



FOUNDATION DOCUMENT

RAMP Council 2021

THE REGISTER OF ANIMAL MUSCULOSKELETAL PRACTITIONERS



Foundation Document: The Register of Animal Musculoskeletal Practitioners

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----------|
| Foundation Document: The Register of Animal Musculoskeletal Practitioners | 1 |
| Prepared by: | 4 |
| THE REGISTER OF ANIMAL MUSCULOSKELETAL PRACTITIONERS (RAMP): | 5 |
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 5 |
| The Definitive Register | 5 |
| The Need..... | 5 |
| The Vision | 6 |
| The Operation of the Register | 6 |
| The Organisation..... | 6 |
| Section 1: The Organisation | 7 |
| Introduction to RAMP | 7 |
| Section 2: The Commitment | 8 |
| A. The Register | 8 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| B. The Vision of the Register | 9 |
| C. The Function of the Register | 9 |
| Section 3: Managing Risks | 10 |
| A. Understanding Risks | 10 |
| B. Managing Risks | 10 |
| Section 4: Managing Finances | 11 |
| A. Proper Financial Management | 11 |
| Section 5: A Competent Organisation | 12 |
| A. RAMP's Competency Foundations | 12 |
| B. RAMP's Website | 13 |
| Section 6: A Sound Knowledge Base | 13 |
| A. Essential Knowledge | 13 |
| A1. Health and Safety | 13 |
| A2. Animal Behaviour and Handling | 14 |
| A3. Legal and Ethical boundaries in Animal Care | 14 |
| A4. Professional Communications | 15 |
| B. Theoretical Understanding | 16 |
| C. Clinical Understanding | 17 |
| C1. Knowledge Base For Clinical Practice | 17 |
| C2. Clinical Reasoning for Practice | 17 |
| C3. Professional Autonomy | 18 |
| Section 7: Governance | 18 |
| A. Good Governance Aims | 18 |
| B. Good Governance Practice | 18 |
| Section 8: Professional Standards For Registrants | 19 |
| A. Acceptance onto the Register | 19 |
| B. Maintenance on the Register | 20 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| C. Standards for Practice | 20 |
| C1. General professionalism, skills and attributes | 20 |
| C2. Business Structure and management | 21 |
| C3. Practical and clinical competences and knowledge | 22 |
| C4. Underpinning knowledge and understanding | 22 |
| Section 9: Education And Training | 23 |
| A. Training for Competencies | 23 |
| B. Applicants to the RAMP Register | 24 |
| C. Education and Training Courses | 24 |
| Section 10: The Register | 26 |
| A. A Useful Register | 26 |
| B. Essential Standards | 27 |
| C. Renewal Standards | 27 |
| Section 11: Complaints and Concerns | 28 |
| A. Receiving Constructive Feedback..... | 28 |
| B. Complaints About Registrants..... | 28 |
| B1. Putting Matters Right..... | 29 |
| B2. Obvious Fairness | 30 |

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THE REGISTER OF ANIMAL MUSCULOSKELETAL PRACTITIONERS (RAMP)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE DEFINITIVE REGISTER

The Register of Animal Musculoskeletal Practitioners (RAMP) is the definitive Register of professionals who meet stringent standards of competence (knowledge, skills and behaviours) to treat animals using Chiropractic, Osteopathic and Physiotherapy techniques. Collectively, these professions have over 50 years of experience in working with, and treating, animals.

The Register will aid veterinary surgeons in both their legal and professional obligations when referring an animal to a musculoskeletal (MSK) practitioner for physical therapy. This will provide assurance to the veterinary surgeons that they can guide animal owners to providers of safe and effective techniques, enable them to comply with the RCVS *Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Surgeons*, and reassure them that all insurance matters are dealt with properly.

Animal owners and keepers are ultimately responsible for ensuring the welfare of the animals in their care. RAMP will help them to find a professional who is suitably competent to work with their animal. In addition, they will have added assurance that the practitioner will be properly insured, will be adhering to a Code of Conduct and Standards of Professional Practice, and that there will be an adequate redress system in the event of a problem occurring.

THE NEED

Between 2013 and 2015 a RCVS/DEFRA-led project “RMPPR” (Review of Minor Procedures Regime) gathered views and evidence about the existing “exemption order regime”; one of the systems that permits non-veterinarians to legally carry out veterinary procedures. Key findings in the animal musculoskeletal sector were:

1. The MSK sector is a relatively young industry which contains multiple competing philosophies, qualifications, courses and course providers that may be creating confusion for animal owners and potentially putting animal welfare at risk.
2. The current situation may be hindering essential cooperation, liaison and interaction between vets and therapists.
3. MSK therapies should only be carried out by those persons who are appropriately competent in order to do so without causing any avoidable, pain, distress or suffering to the animal.
4. The animal owner should be able to make an informed choice i.e. that they are able to choose an appropriately competent person to provide the required services and, therefore, help them to stay within the law. There should be appropriate redress.

It should also be noted that current thinking is, that there should be less Government intervention in regulatory frameworks, with a move towards the implementation of self-regulation/ non-statutory solutions wherever possible.

DEFRA welcomes the development of RAMP; an industry-led solution to the MSK confusion. It meets the requirements of the current law, meets the findings of the RMPPR evidence-gathering

exercise and meets the subsequent outcomes which were sought.

THE VISION

RAMP will:

1. seek to clarify the marketplace, for the animal owner, the veterinary profession and the insurance industry;
2. set a standard of professional competence that can be trusted;
3. provide a current business model and solution to ensure the best possible service for both the animal and owner; thereby, allowing the veterinary profession to refer their clients with confidence.

THE OPERATION OF THE REGISTER

1. Entry onto the Register will be through proof of competence against the agreed standards. Automatic entry will require relevant level six training (equivalent to a full-time three-year BSc degree) of 3600 hours including a minimum of 2000 hours of relevant theoretical and clinical knowledge/understanding and 1000 hours of clinically relevant practice to ensure high level assessment and treatment skills at 'day one' of qualified practice. Those potential registrants who do not possess relevant academic qualifications may apply for entry onto the register through a process of recognition; these will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
2. Renewal will be annual, on a date to be specified by the organisation.
3. There will be standard reasons for removal from the register, including:
 - Failure to renew registration;
 - A complaint, substantiated through the formal process, against a practitioner;
 - A change in circumstances of the practitioner, meaning they are no longer entitled to be registered;
 - Voluntary removal.

THE ORGANISATION

The current scope of the organisation is to produce and maintain the Register of professionals.

The Register is administrated by a voluntary Council. The Register will be funded from fees paid by registrants and funds managed frugally.

SECTION 1: THE ORGANISATION

The Organisation (**The Register of Animal Musculoskeletal Practitioners – RAMP**) holds a voluntary register for professionals treating animals using Chiropractic, Osteopathic and Physiotherapy techniques.

INTRODUCTION TO RAMP

1. **The Origins of the Organisation**

RAMP was set up in consultation with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS), British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA), British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) and British Veterinary Association (BVA) and the regulatory bodies for Chiropractic, Osteopathy and Physiotherapy in human practice: the General Chiropractic Council (GCC), the General Osteopathy Council (GOsC) and the Chartered Society for Physiotherapy (CSP) after the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) consultation 'Review of the Minor Procedures Regime' (RMPPR).

2. **The Relevant Law**

The law in the UK concerning the welfare and treatment of animals is separate from the law concerning the healthcare and treatment of human patients. This means that RAMP operates independently of the GCC, GOsC and CSP.

3. **The Scope of the Organisation**

The organisation provides a voluntary register of professionals who treat animals using Chiropractic, Osteopathic and Physiotherapy techniques, and who have reached standards acceptable to this organisation.

Note: all three professions are regarded here as one occupation: i.e. animal musculoskeletal practitioners.

4. **The Standards Adopted**

These standards are based on Codes of Practice and Standards of Proficiency as issued by the statutory regulatory bodies arising from the Chiropractic Act, Osteopathy Act and Physiotherapy Royal Charter, as relevant to the treatment of animals.

5. **The Gold Standard Level**

These standards are set at the Gold Standard level, equivalent to that in human practice, to ensure that the Register is meaningful to both the public and the professions.

SECTION 2: THE COMMITMENT

RAMP is committed to protecting the public and their animals. In addition, RAMP supports organisations that keep animals and also promote public confidence in the occupations it registers.

A. THE REGISTER

RAMP is a Register of professionals that are qualified to treat animals using Chiropractic, Osteopathic and Physiotherapy techniques. The information provided within our Register, helps animal owners to find a professional who is qualified, insured and who follows our strict Code of Conduct and Standards of Professional Practice.

1. The Primary Purpose.

This Register is designed to protect the public and their animals, and organisations keeping animals, plus promote public confidence in the occupations it registers.

2. The Professional Register

This means that any registrants on the Register are professionals providing Chiropractic, Osteopathic and Physiotherapy techniques for animals allowing the public and their veterinary surgeon to choose a practitioner who is competent and who behaves in an ethical and professional manner. We only accept onto the Register practitioners who meet our standards for training, professional skills and conduct and have appropriate insurance. We remove from the Register any professional who falls below these standards or are proven to be a risk to the public or their animals (see **Section 11**). This offers confidence that anyone on the Register has the ability to practice as a professional.

3. The Public Benefit

When choosing someone to treat an animal, the owner, keeper or handler can rest assured that anyone registered by RAMP, has:

- Qualifications that meet national minimum standards (as set out by RAMP and based on the human equivalent, see sections 6 and 8 of the foundation document);
- Insurance to practice their qualified therapies;
- Agreed to abide by our code of conduct and standards of professional practice;
- Agreed to a robust disciplinary procedure if a formal complaint is made.

4. The Secondary Purpose

We also have a general duty to represent the interests of our registrants to the general public, other relevant professions and other interested parties (e.g. DEFRA, Insurance industry).

5. The Register

The Register of Animal Musculoskeletal Practitioners (RAMP) is the definitive Register of professionals who meet stringent standards of competence (knowledge, skills and behaviours) to treat animals using Chiropractic, Osteopathic and Physiotherapy techniques.

These professions have over 50 years of experience in working with, and treating, animals.

6. Aiding Veterinary Surgeons

The Register will aid veterinary surgeons in both their legal and professional obligations when referring an animal to a musculoskeletal (MSK) practitioner for physical therapy. This will provide assurance to the veterinary surgeons that they can guide animal owners to providers of safe and effective techniques and enable them to comply with the RCVS *Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Surgeons* and reassure them that all insurance matters are dealt with properly.

7. Aiding Animal Owners

Animal owners and keepers are ultimately responsible for ensuring the welfare of the animals in their care. RAMP will help them to find a professional who is suitably competent to work with their animal. In addition, they will have added assurance that the practitioner will be properly insured, will be adhering to a Code of Conduct and Standards of Professional Practice, and that there will be an adequate redress system in the event of a problem occurring.

B. THE VISION OF THE REGISTER

RAMP will:

1. Seek to clarify the marketplace, for the animal owner, the veterinary profession and the insurance industry;
2. Set a standard of professional competence that can be trusted;
3. Provide a modern business model and a 21st century solution to ensure the best possible service for both the animal and owner; thereby, allowing the veterinary profession to refer their clients with confidence;

C. THE FUNCTION OF THE REGISTER

The function of this Register is to protect the public by:

1. Upholding standards for our registrants' education and training, professional skills, conduct, performance and ethics;
2. Keeping a register of practitioners who meet those standards;
3. Recognising minimum standards which practitioners must complete to register with us;
4. Take action when practitioners on our Register do not meet our standards.

It is an aspiration that only practitioners listed on this Register can use the titles Animal Chiropractor, Animal Osteopath and Animal Physiotherapist.

SECTION 3: MANAGING RISKS

The organisation has a thorough understanding of the risks presented in the work of musculoskeletal practitioners to animals, handlers and keepers, the general public, and to themselves – and where appropriate, takes effective action to mitigate them.

A. UNDERSTANDING RISKS

1. **Continuity of understanding**

A majority of the members of the Governing Council are qualified and practising within these professions and are themselves registrants on this Register. This ensures a continuity of understanding of the risks presented by these occupations to animals, keepers, handlers and the public.

2. **Working to minimise risks**

Consider any risk issues arising from any complaint upheld, and from complaints not upheld and any other enquiry or report from the general public, animal organisations, veterinary organisations and any other relevant organisations.

3. **Working with other organisations**

Liaise with other organisations on the assessment of risk to practitioners in these professions.

4. **Working with training providers**

Liaise with training courses on risk assessments taught, management of any risks inherent in any treatment and any new risks in any treatment development.

5. **Promoting risk awareness**

Ensure that registrants are fully aware of, and take responsibility for, the risks within their practice.

B. MANAGING RISKS

RAMP is vigilant in identifying, monitoring, reviewing and acting upon risks associated with the practice of its registrants and actively uses this information in carrying out its voluntary register functions.

1. **Sources of Information**

It monitors risk issues through:

- Analysis of complaints upheld, and enquiries logged;
- Regular liaison with RCVS & other veterinary professional bodies;
- Knowledge gained of any problems submitted from animal owners about the treatment of their animals or professional relationship with the owner or representative;

- Responding to complainants about representations made verbally, in literature and on social media;
 - Regular liaison with insurers of animal health and insurers of professional indemnity.
2. **Timely Action**
It responds to any increase of risk in a timely manner so as to attempt to reduce that risk.

SECTION 4: MANAGING FINANCES

The organisation ensures it has sufficient finance to enable it to effectively fulfil its function as a voluntary register. Including the setting standards, monitoring of education and the implementation of registration (Inc. a complaints and removals process),

A. PROPER FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

1. **The Budget**

The organisation budgets to ensure that it can:

- Operate the Register, through manual checking and technical equipment;
- Employ administrators as required;
- Fund the complaints and disciplinary process;
- Promote the issues to the public through appropriate awareness campaigns;
- Cover the expenses of the Council responsible for governance;
- Liaise with educational bodies for review & monitoring purposes.

2. **Income Sources**

Income will be raised through registrant's application and annual registration fees. Also, via fees taken for REP and AEP assessments for educational institutions. Lastly, RAMP will seek the potential of grants and awards to help with development projects.

3. **Protective Actions**

As a voluntary register, the conditions of being listed include an agreement to abide by all the rules set by the organisation. These are drafted in such a way, such that they minimise financial consequences for the organisation, in the event of complaints from disgruntled ex-registrants, vexatious persons or any other malicious action.

SECTION 5: A COMPETENT ORGANISATION

The organisation creates confidence in its ability to manage the Register effectively.

A. RAMP'S COMPETENCY FOUNDATIONS

1. **The Scope of Occupations**

The organisation at all times includes a representative from the three professions of Chiropractic, Osteopathy and Physiotherapy.

- Chiropractic was founded in 1895 by D.D. Palmer, in the USA. Currently, Chiropractors practice in over 100 countries in all regions of the world.
- The practice of osteopathy began in the United States in 1874, the term "Osteopathy" being coined by Andrew Taylor Still. Currently Osteopaths practice in all regions of the world.
- The earliest documented origins of physiotherapy are found in Sweden dated 1813, and mention massage, manipulation, and exercise. Currently Physiotherapists practice in all regions of the world.

2. **Roots of Authority**

These professions have each worked with animals in the UK for over 50 years through the Veterinary Surgeon's (Exemptions) Order 1962 and more recently the Veterinary Surgeon's (Exemptions) Order 2015 under the term physiotherapy.

3. **Roots of Relevance**

This organisation was initiated by three representatives from the three professions, who between them had over 60 years' experience. They were supported in this venture by their individual professional associations as well as their statutory regulatory bodies.

4. **Working Relationships**

Negotiations and liaison between them have established working relationships, combining their strengths to create a powerful voice within the animal musculoskeletal industry. Liaison with various veterinary professional associations and the animal care insurance industry have enhanced the reputation of this group and formed a solid foundation from which to build this Register.

5. **Intervention**

RAMP has been founded to set standards of professional competence to clarify the marketplace confusions that have grown up over the years. It also demonstrates the importance of practitioners maintaining these standards by hearing complaints and, when appropriate, removing registrants from the Register to provide a clear message to both public and professionals about acceptable and professional practice.

B. RAMP'S WEBSITE

The basic details of all registrants are available through a website for any member of the public to see. This helps them to:

1. Identify a registered professional able to provide the care they require for their animals
2. Check whether any person claiming to be registered is so
3. Check whether any person has been removed from the Register

The website also has other relevant information for the public to use, including recognized and accredited training routes.

SECTION 6: A SOUND KNOWLEDGE BASE

The organisation is based on the application of the knowledge bases of Chiropractic, Osteopathy and Physiotherapy as used for the treatment of animals.

1. Registrants found to be working outside the **scope of practice** associated with these knowledge bases is held to question and may be removed from the Register (see **Section 11**).

A. ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

RAMP uses its knowledge of the industry to set various standards in essential knowledge:

A1. HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. Health and safety
The practitioner must understand the need, be able to establish and maintain safe environments for practice, which minimise risks to service users, those treating them and others, including the use of hazard and infection control.
2. Practitioner safety
The practitioner must be able to demonstrate safe and effective positioning and handling.
3. Patient safety
The practitioner must understand the need to maintain the safety of the animal in their care and be able to articulate and demonstrate awareness of the animal's safety and adapt or alter the environment to ensure compliance.
4. Owner/handler safety
The practitioner must be able to understand the need to maintain the safety of the owner/handler and be able to articulate and demonstrate awareness of the owner/handler's safety, adapting or altering the environment to ensure compliance.
5. Personal Protective Equipment

The practitioner must be able to select appropriate personal protective equipment and use it correctly.

6. Health and safety legislation

The practitioner must be aware of applicable health and safety legislation, and any relevant safety policies and procedures and act in accordance with these as pertinent to their profession.

7. Environmental safety

The practitioner must be able to work safely, including being able to select appropriate hazard control and risk management, reduction or elimination techniques in a safe manner and in accordance with health and safety legislation.

8. Hygiene procedures

The practitioner must be able to articulate and demonstrate awareness of appropriate hygiene procedures and undertake these within their remit of scope of practice.

9. Contagious diseases

The practitioner must be able to articulate and demonstrate awareness of contagious diseases and their 'spread' and undertake the relevant procedures within the remit of their scope of practice to reduce the likelihood of this occurrence.

A2. ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR AND HANDLING

1. The practitioner must know and be able to apply appropriate moving and handling techniques to the animal patient as is relevant to their profession.
2. The practitioner must be competent at handling a range of animals within a range of environments and settings within their scope of practice.
3. The practitioner must demonstrate awareness of animal behaviour and the signs/symptoms of pain and distress used by differing breeds and act accordingly within their scope of practice.
4. The practitioner must understand the following aspects of behavioural science: psychological, social and environmental factors that influence an individual animal in health and illness as appropriate within their scope of practice.

A3. LEGAL AND ETHICAL BOUNDARIES IN ANIMAL CARE

RAMP registrants must know the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession and be able to practice within them.

1. Animal Welfare Act

The practitioner must work in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act (2006) and within their scope of practice.

2. Veterinary Surgeons Act (1966), Veterinary Surgeon's (Exemptions) Order 2015

The practitioner must have a working understanding of the Veterinary Surgery (Exemptions) Order 2015 and act in accordance as is pertinent to their profession at all times.

3. In order to clearly demonstrate that there is no intention to deceive, all RAMP registrants, who are NOT ALSO registered with the GCC, GOsC, CSP or HCPC if using any of the titles 'Chiropractor', 'Osteopath' or 'Physiotherapist' MUST prefix that title with an animal-related term, e.g. 'Animal', 'Equine', 'Canine', etc.
4. All RAMP registrants must make it clear that they do not treat human patients with these techniques unless they are also separately registrants of the GCC, GOsC and HCPC avoid any implication that they do so.
5. All RAMP registrants must publicly correct and clarify any potential confusions arising from other people implying that they treat human patients with these techniques unless they are separately registered with the GCC, GOsC, CSP or HCPC.

A4. PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

RAMP uses its knowledge of the industry to set various standards in professional communications to ensure that registrants recognise the roles of other professionals in animal care and are able to communicate and work professionally with them.

1. Professional Communications

The practitioner must recognise the roles of other professionals in animal care and be able to communicate with them effectively, appropriately and professionally both verbally and non-verbally within the practitioner's scope of practice.

2. Effective Communications

The practitioner must understand the theories of communication relevant to effective interaction with owners/riders and professionals and be able to undertake the following:

- Professional communications with the vet
- Professional communications with the owner, handler and keeper
- Professional communications with all other professionals

3. Comprehensible Communications

All professional reporting must be fit for purpose and universally understood.

4. Confidential Communications

All communication must be treated with appropriate levels of confidentiality and (where relevant) in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

5. Professional Relationships

The practitioner must understand the role of professionals within their scope of practice and be able to undertake the following:

- Be able to work appropriately with others
- Be able to work, where appropriate, in partnership with other professionals
- Understand the need to build and sustain professional relationships

- Understand the need to engage professionals and owners/riders in planning and evaluating diagnostics, and therapeutic interventions to meet their needs and goals
- Understand the need to agree the goals, priorities and methods of musculoskeletal therapy intervention in partnership with the owner/rider/handler
- Understand the need to maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct

6. Maintenance of Records

RAMP registrants must be able to maintain records appropriately in accordance with the criteria laid out below:

- Be able to compile a suitable subjective and objective recorded case history relevant to the animal and discipline (completion of all patient notes should be fulfilled within 24 hours of the session to ensure clarity)
- Be able to compile suitable treatment notes relevant to the animal and discipline (completion of all patient notes should be fulfilled within 24 hours of the session to ensure clarity)
- Be able to keep accurate, comprehensive and comprehensible records in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines
- Recognise the need to manage records and all other information in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols and guidelines

B. THEORETICAL UNDERSTANDING

RAMP registrants must be able to demonstrate that they:

1. Understand and have a thorough working knowledge of the structure and function of the animal species in all aspects health, disease, disorder and dysfunction, relevant to their profession.
2. Understand and have a working knowledge of the following aspects of biological science: normal animal anatomy and physiology, including the dynamic relationships of animal structure and function as related to the neuromuscular, musculoskeletal, cardio-vascular and respiratory systems as relevant within their scope of practice.
3. Understand and have a working knowledge of how the application of musculoskeletal treatment can cause physiological and structural change.
4. Understand and have a working knowledge of the principles and application of measurement techniques based on biomechanics or physiology as relevant to their discipline.
5. Understand and have a working knowledge of the principles and theories from physics, biomechanics, applied exercise science and ergonomics as relevant to the practitioner's scope of practice.

6. Understand and have a working knowledge of physiological, structural, behavioural and functional changes that can result from musculoskeletal intervention and disease progression.
7. Understand and have a working knowledge of pathological changes and related clinical features commonly encountered in animal musculoskeletal therapy practice.
8. Understand and have a working knowledge of the theoretical basis of, and the variety of approaches to, assessment and intervention as relevant to the practitioner's scope of practice and from a professional perspective.
9. Understand both the need to keep skills and knowledge up to date and the importance of career-long learning.

C. CLINICAL UNDERSTANDING

RAMP uses its knowledge of the industry to set various standards in the core competencies and the scope of practice and level of clinical knowledge:

C1. KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR CLINICAL PRACTICE

RAMP registrants must be able to demonstrate that they:

1. Understand the limits of the areas of knowledge that they are trained, qualified and insured to use.
2. Are educated to a safe and competent standard within their area discipline.
3. Are able to practice safely and effectively within their scope of practice.
4. Know the limits of their practice and when to seek advice or refer to another professional.

C2. CLINICAL REASONING FOR PRACTICE

RAMP registrants must also:

1. Be able to evaluate the animal as appropriate to their scope of practice.
2. Be able to complete a safe and effective assessment of the animal before them.
3. Be able to assess and identify when the animal requires further veterinary intervention.
4. Be capable of formulating a safe and effective hypothesis from which to create a suitable treatment plan.
5. Be able to perform a safe effective treatment within the practitioner's scope of practice and knowledge base.
6. Be able to articulate and demonstrate safe and effective post treatment after- care and exercise.

C3. PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY

RAMP registrants must:

1. Be able to practice as an autonomous professional, exercising sound professional judgment.
2. Be able to assess the nature and severity of the animal's problem and call upon the required knowledge and experience to deal with the animal's problem.
3. Provide proof of veterinary consent to treat as appropriate within their scope of practice and in accordance with the Veterinary Surgeon's Act (1966), Veterinary Surgery (Exemptions) Order 2015.

SECTION 7: GOVERNANCE

The organisation carries out its governance in accordance with good practice as an independent organisation.

A. GOOD GOVERNANCE AIMS

RAMP aims to be:

1. Proportionate
RAMP should only intervene when necessary. Remedies should be appropriate to the risk posed, and costs identified and minimised.
2. Consistent
Rules and standards must be joined up and implemented fairly.
3. Targeted
RAMP should be focused on the problem and minimise side effects.
4. Transparent
RAMP should be open and keep rules simple and user-friendly.
5. Accountable
RAMP must be able to justify decisions and be subject to public scrutiny.
6. Agile
RAMP must look forward and be able to adapt to anticipate change.

B. GOOD GOVERNANCE PRACTICE

1. Protecting the Public
RAMP ensures that its voluntary Register is committed to protecting the public and its

animals and promoting public confidence in the treatments of animals by musculoskeletal techniques.

2. Quality Governance

RAMP carries out its governance in accordance with good practice as prescribed by the Better Regulation Executive in 2000 by assuring that all registrants are competent in achieving the high standards that RAMP requires.

3. Open Dialogue

Establishes dialogue with the registrants and with the public in order to maximise ease of use for them, and its own internal efficiency.

4. Accessible Communications

In order to be effective and transparent RAMP aims to keep its guidelines and procedures simple and user-friendly.

5. Appropriate Liaison

Regular communication with government and professional associations including the RCVS and DEFRA ensures that information flow is two-way and helps all organisations do their job efficiently.

6. Learning Lessons

RAMP draws on previous experience and other professions in order to remain relevant and avoid confusion in the marketplace. Conclusions arising are used as a forward-looking mechanism to mitigate any future risk.

SECTION 8: PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR REGISTRANTS

The organisation sets a Gold Standard level for registrants that is applied to:

1. Acceptance onto the Register.
2. Maintenance on the Register.

A. ACCEPTANCE ONTO THE REGISTER

Standards required are:

1. Educational qualification to prove the knowledge base and the skills & proficiency (see **Section 9**).
2. Proof of Professional Indemnity Insurance cover.
3. Proof of Public Liability Insurance cover.
4. Signed undertaking for the minimum level of Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
5. Signed acceptance of the Standards for Practice (see Section 8, C. below).
6. Agreement to only work within their Scope of Practice and to adhere to RAMPs Code of Conduct.

7. Payment of Registration Fee.

B. MAINTENANCE ON THE REGISTER

Standards required are:

1. Absence of any decision by the Registration Council to remove.
2. Payment of registration fee, renewed annually, on a date to be specified by the organisation.
3. Proof of Professional Indemnity Insurance cover renewed annually.
4. Proof of Public Liability Insurance cover renewed annually.
5. Proof of the minimum level of CPD, renewed annually (**see section 10c**).
6. Signed acceptance of the Standards for Practice and Codes of Conduct renewed annually.

Some of these standards are described elsewhere, for example, the educational qualification (**Section 9**) and the decision by the Registration Council to remove a person from the Register (**Section 11**).

C. STANDARDS FOR PRACTICE

These standards, which are to be adopted and upheld by all registrants, include the areas:

1. General professionalism, skills and attributes.
2. Business structure and management.
3. Practical and clinical competences and knowledge.
4. Underpinning knowledge and understanding.

C1. GENERAL PROFESSIONALISM, SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES

RAMP Registrants must:

1. Always behave in a professional manner with regard to their professional and legal responsibilities.
2. Understand and apply exemplary moral and ethical behaviour.
3. Work effectively as a member of a multi-disciplinary team in the delivery of services.
4. Always adhere to current legislation on referral and reporting.
5. Communicate fluently in English with the public, professional colleagues and appropriate authorities to enable good understanding and informed decision making.
6. Demonstrate the ability to communicate at many different levels and change the type of terminology used to accommodate different audiences

7. Promote and maintain good professional relationships with clients and colleagues, encouraging mutual trust and respecting professional views and confidentiality.
8. Document accurate clinical and client records, plus case reports when necessary, in a form satisfactory to colleagues and understandable by the public. Make these records readily available to the Register in the event of a complaint.
9. Acknowledge their own limitations, know when to seek assistance, understand the protocols for dealing with referrals.
10. Identify personal and professional goals for CPD in order to enhance competencies and skills and maintain registered professional status.
11. Comply with minimum annual CPD requirements, 25 hours or 50 hours over two years (**see section 10c**).
12. Promote, monitor and maintain health and safety in the workplace applying good practice of risk management and biosecurity.
13. Understand the economic, cultural and emotional context in which the veterinary/animal musculoskeletal therapist operates.
14. Understand and apply principles of clinical governance, and practice evidence-based clinical practice.
15. Use their professional capabilities to contribute to the advancement of veterinary/animal musculoskeletal therapy knowledge, in order to improve the quality of animal health and welfare.
16. Perform professional duties and therapies within their scope of practice.
17. Maintain and provide evidence of professional indemnity cover as appropriate to practice.
18. Maintain and provide evidence of public liability insurance cover as appropriate to practice.

C2. BUSINESS STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT

RAMP Registrants must:

1. Keep their clinical premises and working environments safe and fit for purpose.
2. Undertake appropriate and legal invoicing and accounting practices with compliance to good financial practice and HMRC requirements.
3. Ensure that their advertising, whether web or print based or in any other format, is professionally restrained with no false claims or allegations.
4. Ensure a robust complaints procedure is put in place.
5. Ensure high standards of efficiency and politeness for customer service.
6. Ensure their management / administration / IT shows good attention to detail and confidentiality and complies with current Data protection legislation.

C3. PRACTICAL AND CLINICAL COMPETENCES AND KNOWLEDGE

RAMP Registrants must:

1. Assess patients safely and effectively taking into account all physical, behavioural and welfare needs of the individual animal while supporting the owner/client.
2. Demonstrate the ability to undertake a musculoskeletal assessment of both large and small animals and to establish treatment goals based on the critical evaluation of assessment findings.
3. Formulate a prioritised problem list from the initial assessment, and any reassessment, leading to clinically reasoned specific, measurable, assignable, reasoned and timed (SMART) goal planning (short, mid and long term).
4. Develop specific, safe and effective treatment plans for patients, using problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills.
5. Use appropriate therapeutic exercises safely and effectively, incorporating goal setting and clinical reasoning into the design of exercise programmes.
6. Use relevant manual therapy techniques in the application of mobilisation, manipulation and massage as appropriate musculoskeletal and respiratory therapy techniques, safely and effectively.
7. Use appropriate proprioceptive rehabilitation techniques and movement therapies.
8. Use suitable electrotherapeutic modalities, if within their scope of practice and field of knowledge, safely and effectively, with underpinning knowledge of the selection, function and application of a range of modalities and their therapeutic use.
9. Assess and manage pain, both acute and chronic, and have a critical awareness of how pain may affect animal behaviour.
10. Assess available evidence in order to choose, evaluate and clinically reason treatment interventions.
11. Demonstrate the ability to apply clinical reasoning to issues through independent thought and informed judgement.
12. Participate effectively and regularly with inter professional approaches to the promotion of animal health.
13. Demonstrate an understanding of the role of veterinary/animal musculoskeletal therapy in the prevention of illness and injury, in health promotion and performance enhancement.
14. Practice good biosecurity and infection control measures when dealing with patients.

C4. UNDERPINNING KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

RAMP Registrants must:

1. Understand the structure, function and behaviour of animals under their care. This should include their physiological and welfare requirements.

2. Have a sound knowledge of the businesses related to animal breeding, production, performance and keeping.
3. Understand the competition rules, activities and demands of different working and domestic equine and canine sports and activities.
4. Understand and have proficiency in the logical approach to both scientific and clinical reasoning, the distinction between the two, plus the strengths and limitations of each.
5. Understand the clinical science base that aids understanding of pathophysiology and the resulting clinical features of conditions usually encountered in animal/veterinary musculoskeletal therapy. Recognise that this underpins effective clinical reasoning and clinical assessment skills.
6. Understand the physical sciences and their application to veterinary/animal musculoskeletal therapy. Especially in relation to movement analysis, measurement techniques, electro-physical modalities, biomechanics and ergonomics.
7. Understand and comply with the legislation relating to animal health and welfare.
8. Understand and recognise warning signs and symptoms of notifiable, reportable and zoonotic diseases found in commonly kept large and small animals.
9. Demonstrate an in depth understanding of the legal, professional and ethical implications of veterinary musculoskeletal practice.

SECTION 9: EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The organisation sets educational standards to ensure its registrants practice the degree of competence that a fellow professional (for instance, veterinary surgeons) would recognise as similar to their own, while in a different skillset.

In setting its standards the organisation takes account of the following factors:

- The nature and extent of risk to service users and the public;
- The nature and extent of knowledge, skill and experience required to provide service users and the public with good quality care;
- Standards set by other relevant bodies for the same or similar occupation and where different, can offer a reasonable justification;
- Maintaining public confidence;
- Equality, diversity and human rights;
- European mobility for animal musculoskeletal practitioners.

A. TRAINING FOR COMPETENCIES

1. Health & Safety

RAMP professionals fall in a high-risk category, by virtue of the nature of their work. From a training perspective, this means that all RAMP practitioners require high level day one baseline competencies to ensure that risks are limited as much as possible.

2. **Day One Competencies**

Registrants are expected to have been trained sufficiently to be able to comply with the Professional Standards for Registrants of RAMP Register (**Section 8**).

3. **Scope of Practice Boundaries**

Registrants on this Register are expected to work within their scope of practice, in line with their level of education and training. Moreover, the nature and extent of their knowledge, skill and experience, should be inextricably linked to the cases they assess and treat. Registrants found to work outside their scope of practice (see **Scope of Practice Document**) are held to question and may be removed from the Register, on the grounds of patient safety. By upholding such standards, the general public will learn to trust the validity of the Register and its registrants, thus maintaining public and professional confidence.

4. **Legal and Ethical Requirements**

Registrants on this Register must practice in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and the Veterinary Surgeons Act (1966), Veterinary Surgeon's (Exemptions) Order 2015 at all times.

B. APPLICANTS TO THE RAMP REGISTER

1. **Sufficient Clinical Training**

Registrants of RAMP are expected to provide evidence that their level of education, clinical training, skills and experience in their field allows them to undertake a safe and effective physical assessment and treatment.

2. **Sufficient Assessment Training**

Registrants must provide evidence that their level of education, skills or experience ensures that they can undertake, safely and competently, a thorough case history and examination, in order to ensure that the patient is fit for treatment and is not presenting with an underlying pathology.

3. **Sufficient Referral Training**

Registrants of RAMP have the necessary level of education, skills or experience to evaluate a patient, prior to treatment, and know when to refer the animal back to its' veterinary surgeon for further investigation.

4. All registrants of RAMP are expected to practice only in the field of therapy to which they were trained. They work within their scope of practice and follow any codes of conduct to which they are professionally bound, including those of RAMP.

C. EDUCATION AND TRAINING COURSES

Recognised Educational Providers (REPs)

RAMP offers two routes through which educational providers can attain RAMP Recognition or RAMP Accreditation:

RAMP Recognition is awarded to educational providers of one of the core disciplines (Physiotherapy, Chiropractic or Osteopathy) that are accredited to provide education at a specified academic level by a Recognised Awarding Body and demonstrate (through a rigorous process), a commitment to provide quality MSK animal education that falls in line with RAMP criteria. Recognised schools, do however, fall short of the total number of hours required to fulfil AEP status (see below), hence the two types of awards available. All REP applicant schools must offer a qualification in either physiotherapy, osteopathy or chiropractic for animals. Furthermore, institutions with REP status, must renew annually, declaring that the registered course has not changed and continues to offer the same standard as first reviewed. If more than 25% of their course has changed within the 12-month period. The course must be re-reviewed by the RAMP Education Department. This means that the REP courses advertised on the RAMP website may be used toward the overall criteria of RAMP registration by applicants from those courses. Automatic entry to RAMP maybe achieved by completing two or more REP courses that combine to meet the full RAMP entry criteria.

RAMP Accreditation is awarded to educational providers that demonstrate (through a rigorous process) that their course/programme fully and wholly satisfies the educational criteria of RAMP registration in one of the core disciplines (Physiotherapy, Chiropractic or Osteopathy). On this basis, students of RAMP Accredited courses may be awarded automatic entry onto the RAMP register in their first year, so long as full and thorough evidence is provided at the time of application. After this time, all applicants must demonstrate appropriate annual levels of CPD (**see section 10c**). As with REP schools, AEP awarded institutions are expected to declare annually, that their courses/programme remain at the same standard and must be re-reviewed if more than 25% of the course has been amended in a 12- month period.

For applicants who wish to apply for RAMP (but have not studied at an AEP awarded school or suitable combination of REP courses), RAMP sets out its application form such that any graduate of any course can be assessed for acceptance to the Register. The only stipulation is that the core education must fall within the discipline of osteopathy, physiotherapy or chiropractic for animals. RAMP standards are listed above in **Section 8**.

1. The academic level of a training course that can produce immediate graduates must be able to meet the Professional Standards for Registrants (**Section 8**). It must be taught and examined as Level 6 (or national equivalent) which is equivalent to a standard full-time three-year BSc degree which includes clinical education.
 - A maximum of 240 credits (2400 hours) at academic level 4 and 5 (or national equivalent).
- Plus
- A minimum of 120 credits (1200 hours) at academic level 6 or 7 (or national equivalent).
2. In line with current BSc programs, RAMP require a total of 3600 hours (or 360 academic credits) to apply for registration.
 - A minimum of 2000 hours of teaching in the Essential Knowledge, Theoretical Understanding and Clinical Understanding as described in **Section 6**. A minimum of 500 hours of this must be based on the animal model. Registered Practitioners in Human Physiotherapy, Chiropractic and Osteopathy may present the remainder of qualifying hours in the human model.

- Also including a minimum of 1000 hours of clinically relevant hands-on supervised and assessed practice for Veterinary Physiotherapy, Chiropractic or Osteopathy, to equip students with high level assessment and treatment skills for day-one competencies. A minimum of 200 hours of this must comprise of clinical practice on the animal model. Registered Practitioners in Human Physiotherapy, Chiropractic and Osteopathy may present the remainder of qualifying hours in the human model.
 - The course(s) must have validation by a government recognised or listed Educational Institute that can competently evidence and quality assure the level of academic learning or prove external accreditation by a Recognised Awarding Organisation (RAO).
3. Graduates with educational attainments that meet the above standard may apply for automatic registration upon graduation and for a period of 18 months afterwards. After this period, further proof of on-going practice and CPD is required (**see section 10c**);
 4. All registrants of RAMP are expected to practice only in the field of therapy to which they were trained. They work within their scope of practice and follow any codes of conduct to which they are professionally bound, including those of RAMP.
 5. Practitioners who are not graduates that meet automatic entry criteria can register through a Pathway Route (PRA) which is a combination of courses, that are not RAMP assessed, however combine to meet the academic criteria set out above.
 6. Practitioners that do not have the academic qualification to meet the above criteria and who have been in established animal practice prior to Sept 1st 2021 can apply via a process of Recognition of Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL). These are assessed on a case-by-case basis after providing evidence that they meet the standards of practice, complete on-going CPD requirements (**see section 10c**) and comply with all other entry criteria.

SECTION 10: THE REGISTER

The organisation is focused on providing the animal owning public, their professionals and their various helpers, with relevant information to be able to make informed choices as to the standard of care provided by the professionals registered to be confident that all health, welfare, safety and well-being measures are appropriate.

A. A USEFUL REGISTER

This Register aims to be useful to the public and to other professionals treating animals.

1. Useful Service
To ensure it is accurate and easily accessible, and enables informed decisions, this Register is:
 - Regularly updated to maintain accuracy of registrants
 - Available online to the general public
 - Transparent in its standards, i.e. who is and isn't allowed to be a registrant
2. Providing Information

To ensure the end user has all the information they require to make an informed decision about the practitioners to whom they refer or use, the Council provides:

- Clear information about standards achieved by the practitioners it registers.
 - Professional contact details and information about the type of care they offer under their profession.
3. To enable this, registrants must provide up-to-date information on application and then on an annual basis at renewal, on a date to be specified by the organisation.

B. ESSENTIAL STANDARDS

The organisation only allows those who meet its standards to join and remain on the Register.

1. **Joining the Register**

Only those who meet the standards set out in the rest of this document may join the Register.

2. **Removal from the Register**

Registrants who no longer meet the standards set out in the rest of this document are removed from the Register.

3. **Professional Responsibility**

It is the registrant's responsibility to ensure they meet the standards in the rest of this document and to inform RAMP immediately if they may no longer be eligible for remaining on, or admittance to, this Register. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Any refusal of Professional and/or Public Liability insurance cover
- Any refusal of entry to, or being struck off, another professional body
- Any Criminal Conviction

C. RENEWAL STANDARDS

RAMP requires registrants to keep their practice up to date and checks at appropriate intervals that registrants continue to meet its standards. In deciding its arrangements, the organisation takes account of:

- The pace and extent to which professional practice is subject to change (for example, technological advancements or research-based findings)
- The nature and extent of risk registrants' practice poses to service users and the public.

To renew their registration annually, RAMP requires each registrant:

- To submit a declaration of a minimum of 25 hours CPD per year or 50 hours over 2 years. This documentation must be retained by the registrant.
- At least 50% of this CPD must be directly animal related, the other 50% can be human based but must be applicable to animals.

- RAMP is a register for those currently in animal practice ensuring maintained and high standards of practice, CPD should be relatable to the standards outlined in **section 6** and be relevant for 'hands on clinical practice' all CPD should be accompanied by a critical reflection of how this has enhanced your animal clinical practice. As a result, CPD such as the creation and amendment of business cards, leaflets and websites etc. do not contribute to the accepted clinically relevant hours required.
- The Council randomly audits a minimum of 5% of the registrants annually
- Registrants are expected to provide up to date information about their insurance cover and information about insurance applications refused. Any lapse in appropriate insurance cover will result in immediate suspension from the register.
- RAMP explains clearly its decisions relating to admissions and renewals to the Register.

SECTION 11: COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

RAMP provides clear information about its complaint's procedures concerning registrants and concerning RAMP itself.

A. RECEIVING CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

1. RAMP gratefully accepts any constructive feedback about its aims and operations.

B. COMPLAINTS ABOUT REGISTRANTS

1. Complaints about Clinical Practice
RAMP does not accept complaints about one registrant by another on commercial issues such as poaching of patients.

2. An Accessible Process
Information is readily available to the public and other professionals on the RAMP website with explicit notes about the process and whom to contact.

3. Making a complaint

The completed complaint form should state which article of the Scope of Practice or Code of Conduct is alleged to have been breached, and include the nature/extent of the breach, details of when the breach occurred, and what remedy is sought. RAMP acknowledges the complaint in writing as soon as possible (normally within 5 working days).

4. On Receipt of complaint

RAMP will allocate a complaint manager. The Complaints Manager, after initial investigation, may first recommend an informal process, so that both parties meet on neutral territory to discuss the concern and/or [if applicable] the allegation. If matters cannot be resolved in this informal manner, the complaint will be escalated as appropriate.

5. Mediator Support
The relevant Council appoints a mediator (if appropriate) for informal and formal complaints made against its registrants.
6. Further Investigation
As part of our consideration process, we may invite the complainant to a meeting to discuss the complaint and provide any further details required. The complainant is at liberty to bring an independent person, such as an advocate, interpreter or mediator with them if they so desire.
7. Written Reply
Once the facts have been established, RAMP sends a written response to the complainant. This gives a full description of the decisions taken, and the reasons for taking them. If any further action is needed, RAMP indicates what they are proposing to do.
8. Ineligible Complaints
Where a complaint is made about a person who is not registered on this Register, the complainant is guided to more appropriate organisations.
9. Complaints Manager
The Complaints Manager oversees all complaints and where necessary provides the complainant or witness with:
 - Any information they require to complete the complaints process.
 - Good advice in a fair and balanced manner when it appears to be appropriate.
10. Confidentiality
Personal data on any practitioner is not shared without prior written consent from the individual, under the Data Protection Act 2018.

B1. PUTTING MATTERS RIGHT

RAMP contributes to correcting the balance of fairness when complaints are substantiated.

1. Removal from the Register
If a serious complaint is substantiated, the Council removes the registrant from the Register and amends the register held and the information publicly accessible, including the relevant information displayed on the website.
2. Liaison with Other Bodies
If appropriate the Complaints Manager informs:
 - The RCVS
 - The professional associations the registrant has shown on their application
 - The insurance company providing the registrant's professional indemnity cover
3. Liaison with The Police
If a complaint is thought to be a criminal offence, the Council notifies the Police.

4. In the event that a complaint pertains to serious misconduct, the matter is handed over to any other investigating body as felt relevant by the Council, after due consideration and a vote according to the rules. Normal complaints procedures may be modified if another investigating body requires cooperation. During investigation the registrant is suspended from the register until the process is complete.

B2. OBVIOUS FAIRNESS

RAMP wishes its decisions about complaints to be fair, transparent, consistent and explained clearly.

1. Where complaints are being overseen by the RAMP Council, the complainant is assured that their complaint remains confidential within the process (where possible) and informed in advance where details need to be shared. Also, the complaint is not overseen or evaluated by anyone about whom the complaint is made - before or after the event.
 2. Information that is given to the RAMP Council for the purpose of a complaint, is kept and dealt with in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.
 3. All complaints are dealt with in a fair, transparent and consistent manner throughout the entire process.
 4. RAMP explains clearly its decisions relating to removal from the Register.
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