

VetSkill Suitably Qualified Persons Disciplinary Procedure

Controlled by:	Created/Updated:	Version:
Standards	November 2023	v1.2

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Updates made to	Change details	Section
N/A	New Document	

1.0 Scope

In accordance with the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) Suitably Qualified Persons (SQP) Code of Practice, Registration Bodies must have a published disciplinary procedure. This procedure includes the actions that will be taken if an individual is refused entry to the Register, or if they are being removed from the Register as a result of disciplinary action. This procedure is intended for, and applicable to individuals at any stage of their registration to the VetSkill SQP Register.

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the process which VetSkill has in place for those individuals wishing to appeal as a result of refusal or removal from the VetSkill SQP Register.

2.0 SQP Registration Application Process

VetSkill offer the following qualifications for which achievement will lead to direct entry to the VetSkill SQP Register:

- VetSkill's Level 4 Certificate for Suitably Qualified Persons
- VetSkill's Level 4 Award for Animal Medicines Advisors (SQP Companion Animal)
- VetSkill's Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing (Companion Animal or Equine) (to include the SQP practical competency examination)
- VetSkill's VTEC Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing (Companion Animal or Equine) (to include the SQP practical competency examination)
- VetSkill's Diploma in Advanced Veterinary Nursing (Practice Nurse) (to include the SQP practical competency examination)

Other qualifications which may be accredited by VetSkill for eligibility to join the VetSkill SQP Register include:

- Any level 4 or above qualification for the supply of Veterinary Medicines by SQPs
- an RCVS approved Veterinary Nursing qualification which has integrated SQP content and assessments

- an SQP course of study recognised by a Secretary of State recognised body as meeting the requirements to register as an SQP

An individual may also transfer from another SQP Register approved by the Secretary of State.

All applicants are required to co-operate fully and respond to all requests for further information or clarification by VetSkill in a fully engaged and professional manner. All applicants must pay the annual registration fee (if applicable) and declare any criminal convictions as appropriate. Misinformation or incomplete responses may lead to rejection, or if discovered after registration, may be revoked or suspended without notice or explanation, at the sole discretion of VetSkill.

3.0 Refusal of Registration

Persons who have completed an SQP qualification, a course of study or who may otherwise be deemed academically qualified by an approved body may apply for registration to VetSkill. VetSkill will decide as to whether the person should be entered onto the VetSkill Register. If a person applies to be entered onto the Register but registration is refused, or a person ceases to be registered because VetSkill has corrected an entry in the Register, that person may make an appeal.

Where registration is refused, the reasons shall be provided to the person in writing along with reference to VetSkill's *Appeals Policy*.

4.0 Removal from the SQP Register

Where VetSkill has identified or been notified of any compliance issues in relation to an SQP on its Register, VetSkill will undertake an investigation. Where it is determined that a

registered SQP has failed to meet the requirements of the SQP role and/or their responsibilities set out below, they will be removed from the Register:

- Fulfil Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements
- Maintain standards as outlined in the VMD SQP Code of Practice
- Maintain professional conduct
- Make payment of the VetSkill annual registration fee
- Ensure all details held by VetSkill are up to date and accurate

Where an individual with the appropriate qualifications is refused registration or is removed from the VetSkill SQP Register, other than for non-payment of the annual renewal and/or reinstatement fee, VetSkill will provide the individual with notice in writing, detailing the reason for refusal or removal.

5.0 Appeals

Where an SQP disagrees with any actions taken by VetSkill, they may submit an appeal by following VetSkill's *Appeals Policy*, which is available at www.vetskill.com. Details should be set out in writing using VetSkill's *Appeal Form*, and sent to priority@vetskill.com. If at any stage throughout the Appeals Process VetSkill's initial decision is overturned, the appellant will be refunded the appropriate fee.

6.0 Appeals Process

6.1 Informal Appeal Review

Appeals must be received by VetSkill within 28 days of the date of notification of refusal/removal from the VetSkill SQP Register. VetSkill will acknowledge receipt of appeals within two (2) working days, and aim to respond fully following the informal review of the appeal within 28 days. VetSkill will undertake an assessment of all appeals, to ensure the

application is complete and to ascertain whether the issue can be resolved informally prior to proceeding to a formal independent external appeal. In all instances, VetSkill will ensure that the individual(s) carrying out the appeal review will not have a personal interest in the decision being appealed. Following the informal review of the appeal, VetSkill will write to the appellant with details of the decision, to either amend the original decision in light of the new rationale/evidence being put forward and which has now been reviewed, or to confirm the original decision. VetSkill will provide the rationale for this position and request that the appellant confirm within 15 working days whether they now accept this decision or whether they wish to proceed to VetSkill's Formal Appeals Process.

6.2 Formal Independent External Review

Formal appeals are considered by an independent panel of no fewer than three (3) individuals appointed by the Chair. Panel members considering an appeal must have no conflict of interest in relation to either the subject of appeal, and at least one (1) member of the appeals panel must hold a qualification and/or professional status directly relevant to the roles held by an SQP. A determination of the outcome will be made within 20 working days.

If the appellant is still unhappy with the outcome at this stage, they are entitled to raise the matter with the relevant regulator.

7.0 Complaints

VetSkill aims to provide excellent service to all customers, learners and SQPs. If an individual wishes to complain about any aspect of VetSkill's service, they should refer to VetSkill's *Complaints Policy* and submit a *VetSkill Complaints Form*.

Completed forms should be submitted via email to: priority@vetskill.com.