

ANNUAL QUALITY IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2021/22

Appendix 3: External Examiners' report

MVetMed

This appendix contains Year Leader's responses to 2021/22 External Examiners' comments and updates to actions from previous External Examiners' reports (if applicable).

As Course Director 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, 01707666938

Appendix 3 consists of:

a.	Updates to actions from previous years' reports – n/a
b.	21/22 Collaborative Annual Report with responses from Course Director

Collaborative Report

Exam board meeting: 20-Jun-2022

Master of Veterinary Medicine, 2021/22

Lead examiner: Dr Veronica Roberts

Collaborating examiner(s): Dr Zoe Belshaw

The Programme

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

1.1 Course content

This is appropriate and indeed the good use of workplace based assessments should be commended

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dominic Barfield

Course Director Response:

Thank you.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

These are appropriate and met

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dominic Barfield

Course Director Response:

N/A

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

1.3 Teaching methods

These are appropriate

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dominic Barfield

Course Director Response:

N/A

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

Excellent support from the RVC team.

We would request in the future that if possible, MCQs are:

1. Internally checked before being sent to external examiners;
2. Are uploaded to a central server which the examiners can then access at a planned time to review, rather than being emailed the questions as and when they are ready.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dominic Barfield

Course Director Response:

Will discuss with exams office how better to facilitate this process - and will action internal examiners to internally check.

Action Required:

Will ask internal examiners to check questions and discuss assisting with external examiners logistical requests with exams office.

Action Deadline:

01-Jun-2023

Action assigned to:

Course director and Head of Exams

1.5 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the Programme

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

Students on these courses are a very high performing students and this is evident in this cohort

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

As expected from this group of students, knowledge and skills are at a high level and there is little to differentiate the quality of the top and bottom students

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

Assessment Procedures

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

3.1 Assessment methods (relevance to learning objectives and curriculum)

The use of the WPBA is good with frequent assessments and these are in appropriate areas for each discipline.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dominic Barfield

Course Director Response:

Thank you for your comments.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

3.2 Extent to which assessment procedures are rigorous

As we have commented before, there are very few MCQs for each discipline which brings into question the robustness of this part of the assessment.

Other than this, we are satisfied with the rigor of the process.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dominic Barfield

Course Director Response:

Will discuss with discipline leads to see if this can be scaled up over the next few years, though keeping high standards of quality.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

01-Jun-2023

Action assigned to:

Course director

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

The level is suitable according to the FHEQ guideline which requires some 480 credits for a Masters' programme and the equivalent of this appears to be met as a minimum.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dominic Barfield

Course Director Response:

The MVetMed is awarded to candidates who successfully achieve 180 credits; 90 credits are awarded at FHEQ level 7 and 90 credits are awarded at level 8. This is in line with the FHEQ guidelines for taught Master's degrees, i.e. candidates must achieve 180 credits, of which at least 150 credits are at FHEQ level 7 or above.

3.4 Standard of marking

The mark scheme for projects is clear and marker feedback has been consistently excellent this year. One project may have had only one marker rather than two.

Feedback in all areas was very strong: individualised, detailed, positive, constructive criticism, with areas where students had improved being commended.

When marking posters, only the final amalgamated mark was given, but there is scope on the feedback form to mark each section individually which would improve feedback to the student seemingly without significantly increasing marker workload.

In the WPBA there were points left blank or marked as N/A but it is not clear if they were N/A as not relevant to the discipline or not observed on that occasion, or if blank meant N/A. Also in some disciplines, there may be areas which do not seem on face value to be relevant but actually can be - for example communication with the client in anatomic pathology could be assessed if a referring veterinary surgeon was considered to be the client.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dominic Barfield

Course Director Response:

The College oral presentation/poster mark sheet was used this year 2022 as the posters were again presented in person which enabled greater feedback to be provided by the internal examiners. Will discuss with discipline leads regarding WPBA and making sure all boxes are checked, with the example given we will clarify that communication is important even in non (public) client facing disciplines. Have assumed that N/A is not observed/relevant on that occasion for that assessment.

Action Required:

Clarify finer points when using WPBA.

Action Deadline:

01-Jun-2023

Action assigned to:

Course Director

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

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

Changing the candidate contribution comment in projects from percentages to a comment has been beneficial as has clarity on timing of submission of the study and the use of the pre-reviewer assessed manuscript.

We have previously commented on the standard (for example failure to pass the cover up test) and number of MCQs for each discipline and there do not appear to have been changes made here.

We have previously commented on the disparity between numbers of distractors in the different disciplines as this would affect how difficult the different papers are to pass, when all students are aiming for the same award. The response has been that the number of distractors for each discipline maps to the number the students will later meet in the board exams for that discipline. This is fair as regards meeting the ILOs for the individual disciplines, however the students are not sitting their boards but the same Masters'. We would advise adding an explanatory comment in the exam regulations by expanding section 6.10 to ensure this was not an area where an unsuccessful candidate could challenge the outcome.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dominic Barfield

Course Director Response:

Thank you for your comments. We appreciate that the award being assessed here is different to the board examinations, though we think that it is important to align to board examination style where possible. We will discuss with the relevant teams to make the changes that are suggested to the AA regulations.

Action Required:

Discuss with head of exams, registrar regarding changes suggested.

Action Deadline:

01-Jun-2023

Action assigned to:

Course Director

3.7 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the procedures

The team and candidates should be commended for continuing run an excellent programme despite the challenges of the pandemic.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dominic Barfield**Course Director Response:**

Thank you it has been challenging on many levels.

Action Required:**Action Deadline:****Action assigned to:**

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

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Yes other than numbers and quality of MCQs

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dominic Barfield

Course Director Response:

Will encourage the individual disciplines to improve their MCQs and consider a plan for question numbers.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

01-Jun-2023

Action assigned to:

Course director

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:

Thanks to Yelena for excellent support.

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

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

4.9 I have received enough training and 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:

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:

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)

