



Allied Veterinary Professional Regulatory Council

Terms of Reference

Council Name

Allied Veterinary Professional Regulatory Council (hereby known as the Council)

Capacity

The Council in an official capacity is a standing committee of the New Zealand Veterinary Nursing Association, with a mandate to avoid conflict of interest between regulatory and representative arms of the organisations. The objective of the Council is to work in line with the Veterinary Council of New Zealand with the aim of aligning governance and infrastructure to assist with eventual amalgamation under New Zealand law.

Role

In line with the Veterinarians Act, the Council will protect the public interest by providing voluntary regulation of veterinary nurses, veterinary technicians, and other allied veterinary and animal healthcare professionals (hereby abbreviated as AVP) ensuring they are competent to practise. In exercising its functions, the Council shall ensure that the welfare of animals and good veterinary practice are central to its work.

We do this by:

- Registering AVPs who are properly trained and qualified.
- Setting and monitoring the registration, education, and professional standards AVPs must meet
- Promoting and enforcing high standards of AVP education and conduct
- Accrediting and monitoring AVP training institutions for AVPs

Future activities, in line with the Veterinary Council of New Zealand include:

- Issuing AVPs with annual practising certificates
- Dealing with concerns about AVP performance, professional conduct or health and acting where necessary
- Advising and making recommendations to the Minister of Agriculture and tertiary education regulators and providers on things related to AVPs, AVP education and related science.
- Establishing and reviewing schemes for post-qualification training and continuing professional development for AVPs

Outside the Council's scope is anything related to duties set out and enforced by the New Zealand Veterinary Nursing Association acting within its representative organisational capacity. This includes:

- Professional representation of veterinary nurses.
- Setting standards for ethical conduct of veterinary nurses, development of practicing policies.
- Education and continuing education of members and delegates.



- Wage guidelines and advocacy.
- Indemnity insurance and advocacy.
- Union guideline and advocacy.
- Legal advice, professional advice, industrial advocacy, HR advice.

Members

The Council comprises veterinary nurses, veterinary technicians, veterinarians, and lay people - details of whom can be found on the [AVPRC Who We Are page](#).

Membership comprises stakeholders from key areas of practice. Currently this includes:

- Allied veterinary professions education providers
- Veterinary nurses
- Veterinary Technicians
- Equine dental technicians
- Animal physiotherapists
- Clinical members
- Academic members
- Industry members

Other members may be invited from time to time, based on the needs of the Group.

The membership of the Council shall be interim until such time as the organisation is formally established as an independent organisation or is amalgamated under Veterinary Council of New Zealand.

Interim members are drawn from endorsement by standing Council members. Minimum membership criteria include:

- All AVPs must have a formal allied veterinary professional qualification or equivalent and be on or planning to join the AVPRC register.
- Veterinarians must be registered in New Zealand.
- Experience in high level veterinary practice and/or education.
- At least one experienced allied veterinary professional educator.
- At least two representatives from veterinary practice or relevant industry.
- At least one lay person.
- At least one NZVNA representative.

Members of the committee must declare conflicts of interest and excuse themselves from discussions where there is a conflict.

The Council has established several sub-committees to assist it in carrying out its statutory functions. The Chair is an ex-officio member of all sub-committees. The Council can outsource specific jobs or tasks to experts, with appropriate non-disclosure and conflict of interest agreements are signed. Committees cannot exercise authority over paid staff, nor shall they assign tasks to any staff unless the Chair has specifically agreed to the assignment. Unless explicitly delegated by the Council, committees cannot make binding Council decisions or speak for the Council.



All Committee members must comply with the Council's Code of Conduct and Policy on the Management of Conflicts of Interest.

The Council will consider, as appropriate, the following in line with governance policies of the Veterinary Council of New Zealand:

Current membership of representative organisations such as the New Zealand Veterinary Nursing Association (NZVNA) Executive is not normally considered compatible with membership of the Council, unless the member is only standing as representative of the respective organisation and is not making decisions relating to complaints, practicing certificates, accreditation, standards, scopes of practice, or codes of conduct. In such circumstances the individual concerned will be involved in NZVNA/NZVA or Council matters that could potentially affect their ability to be, or to be perceived as being, neutral or impartial.

As per the Veterinarians Act 2005, Council and sub-committee members are normally appointed by the Council for a three-year term. Committee members may be reappointed for two further three-year terms but are not normally re-appointed after they have been a committee member for nine consecutive years. Council has agreed that the three-term limit should not be applied in an arbitrary manner as it must consider the need to ensure continuity of experience and knowledge. However, there can be no expectation on the part of appointees or incumbents that they will be automatically reappointed. In deciding on membership, the Council will consider whether the role needs to be altered to consider changed environment and will bear in mind its commitment to using Council work as a 'training ground' for future Council members. In the event of vacancies on Committees during the year, the Chair requests names of potential replacements from the Council and may also consult with wider stakeholders. Once a willing candidate has been agreed upon and approached, the Chair puts a resolution to Council noting the resignation and/or requesting endorsement of the replacement candidate.

Council membership and portfolio responsibilities are reviewed by the Council every three years at a meeting scheduled between August and November.

Meeting arrangements

Meeting frequency - once a month via online web conference, 1-2 hours duration. Agendas and meeting minutes kept online via Google docs - available to NZVNA and VCNZ upon request. A quorum is 5.

Agendas will be published at least a week before meeting. Agenda and minutes prepared and maintained by appointed committee member. Redacted summary of tasks completed available on the AVPRC website, available to the public.

Communication between meetings - via email, Facebook group, messenger, or phone as necessary.

Members can expect:

- that each member will be provided with complete, accurate and meaningful information in a timely manner.
- to be given reasonable time to make key decisions.
- to be alerted to potential risks and issues that could impact the project, as they arise.
- open and honest discussions, without resort to any misleading assertions.
- ongoing 'health checks' to verify the overall status and 'health' of the partnership.

Stakeholder Role

The Council is accountable to industry stakeholders and ensure we are present and accountable in our role. These external stakeholders include, but are not limited to:

- New Zealand Veterinary Nursing Association
- Te Kaunihera Rata Kararehe o Aotearoa - Veterinary Council of New Zealand
- Allied Veterinary professional Regulatory Council
- Muka Tangatat – Workforce development Council
- Primary ITO
- New Zealand Qualifications Authority
- Manatū Ahu Matua - Ministry for Primary Industries
- New Zealand Veterinary Association
- Tāwharau Ora - Massey University School of Veterinary Science

Resources and Budget

There are no funded roles in the Council. Online meeting and file storage platforms are free versions. Web conferencing system is provided by committee members that are employed by education providers, upon permission, or using the free version of Zoom, Google Meet, Messenger, or Teams.

Goals for income and expenditures:

- Paid secretariat – 10 hours per week by 2018.
- Complementary conference registrations to Council members by 2018.
- Registration fees by 2019.
- Accreditation of education providers – by 2018.
- Travel and accommodation covered for essential members to attend face-to-face meetings with stakeholders – by 2019.

Reporting

Under s40(2) of the Veterinarians Act the Council must, if after receiving a complaint it considers and decides on reasonable grounds that must be reported to the Veterinary Council of New Zealand, provide the complainant advice and contact details to follow up.

All redacted activities are to be reported on the Council website with a public access URL.

All activities, queries, and projects that are not the mandate or scope of Council shall be forwarded on to the relevant stakeholder

Code of Conduct for Council Members

Purpose

1. For the Council to command the confidence of all interested parties, it is necessary for the Council members to observe appropriate standards of conduct. The purpose of this Code is to help to ensure that high standards are met and that those who act in the name of the AVPRC are beyond

reproach in the way they conduct themselves and the business of the AVPRC. The required standards are set out in this Code that applies to all members of Council upon appointment. Its provisions apply generally to those who sit on committees; sub-committees; working parties, etc.

Principles

2. In performing their duties, Council members should observe the seven principles of public life ('The Nolan Principles'); namely:

Selflessness: holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends;

Integrity: holders of public office should avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions to gain financial or other material benefit for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships;

Objectivity: holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias;

Accountability: holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office;

Openness: holders of public office should be as open and transparent as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands;

Honesty: holders of public office should be truthful;

Leadership: holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

General guidelines

3. Council members are expected:

- To act in good faith;
- To treat others fairly, equally and with respect;
- To behave in a business-like and professional manner;
- To work collaboratively with colleagues/staff;
- To listen to and value the views of others.

4. Members should also lead by example and demonstrate the values that underpin the culture of the AVPRC:

- Identity;
- Community;
- Professionalism;
- Caring;



- Accountability;
- Courage.

Specific guidelines

5. Council members are responsible for ensuring that they have a clear understanding of their role and the role of the AVPRC as set out in this document, and in the regulatory capacity implied by the Veterinarians Act 2005. Having been elected or appointed, they have a responsibility to make themselves available for meetings of the Council and any committees, sub-committees, working parties, etc., to which they have been appointed (unless they are unable, with good reason, to do so); and to be diligent in reading papers and considering issues to ensure that they are making decisions on a fully informed basis.

6. Council members should follow the principles of mutual respect in all their activities and be prepared to accept that others may have equally strong views in good faith that differ from their own. Council members must uphold high standards of courtesy and respect in all Council debates and meetings. Council members should treat colleagues with respect and not engage in any behaviour towards any colleague or member of staff that might reasonably be interpreted as discriminatory, bullying or harassment.

Collective responsibility

7. Council members are collectively responsible for the decisions, even if they have voted against, abstained from voting or were absent when the decision was made, and are expected to respect the collective decision.

Confidentiality

8. Council members must not disclose information that has been shared with them but designated by the AVPRC as private or confidential.

Conflicts of interest

9. The 'Policy for managing conflicts of interest' requires all Council members to file a Declaration of Interest; to keep it up to date; and to declare any additional interests as necessary at each meeting and generally to comply with the requirements of the policy. The policy is reviewed annually for compliance.

Communication

10. Council members have a role in communicating with the public and the profession about what the AVPRC does but should take care to ensure that what they say is accurate and consistent with established policies and procedures – if in doubt, they should consult the Chair. Any communication with the media on behalf of the AVPRC must be discussed with the Chair in advance.

11. Council members have a responsibility to distinguish clearly when speaking or writing in any public forum, between the views of the AVPRC and their personal views, or of any other organisation they may be affiliated with.



Enforcement

12. Complaints that an AVPRC Council member has breached this Code of Conduct should be made at the earliest opportunity to the AVPRC Chair.

Agreed by Council September 2017.

Version	Date	Author	Comments/changes
0.8	Nov 2021	IM	Added web link, amended correct names in stakeholder list.
0.7	Feb 2000	JJ	Amended correct names in stakeholder list. Added EDT and ART to member list. Updated out-of-scope list. Amended role to reflect wording of VCNZ governance policy. Removed face-to-face meeting requirement.
0.6	Aug 2019	IM	Amended role to reflect wording of VCNZ roles. Updated future plans in line with VCNZ.
0.5	Jan 2019	JH	Added correct code of conduct policy wording.
0.4	Oct 2018	JH	Amended sub-committee with code of conduct.
0.3	Aug 2018	JH	Updated AVP terminology
0.2	July 2017		Final version
0.1	Dec 2016		Draft