Collaborative Report

Accelerated Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine, Year 1, 2013/14

Professor Tony Flint

The Programme

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

1.1 Course content

The course content was appropriate and comprehensive. We neither identified any glaring omissions, nor did there seem to be any areas covered in unnecessary depth.

Response from college requested: NO

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

The learning objectives were wholly appropriate, and it was clear from the scripts we looked at, that the objectives had generally been met.

Response from college requested: NO

1.3 Teaching methods

The teaching methods were clearly appropriate to the course content. In particular the range of teaching methodologies applied continued to impress.

Response from college requested: NO

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

The resources are excellent.

Response from college requested: NO

1.5 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the Programme

The overall quality of the Programme is first class. It is clear that the graduate entry students at the College are among the best in the UK. There were no particular or consistent weaknesses. We have no recommendations for changes to the curriculum, syllabuses or teaching methods.

Response from college requested: NO

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 standard was comparable to that of other institutions we are aware of. The fact that only one student failed this year, reflects the high standard reached.

Response from college requested: NO

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

There was an appropriate range of abilities among the students, although did differ between the assessment methodologies (see para 2.3 below).

Response from college requested: NO

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

There was some concern for the ability the students showed in essay writing, which appeared to be poor. This was evident in the low marks generally obtained in Paper 3. Is it that the students find it hard to collate information from a variety of sources? Is the marking too harsh? Some consideration needs to be given to this, in light of the excellent performances in other assessments.

Response from college requested: YES

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Stephen Frean

Course Director Response:

The average marks for each component of the examination were as follows: In-Course Assessment 71.6%; MCQ 66%; Problem-Solving 64.8% (10-point marking scheme); Essay 54.5% (17-point marking scheme); Oral 61%; Spot Test 78.4%. In respect of the written papers (Problem-Solving and Essay), the average marks for ALL questions were, respectively, 63% (10-point marking scheme) and 54% (10-point marking scheme). The average mark range of the problem-solving questions was between 54.2% and 79%; the average mark range of 9 essay questions was between 53.6% and 65% while the remaining 3 essay questions had average marks of 30.1% (Bacteriology), 46.4% (Nervous System) and 47.2% (Parasitology).

We are comfortable with some parts of our assessment being innately (by virtue of their format and content) more challenging than others (e.g., Essay vs Spot Test). That said, of the total time used in the setting and compilation of the essay paper, a large amount was used on editing / re-writing the three questions that yielded the lowest average marks - it is most likely the case that it was a struggle to edit these questions to conform to the general style and demands of our essay paper and it may be that we should pay (even) more attention to this in the future.

We feel that we do give our students sufficient formative experience (and subsequent associated feedback) of essay writing under simulated examination conditions - there are 2 formative simulated exams, each composed of MCQs, Problem-Solving Questions, and Essay Questions.

We will be reviewing the value of all components of the examination including essays.

Action Required:

Will make the analysis and observations above known to question contributors / editors in the paper setting process for 2014-15

Action Deadline:

31-Mar-2015

Action assigned to:

S Frean

Assessment Process

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

3.1 Assessment methods (relevance to learning objectives and curriculum)

The assessment methods were appropriate to the subject matter, and to the learning objectives. The exam questions were carefully selected to reflect the syllabus.

Response from college requested: NO

3.2 Extent to which assessment processes are rigorous

The exams were rigorous, both in terms of the breadth of questions asked and in the marking. The use of second marking was appropriate. The model answers given at the time of compilation of the papers were more than adequately detailed and showed an admiral depth of engagement with the examination process on the part of the staff.

Response from college requested: NO

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

The amount and timing of assessment, and the different forms of assessment used were consistent with the guidelines included in FHEQ documentation, given that the training leads to professional qualifications.

Response from college requested: NO

3.4 Standard of marking

The standard of marking was excellent, with great care being applied. The standard was comparable to that at other institutions.

Response from college requested: NO

3.5 Opinion on changes to the assessment process from previous years in which you have examined

There were no major innovations this year. The change introduced last year in which the external examiners did not themselves question the students during the oral exams, but instead observed the questioning carried out by the staff, appears to have worked well.

Response from college requested: NO

3.6 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the assessment process

Response from college requested: NO

Assessment Procedures

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

4.1 In your view, are the processes for assessment and the determination of awards sound and fairly conducted?

Entirely sound and fair. The Board meeting was conducted with care and attention to detail in terms of the determination of awards.

Response from college requested: NO

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

As indicated above, the major change introduced in 2013 (external examiners not taking a direct part in oral exams) was on balance an improvement.

Response from college requested: NO

4.3 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the procedures

Response from college requested: NO

General Statements

5.1 Comments I have made in previous years have been addressed to my satisfaction

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

5.2 An acceptable response has been made

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

5.3 I approved the papers for the Examination

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

5.4 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:

Response from college requested: NO

5.5 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:

One of us attended the oral exams, one attended the board.

Response from college requested: NO

5.6 Candidates were considered impartially and fairly

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

5.7 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:

Response from college requested: NO

5.8 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:

Response from college requested: NO

5.9 I have received enough support to carry out my role

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

5.10 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:

Response from college requested: NO

5.11 Appropriate procedures and processes have been followed

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

5.12 The processes for assessment and the determination of awards are sound

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: 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:

Do you have any suggestions for improvements based on experience at other institutes? We may use information provided in our annual external examining report:

Response from college requested: **NO**

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)

The College would like to thank the External Examiner, Tony Flint for his contributions over the last few years.

Response from college requested: **NO**