

ANNUAL QUALITY IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2015/16

Appendix 3: External Examiners' report

BVetMed Year 3

This appendix contains Course Director's/Year Leader's responses to 2015/16 External Examiners' comments and updates to actions from 2014/15 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, 01707666938

Update to actions from 2014/15 External Examiners Report:

Question	External Examiners' comments	Course Director's response	Update in 2015/16
<p>1.2 Learning objectives, and the extent to which they were met</p>	<p>These were extremely difficult to find, even with the help of College staff, and are inconsistent in their location. We question the utility of learning outcomes if they are so inaccessible for staff and students. For some strands we also noted a lack of high-level (e.g. for a whole module/strand) learning outcomes, rather they were articulated for individual teaching sessions.</p>	<p>For the Year 3 of the BVetMed course, the learning objectives/ outcomes are in a consistent location. In the home page of BVetMed Year 3 (https://learn.rvc.ac.uk/mod/book/view.php?id=30765) the overall learning objectives for BVetMed years 3 and 4 are clearly stated within the welcome message of the year 3 leader.</p> <p>The learning objectives for each individual strand can be found within the BVetMed 3rd Year Handbook (https://learn.rvc.ac.uk/mod/book/view.php?id=30765&chapterid=55876). Within each strand the individual learning outcomes for each individual teaching session are clearly stated and they derive from the overall learning objectives for year 3.</p> <p>All the strands have overall learning objectives with the exception of the Principles of Science and the Professional Studies strands. Both of these strands are very diverse and this makes it difficult to create appropriate overall learning objectives that can potentially apply to the diverse list of topics they include. Following the external examiners comment, we have agreed with the strand leaders of these two strands to create overall learning outcomes.</p> <p>Action Required: Create overall strand learning outcomes for Professional studies and Principles of Science strands</p> <p>Action assigned to: Panagiotis Mantis, Brian Catchpole, Elizabeth Chan</p>	<p>Completed. Please note that a mapping exercise of learning objectives for the entire curriculum will be conducted in 2016/17 and will be made available to External Examiners</p>
<p>5.2 Additional comments</p>	<p>It would be helpful for us to receive responses to last year's comments. We would also appreciate the ability to access online course information and materials. Although College staff have been helpful in providing access during our visit, we have struggled with this. Perhaps a subject for the external examiner's INSET day? The examinations office has been diligent in providing us with information and addressing queries.</p>	<p>We can confirm that all last years comments have been answered by the previous BVetMed year 3 leader. We can confirm that the external examiners have online access and they are provided with login and password to access the information online. The facilitators who will run the Introduction for External Examiners at the Inset Day on 6th Jan 2016 will incorporate this topic.</p> <p>Action assigned to: Ana Filipovic</p>	<p>Similar experiences were noted in other External Examiners' report in 2014/15 and from Jan 2016 and therefore the Introduction to Learn has been incorporated in the Inset Day session for External Examiners.</p> <p>Further, from this year all External Examiners are sent links to Learning Objectives and Assessment & Award Regulations, on RVC Learn, prior to their involvement with examinations.</p> <p>RVC Learn team is currently working on improving signposting and searching of content which should provide an easier way to locate information in a "just in time" basis. There are some specific actions they are working on at the moment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involving students in reviewing curriculum content or RVC Learn (ongoing) - Improved signposting of course or supplementary digital documentation - Provide guide for students (and EE) with advice on navigating RVC Learn

Collaborative Report

Exam board meeting: 10-May-2016

Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine, Year 3, 2015/16

Lead examiner: Ms Rachel Burrow

Collaborating examiner(s): Prof Sandy Love, Mr Ian McCrone

The Programme

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

1.1 Course content

The course content is appropriate.

Response from college requested: NO

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

Learning objectives appropriate and were met.

Response from college requested: NO

1.3 Teaching methods

All teaching methods appropriate.

Response from college requested: NO

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

Satisfactory

Response from college requested: NO

1.5 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the Programme

There are a few students that have not reached the expected level of animal handling by the third year of the course which is of concern because they will have already been on pre-clinical placements. If this is the first time students are assessed on these skills the external examiners consider this to be relatively late in the course.

Response from college requested: YES

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Pete Mantis

Course Director Response:

The first time the students are assessed on animal handling is the DOPs at the beginning of year 3 though they get training in year 1 and 2.

Prior to the assessment in year 3, the students get training in handling horses, cattle, sheep, pig and poultry in spring BVetMed year 1 during the animal husbandry. The students also have a laboratory animal handling session in Camden campus prior to coming to year 3. Furthermore, the students gain more experience in animal handling during the animal husbandry EMS. The gateway students receive a special animal handling skill session in term 1 of their gateway year.

In years 1 and 2 of the BVetMed course the students are being supervised while learning and practicing their handling skills.

The DOPs were introduced as a measure to assess the animal handling skills the students acquire during their training prior to entering their clinical training where they shall need to use these skills on a daily basis and in some cases unsupervised. In that respect they cover their objective since there is limited contact with animals prior to year 4 and they get training in years 1 and 2 where they are being supervised.

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.

Action Required:

Consideration of formative assessment of animal handling at some point in the first two years.

Action Deadline: June 2017

Action assigned to: Year Leaders 1, 2 & 3.

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

Student's performance was normally distributed. The proportion of students failing is equivalent to the proportion failing in other institutions.

Response from college requested: **NO**

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

For weaker students failing the exams they should be provided with appropriate remedial revision over the Summer months in preparation for the retakes. Also we were pleased that students that were borderline passes were made aware of this and advised on areas to work on for improvement.

Response from college requested: **NO**

CD course: It happens for those students who need it and seek it. Students are identified via Learning Development and are offered support through Tutor system.

Assessment Procedures

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

3.1 Assessment methods (relevance to learning objectives and curriculum)

Appropriate.

Response from college requested: **NO**

3.2 Extent to which assessment procedures are rigorous

Suitably rigorous assessment procedures.

Response from college requested: **NO**

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

Consistent.

Response from college requested: **NO**

3.4 Standard of marking

Computerised with extensive and useful statistical analysis. DOPS is marked by experienced clinical instructors.

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)

Having three external examiners from different institutions and different clinical backgrounds allowed a thorough review of the exam. The examination office dealt very quickly and efficiently with external examiners' questions.

Response from college requested: **NO**

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

N/A

Response from college requested: **NO**

3.7 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the procedures

If there is any feedback and comments from the students regarding the questions and examination process following the examination could these be made available to the external examiners.

Response from college requested: YES

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Pete Mantis

Course Director Response:

Based on the discussion between Year 3 leader and Year 3 student representatives and comments from the Year 3 students survey, the students considered that the questions were not in analogy with the size of the strands and a disproportionate number of questions were assigned to the PMVPH strand, though the questions were distributed among the strands similarly to previous years with the same number of PMVPH strand questions as in previous years. Some students indicated that some questions were not from taught material, though all questions of each strand were scrutinised by the strand leaders to verify that they were in the learning objectives and the taught material. Interestingly enough, the students performed best in some of the questions indicated that they were not part of the taught material.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

N/A

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

No comments made by the external examiners last year.

Response from college requested: NO

4.2 An acceptable response has been made

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 all examiners.

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

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:

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:

Superb support from the examination office.

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:

A computer based exam would allow inclusion of images, video and audio which is used at other institutions.

Response from college requested: YES

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Pete Mantis

Course Director Response:

A computer-based exam has been considered, however it is not feasible currently based on the requirements for a very large number of students.

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.

Action Deadline:

31.12.16

Action assigned to:

Year Leader – Dr Pete Mantis

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)