Veterinary Student Code of Conduct (Clinical)
Fitness for Practice, Health and Conduct: Guidance for Veterinary Students

As members of the University, veterinary students are subject to the statutory provisions of University Discipline as set out in the Statutes and Ordinances. In addition, the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and the University expect all veterinary students to behave in a manner appropriate to their future role as veterinarians.

The University has agreed a Code of Conduct for veterinary students to guide you during your studies. The code of conduct expected of you, together with some guidance notes, is printed below.

Veterinary students are also required to confirm their acceptance of the University's Veterinary Student Code of Conduct and of the rules to be observed by veterinary students by signing the Veterinary Students' Register form. This imposes important obligations on you, and requires that your name must be on the University's Veterinary Students' Register. A copy of the Register form is included in this handbook, but at the start of the clinical course you will be issued with a copy to sign and hand in. The copy remaining in this booklet serves as a reminder of the standards that you have agreed to follow.

It is important that you are aware that students whose health or conduct may lead them to be a risk to patients, clients or Extra-Mural Studies placement providers may be removed temporarily, or permanently, from the Veterinary Student Register and may not be permitted to enter the Final Vet MB examinations for the award of the Vet MB and registration with the RCVS.

### Veterinary Student Code of Conduct and Guidance

| Respect others: clients, professionals, teachers and fellow students |
| Treat others politely and considerately, respect their views and the animals under your care. |

**Guidance note**
In all your dealings with, or in relation to clients, teachers and colleagues, act without any discrimination, whether on grounds of age, colour, disability, gender, illness, marital status, national or ethnic origins, nationality, perceived economic worth, race, sexual orientation, social status, religious or philosophical belief.

| Be an effective and considerate communicator |
| Always make clear that you are a student and not a qualified vet; be aware of your limitations and do not exceed your ability when giving information to clients. Understand accept and agree to be bound by the principle of confidentiality of patient data and also of information concerning staff and students. Ensure that you can be easily contacted by University and Hospital Staff and always reply promptly to all communications. Do not use mobile electronic devices to record and store patient information. |

**Guidance note**
Contribute to the review of teaching by completing feedback forms as requested by course organisers and by reporting difficulties as they arise through the appropriate channels.
Do not discuss clients or their animals with other students or professionals outside the clinical setting, except anonymously. When recording data or discussing cases outside the clinical setting, ensure that clients and patients cannot be identified by others.
Do not use mobile electronic devices – cameras, mobiles, discs, data-sticks etc. to record and store patient images and other information. **Never** use E-mail, social networking sites, ‘Blogs’, ‘Twitter’, ‘Facebook’ etc to share information about clients or patients.

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<th>Abide by rules and policies, follow procedures and guidelines</th>
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<tr>
<td>You must be aware of and comply with the rules, policies (including health and safety), procedures and guidelines of the University, Colleges, Queens Veterinary School Hospital and Extra Mural Studies placements.</td>
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**Guidance note**
Comply with rules and procedures laid down by the Director of Education (Medical and Veterinary), in the Faculty of Biology, Director of Teaching in the Department of Veterinary Medicine, General Practitioner in extra mural studies, Head Nurse or their deputies. Be in attendance for the hours as directed by them and as required to gain experience of emergency situations. As veterinary surgeons you will have to make decisions not to go to places at the times you would like because of your clinical duties. You have a responsibility to yourself, your financial sponsors and your future patients to complete your rotations and EMS placements.

Comply with appropriate current and any new health-testing requirements. Be aware of potential zoonotic infections and comply with control procedures.

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<th>Be open and honest</th>
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<td>Do not break the law. <strong>Never threaten violence, act violently towards others or act dishonestly.</strong></td>
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**Guidance note**
Just one criminal conviction could jeopardise your career prospects in veterinary medicine. Do not cheat in examinations: cheating, at any level, destroys trust and those who cheat may also lie and be unfit for veterinary practice. Inform the Director of Teaching in the Department of Veterinary Medicine immediately if you are involved in any University or police investigation which may lead to charges being brought; concealment of involvement in a drunken brawl that may lead to prosecution may be viewed as an even greater offence than the incident itself.

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<th>Take care of your appearance</th>
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<td>Your appearance, personal hygiene and demeanour should always be modest and reasonably conventional.</td>
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**Guidance note**
The appearance of a veterinary student or veterinary practitioner should not be such as to potentially affect a client’s trust in that person’s veterinary judgement or standing.

Always wear an identification badge and show your face so that you can be recognised by clients, teachers and staff. Headdress routinely worn for religious observance must not cover the face: facial expression is an important part of communication and showing your face also makes it easier for clients with a hearing impairment to hear you and/or lip-read.

When examining patients in any clinical setting, observe the appropriate clinical dress code as laid down for the establishment or placement in which you are working.
Take action at an early stage when any problem arises
Inform the Director of Teaching at the Department of Veterinary Medicine or a College Tutor immediately if you become aware of any problem (personally or in others) that may put the health or well-being of clients or their animals at risk.

Guidance note
Veterinary Medicine is a demanding profession and, at times, all veterinary students are subject to stress and anxiety; emotional problems and psychiatric conditions such as depression and eating disorders are not uncommon; do not hesitate in seeking support (see Confidential Sources of Help & Advice) as the earlier a problem is addressed, the greater the likelihood of a successful outcome.
Seek advice if you think a veterinary surgeon or colleague has behaved in a way that suggests that he or she is not fit for practice. Examples of such behaviour include:

• making serious or repeated mistakes in diagnosing or treating a patient’s condition
• not examining patients properly or responding to reasonable requests by owners for treatment for their animals
• misusing information about patients
• treating patients without properly obtaining the owner’s consent
• posting pictures, information or comments about farmers, clients or their animals on social media sites
• behaving dishonestly in financial matters, or in dealing with clients, patients, or research
• making improper advances towards clients
• misusing alcohol or drugs

Do not abuse drugs and alcohol
Guidance note
Abuse of alcohol and other mind-altering substances may lead to behaviour that puts clients or patients at risk; problems associated with such abuse e.g. violent and aggressive behaviour jeopardise your career. Never obtain or seek to obtain drugs that have not been properly prescribed, prescription or non-prescription, for yourself or others by any means.

Student Support and Guidance
As a veterinary student and future professional you must now be prepared to take responsibility for your own actions and your own personal development. This means thinking about what you do and in particular, facing up to and dealing with problems in the context of your work and relationships with others.

• Motivational problems: are you on the right course?
If you are having serious doubts, talk about them immediately with your clinical supervisor or the Director of Teaching. There are people who suddenly realise, having got to this stage, that it was all a big mistake. If you really do want to get out, then don't hesitate to say so; it is never too late to change your mind, but it can become increasingly awkward.

• Are you having difficulty coping with the demands of the course?
Again, talk to your Clinical Supervisor and/or your Director of Studies. If you have a serious problem they will help, or in some cases direct you to sources of professional help, but they should be your first port of call.

- **Are you having Academic problems?**

Begin by asking your Clinical Supervisor in the appropriate subject, but other University teachers can be approached if a problem remains unsolved and, in practical classes, Demonstrators are on hand to deal with immediate queries. Problems with these lectures and practical sessions can be raised with those who are lecturing or running a particular class.

- **Complaints or concerns about other students or staff**

The Student Code of Conduct requires students to ‘take action at an early stage when any problem arises’. All veterinary students should seek advice if they think another student has behaved in a way that suggests he or she is not fit for practice. Examples of such behaviour include:

- misusing information about clients
- treating animals without properly obtaining consent
- behaving dishonestly in financial matters, or in dealings with clients, or research
- making sexual advances towards clients
- misusing alcohol or drugs

Complaints and concerns about your fellow students should again be raised in the first instance with your Clinical Supervisor or in accordance with the Department’s policy on dealing with student concerns, which will shortly be available to view on the Department’s web pages.

The University has a formal student complaints procedure, which can be found on the web at:

http://www.cam.ac.uk/cambuniv/studenthandbook/complaints/procedure

**Monitoring and mentoring student progress**

The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons has certain expectations regarding the attitudes, behaviour and performance expected of veterinary students from the beginning of their course through to graduation and provisional registration and places the responsibility for monitoring this on the University.

In the University of Cambridge, much of the day-to-day responsibility for this rests with the College tutorial and pastoral care system.

**The Medical and Veterinary Student Progress Panel**

The College tutorial and pastoral system is supported by the Medical and Veterinary Student Progress Panel, which maintains a general overview of veterinary student progression throughout both the preclinical and clinical course at Cambridge. It will also monitor the cases of students who, for one reason or another may be having problems with the course. This may be because of illness, personal difficulties or due to repeated examination failures. The Medical and Veterinary Student Progress Panel consists of senior members of the School of Clinical Medicine and Department of Veterinary Medicine together with College tutorial representatives.

In co-operation with Colleges, through the Senior Tutors and the College pastoral system, the Medical and Veterinary Student Progress Panel will review student cases with a view to offering advice about support for students who are encountering difficulties with the course. The committee is not a disciplinary
body and is set up to provide support for students and Colleges. Its basic remit is to try to ensure that students have a timely and, as far as possible, trouble free progress through the course. A more detailed description of the Panel and its functions can be found at:

https://www.vet.cam.ac.uk/inform/progress

However, the Medical and Veterinary Progress Panel is aware of the RCVS expectations of veterinary students and it will have the option of referring cases which raise serious concerns to the Fitness for Practice Committee. Details of the Fitness for Practice Procedures are on page 220 of the University regulations:

http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/so/2011/chapter02-section27.html

## Confidential Sources of Advice

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<th>Student's College</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>External</th>
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| Clinical Supervisors | **Counselling Service:** http://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk/  
  tel. (3) 32865 Email: reception@counselling.cam.ac.uk | **General Practitioner:** University or Family |
| Chaplains – local place of worship | **Prof. Alun Williams**  
  **Director of Veterinary Teaching,**  
  **Department of Veterinary Medicine,** tel. (3) 37640  
  Email: aw510@cam.ac.uk | **NHS Direct**  
  24hr Helpline: 0845 4647  
  http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk |
| Directors of Studies  
  Nurse  
  Student Mentors  
  Tutors | **Director of Veterinary and Medical Education,** tel. (7)66899  
  Email: facbiol@mole.bio.cam.ac.uk | **National University Counselling Services:** http://www.student.counselling.co.uk/index.htm |
| **Occupational Health Service**  
  16 Mill Lane  
  Email: occhealth@admin.cam.ac.uk  
  9am – 5pm Monday to Friday by appointment | **Samaritan Linkline**  
  4 Emmanuel Road (all days: 9 am - 10.30 pm) tel. 364455 or 08457 90 90 90 (Day or night)  
  Text phone: 0845 790 9192  
  Email: jo@samaritans.org | **CRISP (Cambridge Racist Incidents Support Project)**  
  62-64 Victoria Road  
  tel. 462615  
  Email: crisp@cecf.co.uk  
  http://www.cam.net.uk/home/crisp/crisp/index3.htm |
| **CUSU Welfare Officer**  
  11/12 Trumpington Street  
  tel.(3)33313  
  Email: welfare@cusu.cam.ac.uk  
  http://www.cusu.cam.ac.uk | **Centre 33 Information & Counselling Service, 33**  
  Clarendon Street tel. 316488  
  Email: office@centre33.org.uk  
  www.centre33.org.uk/ | **Drinksense,**  
  Dashwood House, 185 East Road,  
  tel. 350599  
  Email: Cambridge@drinksense.org |
| **Managing Alcohol: University Counselling Service**  
  http://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk/alcohol.html | **Drinkline telephone helpline:** | |
| **CUSU Eating Disorders Support (EDS)** tel. (7) 40555 | | |
(Mon & Wed, 8-10pm) Email: eds@cusu.cam.ac.uk
www.cusu.cam.ac.uk/campaigns/eds/

Mental Health Support Group:
www.srcf.ucam.org/mhsg

Disability Resource Centre
tel: (3) 66863
Textphone: (7) 64085

Student Linkline
http://www.linkline.org.uk/home.html
01223 367575 (BT)
01223 744444 (NTL)

0800 917 8282
http://www.careline.org.uk
Alcohol Concern:
www.alcoholconcern.org.uk

Don’t Do Drunk:
http://www.womendontdodrunk.com/

Down Your Drink NHS online alcohol reduction programme:
http://www.downyourdrink.org.uk/
VETERINARY STUDENT REGISTER AGREEMENT 2016

If you have a difficulty with any element of this declaration, please contact your college Senior Tutor to discuss how this might be resolved.

1 I have read the following information:
   ➢ The University’s Veterinary Student Code of Conduct and explanatory notes;
   ➢ The University’s Confidential Sources of Help and Advice.

2 I will comply with the rules and procedures laid down by the Faculty Boards of Biology and Veterinary Medicine;

3 I recognise that all information obtained about any patient or their owner during the course of my duties is strictly confidential and may not be divulged to anyone other than in a clinical context;

4 I recognise that my conduct and dress when engaged in the care of patients and while undertaking Extra-Mural Studies will be appropriate to the status of a veterinary practitioner;

5 I will inform the Director of Veterinary Teaching immediately if I am involved in any police investigation, which may lead to charges being brought against me;

6 I will inform the Director of Veterinary Teaching immediately if I am no longer able to meet the requirements of this agreement or if I become aware of any change to my physical or mental health which may put at risk the health and well-being of patients or their owners.

7 I understand that the Fitness for Veterinary Practice Committee may share information about my registration with other bodies in the public interest and has the authority to remove my name, either temporarily or permanently, for failing to observe the Veterinary Student Code of Conduct or failing to progress academically.

8 I understand that I will remain on the Cambridge Veterinary Students’ Register and observe the University’s Veterinary Student Code of Conduct until I have:
   ➢ completed the requirements of the clinical veterinary course satisfactorily;
   ➢ withdrawn from the veterinary course;
   ➢ sat any Final Vet MB examination on three occasions without passing;
   ➢ been suspended by the Fitness for Veterinary Practice Committee.

9 I understand that, if I fail to abide by this agreement and the Code of Conduct, I will be responsible for paying any reasonable costs arising from a review of my fitness for practice in the event that such review leads to me being found unfit for practice or fit for practice only on certain conditions.

10 I give my consent to the processing of my data by the University.

Student Name: ........................................  Witness Name: ........................................
(BLOCK CAPITALS)

Signature: .............................................  Signature: .............................................

Date: ........................................

Note that you will be reminded annually of the importance of these statements.

Please return this signed form to either Alun Williams or Katheryn Ayres by Friday 7th October 2016