

ANNUAL QUALITY IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2018/19

Appendix 3: External Examiners' report

BVetMed Year 3

This appendix contains Year Leader's responses to 2018/19 External Examiners' comments and updates to actions from previous External Examiners' reports (if applicable).

As Year Leader/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
b.	2018/19 Collaborative Annual Report with responses from Course Director/Year Leader

Report Question	External Examiners' comment	Course Directors response and actions	Update in 2018/19
<p>1.3 Teaching methods</p>	<p>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?</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Action Deadline: 12-Nov-2018</p> <p>Action assigned to: Michael Hewetson</p>	<p>Action completed January 2019</p>
<p>1.5 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the Programme</p>	<p>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. ...(complete comment available online)</p>	<p>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</p> <p>Action Deadline: 12-Nov-2018</p> <p>Action assigned to: Michael Hewetson</p>	<p>Action completed January 2019</p>

Collaborative Report

Exam board meeting: 14-May-2019

Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine, Year 3, 2018/19

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 continues to be appropriate for end of third years exams in a five year veterinary course, and is similar to other institutions

Response from college requested: NO

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

The learning objectives are clear and appropriate. The examiners are satisfied that they have been fully met

Response from college requested: NO

1.3 Teaching methods

In as far as it was possible to assess the variety of teaching methods used, the external examiners feel that they are appropriate.

Response from college requested: NO

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

There are resources available on RVC Learn and are considered to be satisfactory.

Response from college requested: NO

1.5 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the Programme

This year there was an introduction of Professional studies included in the exam assessment. Although we feel this is a very positive aspect, the marks for this were added to the written paper marks. This allowed student to compensate with poor marks in the written papers and advance to the fourth year. In addition, there were students who scored highly in the written papers with extremely poor Professional studies assessment marks that were also allowed to proceed. We would suggest that the Professional Studies assessment be separated from the written paper and both elements needed to be passed, i.e. no compensation, as is done for the DOPS.

Response from college requested: YES

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Michael Hewetson

Course Director Response:

Many thanks for your constructive comments and suggestions regarding the professional studies assignment. We will initiate the relevant discussions to reach agreement on the best way forward and submit our proposal for the autumn undergraduate course management committee (CMC) and learning, teaching & assessment committee (LTAC) meetings. If accepted, the change will however, only be implemented in 2021, as the BVetMed 2 and graduate years have already been informed of the professional studies assignment for 2020. In addition, it will have implications for honours and so the honours points for the year will need to be changed.

Action Required:

Discuss making the professional studies assignment in the BVetMed 3 year a 'stand-alone' compulsory component to the exam with a minimum pass mark. Once agreement is reached on the best way forward, submit a proposal for the 2019 autumn undergraduate course management committee (CMC) and learning, teaching & assessment committee (LTAC) meetings.

Action Deadline:

30-Aug-2019

Action assigned to:

Michael Hewetson (BVetMed 3 leader) and Jill Maddison (Course director)

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 (pass rate) was higher this year, but this may be related to the marks for the Professional studies assessment allowing students with poor written paper marks being compensated because of this.

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 student performance ranged from exceptional to poor and was normally distributed. Many more distinctions and merits were awarded this and more distinctions than merits were awarded. It may be that this is due to the additional assessment contributing

Response from college requested: **NO**

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

Response from college requested: **NO**

Assessment Procedures

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

3.1 Assessment methods (relevance to learning objectives and curriculum)

The assessment methods are appropriate.

Response from college requested: **NO**

3.2 Extent to which assessment procedures are rigorous

The assessment procedures are considered to be 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 FHEQ.

Response from college requested: **NO**

3.4 Standard of marking

For the MCQ and EMQ the marking is automatic. There is extensive statistical analysis of question performance. Questions that were seen to have not performed were revisited and decisions made whether they should be included or alternative answers accepted. This was considered fair. The method of standard setting was clearly explained and we are happy this method is appropriate.

The Professional skills assessment marking was fair, with an appropriate proportion double marked to check for consistency.

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 assessment. 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

As stated previously the additional contribution of the Professional studies assessment marks to the overall mark allowed students that would have otherwise failed to progress. This may question the validity of the standard setting pass mark as an additional external mark is contributing to the student's mark. The external examiners believe that Professional skills assessment is appropriate to be done at this stage, but should probably be as separate component that needs to be passed.

Response from college requested: YES

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Michael Hewetson

Course Director Response:

As discussed previously, we will initiate the relevant discussions to reach agreement on the best way forward and submit our proposal for the autumn undergraduate course management committee (CMC) and learning, teaching & assessment committee (LTAC) meetings. It is however, important for us to clarify the standard setting method that we use for the written exam, as it is incorrect to state that the additional professional studies mark will affect the validity of the standard setting. Each written exam undergoes its own independent standard setting, and only once this is completed are the three final marks added together to make up a final written grade for each student

Action Required:

Discuss making the professional studies assignment in the BVetMed 3 year a 'stand-alone' compulsory component to the exam with a minimum pass mark. Once agreement is reached on the best way forward, submit a proposal for the 2019 autumn undergraduate course management committee (CMC) and learning, teaching & assessment committee (LTAC) meetings.

Action Deadline:

30-Aug-2019

Action assigned to:

Michael Hewetson (BVetMed 3 leader) and Jill Maddison (Course director)

3.7 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the procedures

The external examiners are 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:

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:

The item analysis was performed and any anomalies were followed up with question writers and appropriate actions were made. This allowed the whole process to be done very efficiently

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**