



What do the BTEC Equine Nursing Technician (ENT) Diplomas qualify me to do?

In the UK the RCVS regulates the veterinary nursing profession through the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966, the Royal Charter and the Veterinary Nursing Bye-laws; the Act applies to anyone employed or volunteering within a veterinary practice and is in place to ensure the welfare of animals and prevent unqualified persons from performing techniques potentially detrimental to the health and/or welfare of an animal.

Subject to a number of exceptions, only registered members of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons may practise veterinary surgery. 'Veterinary surgery' is defined within the Act as including

- a. the diagnosis of diseases in, and injuries to, animals including tests performed on animals for diagnostic purposes;
- b. the giving of advice based upon such diagnosis;
- c. the medical or surgical treatment of animals; and
- d. the performance of surgical operations on animals.

A number of exceptions apply which can be found in Schedule 3 of the Act, as well as in the form of specific exemption orders. The full Act can be downloaded at www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/veterinary-surgeons-act-1966/

For students studying outside the UK, it is important that you check the regulatory framework within your own country.

Taking into account the requirements of the Act within the UK, we have summarised the tasks you will be trained for by TOCES that you are permitted to complete. Additionally, it is vital to stress the importance of the training, support and supervision received within your practice too; each practice has its own protocol for the range of tasks that you will be involved in.

Tasks completed by both ENTs and Registered Veterinary Nurses (RVNs):

- Prepare and maintain accommodation for hospitalised patients
- Complete records of clinical nursing care clearly and accurately
- Provide first aid to any animal
- Prepare a patient for surgery
- Trot horses up for lameness examination
- Prepare, position and support horses during diagnostic imaging procedures, including endoscopy, ultrasound investigations and radiography
- Prepare animals and test equipment for collection of laboratory samples, including haematology, urinalysis, hair/skin, tissue biopsies, joint fluid and peritoneal fluid
- Use and maintain laboratory equipment including analysers, refractometer, commercial test kits, centrifuge, microscope; record test results and communicate to appropriate clinician
- Clean, maintain and prepare operating theatre, surgical and diagnostic equipment
- Prepare, maintain and package surgical instruments and materials for sterilisation
- Set up and assist radiographs, carry out scintigraphy, MRI and CT imaging
- Process radiographs according to practice policy
- Prepare and dispense medication under a veterinary surgeon's instruction
- Carry out effective barrier nursing
- Provide physiotherapy to include general massage, active exercise and limb support
- Provide care for terminally ill horses
- Prepare and maintain anaesthetic machine, breathing equipment, monitoring equipment and materials for induction including pulse oximeter, ECG and oesophageal stethoscope.
- Monitor equipment during anaesthetic procedures.

Additional tasks that can be carried out in the UK by an RVN, but not an ENT:

- Minor surgery, not involving entry into a body cavity, under the direction of a veterinary surgeon
- Monitor anaesthesia for small animal patients
- Place IV catheters
- Administer IV fluids to equine patients
- Treat wounds under the guidance of a veterinary surgeon
- Administer medications under the direction of a veterinary surgeon
- Take and process urinalysis and haematology laboratory samples
- Act as a scrub nurse during surgical procedures under the direction of a veterinary surgeon
- Plan, implement and evaluate nursing care plans to address needs of patients.

Students enrol on to the Equine Nursing Technician programmes for a variety of reasons:

- A well trained Equine Nursing Technician is a valuable and respected member of the veterinary team
- TOCES is an Edexcel, RCVS, City and Guilds approved centre and ACOVENE Accredited Provider of Veterinary Nursing programmes so the high calibre of the training and learning experience on the programmes are guaranteed
- TOCES programmes are highly accessible to students all over the world so whilst there may not be an equine nursing training programme in their own country, students can still study
- May be employed or on placement in a practice that is not an approved RCVS Accredited Training Practice (TP)
- The student may not currently have a job or placement within a TP but have the desire to do so in the future. Training towards the ENT qualifications shows prospective employers a drive and determination to work to a high standard and achieve a professional level of competence which will be valuable within equine practice
- The student may not have the requisite entry requirements to enrol onto an RCVS training programme; the BTEC ENT programmes fulfil the entry requirements