



STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS.

**S.I. No. 577 of 2020**

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VETERINARY COUNCIL OF IRELAND CONTINUING VETERINARY  
EDUCATION FOR VETERINARY PRACTITIONERS REGULATIONS  
2020

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The Veterinary Council of Ireland, in exercise of the powers conferred on it by section 66 and section 133 of the Veterinary Practice Act 2005 (No. 22 of 2005), with the consent of the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, hereby makes the following regulations:-

**Part A – Introduction**

1. These regulations (“Regulations”) are made by the Veterinary Council of Ireland pursuant to the provisions of section 66 of the Veterinary Practice Act 2005 (as amended) (the “Act”) and may be cited as the Veterinary Council of Ireland Continuing Veterinary Education for Veterinary Practitioners Regulations 2020.
2. These Regulations (with the exception of Regulation 3) shall come into operation on 1 January 2021 and thereafter, subject to Regulation 4, the Continuing Veterinary Education Regulations of 1 August 2017 (the “2017 Regulations”) shall stand revoked.
3. This regulation 3 shall be deemed to come into operation with effect from 1 August 2020. The 2017 Regulations are hereby amended by the deletion of the first sentence of regulation 1.1. and its replacement with the following “The ‘credit year’ runs from 1 August 2019 to 31 December 2020.”
4. The requirements of the 2017 Regulations shall continue to apply to the extent to which the Council audits a Practitioner in respect of a period during which the 2017 Regulations applied.

**Part B – Definitions**

5. In these Regulations:
  - (a) “Continuing Veterinary Education” or “CVE” means a programme of further education or training (or both) to be undertaken by a Practitioner whether relating to an Approved CVE Course, Independent Study, Organisational CVE, Practice Visits, Presentation CVE, Relevant Written Material, Recognised International CVE or Student Supervision, intended to develop or refresh the Practitioner in his or her professional knowledge, skills and abilities in relation to veterinary medicine;
  - (b) “Approved CVE Course” means a CVE Course deemed approved by the Council pursuant to Regulation 7;

- (c) “Council” means the Veterinary Council of Ireland established under section 11 of the Veterinary Practice Act 2005, as amended.
- (d) “CVE Credit” means a credit claimed by a Practitioner in respect of CVE undertaken. One CVE credit may be claimed in respect of each hour of CVE taken, unless otherwise provided in Schedule 1 of these Regulations.
- (e) “CVE Course” means a programme of education, study or training that relates to veterinary medicine to include, events, lectures or seminars of CVE (excluding Independent Study, Recognised International CVE, Relevant Written Material and Student Supervision), whether by E-learning or in person, provided or to be provided by a CVE Provider;
- (f) “CVE Provider” means a provider of education who provides or proposes to provide one or more CVE Courses;
- (g) “CVE Year” means any year ending on 31 December;
- (h) “E-learning” means the provision of education or training (or both) that is generated, communicated, processed, sent, received, recorded, stored and/or displayed by Electronic means or in Electronic form, and includes education or training (or both) provided through: (i) the internet or other computer network connections or sound and/or vision formats, or a combination thereof; (ii) the provision of an Electronic file, a CD-Rom and/or a DVD; (iii) other technologies or formats;
- (i) “Education Committee” means the education committee (or Veterinary Education and Training Committee) established by the Council pursuant to section 62 of the Act;
- (j) “Electronic” includes electrical, digital, virtual, and any other form of related technology;
- (k) “Independent Study” means independent study by a Practitioner which must relate to Veterinary Practice such as (i) a review of (but not preparing or publishing) Relevant Written Material, or (ii) such study in such other manner as may be appropriate;
- (l) “Management Skills” includes education or training (or both) in any one or more of, or a combination of, the following areas: (i) financial and business management, (ii) professionalism, communication and other business and office skills, (iii) practice management, or (iv) self-management or self-care;
- (m) “Newly Registered Practitioner” means a Practitioner who is registered on the Register for the first time during the course of a CVE Year;
- (n) “Restored to the Register” means a Practitioner whose registration on the Register is restored following his or her removal from the Register during the course of a CVE Year;
- (o) “Organisational CVE” means participation by a Practitioner in a committee or board of a professional organisation involved in

Veterinary Practice or a professional discussion group, excluding membership of a representative body;

- (p) “Practice Visits” means documented visits by a Practitioner to a veterinary premises (as defined in section 105 of the Act) or educational institutions in the provision of accredited programmes of education;
- (q) “Practitioner” means a person who is registered under Part 4 of the Veterinary Practice Act 2005, as amended;
- (r) “Presentation CVE” means lectures or presentations to either lay or professional audiences that are prepared and delivered by a Practitioner;
- (s) “Recognised International CVE” means a course of CVE in relation to Veterinary Practice organised or accredited by (i) regulators or specialisation boards in the UK, Europe, the USA, Canada, Australia or New Zealand or (ii) international veterinary organisations deemed acceptable by the Council;
- (t) “the Register” means the register established by the Council known as the Register of Veterinary Practitioners established and maintained by the Council pursuant to section 34 of the Act and referred to as “the Register”;
- (u) “Regulation” means a regulation in these Regulations;
- (v) “Regulatory Matters” means matters relating to the regulation of Practitioners, including: (i) the Veterinary Practice Act 2005 (as amended) and regulations made thereunder, (ii) the Animal Remedies Act 1993 (as amended), the Animal Health and Welfare Act 2013 or regulations made under either, (iii) professional ethics and the maintenance of standards of best practice in complying with regulatory obligations in Veterinary Practice or (iv) any other act, regulation or directive relevant to Veterinary Practice.
- (w) “Relevant Written Material” means written material relating to Veterinary Practice that is published in a peer reviewed periodical or textbook, or other non-peer reviewed sources or articles for the press.
- (x) “Student Supervision” means the supervision or mentoring by a Practitioner of undergraduate students of Veterinary Practice or Veterinary Nursing as part of their extra-mural studies programme as part of a course at a third-level university, college or institute approved by the Council for that purpose;
- (y) “Veterinary Nursing” means carrying out any of the procedures to which section 91(2) of the Act applies and any procedures which may be prescribed by the Minister under section 92 of the Act;
- (z) “Veterinary Practice” means the the practice of veterinary medicine, which means any one of the following—

- (a) in relation to an animal - (i) diagnosing disease, injury, pain, deformity, defect or state of health, (ii) identifying and carrying out treatment, whether surgical or medical in nature, of any matter referred to in *subparagraph (i)*, (iii) performing a surgical procedure, (iv) giving advice, following an action referred to in (i), (ii) or (iii) as to care required, (v) furnishing a written certificate as to the doing of any action referred to in (i), (ii), (iii) or (iv),
  - (b) in relation to an animal or products of animal origin, performing such functions as may be conferred on veterinary practitioners from time to time by the Minister for Agriculture for the purpose of giving effect to - (i) any provision of the Treaties governing the European Communities, (ii) any regulation, directive or other act adopted by an institution of the European Communities, or (iii) a judgement of the European Court of Justice, relating to certification on live animals or products of animal origin,
  - (c) in relation to an animal remedy, performing a function conferred on a registered person by or under any enactment, whether passed before or after the passing of the Act.
- (aa) Other words and phrases in these Regulations shall, where applicable, have the meanings assigned to them by the Act.
  - (bb) In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires, the singular includes the plural.

### **Part C – Approval of CVE Courses**

6. The Council shall from time to time approve CVE Courses pursuant to these Regulations.

7. Upon submission, prior to the CVE Course taking place, of a completed application to the Council by a CVE Provider and payment of any administrative fee prescribed by the Council by regulation (the Council may, at its discretion, waive any administrative fee prescribed), a CVE Course which meets the following criteria shall be deemed an Approved CVE Course:

- (a) It shall be related to one or more of the following:
  - (i) Veterinary Practice
  - (ii) Animal health and welfare
  - (iii) Public health
  - (iv) Management Skills
  - (v) Regulatory matters;
- (b) It must take place for a minimum of sixty (60) consecutive minutes.
- (c) The content of the CVE Course must be relevant to Practitioners.

8. The Council may, at its discretion, refuse, withdraw or revoke the approval of CVE Courses, whether previously approved or otherwise.

9. CVE Courses must be submitted for approval every CVE year in which they take place.

10. CVE Courses which do not meet the requirements of Regulation 7 shall be notified in writing. Any appeal in respect of any CVE Course not approved shall be made to the Education Committee, whose decision in this regard shall be subject to confirmation by the Council.

11. CVE Providers must provide Practitioners who participate in approved CVE Courses with an appropriate certificate of completion and maintain copies of all documentation used in the delivery of and relevant to Approved CVE Courses for a period of at least five (5) years after completion of the course. Such documentation shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- (a) Course outline;
- (b) Timetables and location;
- (c) Advertisements and presenters' CVs;
- (d) Registration and attendance records, including names, addresses and registration numbers of Practitioners.

### **Part C – CVE Requirements**

12. It shall be a condition of registration on the Register, or the continuance of registration on the Register, that Practitioners comply with these CVE Regulations. The annual requirements to be met by a Practitioner in respect of a CVE Year are set out in Schedule 1 to these Regulations. Such annual requirements shall (i) require Practitioners to accumulate a minimum number of CVE Credits, as is specified in Schedule 1, to maintain professional competence (including but not limited to any of the matters identified in Schedule 1) and (ii) to otherwise fulfil the requirements of these Regulations.

13. These Regulations apply to each Practitioner in respect of each CVE Year. A Practitioner is entitled to claim CVE Credits in respect of Approved CVE Courses, Independent Study, Organisational CVE, Presentation CVE, Practice Visits, Recognised International CVE, Relevant Written Material and Student Supervision undertaken by him or her in accordance with the requirements of Regulations.

14. A Practitioner who, during the CVE Year, participates in a postgraduate or residency programme leading to a postgraduate degree, masters, doctorate or other appropriate certification in a specialty or academic field related to

Veterinary Practice, shall be deemed to have satisfied the CVE requirements of the Regulations in respect of that CVE Year.

15. A Practitioner shall undertake the required CVE in respect of each CVE Year as provided for Schedule 1. However, a Practitioner shall not be entitled to claim:

- (a) more than 25% of the minimum number of credits required by Schedule 1 by way of Management Skills;
- (b) more than 30% of the minimum number of credits requirement by Schedule 1 by way of Independent Study.

16. A Practitioner to whom these Regulations apply shall be required during each CVE Year to fulfil the following requirements:

- (a) maintain certificates from CVE Providers to verify his or her attendance at Approved CVE Courses; and
- (b) maintain a written record of CVE Credits completed by him or her which is sufficient to demonstrate compliance with these Regulations; and
- (c) maintain such certificates and records for a period of five (5) years, or seven (7) years if claiming cumulative CVE Credits, after the end of a CVE Year; and
- (d) produce such certificates and written records to the Council upon being requested to do so.

17. A Practitioner who makes an application to the Council for the annual renewal of his or her registration on the Register for all or any part of a CVE Year shall, as part of such application, be required to make a declaration to the Council that he or she has accumulated the minimum CVE Credits required during the preceding CVE Year as may be specified in Schedule 1 and otherwise met the requirements of these Regulations.

18. A Practitioner shall verify such declaration referred to in Regulation 17 if so requested by the Council, by production of the written record, certificates of attendance and written verification(s) maintained pursuant to Regulation 16.

## **Part D – Transitional Arrangements and Modification of CVE Requirements**

19. If a Practitioner accumulates in excess of the required CVE Credits during the CVE year 1 August 2019 to 31 December 2020 (pursuant to the 2017 Regulations), he or she may, subject always to the requirements contained in regulation 16, claim such excess as CVE Credits in respect of the CVE Year expiring on 31 December 2021.

20. The requirements of Regulation 12 in respect of the number of CVE Credits to be claimed in a CVE Year are modified in respect of the following categories of Practitioner as set out in Schedule 1:

- (a) A Practitioner who for reasons of maternity and/or parental and/or carer's and/or adoptive leave, does not practise or ceases to practise as a Practitioner in the course of a CVE Year for a period of more than twelve (12) weeks within any such CVE Year may, on due written certification to the Council of that fact, apply to have his or her requirement to have undertaken CVE during that particular CVE Year reduced;
- (b) A Practitioner who, for reasons of their illness or medical disability, the illness or medical disability of a family member, or for other substantive reasons, does not practise or ceases to practise as a Practitioner in the course of a CVE Year for a period of more than twelve (12) weeks within any such CVE Year may, on due written certification to the Council of that fact, apply to have his or her requirement to have undertaken CVE during that particular CVE Year reduced;

21. As regards Newly Registered Practitioners (or Practitioners who are restored to the Register), the required CVE Credits shall be reduced, based on the Practitioner's date of registration or restoration, as follows:

<b>CVE “pro rata” period</b>	<b>CVE Credits Required</b>
January – March	100% of Standard CVE Credits
April – June	75% of Standard CVE Credits
July – September	50% of Standard CVE Credits
October – December	Exempt

22. A person applying to be restored on the Register after not being on the Register for a number of CVE Years may be required to undertake a programme of CVE prescribed by the Education Committee, subject to confirmation by the Council.

**Part E - Audit**

23. The Council may audit Practitioners in respect of their compliance with the requirements of these Regulations for a period of up to five (5) years after the end of a CVE Year.

24. A Practitioner must upon request from the Council submit evidence of his or her compliance with these Regulations. Such evidence shall include (but not be limited to) certificates from CVE Providers to verify his or her attendance at such Approved CVE Courses.

25. Without prejudice to the generality of Regulation 24 and for the purpose of ensuring compliance with these Regulations, the Council may liaise with a Practitioner to investigate any alleged breach by a Practitioner of these Regulations and, to that end, may in respect of the Practitioner concerned:

- (a) seek explanations from the Practitioner;
- (b) call the Practitioner to a meeting;
- (c) request him or her to undertake a programme of CVE prescribed by the Education Committee, subject to confirmation by the Council, for a future CVE Year or CVE Years; and/or
- (d) bring the matter to the attention of the Council, which may apply, pursuant to section 76 of the Act, to the Registrar for an inquiry into the fitness to practise veterinary medicine of the Practitioner.

26. Any breach of these Regulations by a Practitioner or a false declaration made under Regulation 17 may, upon due inquiry by the Fitness to Practise Committee pursuant to the Act, be found to be (i) a breach of regulations made under the Act within the meaning of section 76(d) of the Act, (ii) behaviour which constitutes professional misconduct within the meaning of section 76(10) of the Act and/or (iii) a false or fraudulent declaration or misrepresentation such that his or her registration is erroneous within the meaning of section 76(c) of the Act.

### **Schedule 1 – Annual Requirements**

1. The annual requirements to be met by a Practitioner during the CVE Year are as follows:

- (a) A Practitioner must accumulate:
  - (i) A minimum of twenty (20) CVE Credits in respect of the CVE Year; or
  - (ii) a minimum cumulative total of sixty (60) CVE Credits over the current CVE Year and the preceding two CVE Years;
- (b) A Practitioner shall be entitled to claim up to a maximum of twelve (12) CVE Credits in respect of a single calendar day, save in respect of (i) an Approved CVE Course under paragraph (c) in relation to which a maximum of twenty-four (24) CVE Credits may be claimed in a single calendar day and (ii) as may otherwise be provided in this Schedule.
- (c) The following categories of Approved CVE Courses shall be awarded two CVE Credits for each hour:
  - (i) wetlabs;
  - (ii) practicals; and
  - (iii) interactive events.

2. Practitioners are entitled to claim the following CVE Credits in respect of Presentation CVE:

<b>Type</b>	<b>CVE Credits</b>
First-time lecture to professional audience regarding Veterinary Practice	Seven (7) CVE Credits
First-time one-day presentation to professional audience regarding Veterinary Practice	Up to a maximum of fifteen (15) CVE Credits can be claimed in respect of such a one-day presentation
Presentation to lay audience	Two (2) CVE Credits per presentation up to a maximum of six (6) CVE Credits per CVE Year

3. Practitioners are entitled to claim one (1) CVE Credit per week up to a maximum of four (4) CVE Credits per CVE Year in respect of Student Supervision.

4. Practitioners are entitled to claim up to a maximum of six (6) CVE Credits per CVE Year in respect of Practice Visits.

5. Practitioners are entitled to a claim a maximum of up to three (3) CVE Credits per CVE Year in respect of Organisational CVE, with one (1) CVE Credit to be awarded for attendance (whether in person or otherwise) at an Organisational CVE meeting.

6. Practitioners who are authors of Relevant Written Material are entitled to claim the following CVE Credits in respect of such Relevant Written Material:

Type	CVE Credits
First author of peer reviewed paper	Fifteen (15) CVE Credits
Second and subsequent author of peer reviewed paper	Eight (8) CVE Credits
Non-peer reviewed paper / article for press	Two (2) CVE Credits per paper up to a maximum of Six (6) CVE Credits per CVE Year

7. The modified CVE requirements in respect of a Practitioner who falls within Regulation 20(a) or 20(b) shall be as set out in the table below:

CVE “pro rata” period	CVE Credits Required
0-3 months	100% of Standard CVE Credits
3-6 months	75% of Standard CVE Credits
6-9 months	50% of Standard CVE Credits
9-12 months	Exempt



GIVEN under the Official Seal of the Veterinary Council of Ireland,

4 December, 2020.

JOSEPH MOFFITT,

President.

NIAMH MULDOON,

Registrar.

#### EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Instrument and does not purport to be a legal interpretation).*

These Regulations set out the approval of programmes of further education, the requirements of registered persons under Part 4 of the Act regarding such programmes of further education and the auditing of compliance with such requirements.

These Regulations may be cited as the Veterinary Council of Ireland Continuing Veterinary Education for Veterinary Practitioners Regulations 2020.

These Regulations come into operation on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021.

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