

**ANNUAL QUALITY IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2019/20****Appendix 3: External Examiners' report****BVetMed Year 4**

This appendix contains Year Leader's responses to 2019/20 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](mailto:afilipovic@rvc.ac.uk), 01707666938.

Appendix 3 consists of:

a.	Updates to actions from previous years' reports
b.	2019/20 Collaborative Annual Report with responses from Course Director/Year Leader

Report Question	External Examiners' comment	Course Directors response and actions	Update in 2019/20
<p><b>3.4 Standard of marking</b></p>	<p>... We would however urge that internal examiners are encouraged to annotate the scripts to help see where marks had been allocated where appropriate.</p> <p>However, with regard to question 2 of paper 2, although this was a well written and constructed question that was very fair, it was poorly answered by the students, who seemed to have a lack of relevant knowledge. It was surprising that so few of them were able to correctly identify the use of median and range or define incidence and prevalence. It seems that there is still a lack of engagement in this topic amongst the student. The scripts were clearly marked and there seemed to be good correlation between different markers. However, it struck the external examiners that the nature of this sort of question does not lend itself as well to the common grading scheme. Many of the answers required in this question are simple statement of facts or brief descriptions and this may be easier to mark with a simpler mark scheme, using a 10-point scale for example. We believe that this was suggested and discussed at the exam board in 2017 and we would suggest that this idea is revisited.</p> <p>We also had concerns that the model answer for question 3 of paper 2 was possibly too detailed and made marking it using the CGS challenging for new examiners, which led to an over-engineered solution and excessive time spent marking for the internal examiners; We noted that the model answer had been modified to incorporate a detailed 100-point marking scheme that was then converted to the common grading scheme. This seemed like a complicated and time-consuming additional step for the marking process. However, we were happy that the results were fair and accurate. It was however noted that marker 3 was more generous than the other markers. This was obvious from the marker averages but this was not picked up by the</p>	<p>We thank the external examiners for their comments and observations. The structure of the Paper 2 is being reviewed to better reflect the aspects of the course that require higher level analysis. Question 2 which is commonly referred as the "Data Analysis" question may be modified and comments from the external examiners will be taken into consideration. If such a question is retained, we may employ a different College-approved marking scheme such as the 10-point scale.</p> <p>We also recognise that further training of internal examiners in applying the CGS to long-answer papers would be beneficial. We also appreciate that model answers should avoid being restrictive. These suggestions will be incorporate in the training of new examiners ahead of next year's exam composition.</p> <p>Action Required:</p> <p>Set up training sessions for internal examiners in setting questions and applying CGS to marking of exam scripts.</p> <p>Action Deadline:</p> <p>01-Oct-2019</p> <p>Action assigned to:</p> <p>Year 4 Leader - Dan Chan</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>The training need has been fed to the organisers of the Annual Inset day on Assessment</p>

	sample marking. Perhaps the sample marking should be modified so that the sample marker independently grades the papers rather than checking that the way that the paper was marked makes sense?...		
<b>3.6 Opinion on changes to the assessment procedures from previous years in which you have examined</b>	, it was felt that question 7 and possibly question 24 were very hard for 4th year students. Question 7 was therefore removed, and it was recommended that this was revised for future use.	<p>We thank the external examiners for their comments. Comments regarding appropriateness of inclusion of questions are fed back to question authors who teach the content of the exam.</p> <p><b>Action Required:</b></p> <p>Question 7 from this exam has been removed from the Question Bank preventing future use. A replacement question on the topic to be composed and submitted for inclusion in Question Bank</p> <p><b>Action Deadline:</b></p> <p>01-Oct-2019</p> <p><b>Action assigned to:</b></p> <p>Year 4 Leader - Dan Chan</p>	Completed Question has been removed. Replacement questions were uploaded into the question bank as normally done every year.
<b>3.7 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the procedures</b>	..full comment available <a href="#">here</a>	<p>We thank the external examiner for the very detailed comments regarding the exam. Comments regarding specific MCQs will be logged in the Question Bank. Removed questions from the exam will be censored from Question Bank. Questions flagged for revision will be highlighted on the Question Bank.</p> <p>Although Questions 1 and 3 of Paper 2 did feature the same disease, the questions explored different learning outcomes (professional reasoning/communication vs clinical reasoning), nevertheless future exams will avoid use of the same pathology whenever possible.</p> <p>Other comments will be fed back to internal examiners and be used in further training of internal examiners</p> <p><b>Action Required:</b></p> <p>Comments from External Examiners on specific questions to be added to Question Bank Questions removed from exam will be censored from the Question Bank</p>	Completed These were done as per normal procedures. Questions are edited in consideration of External Examiners with consultation of question author/Strand Leader (who are internal examiners). Questions flagged for removed are censored from Question Bank. Training occurs ahead of each exam.

		<p>Comments from external examiners to be fed back to internal examiners Further training sessions of internal examiners to be scheduled before next exam</p> <p><b>Action Deadline:</b> 31-Oct-2019</p> <p><b>Action assigned to:</b> Year 4 Leader - Dan Chan</p>	
<p><b>4.9 I have received enough support to carry out my role</b></p>	<p>Wi-fi internet access is either poor or non-existent in the external examiners room</p>	<p><b>Course Director Response:</b> We apologise to the External Examiners for this unforeseen problem. We will inform our IT infrastructure team to investigate and correct this issue before next examination.</p> <p><b>Action Required:</b> Inform IT Infrastructure team to investigate wi-fi access in the External Examination room before next examination</p> <p><b>Action Deadline:</b> 31-Oct-2019</p> <p><b>Action assigned to:</b> Year 4 Leader - Dan Chan</p>	<p>Concerns were passed to the IT Infrastructure.</p>

# Collaborative Report

Exam board meeting: 12-Dec-2019

**Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine, Year 4, 2019/20**

**Lead examiner: Dr Mickey Tivers**

**Collaborating examiner(s): Professor Robert Foale, Mr Lorenzo Viora, Dr Gudrun Schoeffmann**

## The Programme

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

### 1.1 Course content

This was considered appropriate in terms of breadth and detail for fourth year veterinary students.

#### Professor R.F

Agreed

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

Learning objectives were considered appropriate and they were well met by the assessment. There are still some areas with which the students are not engaging as well as others.

#### Professor R.F

Agreed

### 1.3 Teaching methods

These seem appropriate.

#### Professor R.F

Agreed

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

The resources for the assessment were more than sufficient.

#### Professor R.F

Agreed

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

Please see specific comments later.

**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**

The performance of the students was similar compared to other courses at the Universities of Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Nottingham.

**Professor R.F**

Agreed

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

Overall the candidates knowledge was acceptable to excellent with a good number of students achieving merit and distinction scores. However, failing students had very poor knowledge in certain areas and performed poorly in specific assessments, in particular integrated reasoning and data analysis (Paper 2). However, it was clear that there have been significant improvements in the students' overall performance over the last few years.

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

We feel that over the last few years there has been a quantitative improvement in the overall student performance. In particular, the divergent performances in Paper 1 and Paper 2 seem to be less marked than in previous years.

**Professor R.F**

Agreed. This improvement has been pleasing to see and the teaching staff should be congratulated for their efforts in this regard

## Assessment Procedures

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

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

The assessment methods are considered appropriate.

Professor R.F

Agreed

### 3.2 Extent to which assessment procedures are rigorous

This is a very rigorous and transparent process. As external examiners we were given all of the material from the examination and had all our questions answered in a comprehensive fashion.

Professor R.F

Agreed

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

Consistent.

Professor R.F

Agreed

### 3.4 Standard of marking

The overall standard of marking was excellent. The process has several quality assurance steps, which work very well (markers meetings, sample marking and repeat marking where needed). Where an issue with the marking was identified this was dealt with in a timely and efficient manner (prior to involvement of the external examiners). The standard of the model answers continues to be excellent and this allows consistency and facilitates our job as external examiners.

Internal markers have done an excellent job of annotating the scripts and are to be applauded, thank you. It is extremely helpful to have these comments and other feedback on the scripts to allow us to see how the grading scheme has been applied and the marks awarded. On a slightly less positive note, on occasion it was hard to read some of the internal examiners' hand writing.

Professor R.F

Agreed

### 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)

We believe that the whole process is sound and fair.

Professor R.F

Agreed

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

As last year, staff had reviewed the statistics for the MCQ and EMQ papers prior to the congregation of the external examiners. They had identified poorly performing questions, investigated and made appropriate recommendations for the external examiners. This was, again, excellent and very helpful. We were thus able to 'sign off' this part of the examination in an extremely timely fashion, allowing more time to be spent on assessing the rest of the examination. Thank you.

**Professor R.F**

Agreed

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

Additional comments regarding specific questions are provided in the next section.

**Professor R.F**

Agreed

**Mr L.V**

The sentence starting at line 5 is cut and not completed. The rest is fine. Thank you



**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:**

Largely.  
Still unclear what is happening with the 'Data Analysis' question.

**College Response:** 'Data Analysis' question has been repurposed and aligned with the PMVPH teaching element in Years 3&4.

**4.2 An acceptable response has been made****Yes****Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:****Professor R.F**

Agreed

**4.3 I approved the papers for the Examination****Yes****Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:****Professor R.F**

Agreed

**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:****Professor R.F**

Agreed

**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 support to carry out my role**

**Yes**

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

**Professor R.F**

Yes, but as has been the case in the previous four years, the Wi-fi connection failed to work; ensuring this works in future years would be a significant help to the external examiners

**College Response:** Apologies you had a poor experience with the Wi-Fi again. This has been raised with IT.

**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:**

**Professor R.F**

Agreed

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

**Yes**

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

**Professor R.F**

Agreed

**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:**

No.

**Professor R.F**

No suggestions to make

**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)**

We have the following specific comments regarding the individual parts of the examination;

\*\*\*comments were redacted before shared with others; Year Leader has considered these comments.\*\*\*

**College Response:** We thank you for your comments.

**A note for future writing of the reports: As these reports are published on our website, specific comments about individual questions need to be fed back separately and not via this report unless we redact these which would be undesirable.**

