



ANIMAL MEDICINES TRAINING REGULATORY AUTHORITY

Becoming an AMTRA SQP

version 3
8 October 2019





ANIMAL MEDICINES TRAINING REGULATORY AUTHORITY

1c Windmill Avenue
Woolpit
Bury St Edmunds
IP30 9UP

Tel: 01359 245801
Fax: 01359 242569

info@amtra.org.uk
www.amtra.org.uk

facebook.com/amtra
twitter.com/amtrasqp
linkedin.com/company/amtra-ltd

Becoming an AMTRA SQP

Introduction.....	5
AMTRA SQP exams	6
Written exam duration	6
The written exam	7
AMTRA examinations: things you need to know – incorporating the Rules & Regulations for AMTRA Examinations	9
Written exams: questions and scenarios	12
Companion Scenario	12
Equine Scenario	13
Avian Scenario.....	13
Farm animal module.....	14
Viva (oral exam)	16
More about the exams.....	18
Separate sittings.....	18
Re-sits	18
Withdrawal/cancellation fees.....	18
Candidates with additional support needs	19
Exam Results	20
Re-sits	21
After you have qualified.....	22
Continuing as an AMTRA SQP including CPD and annual fees	22
Keep AMTRA updated	22
Upgrades – adding extra modules	23
Premises registration	23
Veterinary Nurses	25
Enrolment	25
Assessment.....	26
Examination centres.....	26
Supportive Taught Courses	26
Continuing Professional Development	27

Introduction

An SQP is a Suitably Qualified Person – this is the legal phrase used in the Veterinary Medicines Regulations. AMTRA also uses the term Registered Animal Medicines Advisor in addition to SQP. The second is the legal term, but the first describes the role better, and we currently tend to use it in external communications with animal owners and others.

Registered Animal Medicines Advisors have an important and responsible role, contributing to animal health and, in the case of farm livestock, farm profitability. They are entitled to prescribe and/or supply certain veterinary medicines under the Veterinary Medicines Regulations, but to do so must act professionally including following the rules of the Regulations and of an associated Code of Practice.

AMTRA SQPs work in a variety of work environments – in veterinary practices, in agricultural or equine businesses, in pet shops. They can deal with customers face-to-face or via the telephone or Internet, but the legal and professional obligations remain the same.

Becoming an AMTRA SQP requires passing both written and oral exams, but that is not the end of the process: being an AMTRA SQP means an ongoing commitment, acting responsibly, following the rules in the Regulations and Code of Practice, advising animal owners on choice of medicine and their safe and effective use, as well as other strategies, contributing to the health and welfare of their animals. There is also a requirement to do some ongoing learning known as CPD (continuing professional development) and to pay an annual fee to remain on the AMTRA Register of SQPs.

AMTRA SQPs are subject to disciplinary processes where we have reports of alleged non-compliance with the rules, and if found in breach can have action ranging from a letter of guidance through to permanent removal from the register of SQPs.

Some people working towards becoming an AMTRA SQP go on an external training course, for instance at a college or university. Others get support from their employer, and some study solely from the AMTRA training material – the printed manual and online. Everything you need should be in the information from AMTRA. Most people find external training support very helpful but it is supplementary and not required – the decision is yours.

Whatever learning route you take, it is important that you have enrolled as a student SQP with AMTRA, and that when ready you book your exam with AMTRA – booking a training course with an external provider is not the same as either of these steps.

AMTRA SQP exams

A list of forthcoming exam dates is available on the AMTRA website.

Your exam booking form is enclosed with your training manual, inside the front pocket. Further copies can be downloaded from the AMTRA website (form reference A03).



Booking your place on a training course is NOT the same as booking your place at the exam. You must always send AMTRA an exam booking form if you intend to sit the exam, regardless of where you are planning to take the exam (or whether you've separately booked a training course).



Exams must be booked with AMTRA an absolute minimum of three weeks before the exam takes place¹ – and some exams fill up well in advance.



AMTRA will acknowledge receipt of your exam booking form with a pink postcard sent to your home address. If you do not receive this within a week of submitting your exam form (or less if you are submitting very close to the three-week deadline), please telephone AMTRA.



Your **first exam attempt must be taken within 24 months** of enrolling with AMTRA (otherwise AMTRA will charge a supplementary fee). You must have enrolled with AMTRA first before booking your exam – **booking a training course with a college is not the same as booking the exam with AMTRA.**

Please note exams may become fully booked, and that all exams are subject to minimum numbers: we regret that very occasionally it may be necessary to cancel an exam if insufficient people book for a particular date.

The examination fee for your first attempt is included in your original enrolment fee².

Written exam duration

Most candidates are examined separately in the Base Module (written examination, 1½ hours) together with whichever species modules you have chosen:

- The Farm Animal Module (written examination, 2 hours)

¹ To be precise, an exam booking form must be received by the AMTRA office by 1pm on the day three weeks before a set of exams, or if that day is a public holiday then by 1pm on the working day that precedes that day. If the set of exams at a centre runs over two days, then the deadline is three weeks prior to the first of the two days, even if you are only being examined on the second day.

² Your enrolment fee includes your exam fees for your first attempt on one occasion: additional fees are charged if you spread your first attempts at the various modules over multiple exam dates. Additional fees are charged for second and subsequent attempts.

- The Equine Module (written examination, 1¼ hours)
- The Companion Animal Module (written examination, 1¼ hours)
- The Avian Module (written examination, 1¼ hours)

To become an AMTRA SQP you must pass the Base module, at least one species module, and the viva (oral exam).

Registered Veterinary Nurses will take just one written exam:

- The Veterinary Nurse module (written examination, 2 hours)

Those qualifying via the **Veterinary Pharmacy Education Programme** will have their own series of exams – details from Harper Adams University.



To count towards the AMTRA SQP qualification, **the viva must be passed not more than 24 months before the written exams**, so if written exams are passed a long time after the viva (for instance after re-sits), then AMTRA will require a fresh viva (at the normal re-sit cost) before considering you for registration as an SQP.

Furthermore, **if you fail all your written modules**, AMTRA will normally require you to take a fresh viva (at the normal re-sit cost).

The written exam



Before sitting the written exam, please study the section of this document **AMTRA Examinations: Things you need to know** which incorporates the **Rules & Regulations for AMTRA Exams**. Also please check the rules on **Entry to AMTRA SQP Examinations** (in this manual attached to the exam booking form, and on the AMTRA website) – you will need approved photo ID.

You will be provided with a copy of the AMTRA SQP version of the NOAH Compendium in the exam room. The Compendium includes a copy of the SQP Code of Practice and VMD's guidance on "Retail of veterinary medicines". Exam questions in the Base module which relate to legislation take account of the fact that the Code of Practice and the guidance will be available in the exam room (since you will have a Compendium), with appropriate emphasis on understanding and implementation of the Code rather than on factual knowledge.



No marks are given to answers which contain advice or actions not compatible with the law, the SQP Code of Practice, or with data sheet recommendations (e.g. supplying a wormer contraindicated in pregnancy to a female animal without checking if it could be pregnant or even checking its gender, or supplying a sheep wormer for use in goats).



Exam centres are suitable for access by **wheelchair or by others with mobility difficulties**, but if this is likely to be relevant to you, please contact Harper Adams University before your exam.



There is **no negative marking in any of the written papers** – it used to be the case that for some of the multiple-choice questions, an incorrect answer was awarded minus one mark: that is no longer the case.

AMTRA examinations: things you need to know – incorporating the Rules & Regulations for AMTRA Examinations

As an AMTRA examination candidate, you will be expected to have read these instructions prior to entry, to adhere to the rules and regulations and understand your responsibilities whilst in the examination room. Any deviation from the rules in respect of written exams is subject to jurisdiction of the Harper Adams University Academic Misconduct Panel, and in respect of the AMTRA viva (oral exam) subject to jurisdiction of the AMTRA Board. By entering the examination room you are agreeing to abide by these rules and regulations. Do not attempt to debate the rules and regulations with the Invigilator. Any aggression or abuse will not be tolerated. Entry into the exam is at the Invigilator's discretion.

Candidates should note that examination results must be agreed by the joint examination board (Special Subject Assessment Board-SSAB) before they can be released. The SSAB meets approximately monthly; therefore you will be notified of your results up to 9 weeks after your exams. Results will only be posted to your home address.

1. Candidates will only be permitted entry to the examination room if they have enrolled with AMTRA and been booked onto the examination by AMTRA. Booking onto a course does not mean an automatic booking onto an exam – it is your responsibility to book onto the examination. Only registered candidates and Harper Adams University (HAU) approved invigilators shall be allowed inside the examination room, before, during and after the examination.
2. Candidates should arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the stated examination start time, gather outside the examination room with their photographic ID and wait for further and final instructions from the HAU invigilator.
3. Candidates should bring the required form of photographic ID to both the written **and** viva examinations. If no suitable form of photographic ID is forthcoming HAU reserve the right to withhold candidate's results.
4. Candidates with requirements for additional educational support in examinations should contact HAU as early as possible before the examination day. Assistance will only be given to candidates who produce proof of requirement, i.e. results of a DAS test or full documentation from an educational psychologist. This must be received six weeks before the examination, otherwise assistance may not be available.
5. Candidates should not enter the examination room until indicated by the HAU invigilator. On entering the examination room all candidates are under examination conditions and are agreeing to abide by these rules and regulations.
6. **Do not bring personal belongings into the examination room.** This includes bags, handbags, course notes or your personal copy of the NOAH compendium. You will not

be allowed to bring personal belongings into the examination – no provision for storing your belongings will be made at the exam venue. All you need to bring is your pen / pencil case and a drink (clear bottle with label removed). This rule is not negotiable and the invigilator will refuse entry of all personal items – do not attempt to debate this with the invigilator. Candidates may **not** bring food into the examination room.

7. Mobile telephones, Smart technology or any electronic devices **MUST NOT** be brought into the examination room. If candidates are found to be in possession of these devices, they will be instructed to immediately leave the examination room for that exam session. The policy of the HAU Academic Misconduct Panel states that in this situation, the candidate will be deemed to have failed the module that they were sitting, i.e. those papers on the examination desk at the time of the infringement. The candidate may be entitled to reassessment and will have to pay the necessary fee to AMTRA, but will have to re-book their examination date for another day.
8. Candidates are reminded that they should make use of toilet facilities and refreshments before entering the exam room. If candidates need the toilet during the examination they will need to be accompanied by an invigilator – if students leave the room without an invigilator, they will be deemed to have finished their written exam.
9. Whilst in the examination room, before, during or after the examination, candidates should not talk, communicate or make any contact in any way with other candidates. All work must be carried out alone and no attempt should be made to read the work of another candidate. Cheating or collusion will result in the candidate's paper being made void and the candidate being asked to leave the room.
10. Candidates are required to remain in the examination room for the first thirty-five minutes. If candidates finish the exam early, they may leave the exam room quietly but should not disturb other candidates who will still be working.
11. If candidates arrive late they may enter the exam room up to thirty minutes after the published start-time of the exam, however they will not be allowed extra time beyond the normal time of completion for the examination. It is your responsibility to be on time for the examinations. If you think you are going to be very late it will be best to withdraw from the exam and re-book. Contact AMTRA in the first instance tel 01359 245801.
12. Candidates should clearly fill out the front sheet of the examination paper at the start of the examination(s). Their HAU student number will be given on the front of their desk. All candidates are given a numbered desk. The invigilator will read out the desk numbers prior to the examination. You will not need your SQP number for the examination.
13. Candidates should be aware that there is no negative marking on any of the written examination papers.

14. .It is a professional requirement in order to join the AMTRA SQP register for the first time that candidates must attend a 10 to 15 minute *viva voce* (oral) examination with an AMTRA Assessor. The timetable will be issued by Harper Adams University. The viva will normally start shortly after the written examinations have been completed, continuing for the remainder of the day. Occasionally some vivas may take place before afternoon written exams, or between written papers, in which case this will be made clear to candidates. Candidates should make adequate provision to attend this part of the examination.
15. Candidates should be aware that if they include within their answer a statement which indicates an illegal procedure and which is considered as inappropriate for the SQP category in question, they will only be awarded a maximum of 39% (the pass mark being 40%) for that question.
16. The pass mark for each written AMTRA SQP module is 40%
17. Candidates should advise HAU of any medical conditions that they think may assist us to prepare examination facilities on their intended examination date. Please note that by entering the examination room, you are stating that you are medically fit to take the exam.
18. If a fire alarm should go off, obey **all** the instructions given by the invigilator. You should not talk to other candidates as you are leaving the room or during the disruption, as this will compromise the exam and the examination may be made void for the whole examination group. Additional time will be added on by the invigilator to make up for any interruption.
19. Candidates who fail to turn up for examination on their stated date without an adequate reason will be liable to pay a cancellation fee to AMTRA³. If you are unable to attend please let AMTRA know in advance. If you are unable to attend on the day, contact AMTRA in the first instance, tel 01359 245801.

³ The fee is payable on rebooking the exam – see the section on “Withdrawal / cancellation fees”

Written exams: questions and scenarios

Some sample question and answers are included at the back of your AMTRA training manual. Additionally, there are some questions where you can test your knowledge in the Harper Adams Moodle Virtual Learning Environment (Learning Hub). These are the only questions and answers available – there are no further past papers.

All exam papers will have some “administration of product” questions. In addition each exam paper will test your ability to use SPCs (via the data sheet compendium that is available for every candidate in every written exam). This may be, for example, assessing dose rates, withholding periods, contraindications and warnings or asking you to find a suitable product to match a defined scenario. There may be a range of “right answers” depending on the product you choose as your example.

The scenario-based questions for the avian, equine and companion papers test your ability to fully manage the perfect transaction following the SQP Code of Practice. Thus we are looking for evidence you fulfils relevant parts of paragraphs 30 to 36 of the Code.

A statement that you would do this (for instance, “I would advise on warnings and contraindications”) is not enough. The required information relating to the specific chosen product must be given, to ensure you are able to use the SPC to give the correct advice.

Companion Scenario

Please provide:

- General advice specific to any question the “customer” may ask in the scenario. This may include information about specific parasites, human health risks, management methods to reduce risk e.g. hand washing and poop scooping etc.
- The questions that should be asked in order to gain enough information to make an appropriate product decision. (If you choose to do this in a question and answer way, this is fine, but a short explanation on why the question is relevant would gain more marks).
- An explanation of what the chosen product will, or will not do.
- Any relevant contra-indications and warnings relevant to the specific product chosen.
- Details of administration of the chosen product: dose, frequency and exactly HOW to administer the product.
- How to store the chosen product
- Disposal of remainder of product and packaging
- Best practice on records

Please note that a mark less than a pass mark will be awarded for this question if insufficient information is given; significant errors made; or if the animal is endangered by supply of a product that is not licenced for it, disregard of relevant contraindications (e.g. potential pregnancy and some products), or inappropriate dose rates.

Equine Scenario

Please provide:

- General advice specific to any question the “customer” may ask in the scenario. This may include information on epidemiology of specific parasites, management methods to reduce risk e.g. pooh picking, use of quarantine dosing if applicable, use of FEC and the issues on wormer resistance, how to get equine weight
- The questions that should be asked in order to gain enough information to make an appropriate product decision (if you choose to do this in a question and answer way, this is fine, but a short explanation on why the question is relevant would gain more marks).
- An explanation of what the chosen product will, or will not do.
- Any relevant contra-indications and warnings relevant to the specific product chosen.
- Code of Practice section 35 information on supply of chosen product relevant to passport status.
- Details of administration of the chosen product: dose, frequency and exactly HOW to safely administer the product
- How to store the chosen product (risks to other species)
- Disposal of remainder of product and packaging
- Records required

Please note that a mark less than a pass mark will be awarded for this question if insufficient information is given; significant errors made; the animal is endangered by supply of a product that is not licenced for it, disregard of relevant contraindications (e.g. potential pregnancy and some products), or inappropriate dose rates; or failure to undertake section 35 of Code of Practice.

Avian Scenario

Please provide:

- General advice specific to any question the “customer” may ask in the scenario. This may include information on epidemiology of specific parasites, management methods to reduce risk, e.g. pasture rotation, use of quarantine dosing if applicable, use of FEC
- The questions that should be asked in order to gain enough information to make an appropriate product decision (if you choose to do this in a question and answer way, this is fine, but a short explanation on why the question is relevant would gain more marks).
- An explanation of what the chosen product will, or will not do.
- Any relevant contra-indications and warnings relevant to the specific product chosen. Please note here the VMD restrictions on the use of small volume flubendazole products and their derivatives in birds that are for sale or producing products for sale
- Please also note poultry of food-producing species can NEVER be given SAES products whatever their individual purpose without veterinary prescription under the cascade
- Details of administration of the chosen product: dose, frequency and exactly HOW to safely administer the product
- Any health and safety issues
- How to store the chosen product
- Disposal of remainder of product and packaging

- Records required

Please note that a mark less than a pass mark will be awarded for this question if insufficient information is given; significant errors made; the birds are endangered by supply of a product that is not licenced for it, disregard of relevant contraindications (e.g. sale of eggs) or inappropriate dose rates; or failure to follow legislative guidelines.

Farm animal module

You will be sent a farm descriptor by Harper Adams University 3-6 weeks before your booked exam date. That farm descriptor will also be attached to the exam paper.

These farm descriptors will change on a regular basis, either in minor or substantial details.

You will be expected to answer the exam questions based on the farm descriptor provided to them for their exam – not a previous version.

You will be asked in **SECTION A** to:

Prepare a detailed control programme for either endoparasites, ectoparasites or use of vaccines for a defined farm animal species on the farm described. They will be asked to consider management as well as medicinal products, but cannot change the nature of the farm or the fundamentals of the business plan. There will be no pre-knowledge of which species or topic will appear in the exam. There will be no choice in the exam.

You will be asked to discuss what an SQP should do in respect of prescription and supply of the medicinal products they have identified.

Marks will be awarded for:

1. Clear practical control plan using products and timing appropriate for the study farm with justification for the choices made. All ages of the relevant species must be covered for an entire production year. Include management control methods.
2. Clear consideration of responsible use of medicines (including, except for a vaccine question, addressing resistance)
3. Comprehensive discussion of the requirements of the SQP Code of Practice and VMD guidance on retail of veterinary medicines in the prescription and supply of these products FOR THIS FARM, e.g. any supplementary questions, advice on administration, contraindications and warnings, storage, disposal, records, etc.

SECTION B will still focus on the same farm but will consist of short answer questions that will cover the farm species not specified in Section A, and the parasite group/vaccine options not covered. At least 1 question will focus on each of the 4 farmed species groups. Thus Section B will be matched with its own Section A.

SECTION C will be short answer and multiple-choice questions to cover the wider range of information and background knowledge.

Re-sit/reassessment papers will be in the same format but will be based on an entirely different farm description – which in itself will be modified regularly.

Viva (oral exam)

In addition to the written examination, you will have a one-to-one 10 to 15 minute oral examination, also called a viva voce or just viva. This will be carried out by one of AMTRA's Assessors.

The viva timetable will be issued by Harper Adams University. The vivas will normally start shortly after the written examinations have been completed, continuing for the remainder of the day. Occasionally some vivas may take place before afternoon written exams, or between written papers, in which case this will be made clear to candidates. Candidates should make adequate provision to attend this part of the examination.

The viva exam is an additional check by AMTRA to go with the written exams, to give AMTRA additional confidence that you are fit to be included on the list of AMTRA SQPs.

The purpose of the assessment is to establish that you have knowledge, understanding and interpretation of the legal and professional responsibilities of SQPs – what you are allowed to do, how to do it, and what you are not allowed to do.

The viva will focus on checking your understanding of and ability to implement in practice the key legislative elements of the Veterinary Medicines Regulations, the SQP Code of Practice, and the VMD's guidance for retailers, all found in the Base module section of the AMTRA training manual.

Some of the questions may be about your interaction with a customer. It may be helpful to think in advance about how you as an SQP would interact with a customer if you were working in a different sort of business from where you currently work. For instance, you might be planning to work as an SQP in an online environment, but your qualification will allow you to work as an SQP anywhere, so we need to be comfortable that you understand the freedoms and restrictions of the SQP role in a range of retail systems.

The Compendium will not be available for general reference during the viva, though the AMTRA Assessor may ask you to look things up to demonstrate familiarity with use of the book – for instance, can you check whether a particular product is suitable for use in pregnant cats or look up the milk withdrawal period of a particular product?



Just like the written exam, you must bring AMTRA-approved photo ID to the viva. Please read the rules on **Entry to AMTRA SQP Examinations** (in this manual attached to the exam booking form).



Although this is an oral exam, you may be expected to read and interpret items presented to you, and should bring reading glasses if needed, in addition to any hearing aid normally used.



Have a look on the AMTRA website – there is a short video giving a bit more information about the viva with some feedback from SQPs on their experiences.

Students tell us that they have positive experiences of the viva. They especially appreciate the friendly approach of the examiner and being set at their ease in the viva exam. Some people tell us that they were nervous or anxious beforehand but found it much easier than they had expected.



The viva will normally last 10 to 15 minutes. Sometimes they can be a little longer, but you should not be concerned if this happens – the length of the viva is not related to the decision of the assessor.



The assessor will make some notes as they go along. They may make some remarks but aren't allowed to tell you whether you have passed or not. You will find out whether you passed when AMTRA writes to you with the results of your written modules, up to 9 weeks after the exam.



Try to answer as fully as possible. The assessor is there to help you show what you know, not to trick you, so if you aren't sure what they mean, say so – they can then re-phrase the question. If you still are unable to answer, don't be afraid to say "I don't know". At this point the assessor can move on.



Don't be concerned if the assessor moves on with the questioning. The viva time will go quickly and there is a lot to talk about. You will be asked a range of questions addressing various elements of the work of SQPs.



We may make a video or audio recording of the viva as an additional record in case of query. Normally it will just be you with the assessor, but occasionally an additional person may be present as part of our quality checking of our assessors.

More about the exams

Separate sittings

If you choose to take your initial exam modules (i.e. those for which you initially enrol) spread over more than one date, there is an additional fee⁴ for each additional exam sitting: the fee also covers paying an exam centre for your place twice and additional administrative costs. In this case, please use the Individual modules Exam Form (available on the AMTRA website – form A04) for second and subsequent sittings and send the fee with the form.

Re-sits

If you fail a written module or the viva, you may re-sit (for a fee). We will normally allow a maximum of four attempts at any module or viva.

If you are booking a re-sit, please use the Individual modules Exam Form (available from the AMTRA website – form A04) and send the fee with the form. (See also the full note on re-sits under "Exam results".)

Withdrawal/cancellation fees

You must tell AMTRA at least 4 weeks in advance if you wish to withdraw from an exam, otherwise a fee will be charged. These are currently:

- £50 fee if a candidate cancels (including failing to show for the exam) within two weeks of an exam, or
- £30 fee if a candidate cancels between 4 and 2 weeks prior to the exam.

Before we introduced this fee, about 17% of SQP exam candidates withdrew from exams at short notice (within four weeks of the exam), or simply failed to turn up. This imposes significant administrative burdens on AMTRA and Harper Adams, and where exams fill up means that other candidates are turned away and also sometimes reduces the viability of courses run by colleges.

AMTRA is also concerned at the number of last-minute substitutions made by companies, where one candidate is withdrawn from an exam and another added. While each case will be done for good reasons, we are worried that the overall trend is likely to lead to candidates being given inadequate time to prepare for the exams.

Note that cancellation/withdrawal includes substituting one individual for another within the same company.

Although the fee is a cancellation/withdrawal fee, it is payable upon re-booking for a fresh exam.

⁴ £95 since September 2013, but subject to change: check the AMTRA website for the latest fee

Exceptional circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis but these should be exceptional – for instance, candidates should allow for traffic delays. Applications for consideration of exceptional circumstances should be made in writing to the AMTRA Secretary General.

These fees were introduced for all exams from 1 January 2015. At the same time, enrolment fees were reduced by £5 with a view to making the net financial effect of these changes zero.

Candidates with additional support needs

Do you have a disability or specific learning difficulty that could impact on your AMTRA SQP assessments? Harper Adams are able to make reasonable adjustments for you, if you let them know **in advance** and certainly no later than **six weeks before** your exam, as they may not be able to assist you if they have less than six weeks' notice.

Disabilities such as:

- Social/communication impairment, e.g. Aspergers/autism
- Blind or visual impairment
- Deaf or hearing impairment
- Mental health condition, e.g. depression, anxiety disorder, etc.
- Physical impairment or mobility issues
- Long standing illness or health condition, e.g. epilepsy, diabetes, etc.
- Any other disability, impairment or medical condition not listed above

Assistance with the examinations, usually in the form of extra time, can only be given to candidates who produce written proof of requirement, e.g. full dyslexia documentation from an educational psychologist. If you do not have any documentary evidence, you may have a DAS (Dyslexia Adult Screening) test – held at a mutually convenient time at Harper Adams University, at least two weeks prior to your course or exam. The cost of this is £45 for which you will be invoiced. Contact the Animals Business Development Office at Harper Adams in the first instance to arrange this with their Learning Support Unit. Contact them on animalswd@harper-adams.ac.uk

Please help Harper Adams to assist you with the assessments, by telling them a long time in advance of your requirements and any reasonable adjustments they can make to your learning experience.

Any disclosure you make will be between yourself and Harper Adams University. Nothing will be discussed with your employer or any third party.

Exam Results



It normally takes around nine weeks for you to receive your exam results – please be patient. Occasionally for a particular exam we may need up to ten weeks in which case we will make this clear on our website.

The reason it can take this long is that your exam papers have first to be marked, and in some cases second-marked, then referred to a Board meeting of Harper Adams University for them to be formally adopted. These meetings take place approximately monthly but can be at longer intervals. After the Board meeting, any queries need to be resolved, the results need to be signed off internally within Harper Adams, and then provided to AMTRA. We then need to process them and then write to you.

AMTRA and Harper Adams will write to you separately: AMTRA tells you about your professional status as an SQP, and Harper Adams about your academic status.

AMTRA will advise you whether you have become an SQP and if so which type (which will depend on which of the species modules you have passed). Harper Adams will write to you separately with your precise exam results in each module.

Although AMTRA and Harper Adams normally try to coordinate our communications, occasionally there may be a short gap. Please do not contact either Harper or AMTRA seeking any “missing” communication until a week after you’ve received the results from one of us.



We will not give out exam results over the telephone – we will write to you at the home address you’ve supplied to us.

To be on the AMTRA SQP Register, you must have passed:

- the Base module, and
- at least one species module (i.e. farm animal, equine, companion animal or avian), and
- the viva (oral exam) – the viva must have been passed within 24 months of the relevant written exams.

Alternatively you must have passed the Veterinary Nurse conversion exam which is equivalent to passing the Base and Companion Animal modules, plus the AMTRA viva; or you must have passed the relevant modules of the Veterinary Pharmacy Education Programme plus the AMTRA viva.

If you failed one or more species module, but still satisfy the three points above, you will still be an SQP, but with a more restrictive classification. For instance, if you tried to become an all-species SQP (R-SQP) but only passed the base and farm animal modules and the viva, you will be an L-SQP, able to prescribe and supply for farm animals but not equines or companion animals.

Re-sits

If you failed some or all modules of the exam, or you failed the viva (oral exam) you may re-sit those modules a limited number of times on payment of the appropriate re-sit fee. It should be noted that the re-sit fees for modules are higher than the equivalent fees included in the initial enrolment fee.

You can re-sit modules at any of the exam centres (see exams and courses), even if the module itself is not being offered for the first time (so you could do an equine re-sit even if the exam was primarily for base and companion animal modules), subject to there being sufficient time available for your chosen module(s).

You may have a total of three attempts at each module, and exceptionally permission for a fourth attempt may be granted by Harper Adams. Note that AMTRA will normally consider four attempts the maximum allowed.

To book a re-sit, please complete and return the "Individual Modules Exam Application Form", reference A04 (not the Standard Examination Booking Form, reference A03) available from the AMTRA website.

After you have qualified

Continuing as an AMTRA SQP including CPD and annual fees

You will be included on the current calendar year's AMTRA SQP Register – your inclusion is for the remainder of the year, not for a full 12 months. Since AMTRA operates on a year from January to December, then if you qualify in the summer you may only be on the Register for a couple of months before we start asking you for your fee for the following year.



In order to continue as an AMTRA SQP, **you must ensure AMTRA is paid the annual renewal fee each year**. The renewal fee should be paid in October or November for the following calendar year. A late payment fee is due on payments received 1 December to 31 March, and for payments received after March a reinstatement fee is payable.

Some employers manage the payment of the annual fee on your behalf, but do check with your employer to make sure that this is the case, as it's your responsibility to ensure the fee is paid to AMTRA.

You must act in a professional manner including acting in accordance with the Veterinary Medicines Regulations and the Code of Practice issued under them by the Secretary of State. If the Code changes in a way which changes the obligations of SQPs, AMTRA will provide an updated copy to all AMTRA SQPs.



You must keep yourself up to date, including undertaking at least the minimum prescribed amount of Continuous Professional Development. **It is important that you understand your CPD obligations once qualified: please read the document "Frequently asked questions about the AMTRA CPD scheme"** enclosed with your training manual and available on the AMTRA website.

AMTRA operates on a two-year CPD period: the same period applies to everyone, with the same deadline regardless of when you qualify, but those who qualify part-way through the two years may be given a reduced target for the first CPD period. Once qualified, please make sure you understand what your CPD obligation is and the deadline for achieving it.

Keep AMTRA updated

Even though most SQPs are supported by their employers, your qualification is personal to you, and AMTRA will write to you at your home address.



Please remember the importance of keeping AMTRA advised of any change in personal details (such as name change) or if you move house – please do not expect your employer to do this for you. You can login to the AMTRA website (amtra.org.uk/login.php) and update your contact details at any time.

If you've provided an email address to us, then you will get extra information which we don't always send in the post. If we have an email address for you, then we will rely on it from time to time, so please always make sure we have an up to date address for you, preferably a personal one which reaches you directly rather than a generic one for the store or practice.

Upgrades – adding extra modules

If your initial enrolment with AMTRA was for anything other than an R-SQP (i.e. an all-species SQP), you may subsequently decide to add one or more of the other species modules to your qualification. (Note that this is more expensive than enrolling for all the modules at the start.)

Like the initial enrolment, this is essentially a two-stage administrative process:

1. Enrol with AMTRA for the upgrade: Send us the application form (from the AMTRA website, reference A02) and fee. We'll send you the text of the additional modules for your training manual.

If you wish, you can book a supplementary training course with one of the training providers – remember that this is a separate process, and if you book a training course you must also both enrol with AMTRA for the upgrade, and book an exam with AMTRA.

2. Book the upgrade exam: Select an exam date from the list of exams, and then send us your Individual modules exam booking form (sent to you with your training manual, or on the AMTRA website reference A04).

Premises registration

SQPs may only supply veterinary medicines for which they are qualified from registered premises – that is, a Veterinary Practice Premises (VPP) registered with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS); a retail pharmacy registered with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) or the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland (PSNI); or, most commonly, premises approved as SQP Retailers' premises by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD).

Please note that if you are setting up a new SQP Retailers' premises, you must apply directly to the VMD's Inspections & Investigations Team with the appropriate payment. **This does not happen automatically once you've passed your SQP exam.**

The premises must be approved before veterinary medicines can be obtained and supplied. The VMD aims to process applications within 10 working days and conduct the approval inspection within 30 days of the application being processed. The VMD's contact details are given below:

Tel. 01932 338475

Inspections & Investigations Team
Veterinary Medicines Directorate

Woodham Lane
New Haw
Addlestone
Surrey KT15 3LS

A copy of the VMD's SQP Retailers Premises application form is available from the AMTRA or VMD website.

Note that because some avian species are food-producing, any premises supplying them must be registered as category "AM", which carries VMD's higher fee.

Veterinary Nurses



This summary for veterinary nurses complements the other material in this document "Becoming an AMTRA SQP", and **should be read in conjunction with the full text.**

AMTRA and Harper Adams University allow qualified VNs on the RCVS register to "add on" to their VN qualification and to become an AMTRA SQP who can supply NFA-VPS medicines for companion animals – termed a C-SQP. One or more of the other modules (equine, farm-animal and avian) may also be taken at the same time.

Practice staff such as non-qualified nurses and receptionists can also become AMTRA SQPs but they will have to enrol as a new student, and then study and be assessed on a base module and a companion animal module, i.e. more study and assessment as they do not have a formal relevant qualification which can be accredited.

Since qualified VNs already have been assessed on some of the relevant material in this qualification they can be given credit for this and just have to be assessed on the "new" material and the working understanding of their other knowledge checked.

A potential AMTRA SQP must register with AMTRA as the body holding the professional register (just as the RCVS does for the VN qualification) but Harper Adams University will conduct the assessment and will award the necessary academic credits, whether the assessment is at Harper Adams or at another centre.

Enrolment

Veterinary Nurses enrolling with AMTRA will be provided with written course material. Optional revision courses are offered by some examination centres, aimed at candidate SQPs taking the normal Base and Companion Animal modules but still of value to VNs.

The AMTRA enrolment fee includes the examination fee (provided the exam is sat within 24 months of enrolment), the AMTRA assessment fee, the price of the training material, the Harper Adams assessment/credit rating/quality control fee, and a NOAH Compendium containing data sheets of those medicines which qualified SQPs can prescribe, free inclusion on the AMTRA SQP Register for the remainder of the calendar year of the examination, access to AMTRA services and to Continuing Professional Development.

Prices for VN SQP enrolment are the same as the prices for standard SQP enrolments.



The full AMTRA Base and Companion Animal training manual modules are sent to VNs as a courtesy, but it is **expected that for VNs the only really new material that these contain will be the legislation and regulatory elements.** This is covered in the Base module Section 1, and in Sections 4 and 5 which are the SQP Code of Practice and the VMD's guidance for retail of veterinary medicines. It is also advisable to

know Section 3, Causes of Disease. It is recommended, however, that you read through the whole of the training manual. You should also be familiar with use of the AMTRA SQP version of the NOAH Compendium.

Assessment



Qualified VNs on the RCVS register take just a **single two-hour AMTRA SQP written exam, plus the viva** (oral exam).

The written assessment is made up of two sections: the first is a case study with a description of a scenario. An example might be: Non client X comes into surgery with young dog Y just obtained from a rescue kennel. It has been vaccinated but the new owner has been told to get the dog wormed. Describe the procedure an SQP vet nurse would go through, including questions asked, advice given, products sold and data recorded.

There are also some short answer questions to cover knowledge of other areas of the medicines legislation relevant to SQPs, e.g. legal aspects of medicine storage and relevant companion animal health areas.

If a qualified veterinary nurse chooses also to include one or more of the other species modules (farm, equine or avian), these will be assessed as standard SQP modules.

After the written examination, you will be assessed for your professional competence as an SQP by an AMTRA Assessor appointed for that purpose in a one-to-one 10-15 minute viva (oral exam).

Examination centres

Once enrolled with AMTRA and in receipt of the training manual, veterinary nurses may book their examination with AMTRA.

There is a range of exam centres around the UK with a variety of dates. See the AMTRA website for the full list.

Supportive Taught Courses

None of the AMTRA examination centres currently offer training courses aimed directly at VNs, though courses covering the Base and Companion Animal modules may be found helpful: these are listed on the AMTRA website. However, most VNs find that home study from the printed and online training manual is sufficient.

VNs should enrol with AMTRA, book any training/revision directly with the college concerned, and when ready send AMTRA the exam booking form.

Continuing Professional Development

All SQPs are required to undertake continuing professional development. When the AMTRA Council set the rules it was agreed that in recognition of the special status of veterinary nurse SQPs, that a slightly different approach was needed from that for all other SQPs.

In general, AMTRA CPD points may only be claimed for content which has been accredited by AMTRA in advance, and where the organiser provides a certified list of attendees. We do not generally allow other evidence of attendance.

We know that veterinary nurses are already doing lots of CPD, but the problem for AMTRA was that not all VN CPD is relevant to the SQP role, and where it is, we generally haven't had applications for AMTRA CPD accreditation.

In recognition of the special circumstances of vet nurse SQPs, you may claim half of your AMTRA CPD points obligation from VN CPD provided it meets the following criteria:

- a copy of a certificate of attendance is provided, and
- the SQP confirms that in their view the CPD was supportive of their SQP role

If you've already undertaken CPD which meets these criteria and you'd like to claim AMTRA CPD points for it, please complete and return the Veterinary Nurse CPD claim form together with a copy of the certificate(s) of attendance.