

Annual Programme Report for Livestock Health and Production and Veterinary Epidemiology and Public Health - Appendix B



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17 July 2017

Dear Dr. Boden

External Examiner's report for MSc and PG Diplomas in Livestock Health and Production, and Veterinary Epidemiology and Public Health (International Programmes) 2016

On behalf of the Royal Veterinary College Board of Examiners for Veterinary Epidemiology and Public Health, and Livestock Health and Production, I would like to thank you for your External Examiner's report for the University of London International Programmes MSc and PG Diploma and Certificates in Veterinary Epidemiology and Public Health, and Livestock Health and Production for the 2016 academic year.

The External and Intercollegiate Examiner reports form an integral part of the assessment and quality assurance processes. All comments and points raised in the report have been considered and our formal response to key points is outlined below:

Examiner Comment	RVC Response
<p>Marking and sampling:</p> <p><u>Epidemiology & Animal Health Economics module</u> Detailed model answers were provided for essay/short answer questions. However, there appeared to be differences between internal examiners in their expectations about which of the criteria in the model answers were necessary to score well. The broad nature of some of the questions and variability in the depth and breadth of expected answers resulted in opportunities for</p>	<p>Responses to comments:</p> <p>The two examiners have the opportunity to discuss and agree the questions and model answers before the exam papers are finalised, such that the requirements of the answer should be clear to both examiners. The two examiners have a further opportunity to discuss the questions/answers when they agree the marks awarded for each question, as guided by RVC policy, particularly in instances where there is discrepancy in double marking. It is expected</p>

students to avoid answering the question precisely and introduce new errors and self-contradictions. The rewards or penalties resulting from introducing superfluous detail appears to be interpreted slightly differently by examiners with one treating this more generously than the other.

Statistical Methods in Veterinary Epidemiology module

The exam papers were annotated very minimally so it was difficult to ascertain how elements within an exam question were weighted. Some detail or insight into examiners' thinking would have made it easier to assess the failed examinations. This would also be more transparent and defensible, should a student choose to appeal.

that these two are adequate opportunities for the examiners to come to a common understanding of what is required of each question.

RVC Policy is to annotate all scripts and there is guidance available and remedial action in place. Guidance will be provided to examiners as a reminder of the standard RVC requirements of annotation either on the script or using the textboxes provided in the mark-sheets.

Thank you again for your comments and for the support you provided to the programme during your term as an external examiner.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Christine Thurania-McKeever

Cc: Professor Katharina Stärk

Ms. Carol Worsfold (Project Administrator, Royal Veterinary College, University of London)

Ms. Sarah Thorniley (Programme Manager, International Programmes)

Ms. Annemarie Dulson (Quality Manager, International Programmes)

Professor Neil Donald Sargison
University of Edinburgh
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17 July 2017

Dear Professor Sargison

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On behalf of the Royal Veterinary College Board of Examiners for Livestock Health and Production, and Veterinary Epidemiology and Public Health, I would like to thank you for your External Examiner's report for the University of London International Programmes MSc and PG Diplomas in Livestock Health and Production, and Veterinary Epidemiology and Public Health for the 2016 academic year.

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Examiner Comment	RVC Response
<p>Programme and assessment design:</p> <p>All of the exam papers were double marked, although this was not possible for the in course assessments. Our understanding is that when markers agree marks, it is standard procedure to go for the higher when the difference is one mark, and for the median when the difference is more than one point on the scale. However, there is little consistency in the application of this rule. In places where markers have not followed a standard procedure, for example by</p>	<p>Responses to comments:</p> <p>RVC policy states that where two internal markers disagree, they should come together and compromise and agree a final mark. Guidance will be provided to examiners as a reminder of the standard procedure in the RVC for agreeing marks.</p>

<p>agreeing on the lower mark, this could create grounds for appeal.</p> <p>Other Comments - Research Project: The key elements of the projects are: the study design; data collection; analysis of the results; and discussion of the outcomes. In most cases this encompasses clinical, management, epidemiological and statistical skills. It is therefore perhaps unfortunate to have both examiners with similar areas of expertise, for example in epidemiology. The risk is that this does not allow the candidates to excel in other areas.</p>	<p>This has been noted and will be a consideration in future examining of research projects, to ensure that the examiners can cover the breadth of expertise required for the assessment.</p>
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Thank you again for your comments and for continuing to support the programme.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Christine Thurania-McKeever

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