
RVC Teaching Quality Committee – AGENDA ITEM

Executive Summary & Report: Cert AVP External Examiners report 20/21

Prepared by: *Jill Maddison***Presented by:** *n/a*

To be considered at Teaching Quality Committee meeting on: 18th May 2021

Action: *to consider/to approve*

Approval obtained from other committees/or pending: *n/a***Reserved item:** *No*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TQC is asked to consider and approve responses to External Examiner report in the absence of Annual Quality Improvement Group meeting since the course is undergoing a periodic review in 2021.

Documents included: Individual Report for Modules A& B 2020/21 by Anna Judson, Cert AVP External Examiner.

Individual Report

Exam board meeting: 09-Feb-2021

RCVS Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice, 2020/21

Mrs Anna Judson

The Programme

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

1.1 Course content

The curriculum is set by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons for the A and B modules

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

These are set out in the module descriptors for the RCVS CertAVP and in the RVC published module outlines. The objectives are clear, comprehensive and relevant to general veterinary practice. In 2019 the A-FAVP the module was reviewed and redesigned to make it more attractive to candidates, improve the student learning experience and outcomes and better prepare candidates for future modules.

The new A-FAVP course with its provision of additional verbal feedback on the first essay submission and an assigned tutor, is working well. The results are good, with only two first essay fails from 64 submissions. There has been evidence in the past that some candidates, despite the availability of support and resources, were not understanding the principles of reflective writing. This new module is helping to address that. Feedback from tutors is that they like the new format and the ability to work with and support the development of candidates over time. The new essay format allows a greater flexibility to include new topics and ideas; essential in a fast changing world.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison

Course Director Response:

Thank you for your positive overview of the new format A module. We are pleased with how it is being received by both students and tutors.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

1.3 Teaching methods

The modules are assessment only. Candidates have access to online learning through the RVC portal Learn which includes a recorded induction day, webinars, course online forums, regularly updated reference material and resource links. In addition there is a monthly newsletter, detailed formative feedback on written work, one to one verbal reviews and an assigned tutor throughout the A-FAVP module.

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

See 1.3 These are continually being reviewed and updated as the need becomes apparent. With all learning material, feedback and tutorials being online or by phone, continuity of student support has been maintained as well as student numbers despite Covid's appearance. The introduction of both written and verbal feedback on all first essay submissions has been very well received.

1.5 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the Programme

It is a pleasure to see how candidates and tutors have positively engaged with the new A-FAVP module and to see the accompanying high essay success rates. Everyone involved in the hard work bringing it to fruition deserves to be congratulated.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison**Course Director Response:**

Thank you for these very positive comments and we will ensure that they are conveyed to the A module tutors.

Action Required:

Email to all new A module tutors conveying the congratulations from the external examiner

Action Deadline:

01-Apr-2021

Action assigned to:

Joanne Jarvis

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

I have no data for student performance on comparable courses in other institutions

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

There is a range of candidate skill and knowledge with essay grades ranging from 42% to 90%. A grade average of 68% from sixteen module passes is to be commended. The data from just over a year of the new A-FAVP shows success in improving the marks of the lower range candidates with few first essay fails. Ongoing monitoring will be required to ensure that this is maintained, however these initial results show that the change in module format was a good strategic decision.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison

Course Director Response:

Thank you. We will definitely continue to monitor student progress in the module but also in future modules as they progress through the course. It will take some time to gather meaningful data but it will be interesting to see if there is an improvement in the perception of the value of Module A to their B and C module work.

Action Required:

Monitor student progress on A-FAVP module and perception of value of the module to other modules.

Action Deadline:

It will take several years to gather meaningful data. To report in the AQIR module relevance scores from the annual candidate feedback survey and candidate progress data.

Action assigned to:

Joanne Jarvis

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

As reflective thinking and writing becomes increasingly embedded in university courses and the wider veterinary profession, the difficulties that some candidates have shown in the past in producing the quality of work needed to pass the A-FAVP may be fewer. For those that do struggle, the new A-FAVP course has the tools to support candidate reflective thinking development and all the positive impact this could have on their future work.

Assessment Procedures

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

3.1 Assessment methods (relevance to learning objectives and curriculum)

Assessment methods are appropriate and assessment is fair at all levels. Detailed high quality feedback is given with every essay submitted to enable candidates to progress their learning. Ongoing training for assessors to ensure optimal feedback methods is provided. All feedback is given within a timely manner of essay submission and past inconsistencies in feedback quality has been ironed out.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison

Course Director Response:

Thank you. It is pleasing that the quality and consistency of feedback provided continues to improve.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

3.2 Extent to which assessment procedures are rigorous

Assessment procedures are rigorous.

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

Assessment is consistent with the framework for postgraduate level 7.

3.4 Standard of marking

Good and consistent with the common grading descriptors.

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. Candidates are considered fairly and administration is conducted efficiently with adequate data to inform discussion at exam board level. The Cert AVP team and assessors have responded sensitively to individual candidate needs regarding appeals and re-submissions. This is a consistent finding over the years I have been External Examiner.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison

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**

Some students in the past were not accessing, understanding or utilising feedback despite it being a valuable resource provided for their benefit. The new A-FAVP format ensures that all students have to engage with the written and verbal feedback following a draft essay submission and the new module candidate results to date are good.

3.7 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the procedures

Since becoming External Examiner I have observed the development of and maturation of the assessment system. Detailed, consistent feedback is provided in an appropriate time span and is increasingly accepted and valued by candidates. The tutor system in the new A-FAVP allows follow through by one assessor over the entire course period. Ongoing monitoring is needed but the benefits are already reflected in good essay marks with feedback indicating all parties appreciate the benefits.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison

Course Director Response:

Thank you. We will certainly continue to monitor the quality and consistency of feedback.

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:****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:**

As I near the end of my term as External Examiner I wish to note that I have very much enjoyed reading candidate essays. The level of research and thought put into these is evident and has delivered some fascinating reading. The essay feedback is valuable to students and this is reflected in the quality of their subsequent essays. The contribution the A-FAVP is making to the critical thinking of future CertAVP holders is evident and significant. The personal growth shown by many candidates is frequently remarked upon in their final essays. It is not an easy course, and it has competition from other providers, yet I very much hope that the RVC Cert AVP A-FAVP course is maintained. It needs and deserves to be.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison**Course Director Response:**

Thank you for your very positive comments and endorsement of the educational approach the RVC has taken to the CertAVP. We recognise that the RVC format does not suit everyone but believe that those who do engage with the process as mature learners benefit considerably from the programme which supports critical reflection, self-directed learning to support individual learning needs as well as a growth mindset in relation to accepting and utilising the high quality feedback provided.

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

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:

4.7 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:

I commend the CertAVP team for always being on hand to supply me with information that I have needed.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison

Course Director Response:

Thank you

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:

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)

Last year I wrote:

The recent introduction of the new A-FAVP module is an important development for the RVC. The key element of reflective learning has been retained, whilst allowing for greater flexibility with essay titles to ensure that candidates can learn with reference to their particular fields of work. Greater support for candidates at the start of the module is now in place with the new tutor system and compulsory initial feedback. Monitoring outcomes and candidate satisfaction and comparing this to the old module will be important and I shall look forward to this with considerable interest. Many candidates in their reflective essays comment on how their reflective and critical thinking processes have developed as a result of taking the A module. I congratulate the Cert AVP team for their hard work in developing these skills in the next generation of Advanced Practitioners.

Having seen the results and heard the feedback and comments from the CertAVP team and candidates the new module is achieving those aims. Pertinent additional topics have been added to the essay options and candidate results and feedback to date are good. An excellent result for the RVC Cert AVP team.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison

Course Director Response:

Thank you so much

Action Required:

External examiner feedback to be communicated to A module tutors

Action Deadline:

01-Apr-2021

Action assigned to:

Joanne Jarvis

