through the programme. The style your diary takes is up to you. It could be a series of dated bullet points or more detailed analytical text. However, we recommend you keep a separate entry for each key event you choose so you can track progress and thinking as you record personal reflections. It can be helpful to use your diary to organise any attempts you make to plan to apply the ideas to your work place and record outcomes. You can also keep track of open issues and next steps.

The learning diary is a private, confidential journal and will not be submitted as part of the assessment however we will ask you to select and submit some extracts of it to demonstrate it exists and the quality of reflection contained therein. We find that candidates who regularly keep such a diary find the submission process and the preparation of the required evidence a more valuable experience.

Some elements you may want to include are:

- Date
- Your learning
- Module outcomes
Next steps/ actions

Use your learning diary to reflect on personal, theoretical and applied issues in your case work and model building. Where you attend key events as part of your programme draw upon those experiences.

By taking examples of concrete experiences, you can then consider them in the light of your new understanding of the subject. By reflecting on that theoretical knowledge, you may come to a new understanding which you can then apply in practice. Or you might critique a previous incident you have worked with in the light of that understanding. Did it happen as your imagined it would, what helped or hindered, what unexpected factors came into play, what delighted and surprised you; these are all questions that might help your reflection.

This produces a reflective cycle of learning which it is helpful to record in your learning diary. By doing this regularly and then looking back over those accounts from time to time, themes will emerge which will take your learning forward.

It is this combination of experiences, theoretical understanding, and reflection, developing new ideas, applying them and reflecting on the experience that constitutes the basis for the learning journey as recorded in your portfolio. These reflections in turn inform the building of your model of practice and help you to critique your case work.

Hence it is not enough to say “this is what I did or this is the theory I used in my model or I applied to the case”, rather your assessors will want to know that you have reflected on these experiences and attempted to apply learning in your practice.

You might want to use your diary to reflect on your experiences in practice and to record reflections from your work context. Think about what works well for you and what does not work in fostering your learning and that of your staff.

Sharing your reflections and feedback within your diary can enhance the learning and help you develop your thinking about issues in professional practice.
The final reflective essay is a 1,000 word essay which should be completed after you have completed your module and submitted with your summative assessment documentation.

It should document your learning journey from the time you started the module to the point at which you submitted it. You should focus upon your own learning rather than the subject matter of the module itself. Consider particularly how your attitudes may have changed during the course of the module. Consider also how your approach has changed and how this may affect your own and/or your team’s current and future practice.

The final summary essay will not receive a mark but submitting it is a condition of passing the module.

It can be helpful to base the essay using the reflective Three What’s approach:

- What? (did I do/observe/write about)
- So What? (did I learn)
- Now What? (how will this change my practice in the future)
Instructions for submitting work

Please submit a complete portfolio as a double spaced .PDF document and ensure that the beginning of the work has a cover page as per appendix a. detailing:

1. your name  
2. your candidate number  
3. module code and name  
4. Date submitted

Please email your work to certavp@rvc.ac.uk.

Your portfolio should consist of:

- Cover page  
- Contents page  
- Standard supporting items  
- A reflective commentary (+ word count)  
- Workplace project (+ word count)  
- References should be inserted immediately after the piece of work to which they relate  
- Appendices containing relevant evidence and
  - Personal Profile  
  - Critical Career Review  
  - Feedback from Others  
  - Bibliography  
  - Glossary of terms  
  - Extracts from a learning diary  

- Final reflective essay (+ word count)

Word counts

Word counts, where quoted are the maximum accepted unless otherwise stated. Submissions over count may be returned unmarked.

The word counts for this module are:

- Submission 7,500 words maximum  
- Final reflective essay 1,000 words maximum

Tables, figure legends (including description of radiographs), appendices and reference list are not included in the word count. The report title and titles within the report are included. You should not put important information in to a table to avoid the word count; only numerical data should appear
within a table. In the interests of fairness to all candidates the word count is strictly adhered to and reports that exceed it will be returned unmarked.

**Plagiarism**
Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Work submitted to Vet Learning for assessment may be examined using Turnitin. We would advise you to examine your own work prior to submission to ensure it does not present a problem.

**References**
All references should be cited in the text. Avoid listing references that are not cited in the text or vice versa.

References should be placed immediately after the piece of work to which it relates. We recommend using Harvard referencing as described by the Anglia-Ruskin University (http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/harvard.htm). You will find it very helpful to use a program such as Endnote® or Reference manager® to organise your references.

**Appendices**
- You may include appendices to provide evidence to support the learning outcomes described within the submission.
- The assessors are not obliged to read the appendices in detail so please only include relevant items of evidence.
- The appendices may not be used to provide additional information that should be within the submission. Any such information will not be marked and will not contribute to the overall grade.
- Images may be included here or in the main body of text. Only include images that you think are specifically relevant as these generally enhance your submission.
- All items containing personal information should be anonymised.
Additional support, mentors and coaches

Candidates who study for the Vet Learning C modules with the RVC are encouraged to work collaboratively with others to enhance your learning.

**Additional support**
Within the support packages available the module leaders, facilitators and learning advisors are happy to provide guidance, coaching and mentoring as appropriate.

Where practical, Vet Learning will also provide access to an online learning community (ask for details).

Outside of the formal support, the following might be considered:

**Mentors**
Mentors can offer considerable support but it should be remembered that, for a number of the Vet Learning modules it may prove difficult to find individuals with appropriate skills, they should possess a significant understanding of self-directed learning, reflective practice and the specific subject matter of the module concerned.

**Coaches**
Many coaches have a sound understanding of self-directed learning and the skills of reflection. They are also, often, able to provide “content free” coaching which supports development without requiring an in depth knowledge of the subject concerned. Working with a coach can be challenging but may support more rapid development with greater exposure to and use of reflective skills than might be the case with a mentor.

Whether you work with a coach or mentor ensure you negotiate the relationship in an explicit way so that you get what you need and both parties clearly understand your responsibilities and limits.
Recommended reading list

The following list is given as a guide as to where to start and for this reason cannot be considered ‘complete’. We also don’t expect you to read texts from cover to cover or to use all of the texts listed, however we do recommend you make use of the most recent edition of textbooks where available. We apologise if you feel a particular favourite is missing - feel free to use the Learn discussion board to pass on additional suggestions to other candidates.

**Textbooks:**
If you are planning on buying textbooks ensure that you buy the most recent edition:


**Journals:**
A wide variety of management journals contain articles on developing practice including sources such as HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW
Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice
C-VGP.3 Veterinary General Practice –
Professional Responsibility and Practice

Submission Portfolio

Candidates Name:

Candidate Number:

Date submitted: