

Individual Report

PM/06/25

Exam board meeting: 10-Jun-2024

Pg Dip in Veterinary Clinical Practice , 2023/24

Dr Mike Cathcart

The Programme

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

1.1 Course content

Not directly applicable, as not a taught programme, however the structure of the programme is well aligned to developing candidates within their clinical speciality and provides the material and support needed to be able to complete the assessments and meet the requirements of the programme.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Stefano Cortellini

Course Director Response:

Thank you for these comments, we are glad that the course seems well aligned with our students learning objectives and professional expectations.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

Learning objectives are appropriate and the objectives of the programme are clear and achievable by all candidates. The outcomes of the assessments, particularly the workplace based learning, allow the candidates to meet the objectives

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Stefano Cortellini

Course Director Response:

Thank you for the comments; we are glad the assessments are well aligned to the objectives as we are trying actively to make sure these assessments can act both as a learning opportunity and as an evaluation checkpoint. This is one of the reasons we have increased numbers of WPBA required and have accepted 'not yet competent' submissions to encourage students to push themselves and learn from procedures they might not feel confident been assessed on.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

1.3 Teaching methods

N/A

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Stefano Cortellini

Course Director Response:

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Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

No concerns here - candidates clearly have access to all the resources they need to be able to write the clinical case reports, and access to clinical cases and supervision of these cases by appropriate staff enable the workplace based learning to be completed in an authentic and relevant setting

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Stefano Cortellini

Course Director Response:

Thank you for your comments. It is reassuring to hear that the students learning is supported by appropriate resources and information throughout their different assessments.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

1.5 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the Programme

None

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 candidates in the programme can only really be evaluated, from an EE perspective, via the case reports, which is only a component of their general performance in a clinical setting. Candidate performance within the workplace is the most important part of a programme like this, which can only be evaluated by the clinical supervisors. The feedback and commentary on the workplace based assessments does indicate a high calibre of candidate within the programme.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Stefano Cortellini

Course Director Response:

Thank you for the comments, it is really appreciated that feedback for WPBA and case reports seem to be at a high level. We agree that unfortunately there are not many ways in which we can show performance of the students within the workplace retrospectively.

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

The case reports do differentiate between good candidates, who perform consistently well in these area of scientific writing and clinical case research, with weaker candidates not evidencing the same ability to apply knowledge and evidence-based practice into their write-ups.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Stefano Cortellini

Course Director Response:

Thank you; we are glad that case reports seem to be able to identify specific skills level, such as scientific writing, case research and evidence based practice.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

Candidates seem to develop case writing skills as they progress through the 4 modules, and use the feedback effectively to improve. There is a very broad range in capacity for reflective writing, and the feedback is rarely focussed on this, so I didn't see as much longitudinal improvement in the reflective writing, when it was present.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Stefano Cortellini

Course Director Response:

Thank you for your comments. We have emailed the case report assessors on reflective writing on 18.09.2024 prior to case reports marking this year, highlighting the reflective component. We can email again highlighting further this aspect with some examples from case reports feedback.

Action Required:

Email all assigned PGDipVCP markers highlighting the need for commenting on the reflective component to optimise learning on reflective writing and standardise grading across modules/pathways

Action Deadline:

30-Sep-2025

Action assigned to:

Stefano Cortellini (PGDipVCP course director)

Assessment Procedures

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

3.1 Assessment methods (relevance to learning objectives and curriculum)

Methods of assessment remain unchanged, appropriate to the nature of a post graduate clinical training programme which develops students within their chosen areas of practice. The transferable nature of the case report format, and the different forms of WBA allow a standardised approach to assessment across the different disciplines.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Stefano Cortellini

Course Director Response:

Thank you for the comments, these WPBA seem to work well within the PGDip VCP structure and aims.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

3.2 Extent to which assessment procedures are rigorous

Marking, grading, provision of feedback and moderation are all rigorous with all processes meticulously adhered to

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Stefano Cortellini

Course Director Response:

Thank you for the comments

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

Level and nature of assessment is consistent for Level 7 studies

3.4 Standard of marking

Standard of marking remains high, with rigorous second marking processes for all case reports which provides robust grading processes and increase amount of feedback given. The redundancy at the top end of the grading rubric remains, with very few case reports ever being graded above 75%.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Stefano Cortellini

Course Director Response:

Thank you for raising this issue. We appreciate your view on grading processes and agree that there is redundancy at the top end of the grading scheme, with a variability between pathways and modules. We can further email markers to remind and promote full use of grading points on the rubric as this grading reflects tendency across other courses throughout the College.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

30-Sep-2025

Action assigned to:

Course Director (PGDip VCP)

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)

Yes

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

The programme team have adapted the marking rubric to enable examiners to account for the quality of reflective practice within the case reports, which is a declared objective of that assessment. This is a positive change, as it allows students who are authentically reflecting on their experience to be graded higher and those who do not do this to be graded lower. There is still, however, some variance in application of this rubric between the assessors

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Stefano Cortellini

Course Director Response:

Thank you for sharing your opinions and highlighting points of improvement. We agree there is some variance in application of this rubric and feedback provided, especially for the reflective component. We would aim at re-emailing all assessors with some specific examples of reflective feedback so that assessors can identify this as an area of required improvement.

Action Required:

Email all assessors to provide some examples of feedback and once again remind how the reflective component evaluation should be applied to these case reports. We hope that providing these examples might help with standardising application of this rubric but would be open to other suggestions if there were any.

Action Deadline:

30-Sep-2025

Action assigned to:

Course Director PGDip VCP

3.7 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the procedures

No further comments

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 on the inclusion of grading criteria relevant to reflective writing have been included in the rubric for the case reports

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

N/A

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:

I had full access to all submissions and was able to take my own sample of the work. The system used is very good and enables thorough review by the external examiner

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:

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:

EE page within RVC Learn is very helpful and easy to navigate

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:**

No further comments

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)

With due recognition that this report has been submitted beyond the expected time frame, I would not anticipate any material changes to have been made following this report.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Stefano Cortellini**Course Director Response:**

Thank you for all your help with this review and for your expertise. We appreciate there are areas that need improvement, and will try to emphasise these (e.g reflective feedback/ standardisation across the pathways/ distinction award) to find some solutions.

Action Required:**Action Deadline:****Action assigned to:**