

Collaborative Report

Exam board meeting: 14-Dec-2023

Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine, Year 4, 2023/24

Lead examiner: Dr Emma Fishbourne

Collaborating examiner(s): Dr Veronica Roberts, Dr Gudrun Schoeffmann, Dr Barbara Skelly

The Programme

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

1.1 Course content

Ensure sufficient coverage of large animal material in balance with other species in the 4th year. The 2023 4th year assessment was small animal biased which we were told reflected their teaching in the 4th year.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dan Chan

Course Director Response:

Thank you for the observation. The composition of the exam is blueprinted to contact hours of teaching. The percentages of questions match the material taught, so the bias in questions from small animals reflects the significant composition of small animals in the Strands covered in the exam. In the new curriculum, all of the teaching in Year 4 will be on Population Medicine and Veterinary Public Health and therefore the content and exams will almost be exclusively large animal.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

The LOs were considered appropriate and well met by the assessment, essay questions focused on clinical reasoning.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dan Chan

Course Director Response:

Thank you - we designed questions to reflect the intended learning objectives

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

1.3 Teaching methods

A mixture of teaching methods used which is comparable with other vet schools

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dan Chan

Course Director Response:

Thank you - that is reassuring to hear

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

Learning material clearly signposted on Learn

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dan Chan

Course Director Response:

Thank you

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

1.5 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the Programme

See comments above re large animal component.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dan Chan

Course Director Response:

Thank you - we believe we addressed this comment earlier in the report

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

Comparable knowledge to other cohorts at other institutes, from the mixture of scores clear that information had been taught but there was a lack of understanding from some students particularly around farm animal with students generally performing poorly in the farm animal long answer questions. The externals agreed with the examiners general comments on the questions.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dan Chan

Course Director Response:

Thank you. We hope that the restructure of our curriculum being introduced to Year 4 next year will better focus students and improve their engagement with large animal topics. All of the teaching in Year 4 (3 weeks) will be solely in Population Medicine and Veterinary Public Health

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

See above

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dan Chan

Course Director Response:

Thank you. We believe we have addressed this comment earlier in the report

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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)

Good mix of different types of questions but it would be good to have a better balance of small and large animal.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dan Chan

Course Director Response:

Thank you. As mentioned, the questions are blue-printed to the content taught in the course. This will change with the introduction of the new curriculum as all of Year 4 taught content will shift to Population Medicine and Veterinary Public Health

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

3.2 Extent to which assessment procedures are rigorous

Large cohort and the externals would like to commend the staff on establishing marking teams with good discussion between members to ensure a consistent approach. Good level of feedback provided for students. We are again impressed by the rigorous, transparent and professional approach of the College. As external examiners we were given timely access to all the material in a comprehensive fashion.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dan Chan

Course Director Response:

Thank you - we are gratified by the feedback

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

It is consistent.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dan Chan

Course Director Response:

Thank you - that is reassuring to hear your view of this

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

3.4 Standard of marking

Consistent marking between groups of markers. Clear marking scheme provided. Externals suggest that this marking scheme is used for each part of a question and a final score then calculated to aid marking and reviewing.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dan Chan

Course Director Response:

Thank you. The approved marking scheme is a global score for Problem-Solving questions involving cases - rather than compartmentalised to parts of a question. As competencies in veterinary medicine are holistic in the sense that assessing clinical problems, diagnosis, treatment and communication, we believe that a global score in addressing clinical cases is more appropriate than scoring sections of a case and simply mathematically adding points - we are aiming to assess their performance holistically. We are bound to use the institutionally approved marking scheme which is communicated to students.

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)

Very robust procedures, very clear instructions for meetings with lots of opportunity to raise questions before the exam board meeting and meet with other externals.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dan Chan

Course Director Response:

Thank you

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

Improved feedback from markers and the MCQs better written.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dan Chan

Course Director Response:

Thank you - it is very reassuring to hear that our efforts to improve the exam are noticeable.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

3.7 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the procedures

It would be useful to define key points for a fail to aid marking and reviewing and to ensure that equivocal instructions are not given elsewhere in the model answer.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dan Chan

Course Director Response:

Thank you for your comments and we would normally feed this back to internal examiner composing future exams, however, the Year 4 assessment will changing to all MCQs so this format of examination (Problem-solving essay-type questions) will not form part of the Year 4 exam

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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:

Feedback form could be considered again.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dan Chan

Course Director Response:

Thank you. We welcome feedback on our exams and processes.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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:

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:

Might be useful in the training to highlight the different marking methodology used.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dan Chan

Course Director Response:

Thank you - we will feed this back to the Exams Office to cover in External Examiner induction

Action Required:

Feedback to Exams Office that External Examiner Induction should include clarifying marking methodology employed in our exams

Action Deadline:

24-Jan-2025

Action assigned to:

Dan Chan

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:

We thank the RVC examiner team for the great work during the preparation and correction of the exam. We would like to suggest the creation of a feedback form to be used by each marker to make the comments consistent, of the same high quality and potentially reducing of the workload of the most conscientious examiner and to consider using the marking rubric for each part of the long answer questions to aid marking and reviewing.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dan Chan

Course Director Response:

Thank you for the suggestion. As the type of examination for the Year 4 will no longer include problem-solving essay-type questions, and moving to MCQ only - this type of feedback form on each marker question will not be required

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)

We are very grateful to the individual members of the RVC team for organising access to all of the required material, providing online training and the further details of the exam process. This has made the review process very efficient, professional and pleasant.
Thank you.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr Dan Chan

Course Director Response:

Thank you

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to: