

## ANNUAL QUALITY IMPROVEMENT REPORT 17/18

### Appendix 3: External Examiners' report

#### BVetMed Year 3

This appendix contains Course Director's/Year Leader's responses to 2017/18 External Examiners' comments and updates to actions from 2016/17 External Examiners' report (if applicable).

As Course Director/Year Leader please ensure you reflect on External Examiners' comments in the Course Review section. Please ensure that any actions to be taken in response to these comments have been recorded in your Annual Quality Improvement Report.

For support or advice please contact Ana Filipovic, Academic Quality Officer 'Standards', [afilipovic@rvc.ac.uk](mailto:afilipovic@rvc.ac.uk), 01707666938.

Appendix 3 consists of:

a.	Updates from Course Director/Year Leader to actions from previous years' reports
b.	2017/18 Collaborative Annual Report with responses from Course Director/Year Leader

a. Update to actions from 2015/16 External Examiners Report:

Question	External Examiners' comments	Course Director's response	Update in 2016/17	Update in 2017/18
1. The Programme	Expected Level of Animal Handling by third year	<p>If the external examiners feel that there is merit in earlier evaluation of the animal handling skills of the students prior to year 3, though they do not handle animals unsupervised, we shall be happy to investigate the feasibility of moving the DOPs earlier in the curriculum.</p> <p>Action Required: Consideration of formative assessment of animal handling at some point in the first two years.</p> <p>Action Deadline: June 2017 Action assigned to: Year Leaders 1, 2 &amp; 3.</p>	<p>Dr Troy Gibson should be asked to record a demonstration of how to rug a horse the RVC way. It is possible that some students' rug horses as advised by the British Horse Society (BHS), which differs to the way in which the RVC expects a horse to be rugged.</p> <p>Action: Dr Troy Gibson</p> <p>It was not understood why there had been an increased level of fails in the DOPs at the first two attempts, which classes as the first sit. It was noted that students should not be assessed on things they have not practised.</p> <p>Action: Year Leader, Course Director and Dr Troy Gibson to liaise to consider if there are any gaps in the teaching/practical content that might explain a higher failure rate in the animal handling DOPs.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p> <p>There are currently plans with the curriculum review to move husbandry DOPs to 3rd term of year 1. Year course and husbandry leaders are all on board to make this change. Regarding the failure rate there have been no changes in the content of either the DOPs or the husbandry teaching. The core of what is assessed in DOPs can be mapped to the animal handling practicals (exception being dog handling and cattle quick release knots, which are both been introduced for 2018.19). There are no identifiable gaps in the teaching (other than those mentioned above) and the moving of the assessment to be in the same year as the practicals will improve the pass rate and more importantly better prepare the students for summer AHEMS practicals.</p> <p>There is already a video of rugging a horse on the Animal Handling page on learn which all the husbandry students have access to (and are directed to in several lectures): <a href="https://learn.rvc.ac.uk/mod/book/view.php?id=65131&amp;chapterid=111927">https://learn.rvc.ac.uk/mod/book/view.php?id=65131&amp;chapterid=111927</a></p> <p>Also this same video is on the CSC site with additional pdf (see below for pdf). <a href="https://learn.rvc.ac.uk/pluginfile.php/137493/mod_book/chapter/100271/rugging%20skill%20sheet.pdf">https://learn.rvc.ac.uk/pluginfile.php/137493/mod_book/chapter/100271/rugging%20skill%20sheet.pdf</a></p> <p>In addition the BHS method is taught in the</p>

				<p>animal handling practicals.</p> <p>Students are not assessed in DOPs on how to put on a rug and ALL RVC STUDENTS are taught the BHS method (there is no RVC method).</p>
5. Suggestions for improvements	A computer based exam would allow inclusion of images, video and audio which is used at other institutions.	<p>A computer-based exam has been considered, however it is not feasible currently based on the requirements for a very large number of students.</p> <p>Action Required: The Year Leader is to ask the Head of Exams if consideration has been given to using external facilities for holding computer-based exams.</p> <p>Action Deadline: 31.12.16</p> <p>Action assigned to: Year Leader – Dr Pete Mantis</p>	<p>The Head of Exams noted that running computer-based exams at the RVC is not currently an option. There are a lot of technical issues to address.</p> <p>Dr Liz Mossop is from the University of Nottingham where computer-based exams are run. Dr Mossop will be attending the INSET Day on Assessment in January 2018. It was agreed to ask Dr Mossop for further details about how computer-based exams are run at Nottingham.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Head of Exams</p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p> <p>2018 Inset Day on Assessment included a session on ROGO (University of Nottingham Online assessment system).</p>

Update to actions from 2016/17 External Examiners Report:

Question	External Examiners' comments	Course Director's response	Action assigned	Update in 17/18
1.5 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations	As for last year, we have a fair number of students not reaching the expected level of animal handling skills by the	Whilst the students are assessed on their animal handling skills for the first time in the third year of the course, they have training on	Reminder to be provided to the students during the animal handling training as to the importance of the skills, the	<i>Reoccurring issue! Addressed in 17/18 Report!</i>

<p>regarding the Programme</p>	<p>end of the third year, and this included students who had scored exceptionally high marks on the written papers. We appreciate the response from last year but could the importance of these skills be emphasised and students to be given opportunity to develop these skills in the preceding years. (We appreciate that this may already be done).</p>	<p>all species in years 1 and 2 of the course as previously listed. In addition, the students now have access to teaching materials from the clinical skills centre in the form of videos covering the vast majority of required skills for review, in addition to a sample assessment sheet and full information about the assessment process from the examinations office.</p> <p>The students are encouraged to reflect on their animal handling training and previous handling experiences, and identify any areas for improvement to be addressed during the summer break before the start of the third year. A reminder to the students about the learning resources available to help them acquire these important day 1 skills can be provided. Remedial teaching is also provided to all students prior to a repeat sitting of the examination.</p>	<p>learning resources available, and the assessment they will undertake.</p> <p>Action Deadline: 01-Oct-2017</p> <p>Action assigned to: Lindsay Kellett-Gregory</p>	
<p>2.3 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the students' performance</p>	<p>For students failing the exams we would like to know if appropriate remedial revision or advice in exam techniques is offered over the summer months in preparation for the retakes.</p>	<p>Students who are unfortunately unsuccessful in their examinations are all invited to a debrief session run by the Senior Clinical tutor where advice and assistance can be provided. They are strongly advised to attend this session but the attendance is usually less than 100%. Clinical tutors are also informed directly of any tutees</p>	<p>Action Required: Discussion with senior clinical tutor (Karen Humm) regarding addition support possible for failing BVM 3 students.</p> <p>Action Deadline: 01-Nov-2017</p> <p>Action assigned to: Lindsay Kellett-Gregory</p>	<p>This wasn't flagged as a problem in the latest report 2017/18!</p>

		<p>who have been unsuccessful and students encouraged to meet with their tutor. At this time the examination script may be reviewed, additional support in exam technique and stress management provided, as well as any other support needed.</p> <p>There are no specific sessions provided over the summer months owing to low student attendance due to EMS. The advice centre can be contacted in several ways over the summer period for advice about exam performance. The learning materials remain available on Learn for review by the students to work on areas for improvement.</p>		
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# Collaborative Report

Exam board meeting: 15-May-2018

## Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine, Year 3, 2017/18

Lead examiner: Mr Ian McCrone

Collaborating examiner(s): Prof Sandy Love, Dr Bryan Markey

### The Programme

Please comment, as appropriate, on the following aspects of the programme:

#### 1.1 Course content

The course content is appropriate for the end of third year exams in a five year veterinary course and similar to other institutions.

Response from college requested: **NO**

#### 1.2 Learning objectives, and the extent to which they were met

The learning objects are appropriate and we are satisfied that they have been met.

Response from college requested: **NO**

#### 1.3 Teaching methods

As far as we can assess all teaching methods are appropriate. This year we were able to receive feedback from students who were satisfied with the variety of teaching methods. In some exam questions, where students generally performed poorly, it seemed that information was only available in CALs. Are these CALs identified as core teaching or as additional extra?

Response from college requested: **YES**

### COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Michael Hewetson

#### Course Director Response:

If there are CALs on which exam questions are set they are (a) identified to the students as core teaching and (b) given timetabled time. We will however, reiterate to the students that all timetabled teaching sessions are examinable. Furthermore, we will identify the questions that you have highlighted and will check where they are appear in the relevant strand to make sure that they are indeed timetabled.

#### Action Required:

Remind students that the material covered in CALs (and all other timetabled sessions) are considered core content and are examinable

Identify the questions that you have highlighted and check where they are appear in the relevant strand to make sure that they are indeed timetabled.

#### Action Deadline:

12-Nov-2018

#### Action assigned to:

Michael Hewetson

#### 1.4 Resources (in so far as they affected the assessment)

The resources available on RVC Learn are satisfactory, albeit as little difficult to navigate.

**Response from college requested: NO**

#### 1.5 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the Programme

Again this year, there was a significant number of students not reaching the expected level of animal handling skills by the end of their third year. Also there was a significant number that required 2nd attempts to gain competency. This was even seen in highly motivated students, as judged by exams marks and student feedback session. On questioning the students they considered that their opportunities to develop these skills around the time of the assessment was limited. Some of the skills are basic animal handling skills that we would expect the students to be competent at, before they go off to do pre-clinical EMS. Perhaps there should be an assessment of these skills close to first year teaching, and remediation given to poorly performing students. On feedback from students, they commented that success in DOPS, was largely dependent on quality of their pre-clinical placements. This may disadvantage students who are geographically limited to areas with low livestock numbers. It was positive to hear at the exam board meeting that steps have been put in place to give students more opportunity to develop dog handling skills, where many students failed.

**Response from college requested: YES**

**COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Michael Hewetson**

##### **Course Director Response:**

We are aware of this ongoing problem and will be having a debriefing session after the DOPS resit exam with all stakeholders as a matter of urgency to try and find a solution. We agree that a handling assessment should form part of the pre-clinical part of the course, and plan to incorporate a formative animal handling assessment into the first year. This will ideally be in the third term after the handling practicals and Easter lambing placements. This will be implemented as part of the curriculum review which will occur in September 2020.

In the interim, we will make every effort to publish and make students aware of the DOPS assessment criteria in the first and second year. This will (1) help align the assessment with the handling practicals; (2) emphasise the importance of the DOPS assessment in terms of the assessment criteria required to pass third year; and (3) encourage students to reflect on their animal handling training and identify any areas for improvement that can be addressed before the start of the third year.

With respect to the provision of opportunities for students that were not successful in passing their first DOPS examination in the third year, several remedial opportunities are currently in place. During the first DOPS exam, students are given verbal feedback after each station; and notes are made that are subsequently given to the students. If a student fails then additional remedial sessions are provided, however attendance of these sessions has been very poor. In addition, students that have not reached the expected level of animal handling skills have the opportunity to develop their skills further at the Bolton farm by helping with lambing and year 1 practicals prior to the resit exam. Furthermore, these students also have an opportunity to practice dog handling skills during their Easter EMS. Finally, as you are probably aware, students also have access to teaching materials from the clinical skills centre in the form of videos covering the vast majority of required skills for review, in addition to a sample assessment sheet and full information about the assessment process from the examinations office.

##### **Action Required:**

Incorporate a formative animal handling assessment into the BVM first year. This will be implemented as part of the BVetMed curriculum review.

Publish and make students aware of the DOPS assessment criteria in the first and second year

##### **Action Deadline:**

12-Nov-2018

##### **Action assigned to:**

Michael Hewetson

## Student performance

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

### **2.1 Students' performance in relation to those at a similar stage on comparable courses in other institutions, where this is known to you**

Student performance was similar to other institutions with similar programmes.

**Response from college requested: NO**

### **2.2 Quality of candidates' knowledge and skills, with particular reference to those at the top, middle or bottom of the range**

The students performance ranged from exceptional to poor and was normally distributed. The proportion of students failing the written papers is equivalent to other institutions.

**Response from college requested: NO**

### **2.3 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the students' performance**

In previous years we have suggested appropriate remedial revision and support for failing students. This seems to be in place with all re-take student successful.

**Response from college requested: NO**



## Assessment Procedures

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

### 3.1 Assessment methods (relevance to learning objectives and curriculum)

The assessment levels are appropriate.

Response from college requested: **NO**

### 3.2 Extent to which assessment procedures are rigorous

The assessment procedures are suitably rigorous.

Response from college requested: **NO**

### 3.3 Consistency of the level of assessment with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)

The level of assessment is consistent with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications

Response from college requested: **NO**

### 3.4 Standard of marking

The marking is automatic. There is extensive statistical analysis of question performance. There seems to be robust feedback to examiners regarding quality of question, and appropriate action taken with regards to question that may not have performed. The method of standard setting was well explained to us and we are confident this is appropriate.

Response from college requested: **NO**

### 3.5 In your view, are the procedures for assessment and the determination of awards sound and fairly conducted? (e.g. Briefing, Exam administration, marking arrangements, Board of Examiners, participation by External Examiners)

The procedures for assessment are conducted very fairly. The oversight by three experienced examiners from different institutions with different clinical backgrounds allowed a thorough review of the. The examinations office dealt very quickly and efficiently with the external examiner's questions.

Response from college requested: **NO**

### 3.6 Opinion on changes to the assessment procedures from previous years in which you have examined

The standard setting employed this year seems more robust than that used in previous years.

Response from college requested: **NO**

### 3.7 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the procedures

We were happy with the procedures.

Response from college requested: **NO**

**4.1 Comments I have made in previous years have been addressed to my satisfaction**

**Yes**

**Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:**

**Response from college requested: NO**

**4.2 An acceptable response has been made**

**Yes**

**Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:**

**Response from college requested: NO**

**4.3 I approved the papers for the Examination**

**Yes**

**Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:**

All questions were scrutinised by the external examiners. Most queries were explained or rectified to the examiners satisfaction.

**Response from college requested: NO**

**4.4 I was able to scrutinise an adequate sample of students' work and marks to enable me to carry out my duties**

**Yes**

**Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:**

**Response from college requested: NO**

**4.5 I attended the meeting of the Board of Examiners held to approve the results of the Examination**

**Yes**

**Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:**

**Response from college requested: NO**

**4.6 Candidates were considered impartially and fairly**

**Yes**

**Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:**

The conduct of the exams was fair.

**Response from college requested: NO**

4.7 The standards set for the awards are appropriate for qualifications at this level, in this subject

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

4.8 The standards of student performance are comparable with similar programmes or subjects in other UK institutions with which I am familiar

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

4.9 I have received enough support to carry out my role

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

4.10 I have received sufficient information to carry out my role (where information was insufficient, please give details)

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

4.11 Appropriate procedures and processes have been followed

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

4.12 The processes for assessment and the determination of awards are sound

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

## Completion

If you have identified any areas of good practice, please comment more fully here. We may use information provided in our annual external examining report:

5.1 Do you have any suggestions for improvements based on experience at other institutes? We may use information provided in our annual external examining report:

Response from college requested: **NO**

5.2 External Examiner comments: For College information only (Responses to External Examiners are published on the College's website. Please only use this box to add any comments that you wish to remain confidential, if any)

Response from college requested: **NO**