

**Qualification Title:** New Zealand Certificate in Animal Technology (Level 5) with strands in Rural Animal Technician, and Veterinary Nursing Assistant

**Qualification number:** 2490

**Date of review:** 26-27 April 2023

This report refers to graduates awarded this qualification prior to: **31 December 2022**

**Final decision on consistency of the qualification: National consistency is confirmed**

#### Threshold:

The threshold to determine sufficiency with the graduate profile was determined as evidence that: under supervision, within a vet clinic OR large or mixed practice OR in the field, all graduates will be able to assist with interfacing with clients. In addition to this:

Graduates of the Rural Animal Technician (RAT) strand in a rural setting will be able to assist with:

- Maintaining and performing technical tasks related to animal health, welfare and husbandry;
- Dispensing and administering veterinary medicines; and
- Collecting, testing and preparing diagnostic samples for dispatch.

Graduates of the Veterinary Nursing Assistant (VNA) strand in a veterinary clinic setting will be able to assist with:

- Maintaining animal health and husbandry including routine diagnosis;
- Caring for hospitalised patients; and
- Surgery preparation and anaesthesia.

#### Education Organisations with sufficient evidence

The final decision on the sufficiency of an education organisation evidence, will be updated as other organisations show sufficient evidence.

MOE Number	Education Organisation	Final rating
9294	AG Challenge Limited	Sufficient
7402	National Trade Academy Limited	Sufficient
6006	Te Pūkenga – NZ Institute of Skills and Technology T/A Ara	Sufficient
6013	Te Pūkenga – NZ Institute of Skills and Technology T/A Otago Polytechnic	Sufficient
6015	Te Pūkenga – NZ Institute of Skills and Technology T/A SIT	Sufficient

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6025	Te Pūkenga – NZ Institute of Skills and Technology T/A Toi Ohomai	Sufficient
6009	Te Pūkenga – NZ Institute of Skills and Technology T/A UCOL	Sufficient
6004	Te Pūkenga – NZ Institute of Skills and Technology T/A Unitec	Sufficient
6019	Te Pūkenga – NZ Institute of Skills and Technology T/A WinTec	Sufficient
7841	Vet Nurse Plus Limited	Sufficient

### Introduction

This 120-credit qualification was designed to provide the animal industry with people with the skills, knowledge and attributes needed to help assist veterinarians and veterinary nurses in a companion animal practice and veterinarians in a rural veterinary practice.

The consistency review was conducted online over three sessions, over a day and a half, with a representative from each of the eleven tertiary education organisations (TEOs).

A total of 1,775 graduates were reported by the TEOs for the scope of the review, comprised of 302 RAT graduates, and 1473 VNA graduates.

### Evidence

The education organisations provided a range of evidence to demonstrate that their graduates met the graduate profile outcomes.

The criteria used to judge the evaluation question were:

- the nature, quality and integrity of the evidence presented by the education organisation
- how well the organisation has analysed, interpreted and validated the evidence, and used the understanding gained to achieve actual or improved consistency
- the extent to which the education organisation can reasonably justify and validate claims and statements relating to the consistency of graduate outcomes, including in relation to other providers of programmes leading to the qualification.

### **How well does the self-assessment and supporting evidence provided by the education organisation demonstrate that its graduates match the graduate outcomes at the appropriate threshold?**

The providers submitted a range of supporting evidence and data relevant to their validation of graduates meeting the graduate profile outcomes for this qualification. With the two strands being quite different from each other, evidence was often quite comprehensive with analysis provided in the self-assessment report. Where providers delivered both the VNA and RAT strands, evidence was complex and detailed to reflect the unique nature of graduates from each strand and alignment to the GPOs. This was both helpful and challenging as it resulted in dense data sets, and many graphs to illustrate the collective and individual feedback.

Overall, the programmes are well planned out with relevant matching of assessment to the learning outcomes and GPOs. Mechanisms for monitoring hours is largely embedded in the

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programme, through logbooks, which are attested to by employers, and are relevant to the specific practical skills of the strands (as necessary). Assessment is supported through valuable moderation processes, that engage external perspectives and industry expertise, and have resulted in positive moderation outcomes and improvements over time.

Graduate feedback is overall positive with strong indications that graduates are confident in their skills to demonstrate the core and strand specific graduate profile outcomes. Qualitative data indicates the skills and knowledge to be useful and valuable in the workplace to contribute to personal and professional progression. One graduate profile outcome with reoccurring weakness in skill was GPO 1, relating to administration skills. Feedback from graduates illustrated the limited experience in front desk duties, which correlates with some employer feedback that reception and office skills are not prioritised for students in the workplace.

While there are areas within the industry that could better support the graduates, overall, the self-assessment and supporting evidence supplied, by those organisations found sufficient, demonstrates that their graduates meet the graduate outcomes at the determined threshold.

### **Special Focus** (includes special focus on a strand or outcome)

None

### **Issues and concerns**

COVID had an impact across the industry with a reduction in both staffing in the workplace, and resources to support work experience and completion of practical hours in the specified time frames. Across the majority of providers, it was increasingly challenging to gather employer feedback due to staff shortages and busy clinics which left minimal opportunity to provide responses to surveys. Anecdotal comments from industry did indicate that clinics preferred to employ students who will move to the diploma programme, as there was a demand for a skilled workforce, which Level 6 students and graduates could fill. Similarly, some providers identified that the need for more skilled employees also motivated some clinics to be more selective of the students, enabling the more capable students to fill the skill shortage in their clinic.

### **Recommendations to Qualification Developer**

None

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### Education Organisation sufficiency rating

Education Organisation	Rating	What evidence is good and what gaps are there in the evidence? (feedback for the education organisation)	What is needed for evidence to become sufficient?
Vet Nurse Plus (7841)	Sufficient	<p>Vet Nurse Plus reported a total of 219 graduates during the reporting period: 44 in 2018, 49 in 2019, 42 in 2020, 46 in 2021 and 38 in 2022. All graduates had completed the Veterinary Nursing Assistant (VNA) strand.</p> <p>Vet Nurse Plus's programme is made up of five compulsory courses delivered over 36 weeks at their campuses in Auckland.</p> <p>The self-assessment report and evidence provided give a good level of confidence that graduates meet the graduate profile outcomes. Vet Nurse Plus has sought to continually self-identify and action areas for improvement in evidence collection.</p> <p><b>Programme evidence:</b></p> <p>Good evidence was provided that the programme has been designed and delivered to develop the graduate outcomes in the learners. Vet Nurse Plus presented a mapping matrix, which demonstrated how five programme modules align with learning outcomes, courses, and assessments which in turn align to the graduate profile outcomes (GPOs). The matrix also showed how the students are provided with multiple opportunities to demonstrate through formative and summative assessments showing they have met the learning outcomes and the GPOs.</p> <p>Internal and external moderation evidence supports the validity of the assessment. Internal and external moderation results are positive, again providing indication that the graduates have successfully met the GPOs of this qualification at the appropriate level. A useful table summarising the dates and results of all moderation activities was included to support this conclusion.</p>	No further evidence required.

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Education Organisation	Rating	What evidence is good and what gaps are there in the evidence? (feedback for the education organisation)	What is needed for evidence to become sufficient?
		<p><b>Graduate evidence:</b></p> <p>Graduate evidence was strong. Vet Nurse Plus, through a variety of methods, had engaged the majority of their graduates. with a survey, or conversation. Graduate survey data that was directly related to the GPOs was gathered via surveys, focus groups and phone calls. Responses were received from 112 of 124 graduates surveyed (response rate: 89.5 per cent). There was generally very high (95%+) agreement (confidence) among graduates in their attainment of the GPOs.</p> <p>Eighty eight percent of graduates in the reporting period had progressed to the New Zealand Diploma in Veterinary Nursing (Level 6) (ref: 2491) upon completion of this programme. Vet Nurse plus has conducted focus group discussions, focussed around the Level 5 GPOs, with groups of level 6 students every year since 2018. The validity of this data is strengthened by the regularity of the collection. The feedback was resoundingly positive with useful qualitative data also captured and used appropriately to make improvements to programme design and delivery.</p> <p><b>Destination evidence:</b></p> <p>As previously stated, the majority of graduates progress to Level 6 study at Vet Nurse Plus. In addition to engaging with the graduates, as students of Level 6, Vet Nurse Plus have surveyed and had conversations with Level 6 tutors who confirm that Level 5 graduates meet the GPOs.</p> <p>Industry employment rates for Level 6 graduates are high – upwards of 85% and in some years 100%. Feedback was sought from industry partners who had employed graduates (as graduates of Level 6). Feedback from these employers was strong in terms of meeting GPOs.</p> <p>There was a high level of agreement amongst employers that they would continue to employ Vet Nurse Plus graduates, reflecting confidence in the</p>	

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Education Organisation	Rating	What evidence is good and what gaps are there in the evidence? (feedback for the education organisation)	What is needed for evidence to become sufficient?
		<p>programme delivery and outcomes and a strong indicator that the qualification is meeting its strategic intent.</p> <p><b>General comment:</b></p> <p>Vet Nurse Plus has engaged well with graduates and stakeholders and collected, analysed and effectively used a large amount of data. This data provides good confidence that the graduates are consistent with the GPOs of the qualification.</p> <p>The information presented for this Consistency Review was voluminous and not well ordered which made it at times, challenging for the reviewer to identify relevant, quantitative, and succinct summary information. Vet Nurse Plus has used an older format for the self-assessment report and has not followed guidelines – eg the guideline for the summary section on page 2, suggests “1 or 2 paragraphs”. Vet Nurse Plus’s response ran to 5 full pages; and a (15 minute) PPT presentation ran to 58 slides – more selective use of material would be beneficial.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>Consider a more user-friendly presentation of data and evidence.</p>	