



Veterinary Code of Conduct

Veterinary Code of Conduct

You are required to [sign the Entry Agreement](#) before starting your course, no later than 30 August 2024.

Please read the information provided on this page, and then follow the link at the bottom to sign your agreement.

Expected attitudes and behaviour

As a veterinary student you are studying for both a university degree and a professional qualification. Consequently, you are expected to comply with both university and Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) guidelines regarding conduct.

You are embarking upon a career requiring the highest personal and professional standards. You will frequently come into contact with patients, clients, members of the public and members of the veterinary and related professions. You should always remember that you have responsibilities to, and you will be judged by each of these groups. You will be considered in all of these professional circumstances to be a representative of the Nottingham Veterinary School and the University of Nottingham, and we ask that you act with the integrity that such a role demands.

National and European legislation governing the various professions is to protect the public interest by ensuring a high level of education and training combined with personal and professional integrity. The Veterinary Surgeons Act (1966) which governs the veterinary profession in the UK is no exception. Membership of the Royal College will give you the right to practise as a veterinary surgeon; but rights and responsibilities go hand in hand. For this reason, on admission to membership of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, and in exchange for the right to practise veterinary surgery in the United Kingdom, every veterinary surgeon makes a declaration to observe the provisions of the RCVS "Guide to Professional Conduct", and in so doing to make animal welfare their overriding consideration at all times.

The Nottingham Veterinary School selects students whom it believes will demonstrate the appropriate attitudes and behaviours required of a veterinary surgeon as dictated by the RCVS 'Guide to Professional Conduct'. The Nottingham curriculum also has specific objectives for professional attitudes and behaviours, together with opportunities to facilitate their achievement. Students who fail to meet these standards will be offered advice and guidance in the first instance. Students who persistently display inappropriate professional attitudes and behaviour or fail to accept our guidance and advice will be subject to the School's Disciplinary Procedure, and ultimately may be referred to the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences Fitness to Practise Panel, as a result of which you may not be allowed to continue on the veterinary course. Decisions of the Fitness to Practise Panel are final.

By signing this Agreement, you agree to be bound by the University's, Faculty's and School's rulings. In signing this Agreement, you agree to accept our advice and guidance if you fail to meet expected standards. You also accept that, for the protection of yourself, patients, clients, staff and other students, at the request of the School, at any time, you will: submit to a medical or occupational health examination and any tests, or referrals; will obtain any immunisations when deemed necessary; accept referral to appropriate student support services. Any issues that arise will only be disclosed with your permission to a small number of relevant staff on a need-to-know basis.

Veterinary student responsibilities, general attitudes and behaviours

You are expected to:

1. Ensure that your views about a person's lifestyle, culture, beliefs, race, colour, gender, sexuality, age or social status do not prejudice your interaction with patients, clients, staff or colleagues.
2. Inform the Veterinary School if you have any disability or medical condition either existing or which develops during the course that might affect your studies or pose a risk to patients, clients or colleagues.
3. Ensure that you take responsibility for your own health (including mental health). This includes seeking appropriate medical advice and/or support.
4. Ensure that you do not use illegal drugs or become involved in any criminal activity, including accepting a police caution. As a veterinary student you will have access to controlled drugs and possession of any drugs and/or any behaviour indicating that you might abuse this situation will be dealt with by immediate referral to the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences Fitness to Practise Panel. The school and university have a zero-tolerance policy on illegal drug use.
5. Maintain appropriate standards of dress, appearance, personal hygiene and conduct so as not to cause offence to clients, staff or colleagues, impair your performance or jeopardise safety. General appearance, facial expression and other non-verbal signals are important components of good communication in the wider UK community. Any form of dress which interferes with this (such as covering the face, wearing excessive jewellery or leaving inappropriate areas of the body uncovered) should be avoided.
6. Ensure that you are aware of and undertake all health and safety and biosecurity measures. This may include, where appropriate, being inoculated against zoonoses that may be transferable to/from animals in order to protect both your own health and that of the animal.
7. Demonstrate probity (honesty, integrity and of upright character) and politeness to all people you encounter and ensure that your actions do not bring the school, the university or the profession into disrepute.
8. Avoid the use of offensive language or text or bullying behaviour especially on social networking sites (e.g. Facebook) or in your Hall of Residence.

Attitudes and behaviour towards patients

You are expected to:

9. Treat all animals of whatever species, humanely, with respect, and with their welfare as the primary consideration.
10. Ensure that in the handling of animals or any given procedure that the safety of the patient, client/animal owner/keeper, yourself and any other member of staff or student is of prime concern.
11. Recognise your limitations when handling animals or undertaking any procedure or communicating any information.
12. Seek and follow advice from a suitably qualified veterinary surgeon and/or the school about modifying clinical contact with patients if you have any condition that can be passed on to patients, or if your judgement or performance could be significantly affected by your condition or illness or its treatment.
13. Act quickly to protect patients from risk if you have good reason to believe that you or a colleague may not be fit to practise, by reporting any concerns to a senior member of staff, e.g. a Senior Tutor.

Attitudes and behaviour towards Clients or Animal Owners or Keepers

You are expected to:

14. Demonstrate respect for the client/animal owner/keeper that encompasses, without prejudice, diversity of background and opportunity, language, culture and way of life. This includes treating patients and clients/animal owners/keepers professionally, politely and considerately, respecting clients' privacy and dignity and respecting their right to refuse to take part in teaching.

15. Always make clear to the client/animal owner/keeper that you are a student and not a qualified veterinary surgeon, and not give veterinary advice or recommend treatment unless under direct supervision.
16. Make sure the client/animal owner/keeper has agreed to your presence and involvement.
17. Not continue interaction if the client/animal owner/keeper indicates a wish to stop.
18. Treat information about patients as confidential and not divulge it to anyone not involved in the patient's care. This principle of confidentiality includes not discussing patients with other students or professionals outside the clinical or educational setting.
19. Give due consideration to the client/animal owner/keeper's concerns and wishes where these do not conflict with the patient's welfare.
20. Not abuse a client/animal owner/keeper's trust.
21. Respect a client/animal owner/keepers' property and belongings, acting responsibly and safely when at a client/animal owner/keeper's premises.

Attitudes and behaviour towards staff, including Clinical Associates

You are expected to:

22. Demonstrate respect for Academic, Support and Clinical Associate staff, and treat them with consideration whether in academic or social settings.
23. Attend all classes, clinical teaching sessions and clinical practice duties on time and in appropriate dress and with appropriate equipment (including all scheduled teaching and assessment at Clinical Associates); not leave early (except by arrangement with the staff concerned); observe safety rules and not behave disruptively.
24. Undertake Extra Mural Studies (EMS) as required by the School and the RCVS.
25. Report any absence from the course to the School Office with an Absence Form and also adhere to the absence policy for clinical rotations.
26. Notify the relevant staff member, in advance, if possible, of teaching sessions you are unable, for good reason, to attend, and submit an Absence Form to the School Office.
27. Whilst at Clinical Associate or other teaching facilities away from the Nottingham campus, observe all safety, dress, behaviour or other required conventions as directed.
28. Understand your learning originates from all formats of teaching delivery and not just lectures.
29. Follow rules and instructions about examinations with correct behaviour, in particular by arriving promptly, bringing only permitted materials, remaining silent when under exam conditions and not committing any Academic Offence.
30. Submit coursework and other documentation as required and on time.
31. Agree to the submission of all assessed work to online plagiarism detection services.
32. Submit yourself to any examination or provide any information as required by the professional bodies.

Maintain communication with staff by:

33. Attending scheduled appointments with Personal Tutors and initiating additional contact where necessary.
34. Responding promptly to requests for information and completing all appropriate forms, including those used to record extenuating circumstances which may have affected performance or caused absence from examinations.
35. Regularly reading your university e-mail and checking teaching notice boards.
36. Participating responsibly in student feedback processes. Actively engage in remedial work after poor academic, clinical or professional performance.
37. Disclose in confidence, any new or pre-existing medical conditions to the School's Disability Liaison Officer to enable appropriate support to be implemented.

Attitudes and behaviour towards students

You are expected to:

38. Demonstrate respect for other students that encompasses, without prejudice, diversity of background and opportunity, language, culture and way of life.

39. Take responsibility for supporting other veterinary students in academic, practical and clinical work.
40. Be prepared to inform an appropriate member of staff if you observe behaviour in colleagues which is at variance with the standards outlined in this document.
41. Take responsibility for supporting your fellow students but know when to seek further advice.

General university student responsibilities

In addition to the responsibilities specific to your role as a veterinary student, the university has guidelines about student responsibilities which you are also expected to observe.

You are expected to:

Take significant responsibility for your own learning, personal development and well-being, including:

42. Making yourself familiar with all dates relevant to the course and being available when required for teaching and assessment.
43. Raising any problems affecting your studies with the Student Welfare Officer, your Personal Tutor, Module Leader or other appropriate member of staff. Handing coursework in on time.
44. Avoiding all forms of cheating and plagiarism and other Academic Offences, including fabrication of results. Read and comply with the university's Regulations and Codes of Practice relating to students including safety guidelines and instructions.
45. Take advantage of the support services provided for you if you need them. Satisfy all financial obligations to the university in a timely fashion.
46. Keep the school informed of any changes to your contact details.
47. Assist in the continued development of the University by letting us know where improvements can be made and by participating in our decision-making processes as appropriate.
48. Acknowledge that you have responsibilities to members of the student and non-student communities in which you are resident.
49. Respect the rights and property of all staff, fellow students, visitors and those living in the area whose day to day lives do not necessarily coincide with that of student life.
50. Recognise that your conduct and behaviour on or off campus reflects on you and the university and undertake to act with consideration and respect for the welfare and interests of your fellow students and members of the wider community.

Please confirm you have read the code of conduct by filling out the declaration form:

Sign the declaration by completing the [Veterinary Student Agreement Form](#)