



ANIMAL MEDICINES TRAINING REGULATORY AUTHORITY

# Becoming an AMTRA Registered Animal Medicines Advisor (RAMA)\*

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\* known in the Veterinary Medicines Regulations as an SQP (Suitably Qualified Person)





ANIMAL MEDICINES TRAINING REGULATORY AUTHORITY

1c Windmill Avenue  
Woolpit  
Bury St Edmunds  
IP30 9UP

Tel: 01359 245801

[info@amtra.org.uk](mailto:info@amtra.org.uk)  
[www.amtra.org.uk](http://www.amtra.org.uk)

[facebook.com/amtra](https://facebook.com/amtra)  
[twitter.com/amtra\\_rama](https://twitter.com/amtra_rama)  
[linkedin.com/company/amtra-ltd](https://linkedin.com/company/amtra-ltd)

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## Introduction

A Registered Animal Medicines Advisor (RAMA) is the name AMTRA gives to those people described as SQPs (Suitably Qualified Persons) by the Veterinary Medicines Regulations. The second is the legal term for the time being, though that might change in future, but the first describes the role better and is the name we are increasingly choosing to use in preference to SQP. However, you will continue to encounter the term "SQP" sometimes, including in some AMTRA documentation, and should regard it as equivalent to RAMA.

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 RAMAs work in a variety of work environments – typically in veterinary practices, in agricultural or equine businesses, or in pet shops, but we have RAMAs working for pharmaceutical companies, government, universities, charities, zoos, laboratories, the army and other less obvious places. 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 RAMA requires passing both written and oral assessments, but that is not the end of the process: being an AMTRA RAMA 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 RAMAs.

AMTRA RAMAs 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 RAMAs.

Some people working towards becoming an AMTRA RAMA participate in an external training course provided by a third party, which could be face-to-face or online. 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 RAMA with AMTRA, and that when ready you book your assessments (both written and oral) with AMTRA – booking a training course with an external provider is not the same as either of these steps.

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## AMTRA RAMA assessments



What follows is a summary: specific provisions relating to the online written assessments are set out in the document “Online written exams: Instructions and Information for Candidates and Employers” which should be studied.

A list of forthcoming assessment dates is available on the AMTRA website. All assessments (written and oral) are carried out online: for most people this means sitting the exams at home or work or some other quiet place, though from time to time we do offer assessments hosted at Harper Adams University (in Shropshire) where the computer equipment is provided and configured for you, so you only need to turn up at the booked time.

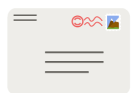
Your exam booking form is enclosed with your training manual, inside the front pocket. Further copies can be downloaded from the AMTRA website (form reference A03).



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



Written assessments must be booked with AMTRA by the deadline date shown on the AMTRA website, normally 4 weeks before the batch of written assessments begins. As an exception, the viva (oral) exam may be booked up to 6 working days before the exam.



AMTRA will acknowledge receipt of your exam booking form by email. If you do not receive this within a week of submitting your exam form (or less if you are submitting very close to the booking deadline), please telephone AMTRA.



Your **first assessment attempt must be taken within 24 months** of enrolling with AMTRA (otherwise AMTRA will charge a supplementary fee). After two years of inactivity, your enrolment with AMTRA will lapse and you would need to enrol from scratch if you wanted to resume. You must have enrolled with AMTRA first before booking your assessment – **booking a training course is not the same as booking the assessment with AMTRA.**

Please note the viva exams may become fully booked and places are subject to availability. We do not anticipate any written assessments becoming full but may close these to bookings in exceptional circumstances. AMTRA and Harper Adams will make reasonable efforts to hold all assessments, but reserve the right to cancel an assessment at their sole discretion.

The fee for your first attempt at the written assessments and the viva is included in your original enrolment fee<sup>1</sup>.

### **What you need to pass to become an AMTRA RAMA**

Most candidates are assessed separately in the Base Module together with whichever species modules you have chosen:

- The Farm Animal Module
- The Equine Module
- The Companion Animal Module
- The Avian Module

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

**Alternatively, Registered Veterinary Nurses** are required to take just one written assessment:

- The Veterinary Nurse module

The Veterinary Nurse module effectively replaces the standard Base and Companion Animal modules, but RVNs may also enrol for the Farm Animal, Equine, or Avian modules if appropriate to their needs. RVNs must also pass the AMTRA viva.



To count towards the AMTRA RAMA qualification, **the viva must be passed not more than 24 months before successful written assessments**, so if written assessments 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 a RAMA.

Additionally, if you pass one or more written modules but fail overall to qualify as a RAMA, then any pass in written modules will cease to be considered valid after 24 months if you don't qualify in the meantime, and these would then have to be re-sat at the normal re-sit cost.

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

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<sup>1</sup> Your enrolment fee includes your fees for your first attempt: we do not currently charge additional fees if you spread your first attempts at the various modules over multiple dates, but may re-introduce these in future. Additional re-sit fees are charged for second and subsequent attempts.

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## Written assessments

### Online written assessments

Specific provisions relating to the online written assessments are set out in the document “Online written exams: Instructions and Information for Candidates and Employers” which should be studied.

All assessments (written and oral) are carried out online: for most people this means sitting the exams at home or work or some other quiet place, though from time to time we do offer assessments hosted at Harper Adams University (in Shropshire) where the computer equipment is provided and configured for you, so you only need to turn up at the booked time.

If you don't have access to a suitably equipped computer (including webcam and microphone), struggle with IT skills, don't have a reliable Internet connection, or don't have a suitable quiet place to sit the exam, we recommend you consider sitting the exam at Harper Adams University.

### General guidance

The AMTRA written exams are “closed-book” exams so you should have access to your copy of the AMTRA Compendium during the exam, but no other material is permitted.



Before sitting the written assessment, please study this document which includes things you should know.



Zero marks are given to an entire answer if any part of the answer contains advice or actions not compatible with the law, the SQP Code of Practice, or with data sheet recommendations, or which may endanger the animal. This might include supplying a wormer contraindicated in pregnancy to a female animal without checking if it could be pregnant or even checking its gender, supplying a sheep wormer for use in goats, failing to address horse passport requirements, failing to consider restrictions on the sale of eggs from domestic flocks, failing to address specific requirements for sheep dips, or incorrect dose rates.



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.

### What might be in the exam

All written assessments will have some “administration of product” questions. In addition your ability may be tested to use SPCs (via the AMTRA version of the Compendium that every candidate should have available for their written assessment). 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.

Other questions test your ability to fully manage the perfect transaction following the SQP Code of Practice. Thus we are looking for evidence that what you propose to do in a particular case 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.

In thinking about how you might tackle longer-answer questions, depending on the question you might include:

- 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 product you have chosen to recommend will, or will not do.
- Any relevant contra-indications and warnings relevant to the specific product you have 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 record-keeping
- Information on epidemiology of specific parasites, management methods to reduce risk e.g. poo picking, use of quarantine dosing if applicable, use of FEC and the issues on wormer resistance, how to get animal weights
- For the Equine module: how to manage the requirements of horse passport status of animals
- For the Avian module: 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
- For the Avian module: please also note poultry of food-producing species can NEVER be given SAES products whatever their individual purpose without veterinary prescription under the cascade

### ***Sample questions and answers***

Some sample questions and answers on which you can test yourself are included in the Harper Adams “Virtual Learning Environment” (VLE) to which you will have access – if you’ve not

received details from Harper Adams about your access to this within 5 days of enrolling with AMTRA, please contact Harper Adams.

AMTRA strongly encourages all candidates to make use of the sample Q&A (effectively a mock exam) within the VLE.

Note that the sample Q&A (use of which is strongly encouraged) is different from the Systems Access Test (SAT) which, while presented as a mini-exam, is focussed on ensuring your computer equipment is correctly set up to take your full exam. The SAT is compulsory to allow you to sit the real exam. More details of that process are in the document "Online written exams: Instructions and Information for Candidates and Employers" and will be provided again by Harper Adams after you've booked your exam.

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## Viva (oral exam)

In addition to the written assessment, 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.

Your viva will be carried out online through Zoom – see the guidance in the “Managing your viva online through Zoom” section. Please ensure that you have read and understood these notes. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have suitable equipment, have installed the software, and are able to use it, and that you have access to a quiet room where you are alone.

AMTRA will communicate with you about your viva by email, with reminders by text message if we have a mobile phone number for you: please ensure we have accurate contact information for you, and read the communications promptly.

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

The purpose of the assessment is to establish that you have knowledge, understanding and interpretation of the legal and professional responsibilities of RAMAs – 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 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 a RAMA 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 a RAMA in an online environment, but your qualification will allow you to work as a RAMA anywhere, so we need to be comfortable that you understand the freedoms and restrictions of the RAMA role in a range of retail systems.

The AMTRA Assessor may ask you to look things up in the Compendium 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? However, unless you are invited to use the Compendium by the assessor, you should not refer to it: **you should already have a good understanding of the SQP Code of Practice and VMD guidance, and not need to refer to that part of the book.**



You must bring AMTRA-approved photo ID to the viva, ready to show to the AMTRA Assessor when asked. Please read the Rules & Regulations on AMTRA viva examinations in this document.



Although this is an oral exam, you may be expected to read and interpret items presented to you on the screen, or read the Compendium, 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 RAMAs on their experiences: although vivas have moved online since the video was made, the experience should be similar.

Students tell us that they have positive experiences of the viva. They especially appreciate the friendly approach of the Assessor 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. The AMTRA office will advise you of your result which may be separate from the results of your written modules.



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 RAMAs.



We will normally make a video 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.

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## Managing your viva online through Zoom

These notes should be read in conjunction with the general advice and instructions to AMTRA viva candidates, together with the Rules & Regulations for AMTRA viva examinations, both found elsewhere in the guidance document "Becoming an AMTRA Registered Animal Medicines Advisor (RAMA)".

**PLEASE READ THIS DOCUMENT COMPLETELY BEFORE THE DAY OF THE VIVA**

### **Introduction**

1. AMTRA online vivas will be conducted by video conferencing software. AMTRA will specify what software will be used. At the present time this is Zoom: if this changes, you will be informed by email.
2. AMTRA will record the viva (video and audio) for quality assurance purposes, to support assessor training, and in case of any subsequent query.
3. It is your responsibility to provide suitable equipment for the video conferencing (such as laptop, tablet, phone, or PC) and install the software (app) and ensure it is working.
4. The equipment (specifically its camera) must be capable of being moved so that you can give a "tour" of the room to the AMTRA Assessor to demonstrate that you are alone and do not have any items not permitted. If your proposed equipment is a desktop PC with a fixed camera, please think about whether it is suitable for moving to provide this tour of the room that the assessor will require. Be aware that any items in the room may be seen by the assessor and/or included in the viva recording.
5. The equipment must produce audio via a speaker and not via headphones – the Assessor must be able to see and hear that you aren't communicating with anyone else during the viva.
6. It is your responsibility to find a quiet room with a sufficient Internet connection to support the video call, where the door can be closed.
7. AMTRA encourages you to take up the offer of a test call in advance, to confirm all is working well, but will not be able to provide IT support in the event that there are problems. Details of this test call option will be provided by email to you.
8. Occasionally a third person may also be present on the call to observe the Assessor for training and quality assurance purposes – if there is a third person, they are not assessing you.

### **Preparing yourself for the viva**

9. Ensure your equipment and the necessary software is set up and working as described above
10. You must be alone in a quiet room with the door closed. We suggest that if you can, you ask any other people also in the building not to disturb you, or put a notice on the door.

11. You should bring AMTRA-approved photo ID to show to the Assessor (see our notes on what is acceptable Photo ID, but a photo driving licence or passport is ideal).
12. You should have an AMTRA Compendium to hand
13. You may have a glass or bottle of water.
14. You should have no other items in reach: in particular you should have no notes and no electronic devices (such as mobile phone or smart-watch) except that being used for the video call.
15. You should ensure that the device being used for the call is fully charged if it isn't plugged into a power supply.

### ***During the viva***

16. We suggest you establish the video call by the link provided by AMTRA five minutes before the viva start time. Please try to avoid being late. On arrival, you will be in the Zoom waiting room. Please wait for the assessor to let you in to the meeting – occasionally they may be slightly late if the previous viva session has over-run. If you haven't arrived five minutes after the due time, the assessor will seek to phone you on the number you have provided AMTRA.
17. The AMTRA assessor will introduce themselves and explain the process.
18. You will be asked to show your photo ID to the camera.
19. The Assessor will ask you to do a "tour" of the room with your device, to show that you are alone and that you do not have any items not permitted. They may ask you to move nearby items, or to let them see such items more closely. The Assessor may ask you to repeat this exercise at any time during the viva, including at random – this should not be taken to imply any concerns on the part of the Assessor.
20. You will be asked to focus on the screen and avoid looking elsewhere in the room unless invited to do so (such as to consult the Compendium).

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## Rules & Regulations for AMTRA viva 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 undertaking your AMTRA viva examination. Any deviation from the rules is subject to jurisdiction of the AMTRA Board advised by the Professional Standards Committee. By starting your viva you are agreeing to abide by these rules and regulations. Do not attempt to debate the rules and regulations with the AMTRA Assessor. Any aggression or abuse will not be tolerated.

1. You will only be permitted to undertake a viva examination if you have enrolled with AMTRA and been booked onto the examination through AMTRA. Booking onto a course does not mean an automatic booking onto an exam – it is your responsibility to book onto the examination.
2. You should be present in the Zoom waiting room by the appointed time, and await admittance by the AMTRA Assessor.
3. You should bring the required form of photographic ID to the viva examination. If no suitable form of photographic ID is forthcoming AMTRA reserve the right to withhold your results.
4. On entering the Zoom meeting room, you are under examination conditions and are agreeing to abide by these rules and regulations.
5. You must be alone in a quiet room with the door closed.
6. You should have a copy of the current edition of the AMTRA Compendium to hand
7. You may have a glass or bottle of water.
8. You should have no other items in reach: in particular you should have no notes and no electronic devices (such as mobile phone or smart-watch) except that being used for the video call.
9. You should make use of toilet facilities and refreshments before entering the Zoom meeting.
10. Whilst in the Zoom meeting room you should not talk, communicate or make any contact in any way with other people. Cheating or collusion will result in your exam being void, and AMTRA may decline to offer you a further opportunity.
11. If you arrive late, the Assessor or the AMTRA office will try to contact you by the telephone number(s) provided to AMTRA as part of your enrolment. If you are more

than 10 minutes late, you may not be able to sit the exam on this day. It is your responsibility to be on time for the examinations. If you think you are going to be very late it will normally be best to withdraw from the exam and re-book, but please contact AMTRA as soon as you are aware that you are going to be late: tel. 01359 245801.

12. If you fail to turn up for examination at the stated date and time without an adequate reason, a cancellation fee will be due to AMTRA<sup>2</sup>. If you are unable to attend please let AMTRA know in advance. If you are unable to attend on the day, contact AMTRA as soon as possible: tel. 01359 245801.

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<sup>2</sup> The fee is payable on rebooking the exam – see the section on “Withdrawal / cancellation fees”



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## More about the assessments

### ***Separate sittings***

AMTRA has in the past charged an additional fee if you choose to take your initial written modules (i.e. those for which you initially enrol) spread over more than week. This fee is currently suspended, but may be reintroduced in future – if so, this will not be retrospective for those who have already booked their written assessments.

### ***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 ensure you send the fee with the exam booking form. (See also the full note on re-sits under "Your 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:

- £55 fee if a candidate cancels (including failing to show for the exam) within two weeks of an exam, or
- £33 fee if a candidate cancels between 4 and 2 weeks prior to the exam.

Before we introduced this fee, about 17% of RAMA 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.

Exceptional circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis but these should be exceptional – for instance, candidates should allow for traffic delays, and should have made

suitable checks in advance of computer equipment. Applications for consideration of exceptional circumstances should be made in writing to the AMTRA Chief Executive.

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 RAMA 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 take an online Dyslexia test.

[qsdyslexiatest.com/online-dyslexia-testing-and-self-screening/quickscreen-for-individuals](https://qsdyslexiatest.com/online-dyslexia-testing-and-self-screening/quickscreen-for-individuals)

The cost is currently £34.50 which is paid on the website at the time of taking the test. You will register online, pay the fee and take the test. When you get the results, forward them to Harper Adams at [animalswd@harper-adams.ac.uk](mailto: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, except that unless you request otherwise Harper Adams will notify the AMTRA viva assessor where it may be appropriate for the assessor to be aware.

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## Your Results



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

AMTRA will normally provide your viva result much more quickly, and separately from your written assessment result.

The reason it can take this long for your written assessments is that your 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 a RAMA, and Harper Adams about your academic status.

AMTRA will advise you whether you have become a RAMA 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 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 results over the telephone** – we will write to you at the home address you’ve supplied to us.

To be on the AMTRA RAMA 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 assessments.

Alternatively you must have passed the Veterinary Nurse module 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 or Companion Animal Life Care plus the AMTRA viva.

If you failed one or more species module, but still satisfy the minimum requirements above, you will still be a RAMA, but with a more restrictive classification. For instance, if you tried to become

an all-species RAMA but only passed the base and farm animal modules and the viva, you will be an farm-animal-only RAMA, able to prescribe and supply for farm animals but not equines or companion animals.

### ***Re-sits***

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

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 for written modules or the viva.

To book a re-sit, please complete and return an exam booking form with the appropriate fee.

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## After you have qualified

### *Continuing as an AMTRA RAMA including CPD and annual fees*

You will be included on the current calendar year's AMTRA RAMA 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 (which we do in October).



In order to continue as an AMTRA RAMA, **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 in December, and for payments received after 1 January 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 RAMAs, AMTRA will provide an updated copy to all AMTRA RAMAs.



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 RAMAs 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 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 all-species RAMA, 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 exam booking form (sent to you with your training manual, or on the AMTRA website).

### **Premises registration**

RAMAs 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 assessments and joined the AMTRA Register.**

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, currently any premises supplying them must be registered as category "AM", which carries VMD's higher fee, though this may change in future Veterinary Medicines Regulations.

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## Veterinary Nurses



This summary for veterinary nurses complements the other material in this document "Becoming an AMTRA RAMA", 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 RAMA who can supply NFA-VPS medicines for companion animals. 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 RAMAs but they will enrol as a new student by the standard route, and then study and be assessed on a base module and a companion animal module (or other relevant species choice), i.e. somewhat more study and assessment as they do not have a formal relevant qualification which can be taken into account.

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 RAMA 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.

### **Enrolment**

Veterinary Nurses enrolling with AMTRA will be provided with written course material.

The AMTRA enrolment fee includes the assessment fee (provided the assessment is sat within 24 months of enrolment), the AMTRA viva 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 RAMAs can prescribe, free inclusion on the AMTRA RAMA Register for the remainder of the calendar year of qualification, access to AMTRA services and to Continuing Professional Development.

Prices for VN RAMA enrolment are the same as the prices for standard RAMA 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 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**



## **Assessment**



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

In preparing for the written assessment you should be confident to deal with this type of scenario: 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 a RAMA vet nurse would go through, including questions asked, advice given, products sold and data recorded.

The assessment includes some short answer questions to cover knowledge of other areas of the medicines legislation relevant to RAMAs, 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 RAMA modules.

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

## **Booking your assessment**

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

See the AMTRA website for the full list of options.

## **Continuing Professional Development**

All RAMAs 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 RAMAs, that a slightly different approach was needed from that for all other RAMAs.

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 RAMA role, and where it is, we generally haven't had applications for AMTRA CPD accreditation.

In recognition of the special circumstances of vet nurse RAMAs, 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
- you confirm that in your view the CPD was supportive of your RAMA 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.