
CERT AVP EXTERNAL EXAMINERS REPORTS (Modules A and B)

Responses to 2018/19 External Examiners' Comments

To be considered at the Autumn TQC Meeting

Individual Report

Exam board meeting: 05-Feb-2019

RCVS Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice, 2018/19

Mrs Anna Judson

The Programme

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

1.1 Course content

The curriculum is set by The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons for the A and B modules

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

These are set out in the module descriptors for the RCVS Cert AVP and in the RVC published module outlines. They are clear and comprehensive, and regularly reviewed to ensure relevance to general practice.

1.3 Teaching methods

Modules are assessment only. Supportive online resources include webinars, guidance notes and sample essays, there are extensive reference resources, 1-2-1 coaching and a recorded induction day. Detailed formative feedback accompanies every piece of written work. Feedback is effective at improving subsequent candidate performance in the majority of cases.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison

Course Director Response:

Thank you for your positive comments especially about the value of our feedback on candidates work.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

Resources are available via RVC Learn and most candidates who use them find them valuable. Additional material is regularly added by module and course leaders. The Induction Day has been recorded to facilitate a wider audience throughout the year. Reasons for lack of engagement with resources are noted from the Cert AVP Module Survey and steps are taken to address any barriers to access.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison

Course Director Response:

Thank you. We are hoping that our monthly short bulletin which we have just started will be a regular reminder to candidates about the wide variety of learning resources available to them

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

1.5 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the Programme

New approaches are being developed to improve awareness of and accessibility to the online resources available to candidates such as the Cert AVP bulletin. Regular emails noting significant updates ensures students are aware of changes and helps ensure ongoing resource engagement. Dating all refreshed or new resources ensures it is easier for students to spot additional material.

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

Information regarding student performance at other institutions is not available. Whilst this information would be helpful, it is understood to be currently unavailable.

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

The range of marks is consistent with past years. There were some exceptional results amongst the higher range candidates who demonstrated excellent knowledge and reflective writing skills. Most candidates appeared to benefit from the formative feedback showing improved scores whatever the starting point skill level. A few candidates struggled to adapt to the reflective writing required for this module, despite the advice and feedback provided. Encouragement is given to these candidates to use the 1-2-1 coaching sessions available.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison

Course Director Response:

We have noticed an improvement in candidate engagement with the reflective process and this may reflect a more widespread appreciation in the veterinary community, as a result of our marketing initiatives, of the nature and ethos of the CertAVP at the RVC

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

For the students who have to resubmit essays consistent feedback is the lack of reflective writing. Follow up advice is detailed with good signposting to resources, however a small number of students still struggle to adopt reflection into their submissions.

A bank of 'before and after' examples of short pieces of text rewritten into a reflective style might support students new to this style of writing early on with their studies.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison

Course Director Response:

Thank you for this suggestion. We will definitely work toward supplying such examples for our candidates who are struggling with reflective writing.

Action Required:

Module A leader, Liz Chan to be asked to create some "before and after" examples of reflective writing.

Action Deadline:

01-Sep-2019

Action assigned to:

Liz Chan and Joanne Jarvis

Assessment Procedures

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

3.1 Assessment methods (relevance to learning objectives and curriculum)

Assessment methods and detailed formative feedback are appropriate in helping students towards the course aim of improving through reflection.

To ensure the AFAVP module retains relevance to students and adequately prepares them for subsequent modules and careers the AFAVP module is under review. The number, titles and grouping of essays is being considered alongside assessor allocation. Learning through reflection will remain a central feature of the RVC Cert AVP approach as does ongoing support for student progression.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison

Course Director Response:

We are pleased that the proposed changes to the A-FAVP module have been supported and look forward to launching it in the next academic year

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

3.2 Extent to which assessment procedures are rigorous

Assessment processes are fair.

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

Assessment is consistent with the framework for post graduate level 7.

3.4 Standard of marking

Facilitated by the use of templates, essay marking and feedback has become more detailed with advice on how to access appropriate resources and improve future submissions. This has received good student feedback.

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)

Yes. The procedures for assessment and the determination of awards are sound and fair. Sufficient information is provided at all stages of the process. The Board of Examiners meeting is well attended with broad participation.

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

Essays and assessment reports are now online. The time taken to mark essays has been reduced from 8 to 4 weeks which has addressed negative student feedback in the module survey report. Could the RVC note over time whether this improved marking turnaround has any impact on student motivation, length of time taken to complete modules and student retention for further modules?

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison

Course Director Response:

We will certainly endeavour to although the factors influencing student motivation and feedback for a totally "distant" course such as the CertAVP are multifactorial. We are instituting several initiatives to help with student engagement at a distance and to prepare candidates for this type of academic endeavour so if there is an improvement in completion rates it may be hard to tease out what elements have had the most impact.

Action Required:

Comparison of completion times and dropout rates for 2019/2020 academic year vs 2018/2019 academic year to be presented for consideration at the next A and B module exam board.

Action Deadline:

03-Feb-2020

Action assigned to:

Joanne Jarvis

3.7 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the procedures

None

General Statements

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

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

4.2 An acceptable response has been made

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

4.3 I approved the papers for the Examination

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was 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:

This was facilitated by access to the papers online.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison

Course Director Response:

Thank you for your commitment to the review process and insightful comments.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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:

4.6 Candidates were considered impartially and fairly

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was 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:

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

N/A

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

I am not familiar with other programmes.

4.9 I have received enough support to carry out my role

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was 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:

Good guidance from the helpful RVC team.

4.11 Appropriate procedures and processes have been followed

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

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

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was 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:

I have no experience of other institutions yet feel that this would give valuable insight to all organisations should it prove possible to arrange.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison

Course Director Response:

The diverse nature of the approach to learning and delivery of educational support for the CertAVP makes this a very difficult task. We currently have had to "agree to disagree|" with the approach of some providers while recognising that individual candidates have individual learning needs which will be more suited to different providers.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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)

It is clear the RVC Cert AVP team wish candidates to succeed and the feedback, encouragement, support and advice provided is excellent.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison

Course Director Response:

Thank you for this very positive comment about our CertAVP team which we will convey to them.

Action Required:

Comment to be shared with the CertAVP team of assessors

Action Deadline:

01-Apr-2019

Action assigned to:

Joanne Jarvis

