

ANNUAL QUALITY IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2019/20

Appendix 3: External Examiners' report

Accelerated BVetMed

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, 01707666938.

Appendix 3 consists of:

a.	Updates to actions from previous years' reports – There were <i>no actions from the last year's report!</i>
b.	2019/20 Collaborative Annual Report with responses from Course Director/Year Leader

Collaborative Report

Exam board meeting: 01-Jul-2020

Accelerated Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine, 2019/20

Lead examiner: Dr Emanuele Ricci

Collaborating examiner(s): Dr Catrin Rutland

The Programme

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

1.1 Course content

the requirement for the internationally recognized programme are satisfied by the depth and organization of the programme, engaged by the specific cohort of entrant students with more studying autonomy than traditional higher education courses.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

All RVC courses adhere to internal quality assurance processes.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

They are clearly stated throughout the course and the assessment is clearly aligned with the learning objectives of the course.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

provision of Learning Objectives constitutes an integral part of teaching, learning as well as assessment. They benchmark the assessment given to the students.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

1.3 Teaching methods

Despite the unprecedented circumstances presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and the sudden shift into an on-line only teaching model, the teaching staff reacted promptly ensuring continuity and consistency of teaching delivery, with addition of sessions for consolidation and formative assessment.

Students were assisted during this sudden period of transition, with continuous updates from the teaching staff, numerous methods to increase active learning and engagement. International students in different time zones had the opportunity of dedicated teaching sessions.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The shift to online learning was a significant even and a challenging one. The staff involved in the course delivery together with administrative support acted quickly to adjust to online teaching and were able to deliver credible teaching and support to students.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

Synchronous and asynchronous teaching methods are admixed to respond to the obligation to deliver teaching and assessment in a socially distant manner. the online format of the final year examination was appropriate and worked correctly.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The end of year exam was undertaken online for the GAB course. Synchronous and asynchronous teaching methods were applied in the the summer term and helped the students to complete the requirements of the course and sit exams.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

1.5 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the Programme

Despite the unplanned derangement of the teaching schedule due to COVID19, standard of teaching and assessment remained unchanged

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The RVC staff, both teaching and in administration worked cooperatively to provide learning and support to the students and created an environment close to a normal term time experience wherever possible.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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 per test and per overall assessment method showed a reasonable variation in marks with a success rate comparable to previous years and other national Vet schools.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The grades obtained by students were comparable to the previous years indicating that overall teaching and learning were optimized to promote student achievement.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

No specific portions of the assignments showed a poorer performance and high achieving students performed equally well in all parts. Discrimination between good and poor performances was obtained and visible.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The performance was a true reflection of individual student abilities.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

3.1 Assessment methods (relevance to learning objectives and curriculum)

This year, all forms of in-person assessments have been replaced by on-line ones. An allocated 24h time slot was available for virtually "sitting" the final year examination, in consideration of the differences in local times for international students. The over-reliance on MCQ and short answers, since omission of ISF orals (COVID19), was nicely coupled with a very praiseworthy and consistent feedback for each of the questions marked.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

No student was disadvantaged because of time difference and mitigations were put in place for any unforeseen issues such as internet downtime.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

3.2 Extent to which assessment procedures are rigorous

Despite the change in modality of assessment, criteria for marking were as rigorous as usual, as much as transparent.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The assessment was thorough and rigorous. The provision of feedback for each question helped the student to understand any deficiencies they may have had in their answers.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

excellent

3.4 Standard of marking

Despite the new teaching and assessment methods, standards of marking remained transparent and clear as usual. The new virtual marking environment did not allow annotation directly on the students' answers, making acknowledgement of the correct answer less straightforward. Model answers, final score and feedback for each individual answer was anyway available just below the students' answer.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The marking was done against a background of the model answer and with all question parts clearly indicating the highest possible marks.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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)

Exam administration office was particularly prompt, efficient and professional, also in regard to the assistance for the external examiners. RVC administration, subject and module leaders were all very helpful and engaged in discussion.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

Lauren Christian did an excellent job in communication, coordinating the assessment teams and collating all the final grades.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

The dramatic changes on the examination format occurred, but followed health issues concerns dictated by the Government, with temporary and complete replacement of face-to-face examination (ISF orals) with on-line only formats. Both MCQ and short answer questions remained as tools for assessment. both technically and academically, this new format was dealt effectively by members of staff.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

Both MCQ and short answer integrative PSQ exams were provided. While there was no significant change in the format of MCQ assessment in previous years except that it was online, the integrative PSQ was adjusted to the online conditions but tested the students to the same level as 'in person' exam.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

3.7 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the procedures

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:

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:

Both senior tutees and SPD teams officers will engage in discussion with students who performed poorly at the end of the cycle of assessment during summer 2020, supporting them in planning and progression along the oncoming academic year.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

This is being actioned and will be followed through for all students who performed poorly.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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:

RCV exam office provided professional and helpful support.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

Laura Christian and colleagues at the RVC exams office did a sterling job.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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:

External examiners were both positively impressed by the smooth adaptation to the new teaching and assessment systems, in particular the ongoing consolidation sessions added at the end of each teaching week, the extensive feedback to most, if not all, of the essay questions and the staggered teaching sessions to accommodate the large number of international students in different time zones.

Students have been encouraged to remain active in the learning process, attending classes and examinations.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

This was an entirely new experience but the staff effectively and efficiently rose to the challenge.

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)

None

