VETERINARY NURSING PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION

Visitation Report

VETERINARY COUNCIL OF IRELAND

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VISITATION AND PROGRAMME DETAILS					
Name of school:	Technological University of the Shannon – Athlone Campus				
Nature of visit:	Initial accreditation		Re-accreditation	X	Interim inspection
Names of Chair and Visitation Panel:	Sean Ó Laoide MVB (Chair)		Fiona Linnane RVN		
	Vilhelmiina Huuskonen DVM		Shirley Gibbins RVN		
Date of visit:	24-25th October 2023				
School liaison officer for this visit:	Gillian Coughlan				
VCI liaison officer for this visit:	Yvonne Reville				

Nature of courses for delivery/delivered:					
Higher education	X	Further education			
Small animal	X	Equine	X	Farm (food-producing) animal	X

Pattern of delivery:		
Full-time:	X	Part-time (day or block-release from employment)

Name of veterinary nursing award achieved by students:

Bachelor of Science (Ordinary) Veterinary Nursing

Is this award nationally accredited?		Yes	X	No	
Name of accrediting body:	Veterinary Council of Ireland				

Intakes and student numbers: _Please indicate day of week students in college (day-release)_

1st year	Intakes per year	48	Students per intake at present:	
	Month(s) commenced	September	Maximum VCI- approved capacity:	
2nd year	Intakes per year	48	Students per intake at present:	
	Month(s) commenced	September	Maximum VCI-approved capacity:	
3rd year (if applicable)	Intakes per year	48	Students per intake at present:	
	Month(s) commenced	September	Maximum VCI- approved capacity:	

STANDARD 1 INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/ Minor Deficiency)
1.1 An accredited veterinary nursing programme in Ireland must normally be part of an institution accredited to provide higher and/or further education by National Authorities.	Yes	

Evidence Examined related to this Standard
SER completed.

Comments
Approved by QQI

Commendations

Recommendations

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STANDARD 2   FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
2.1 The programme must demonstrate adequate and sustainable financial resources to support its educational goals and support its mission	Yes	

Evidence Examined
Interview with the TUS Vice President for Finance.

Comments
HEA funding and student fees assured for 5 years. HOD responsible for non- pay budget managed through the agresso financial management system.

Commendations

Recommendations

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STANDARD 3. ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
3.1 The programme must develop and follow an appropriate mission statement	Yes	

Evidence Examined
TUS Strategic Plan 2023-2026

Comments
TUS – connectivity, cross country campuses. Improving and advancing standards and opportunities throughout the Republic of Ireland. Faculty of Health and Science includes Biovet and microbial sciences (VN). The STEM building will be incorporated from 2025. TUS are keen to grow post graduate and international opportunities. Why is there no honours option for VN? Offers a different opportunity for VNs and allows competition with other universities. Does the faculty teach across, or is it within departments? Primarily teaching within the microbiology / biovet department, but no barrier to teaching across full faculty. MOU with GURTEEN. Focusing on overall faculty approach – period of transition. Working process for roles and responsibilities / creation of new roles following restructure. VN has a mission statement.

Commendations

Recommendations

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
3.2 The authority of the Programme Director, Organisational Structure, and Line Management of all staff contributing to the programme must be clearly defined	Yes	

Evidence Examined Panel discussion Interview with Head of Department and core VN team. Organisational chart

Comments

Commendations

Recommendations

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Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
3.3 Policies, procedures, and marketing information for the programme must be clear and transparent, and must be consistent with those provided for all students of the parent institution	Yes	

Evidence Examined

TUS Website and SER.

Comments

Detailed information contained on the TUS website with links to the VCI and ACOVENE webpages.

Commendations

Recommendations

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Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
3.4 Opportunities for feedback on the programme must be provided to students, teaching staff and employers, and evidence should be provided on how this feedback is used to inform programme development	Yes	

Evidence Examined

Panel discussion with staff members
Panel discussion with students

Comments

Open door policy for feedback.

End of module feedback is optional. Class student representatives meet Programme Board once per semester. The meeting outcomes feed into programme review. Class rep group is trained by the university team to ensure they can manage the feedback processes effectively.

Team-based learning approaches offer more immediate feedback to lecturers.

Wider university team contributes to programmatic review, which is fed by student feedback.

Students feel that they have good opportunities for feedback, and it is considered and addressed where feasible.

Commendations

Recommendations

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STANDARD 4. HUMAN RESOURCES

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
4.1 Institution must provide sufficient number of teaching and support staff to underpin delivery of educational goals and student support	Yes	

Evidence Examined

Staff CVS
Interviews with staff
BVM Staff List and Duties
Department Structure Biovet

Comments

There is a good range of interprofessionalism demonstrated across the lecturing staff, with impressive experience and relevant teaching qualifications.

The veterinary nursing department now comprises of eight team members, four RVNS and four veterinary practitioners. This is a significant increase since the last accreditation review, demonstrating the support for this provision from the university.

Student development appears to be well considered by support staff, and students were very complimentary about the support in place. This is clearly accessible and provides relevant assistance. Those who required reasonable adjustments found the process easy to follow and had their additional needs considered.

Commendations

Recommendations

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Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
4.2 The Programme Director must have sufficient authority and support to manage the programme according to its mission statement	Yes	

Evidence Examined

Programme Coordinator job description
Staff CVs
BVM Staff List and Duties
Department Structure Biovet

Comments

The Programme Coordinator role is shared across three members of the veterinary nursing department, to ensure the workload is manageable and feasible. The role is also rotated at least every three years, to avoid burnout and overwhelming staff and to encourage innovative approaches to the development and delivery of the programme.

The Programme Coordinators are well supported by the Head of Department, who accommodates reasonable requests for resources, ensuring the team is able to maintain the required standard of provision.

Commendations

The programme is clearly run by a passionate team who are well supported by the Senior Leadership of TUS, specifically the Head of Department.

Recommendations

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Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
4.3 Veterinary nurses should be included among those providing instruction, and clinical instruction must involve veterinary nurses and veterinary practitioners, ensuring that legal provisions on the practice of veterinary medicine in Ireland are respected.	Yes	

Evidence Examined

TUS Application Form
Staff CVs
BVM Staff List and Duties
Department Structure Biovet

Comments

The lecturing team demonstrate effective use of VNs and VPs, with other relevant skills covered, such as microbiology and pharmacology. There is appropriate use of non-registered professionals from other backgrounds, such as the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation and Development (CPID) and safeguarding, to promote well rounded student development.

Clinical Supervisors in practice appear to effectively support student development with the practical competences and are exclusively veterinary nurses and veterinary practitioners. TUS ensures that students are only completing placements in practices that have a RVN.

Commendations

Recommendations

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Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
4.4 Provision of clinical instruction outside the institution, by those not directly employed, must be accompanied by appropriate training for all individuals involved in supervising student placement	No	Minor Deficiency

Evidence Examined
TUS Application Form Staff CVs Student and alumni interviews

Comments
The lecturing team demonstrate effective use of VNs and VPs, with other relevant skills covered, such as microbiology and pharmacology. TUS hosts CPD days which are available to Training Practices and Clinical Supervisors. An online training programme is being developed, with support from the VCI and other training providers, however, there is no specific date for release. According to current Clinical Supervisors, there is no formal Clinical Supervisor training, and it is very much handed on from previous staff in practice. TUS does not appear to be actively training and developing the Clinical Supervisors, other than guidance on how to use the InPlace software. Ongoing support is available for CS as required, but this is a case-by-case basis and is not standardised. The Placement Guidance contains relevant and valuable information for Clinical Supervisors to assist with student development in the practice setting, but specific training and standardisation must be available.

Commendations

Recommendations
TUS must develop and deliver Clinical Supervisor training and standardisation. School Liaison Officer Gillian Coughlan commented on the recommendation of standardisation: TUS staff were involved in the development of a national clinical supervisor training programme. This programme is ready to be rolled out and sits with the VCI currently. TUS will make this available immediately once it is available through the VCI website and will offer a CPD evening to accommodate this.

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
4.5 Teaching staff must have appropriate opportunities for continuing professional development	Yes	

Evidence Examined

TUS Application Form
Staff interviews
Staff Development Policy
BVM Staff List and Duties
Department Structure Biovet

Comments

All clinical staff have either undertaken or are enrolled on Master's programmes. This is either clinical or education based.

VCI CPD requirements are covered, including attendance at conferences, both Irish and international, allowing for an opportunity to build networks.

There is a well-documented approach to applying for CPD and time supported for study leave, which can include hours remission (time release). All staff felt that their professional development is well supported by TUS.

Commendations

Recommendations

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STANDARD 5 PHYSICAL FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
5.1 Classrooms, lecture halls, practical classrooms and other teaching spaces must be maintained and cleaned regularly, have adequate capacity for the number of students enrolled, and be appropriately equipped	Yes	
Evidence Examined Tour of the facilities. Panel discussion with staff		
Comments Student intake per year for the past three years is 48. Practical classes are held in groups of 16, therefore adequate capacity. Rooms are well equipped with consumables and there is plenty of storage space.		
Commendations		
Recommendations		

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Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
5.2 Clinical facilities, including clinical skills laboratories and simulated facilities, must be representative of contemporary veterinary facilities in Ireland.	Yes	

Evidence Examined

Tour of the facilities.
Interview with current students.

Comments

€54000 spent on equipment since 2021, significant increase for this particular programme.
Manikins including canine, equine and poultry are available. Multiparameter monitors, new diagnostic imaging, and personal protective equipment. In-house haematology analyser, canine / feline dental models, and clinical waste containers. Wall display of VPO and POM drugs used in practice.

Erasmus + partnership with Nord Universitat (10 students undertaken/taking international placements).

Commendations

Excellent Clinical Skills Lab and diagnostic imaging suite

Recommendations

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
5.3 Adequate space must be provided for administrative requirements of the programme, and for pastoral support of students	Yes	

Evidence Examined

Meeting with staff members from the academic staff, student resource centre, disability, counselling, administration and registration.
Interview with the current students.
Tour of the facilities and meeting with the TUS student counselling service and TUS student disability support service.
Student services brochures (appendix 12.1)

Comments

Additional learning needs considered and supported.
GP and nursing clinics on site.
Student counselling service.
Library has designated work areas.
Communal pods.

Students confirmed they make use of the tutor support available to them and feel well supported, academically and pastorally.

Commendations

The student support facilities are impressive, and it is apparent that every member of the staff is highly dedicated.

Recommendations

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Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
5.4 Adequate safeguards must be in place to ensure the safety of students and staff, and of animals that may be used for instructional purposes	Yes	

Evidence Examined

Tour of the facilities.
Interview with academic staff.
Interviews with postgraduate and current students.

Comments

Induction process.

Counselling service, GP, and nurse clinic. Inclusive approach.

EAP available. Online health advice, twice weekly group wellbeing online. Relevant campaigns e.g., menopause and mental health awareness.

6-week counselling service available to staff.

Togetherall app available for students off campus, 24/7. Vetlife and Irish Benevolent Fund on campus to explain to students how they help etc.

Safety on placement covered in Placement Guidance.

Commendations

Recommendations

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Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
5.5 Facilities must be such as to provide for compliance with legislation impinging on the practice of veterinary medicine, including Animal Remedies Regulations	Yes	

Evidence Examined
Training Practice visit Module content and placement skills list. Panel discussion with students. TUS veterinary nursing learning outcomes mapped to VCI benchmarks and competencies (Appendix to section 11.0)

Comments
Student understanding of the ARR is covered in Pharmacology 2.1. Ethics & regulatory affairs for veterinary practice module

Commendations

Recommendations

STANDARD 6. CLINICAL INSTRUCTION

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
6.1 The Programme must be provided with access to domestic animals in their normal settings, and in clinical environments, to ensure adequate instruction in animal handling and in clinical veterinary nursing procedures.	Yes	

Evidence Examined
Gurteen college – video made by the students shown to us on day 1. Tour of the facilities on day 1. Interview with the current students and staff. Practice visit on day 2.

Comments
Healthy cat, dog, equine and farm animal handling is well organised and supervised (especially with Gurteen). MOU fit for purpose and covers all aspects with Gurteen.

Commendations
The exposure to farm animals is a unique element of this programme, and this is clearly well supported by the teams at Gurteen and TUS.

Recommendations

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Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
6.2 There must be a written agreement with clinical placement providers and other organisations contributing to the veterinary nursing programme	Yes, minimally.	Minor Deficiency

Evidence Examined
Written agreements signed by the practices Self-assessment report Interview with the staff Veterinary Placement Agreement

Comments
A suitable number of practices. The written agreement between TUS and the placement practices is basic. It does not include roles and responsibilities but does minimally cover what is required. Placement guidance is detailed and covers all requirements for students and practices. Discussions in practice indicated that personnel knew and understood what was expected; however, the Placement Agreement is very limited in detail and needs expanding so that practices know and understand the specific requirements and it is clearly documented.

Commendations

Recommendations
Update the Veterinary Placement Agreement to cover all roles and responsibilities related to student veterinary nurse training in the practice setting.

STANDARD 7 INFORMATION RESOURCES

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
7.1 Adequate access to appropriate current information *via* print and electronic textbooks, journals and other information sources must be provided	Yes	

Evidence Examined

Tour of the library and meeting with the head librarian.
Interview with current students.
List of Library resources (Appendix to 7.8)

Comments

Library induction delivered to students to support literature search etc.

Relevant texts, although some outdated. Journals and other sources are referenced in the module descriptors, with up-to-date texts included.

The library provides free printing service to students and an inter-library loan service which provides readers with materials held in other libraries.

A modern library space including good seating arrangements.

Commendations

Recommendations

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
7.2 The programme must equip students with the skills, including information retrieval and analysis, to become independent learners	Yes	

Evidence Examined

Interview with postgraduate and current students.
Interview with academic staff.
Tour of the Library

Comments

Induction processes developing inter-professional elements.

It would be helpful to see some assessment examples to confirm this. Modules appear to cover it.

Independent learning promoted within module delivery strategies and the physical training is developed in the practice setting as well as at Gurteen, where students take responsibility during night shifts with support from the farm team.

Buddy system also in place to support and develop new students.

Students can borrow Laptops from the Library on 2-hour loan and apply for a yearly laptop loan through TUS loan scheme. The library is equipped with multiple computers available for students and a separate modern library IT Lab.

Commendations

Recommendations

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STANDARD 8 ADMISSIONS AND STUDENT SUPPORT

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
8.1 Admissions policies must be clearly articulated, including any provision for advanced entry/accreditation of prior learning, and must be transparent	Yes	

Evidence Examined
Meeting with staff members from the student resource centre, disability, counselling, administration, and registration (day 1). Via TUS website

Comments
Admissions policy is transparent and available to prospective students. Places are available to students through the CAO process. With five award entry places for QQI level 5 students.

Commendations

Recommendations

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
8.2 Policies and procedures for student assessment, academic progression, and fitness to practice must be transparent and available to all students	No	Minor deficiency

Evidence Examined

Meeting with staff members from the student resource centre, disability, counselling, administration, and registration (day 1).
Interview with the Head of Department, academic and clinical staff members, and the postgraduate and current students.
TUS website.

Comments

Currently there is no "fitness to practice" policy, although a TUS policy is under development as directed by the Academic Council. Fitness to study is primarily being considered and needs to cover all professional programmes delivered at TUS. It was suggested that TUS consider an overarching policy that can be relevant for all regulatory considerations, without necessarily needing to create separate and specific policies.

The process for module and academic progression is clear, with a robust Boards process in place which External Examiners are invited to attend. External Examiner reports are completed annually, and feedback is addressed as applicable. There is an appropriate exit award in place should students be unable to achieve the licence to practise qualification.

Commendations

Recommendations

An appropriate "fitness to practice" policy must be developed.

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Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
8.3 Formal mechanisms should be established for liaison between student representatives and those responsible for management of the programme	Yes	

Evidence Examined

Meeting with staff members from the academic staff, student resource centre, disability, counselling, administration, and registration (day 1).
Interview with current students.
Lecturers available via email.

Comments

Student representative for class meets with the programme board once per semester, feeds student feedback into programme review. Class rep group is trained by the student union to ensure they can manage the feedback processes effectively.

Wider university team contributes to programmatic review, which is fed by student feedback.

Commendations

Student reps, clear system.
The current students feel that they are listened to and that their opinions and suggestions are taken on board and changes implemented when appropriate.

Recommendations

STANDARD 9 CURRICULUM

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
9.1 The curriculum should provide graduates with the skills and competencies to perform a wide variety of entry-level professional veterinary nursing roles, as articulated in the VCI Benchmarks and Competencies document.	Yes	
Evidence Examined Meeting with academic staff members (day 1). Interview (online) with postgraduate and current students. Self-assessment report. Student timetables (appendix 4.2). Programme schedule (appendix 4.1). TUS 2023 academic regulations (appendix 10.2). Findings from 2023 survey of stakeholders (placement facilitators, future employers, and current students).		
Comments 30 weeks of placement covering 1200 hours. Staggered placements so they have enough placement provision. SA/LA & EQ. Outreach – developing student awareness of the wider veterinary community. Careers fair. Gurteen is a residential placement, supporting safe and effective skill development in a safe and standardised way. Two weeks, continuous on site. Beef and dairy cows, and sheep and horses on site. Can be rostered off if they need to spend some time at home e.g., childcare. Covered in the placement module requirements and placement guidance. Curriculum has been mapped to the VCI benchmarks and competencies since the last visitation in 2017.		
Commendations Based on the online interview, the postgraduate and recent graduate students feel that the course prepared them well for a professional Veterinary Nursing role.		
Recommendations		

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Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
9.2 In addition to specific veterinary nursing technical skills and competences, graduates should demonstrate appropriate generic competences including professionalism, ethical behaviour, and readiness for continuing professional development	Yes	

Evidence Examined
Interview in person with current students. Online interview with postgraduate and recent graduate students. Findings from 2023 survey of stakeholders (placement facilitators, future employers, and current students). Practice visit (day 2).

Comments
Seems to have been improved recently – well covered in placement and preparation modules. Independent learning promoted in module delivery methods.

Commendations

Recommendations

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
10.1 Assessment criteria, and required standards for progression, must be clearly articulated	~~No~~ School Liaison Officer Gillian Coughlan commented: All assessment criteria and progression requirements are outlined in both the module descriptors and in the TUS Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes 2023 – 2024	Minor Deficiency

Evidence Examined

TUS Application Form; Module Descriptors
Assessment Schedule
External Examiner Report

Comments

The programme consists of five and ten credit modules, with a mix of continuous and summative assessments.

The TUS strategy has aimed to increase the number of five credit modules, however, this did not fit well with the veterinary nursing programme requirements, so this has been reverted to primarily ten credit modules for this programme. This was based on staff and student feedback.

The assessment load appears to be quite high, with generally three assessment strategies for each module; however, students fed back that they appreciated the continuous assessment approaches and felt that they were clearly progressing. It also reduces the pressure on the summative assessment. There is a mandatory pass/fail practical element in some modules, which is required due to the clinical nature of the veterinary nursing role and the necessity to demonstrate practical competence.

The assessment methodologies are diverse, with relevant skills being developed for students' future careers. Nonetheless, TUS is required to review the assessment mapping, as there are currently multiple learning outcomes being assessed in different ways within the same module. Reducing this will ease staff workload as well as assessment burden and pressure for students.

School Liaison Officer Gillian Coughlan reflected on the number of credits obtainable for the different modules stating: 10 credit (non-semesterised) modules are only applicable to Year 1. All modules in year 2&3 are 5 credit.

Commendations

TUS is to be commended for a diverse assessment approach, empowering students to develop skills which will support their future career development.

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Recommendations

Review the assessment mapping to reduce overassessment of learning outcomes.

School Liaison Officer Gillian Coughlan reflected on assessment mapping and learning outcomes as follows: Assessment loads are under continual review through the programme boards and other feedback mechanisms. However this recommendation does relate to the Standard 10.1 and should not impact on the standard being met.

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
10.2 Direct evidence must be provided on how students' competence in practical skills is objectively assessed	Yes	

Evidence Examined

Student portfolios
Student and alumni interviews
Training practice visit / employer interview
External Examiner Report

Comments

Students are required to complete a skills list, in the practice setting, with competency confirmed by a Clinical Supervisor or member of the practice team. The list of skills is appropriate and relevant for contemporary practice and should develop students who are practically capable for their roles in practice.

Students also complete case studies and deliver a presentation, further demonstrating their knowledge, understanding and experience gained in the practice setting.

Individual practical assessments are incorporated into specific modules, as a pass/fail assessment element, with a final practical summative assessment covering four OSCE style stations. The number of stations aims to reduce the risk of students completing their qualification without having the requisite skill in an entire area of nursing practice, such as anaesthesia or surgical nursing, which are now assessed separately within the relevant modules.

The practical assessments follow PEPAS/RCVS guidance for practical assessment of veterinary nurses. Whilst this is a valid and robust approach, TUS is encouraged to consider the currency of the guidance and review whether the approaches remain fit for purpose for its requirements. The marking processes for these assessments introduce a risk of human error, which TUS has already recognised, and has purchased marking software (Speedwell) which it will commence utilisation of in this academic year.

Commendations

TUS is to be commended for its recognition of the marking risks posed during practical assessments and the purchasing of marking software to alleviate this concern.

Recommendations

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/ Minor Deficiency)
10.3 Appropriate procedures for quality assurance of assessment and grading must be implemented	Yes	

Evidence Examined
External Examiner Reports TUS Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook Portfolio examples Skills lists examples

Comments
The quality assurance of assessments was described in detail and documented within the Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook. Relevant ICE policies are in place and fully followed from the start of assessment development to when a particular assessment is no longer used. The Examinations Office has recently commenced use of GURU, an online security software package to maintain the integrity of assessments. This approach was generated following internal review and has been commended by the External Examiner. Examples of completed student skills lists and portfolios were also provided as evidence of the quality assurance process, which was demonstrated sufficiently. TUS has recognised that the grading criteria across the practical skills completion could be ~~was~~ weighted ~~unfairly~~ differently, and this has now been amended so third year students are required to demonstrate a higher level of academic capability than first years. School Liaison Officer Gillian Coughlan's comment on the last paragraph: It was weighted equally in each year. However, it was decided during the programmatic review process by the clinical team that a redistribution of the marks would allow greater awarding of marks in year 2 & 3 in line with their level of competency.

Commendations

Recommendations

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
10.4 Procedures for timely remediation, and of appeal, of assessment outcomes must be available	Yes	

Evidence Examined

TUS Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook
Student interviews
Placement Guidance

Comments

The students who were interviewed confirmed that they were aware of the appeal process, although none of them had needed to submit an appeal.

The appeal process is clearly detailed within the Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook and is included within the Placement Guidance. There are also links directly to the relevant elements of the regulations within the online platform.

Commendations

Recommendations

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SECTION 11 COMPETENCIES

Standard	Standard is Met	Standard is not Met (Specify Major/Moderate/Minor Deficiency)
11 . Please refer to the amended Accreditation Committee for Veterinary Nurse Education (ACOVENE) competencies outlined in the document. 'Veterinary Council of Ireland Standards of Accreditation for Educational Programmes of Veterinary Nursing in Ireland'. Demonstrate how each of the 13 competencies are developed in veterinary nursing students and assessed by the programme provider.	Yes	

Competencies

1. Health and safety
2. Developing personal performance and maintaining working relationships
3. Carry out veterinary reception duties
4. Manage clinical environments for procedures and investigations
5. Providing emergency first aid to animals
6. Provide and administer nursing care
7. Supporting clients in caring for animals
8. Perform laboratory diagnostic tests
9. Prepare for diagnostic imaging techniques and conduct radiography on animals
10. Prepare for veterinary surgical procedures
11. Assist the veterinary surgeon during surgical procedures
12. Assist in the provision of anaesthetics to animals
13. Dispense and administer medication

Comments

The ACOVENE Competences and VCI Standards are fully mapped and clearly covered within the duration of the programme. The module mapping provides a clear overview of the requirements, and the Skills List and portfolio demonstrate the practical requirements which are covered in the practice setting.

Students are assessed both theoretically and practically against the competencies and standards requirements.

VISITATION REPORT SUMMARY
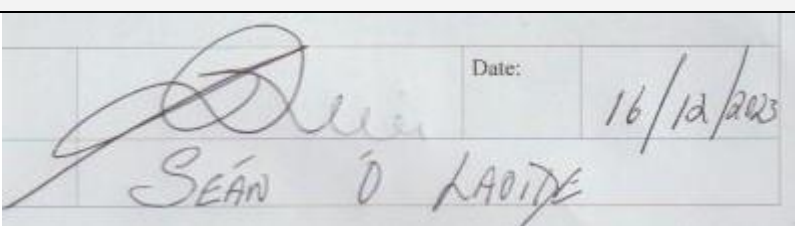
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Actions by institution:

Recommendations:

Standard	Recommendation:
4.4	TUS must develop and deliver Clinical Supervisor training and standardisation.
6.2	Update the Veterinary Placement Agreement to cover all roles and responsibilities related to student veterinary nurse training in the practice setting.
8.2	An appropriate "fitness to practice" policy must be developed.
10.1	Review the assessment mapping to reduce overassessment of learning outcomes.

Recommendations _must_ be addressed to the satisfaction of the Veterinary Council for Ireland before accreditation can be confirmed. Re-accreditation programmes must address conditions within the timescales agreed, or as stipulated by the VCI

Date for response by institution

A response to the recommendations set out above, with a detailed action plan for resolution, is required by: Date:	
All conditions must be satisfactorily addressed by: Date:	

Accreditation or re-accreditation recommendation to the Veterinary Council for Ireland

Name of programme(s)	Accreditation category						Period of Accreditation	
	Full		Conditional		Provisional		Period (years)	

Signatures

Chairperson of visitation Panel:	_signature_ Date: 16/12/2023 SEÁN Ó LAOIDE	Date:
Please print name:		

		Date:
Signature of Principal or Chief Executive		
Please print name:		

VETERINARY COUNCIL OF IRELAND

On receipt of this document, the Course Provided must complete and return to the accreditation panel within 12 weeks

To Be Completed by the Accreditation Panel			To be completed by the Course Provider	To be completed by the Course Provider	To be completed by The Accreditation Panel	To be completed by The Accreditation Panel in Consultation with the Course Provider		
Standard	Non-Compliance Category (Minor/Moderate/Major)	Detail of Non-Compliance Requiring Corrective Action	Proposed Corrective Action	Proposed Completion Date	Assessment of proposed action and timeframe	Update (to be provided by the **Course Provider to** VCI at end of proposed completion date)	Status	
							Open	Closed (include date closed out)
4.4	Minor	TUS must develop and deliver Clinical Supervisor training and standardisation						
6.2	Minor	Update the Veterinary Placement Agreement to cover all roles and responsibilities related to student veterinary nurse training in the practice setting.						
8.2	Minor	An appropriate "fitness to practice" policy must be developed.						
10.1	Minor	Review the assessment mapping to reduce overassessment of learning outcomes.						

Rev 2

VETERINARY COUNCIL OF IRELAND