

RCVS Day One Skills for Veterinary Nursing (Equine)

In order to determine the most appropriate way in which the student can work towards the skill, where deemed applicable, the following teaching or assessment methods should be utilised:

- A set task is an opportunity for students to demonstrate clinical skills in areas that do not require a patient, for example, preparing necessary equipment and materials for administration of intravenous fluids or applying bandages. Objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) stations are set tasks and can be utilised in the teaching and assessment of students.
- Role playing can provide powerful and significant learning opportunities in training. When implemented properly it allows for the opportunity to practise in a safe environment where mistakes have no real consequences as would be the case in “on the job” practice, for example communication with clients. Role plays can demonstrate how well students apply theory to practice.
- Mannequins can provide realistic clinical experiences for students and should be as realistic as possible to mimic real life.
- Simulation is an event or situation that is made to resemble clinical practice as closely as possible. It has a detailed scenario, patient and/or client information and requires careful planning. General points to consider include:
 - Is the situation as realistic as possible?
 - Does the chosen method reflect requirements of nursing practice?
 - Is student performance sufficient to make a decision that they would be competent with the skill in a real situation?
 - Have you recorded a clear rationale?

| Day One Skill | | Guidance |
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| Section One | | |
| 1.1 | Comply with Health and Safety requirements and local risk factors | Comply with legislative requirements. |
| 1.2 | Follow Standard Operating Procedures and manufacturer guidelines when using equipment and materials | |
| 1.3 | Take appropriate action and report injury involving self or others | Complete the accident book/record in accordance with practice protocol. |
| 1.4 | Critically evaluate a risk assessment for one area of the practice and suggest appropriate action where necessary. | |
| Section Two | | |
| 2.1 | Communicate effectively using a variety of different methods Refer to and consider supporting guidance: 5 communication between professional colleagues | Communicate with clients, work colleagues, other veterinary professionals, and the public, considering diverse needs and requirements. Communication models should be considered. |
| 2.2 | Create accurate and legible written communications/documentation according to practice policy | Records to include: patient records and reports, laboratory reports, admission and consent forms, client home care plans and instructions. |
| 2.3 | Access and store client and practice records according to practice policy and data protection laws | |

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| | Refer to and consider supporting guidance: 14 client confidentiality | |
| 2.4 | Admit patients Refer to and consider supporting guidance: 1 referrals and second opinions 9 practice information, fees and insurance 11 communication and consent | Obtain written and verbal informed consent; Respond appropriately to economic status of clients to include insurance; Develop care plans as appropriate. |
| 2.5 | Conduct effective nursing consultations or assessments. Refer to and consider supporting guidance: 18 delegation to veterinary nurses | History taking and appropriate examination; Identifying patients for referral to a veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse; Application of treatments; Programmes of preventative medicine. This may be achieved through nursing assessments. Advise on transportation. |
| 2.6 | Provide discharge information and guidance to clients | Discuss home care plans with clients, to include advising clients on safe and correct routes of administration and potential side effects; Demonstrate to clients safe techniques for administering medication; Advise clients on the storage and disposal of medication; Wound care advice; Bandage advice; advise clients on out of hours services. |
| 2.7 | Complete appropriate documentation for referral and diagnostic services Refer to and consider supporting guidance: 13 clinical and client records | To include laboratory samples and clinical histories |

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| 2.8 | Review and discuss evidence-based nursing | Identify an area of practice for discussion with members of the veterinary team; Appraise literature; consider cases in accordance with reviewed literature; Discuss and disseminate findings with practice team. |
| 2.9 | Identify and collaborate on quality improvement within the practice setting Review and consider supporting guidance: 5 communication between professional colleagues 17 veterinary teams and leaders | Review definition of quality improvement and guidance provided by RCVS Knowledge , discuss unexpected medical or surgical complications with the veterinary team, examples of which may include serious complaint, accident or anaesthetic death; Consider circumstances; Ensure effective protocols are in place; Discuss proposed improvements with the veterinary team. |
| 2.10 | Demonstrate compliance with practice protocols in regard to health and wellbeing of personnel. Refer to and consider supporting guidance: 15 Health Protocol | Discussion of health and wellbeing concerns which may be experienced by any member of the veterinary team, and the protocols in place to prevent and mitigate them. These should include reference to mental and emotional health concerns, as well as those relating to physical safety and health. |
| 2.11 | Communicate effectively expressing appropriate empathy and sympathy Refer to and consider supporting guidance: 8 Euthanasia of animals | Prepare the owner for loss; Support the owner through the euthanasia process; Provide follow-up support for a bereaved owner; Maintain and adapt professional approach to the circumstances. |
| Section Three | | |
| 3.1 | Evaluate behavioural and environmental factors when approaching and handling animals | Recognition of and minimising fear and distress, utilising approaches which reduce stress. Handling techniques with reference to welfare, for example positive reinforcement. |

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| 3.2 | Select and use appropriate personal and patient protective equipment | |
| 3.3 | Demonstrate techniques for approaching and handling patients. | With due regard to patient needs and behaviours. |
| 3.4 | Lead and move animals using the most appropriate equipment for the species using approved manual handling and lifting procedures | May include the use of hoists and slings. |
| 3.5 | Use appropriate restraint methods suitable for the patient and situation with due consideration for animal welfare | Maintain patient's emotional homeostasis and wellbeing; Recognise signs of distress and act accordingly to minimise this; Restrain for clinical examination, sample collection, administration of medicines. |
| Section Four | | |
| 4.1 | Interpret and use individualised care plans to deliver the nursing process for a range of disorders and diseases | Interpret nursing care plans and carry out appropriate nursing interventions. Consider cross-referencing to Section 2 |
| 4.2 | Critically evaluate a care bundle | This may be evidenced through research and a clinical discussion. |
| 4.3 | Carry out a nursing assessment ascertaining information about the patient's normal routine | Food and fluid intake; Urination and defecation; Behaviour (response to pain), Mobility and exercise; Sleep and rest; Stabling, turnout and companion requirements; Rugging. |

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| | | Consider cross-referencing to Section 2 |
| 4.4 | Perform a clinical examination and record findings | To include temperature, pulse, respiration, weight and capillary refill times/mucous membranes, gut sounds and digital pulses. |
| 4.5 | Provide husbandry to patients, considering accommodation, nutrition, and excretions | Consider age, species, condition, demeanour and enrichment. Calculate food requirements based on disease and life stage/lifestyle, manage assisted feeding to include hand feeding, oral hydration and managing and maintaining stomach tubes. |
| 4.6 | Maintain patients' hygiene according to their needs | To include eyes, nostrils, hoof-picking and general grooming. Consider cross-referencing to Section 2 |
| 4.7 | Assess, monitor, manage and report the status of wounds to the appropriate member of the veterinary team. | |
| 4.8 | Apply dressings appropriate to type of wound | Consider evidence-based techniques and materials. |
| 4.9 | Apply bandages appropriate to condition | |
| 4.10 | Administer medicines prescribed by the veterinary surgeon in accordance with instructions from the manufacturer | To include oral, topical, subcutaneous, intramuscular, and intravenous. |
| 4.11 | Monitor for side effects and adverse medication reactions and alert veterinary surgeon | |

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| 4.12 | Provide fluid therapy to in-patients | Select appropriate fluids according to veterinary surgeon instructions; Select and prepare administration equipment; Place intravenous catheters into appropriate veins; Intravenous catheter management; Calculate amount and rate of fluid to administer; Observe and monitor patients receiving fluid therapy, reporting any concerns to an appropriate member of the veterinary team. |
| 4.13 | Identify, assess, and evaluate pain and alert the veterinary surgeon | Score and evaluate pain using a validated system; intensity of pain and associated anxiety and behaviour. |
| 4.14 | Perform basic physical therapy techniques to aid mobilisation | To include passive movement and active exercise. |
| 4.15 | Administer first aid for a range of situations within the limits of the law and the expertise of the student | First aid is defined as care that can be carried out by a lay person. |
| 4.16 | Assist with a range of emergency care techniques within the limits of the student's expertise. | Emergency care is defined as care delegated by the veterinary surgeon in an emergency scenario. |
| Section Five | | |
| 5.1 | Discuss with the veterinary surgeon and prepare for an appropriate sampling strategy | Strategy to include: personal protective equipment (PPE), clipping and preparing sample site, preparation of patient and equipment; calibration of equipment. Strategies prepared for: blood, urine, faeces, skin/hair and tissue biopsies; peritoneal tap, synovial fluid sample. |
| 5.2 | Safely and effectively take appropriate samples | Samples to include blood, urine, faeces, skin, hair pluck, bacterial swabs. Assist with the collection of peritoneal fluid; synovial fluid sample. |

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| 5.3 | Carry out haematological analysis | To include biochemistry, haematology, packed cell volume, total solids (protein) and smear. |
| 5.4 | Carry out urinalysis | To include urine reagent strips, specific gravity, sediment analysis. |
| 5.5 | Carry out faecal analysis | May include: gross visual analysis; microscopic analysis; quantitative examination. |
| 5.6 | Carry out skin and hair analysis | May include: hair pluck, tape strips and coat brushings. |
| 5.7 | Use a microscope to examine laboratory samples | To include: low magnification, high magnification and oil immersion. Record Vernier Scale readings. |
| 5.8 | Prepare samples for external analysis | To include: accurate completion of documentation, correct packaging and labelling, correct preservation and storage in line with current legislation. |
| 5.9 | Record laboratory test results and communicate accurately to the appropriate member of the veterinary team. | |
| Section Six | | |
| 6.1 | Prepare and use radiography equipment to produce a diagnostic image. | |

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| 6.2 | Use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and radiation monitoring equipment in accordance with practice local rules | |
| 6.3 | Position a patient to obtain a diagnostic image of the area of interest | A variety of positions would be expected. Positioning of equipment must also be referenced. |
| 6.4 | Produce images according to practice procedure | |
| 6.5 | Record exposures and results of images according to practice procedure | Appraise the quality of the image. |
| 6.6 | Prepare and support animals during endoscopy investigation | To include setting up equipment and assisting with passing an endoscope. |
| 6.7 | Prepare and support animals during ultrasound investigation | To include setting up equipment. |
| Section Seven | | |
| 7.1 | Ensure safe handling and management of pharmaceuticals in accordance with legislation and manufacturer guidelines. | Store, handle and dispose of medicines in line with legislative guidelines and specific requirements found in the Summary of Product Characteristics (SPC) and with reference to their drug category. To include: Controlled drugs and hormone based medicines which require special handling and disposal. |
| 7.2 | Interpret prescriptions and prepare medicines for dispensing | Calculate drug dosages and confirm with an appropriately qualified member of the veterinary team; Package and label in accordance with legal requirements |

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| 7.3 | Maintain appropriate records | To include medicines records and Controlled Drugs (CDs), Withdrawal periods and hospital charts |
| Section Eight | | |
| 8.1 | Recognise clinical signs of common zoonotic diseases and undertake strategies to prevent spread and infection | |
| 8.2 | Formulate and implement an appropriate infection control strategy according to practice protocol | Constitute appropriate cleaning and disinfectant solutions; Prepare, clean and maintain patient accommodation that maximises the welfare of hospitalised patients to include isolation accommodation; Prepare, clean and maintain examination rooms, preparation area and operating theatre to include periodic deep clean and after infected cases. |
| 8.3 | Dispose of hazardous and non-hazardous waste safely and correctly according to current legislation | To include recycling and correct disposal of medications. |
| 8.4 | Ensure appropriate hygiene skills are followed before and after handling animals and equipment | Comply with the World Health Organisation hand washing method; Use and dispose of PPE. |
| 8.5 | Carry out effective barrier nursing | Taking into account accommodation, PPE, equipment and patient condition, to include reverse barrier nursing. |
| 9.1 | Maintain common surgical instruments | Identify, check, and clean common surgical instruments; Identify and report damage to equipment and instruments. |

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| 9.2 | Prepare, package, and monitor the sterilisation of instruments and materials | |
| 9.3 | Prepare the theatre for use based on patient, equipment, and procedure | |
| 9.4 | Position patients appropriately in accordance with the planned procedure considering patient condition | Correct and safe use of the hoist. Consideration of lateral and dorsal recumbency and standing surgeries. |
| 9.5 | Prepare the surgical site appropriately for the procedure in accordance with practice protocol | Consider cross reference to Section 2 |
| 9.6 | Assist as circulating nurse | Open and pass sterile materials direct to scrubbed personnel; Prepare ancillary and powered equipment, complete surgical safety checklists. |
| 9.7 | Prepare hands and arms using appropriate method | Consider cross referencing to Section 2 To include pre-surgical scrub prior to donning gown and gloves. |
| 9.8 | Prepare for surgical assistance wearing appropriate attire in accordance with practice protocol. | Don gown and gloves (closed gloving method) in an aseptic manner to assist with surgery. |
| 9.9 | Put on surgical gloves (open gloving method) in an aseptic manner to assist with sterile procedures | Maintain sterility of self and others during procedures |
| 9.10 | Assist with draping patients maintaining sterility in accordance with practice protocol. | |

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| 9.11 | Monitor and record materials during surgery | |
| 9.12 | Handle and pass instruments and equipment aseptically during surgery | |
| Section Ten | | |
| 10.1 | Assess the patient and identify the patient's anaesthetic risks | To include ASA guidelines, behaviour and temperament; clinical assessment, and discussion with an appropriate member of the veterinary team. |
| 10.2 | Prepare equipment for anaesthesia | Prepare the knockdown box. Check and prepare the anaesthetic machine in accordance with practice protocol; Select, check, and prepare breathing system/circuit and pollution control system in accordance with practice protocol; Select and prepare monitoring equipment according to the patient's condition; Prepare materials and equipment required for induction of anaesthesia to include pharmaceutical agents (according to veterinary surgeon direction) and appropriate airway management device. |
| 10.3 | Prepare patients for anaesthesia in accordance with practice protocol. | Starvation (if appropriate); determine patient weight; pre-operative clipping of the surgical site (if safe to do so); grooming, tail bandages, foot preparation including shoe removal; intravenous catheter placement and mouth washing, administer pre-medicants. |
| 10.4 | Assist with induction of anaesthesia | Assist with physical stabilisation of the patient until recumbency and unconsciousness has been attained. |

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| 10.5 | Maintain and monitor the patient during the anaesthetic process under continuous and direct supervision Refer to and consider supporting guidance: 18 delegation to veterinary nurses | Measure temperature, heart rate, peripheral pulse, respiratory rate; Monitor equipment (systems/circuits and tube, gases and volatile agents, patient monitors); Interpret and report observations to the directing veterinary surgeon (Inconsistencies, patient monitors); complete anaesthetic monitoring records. Calculate and administer inhalation anaesthesia under veterinary direction (Change the depth or level of inhalation anaesthesia under veterinary direction) disconnecting patient from anaesthetic equipment and materials. |
| 10.6 | Assist with recovery from anaesthesia under continuous and direct supervision | Assist with: positioning patients for recovery; Administration of 100% oxygen in the recovery room, if appropriate; removing airway management device at appropriate stage of recovery; Assisted recovery if appropriate; assessing if the patient is ready to leave the recovery box and return to the stable. Maintain accurate recovery records; Communicate post-operative and/or anaesthetic recovery progress to the veterinary Surgeon and other appropriate members of the veterinary team. |