

ANNUAL QUALITY IMPROVEMENT REPORT 2018/19

Appendix 3: External Examiners' report

Accelerated BVetMed (Graduate Year)

This appendix contains Year Leader's responses to 2018/19 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
b.	2018/19 Collaborative Annual Report with responses from Course Director/Year Leader

a. Updates to actions from previous years' reports

Report Question	External Examiners' comments & suggested actions	Course Director/Year Leader's response & Action	Update in 2018/19
<p>3.4 Standard of marking</p>	<p>Comments written on scripts by Examiners are not always in line with the College policy on annotation of scripts. This may be to avoid influencing second (or sample) markers. However, the benefit of clear annotations may outweigh the disadvantages</p>	<p>Action Required: All internal examiners to be requested to provide a succinct rubric of marking for every supplied examination question. Action Deadline: 01-Apr-2019 Action assigned to: Course Leader- Raymond Macharia</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p>
<p>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)</p>	<p>Common grading scales are used generally although one question was discovered to have been marked using a different scale with no context regarding why this was done</p>	<p>The exams office to remind all examiners to use the relevant exam grading schemes during the exam grading process. Action Deadline: 01-Apr-2019 Action assigned to: Exams office- John Sanger</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p>
<p>3.7 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the procedures</p>	<p>Model answers are a guideline for the examiners and form part of the formulation of the exam questions. From time to time it can be helpful (or even necessary) to refine or modify a model answer. It may be useful to invite Internal Examiners to test their model answer by sampling and checking against the key. This can be particularly valuable when more than one individual is marking.</p> <p>A simple checklist for Internal Examiners might record 1) changes (if any) to model answers, 2) departures from the Common Grading Scale and 3) alignment with the Policy on annotation of scripts</p>	<p>The suggestions above will be taken into consideration during the setting of exams for the academic year 2018/19. As mentioned earlier, internal examiners will be requested (as in the past) to provide a succinct model answer(s) to all the questions supplied. Further to external examiners review and moderation, model answers will be counterchecked to confirm alignment with the key. Action Required: The exams office to include this item on the paper setting agenda. Action Deadline: 01-Apr-2017 Action assigned to: John Sanger- Exams office</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p>

b. Collaborative Report

Exam board meeting: 09-Jul-2019

Accelerated Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine, 2018/19

Lead examiner: Dr Emanuele Ricci

Collaborating examiner(s): Professor Alan Baird

The Programme

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

1.1 Course content

The Course content is deemed appropriate in breadth and detail for this internationally accredited programme. Graduate are requested a higher degree of learning autonomy when compared to "traditional" entrants.

Response from college requested: **NO**

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

Graduate students by virtue of being a holders of a first degree in science are deemed competent in taking ownership of their learning. The course however, provides a lot of signposting and specific guidance on the course.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

They are available and published. Each of questions clearly covers the learning objectives as expected.

Response from college requested: **NO**

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The RVC blueprinting policy requires that the learning objectives be clearly stated in all the lecture or learning materials. Moreover, the questions used during exams are mapped on specific learning objectives.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

1.3 Teaching methods

The teaching methods employed are complete, varied and appropriate to facilitate and allow the best and most productive learning experience from the cohort of students examined.

Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

Agreed: The variety of learning opportunities support the overall student achievement.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

Resources are considered appropriate, in order for the students to achieve successful outcome at their examination.

Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

RVC's blended learning provides for pre or post-scheduled learning include , e-library, Learn portal with Echo-recorded lectures and podcasts, well equipped anatomy museum and live animal learning opportunities.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

1.5 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the Programme

No further comments.

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

Student performance is considered to be of high standards and in agreement with the expected average from comparable national Institutions.

Response from college requested: **NO**

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The external examiners are professionals from institutions similar to RVC and who are conversant with academic quality standards. It is gratifying to note their positive comment.

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

There is a degree of consistency in performance within the spectrum of assessment methods used. Students performing above average in oral exams, tend to perform equally better in both MCQs and paper essays. At the lower end, there is a similar pattern and consistency in achievement.

Response from college requested: **NO**

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The student performance display a normal distribution pattern. It is a correct observation that most of the students who do well in the orals also tend to do well in other formats of exams.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

There is a degree of variation in some students' performance, when comparing the relative outcome of either the written essay or their oral exams. While doing better on MCQs, some perform relatively poorly in the written papers.

Reiteration of the variegated set of individual skills necessary for a successful exam outcome, such as suggesting to look after their verbal communication skill as much as their written one.

Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

Communication skills training is a part of Day One Skills aimed at making the students competent practitioners. However, the display of a student's communication skills during the oral exam may come under intense pressure due to among others, the exam room atmosphere, unfamiliar new examiners and the shortness of the exam.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

Assessment Procedures

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

3.1 Assessment methods (relevance to learning objectives and curriculum)

The assessment method is deemed both thorough and detailed. Broadly speaking, assessment maps well to the learning objectives.

Choice available to the students for the paper 3 may encourage strategic learning, which will no longer be a feature of the programme once the paper 3 is removed.

Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The diet of exams in the assessment is specifically aligned and benchmarked against course's learning objectives. Paper 3 which allowed a student to demonstrate depth in a certain areas or topics is no longer part of the future assessment methods.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

3.2 Extent to which assessment procedures are rigorous

The review of the assessment by item analysis supports the view that the assessment is rigorous and meaningful. Double marking is a robust quality assurance element. Retrospective statistical analysis of student performance for both individual question and more globally is exemplary and it is proven to help both internal and external examining process.

Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

Agreed- Item analysis is a good discriminator and a proven method in validating assessment.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

Very high

Response from college requested: **NO**

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

Agreed- Thank you

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

3.4 Standard of marking

It remain transparent and fair.

Compared to the previous year, strong correspondence with the marking scheme/rubric is observed and this is deemed to improve consistency and fairness of marking between examiners and along student's exam.

Paper 3 is prone to more inconsistency in marking due to the wide and possibly less objective marking rubric.

Response from college requested: **NO**

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

RVC deeply appreciate the input from the exams office and specifically Lauren Christian for consistently reminding the examiners of their marking obligations. As explained earlier, paper 3 which is deemed to have the highest inconsistency in grading in no longer going to be a part of the exam diet.

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)

Opportunities to review assessments by externs included commentary and input at the drafting stage. Marking arrangements are clear and fit for purpose. Boards (and discussions with course leaders) were well supported.

Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The exams office has maintained a high level of correspondence with the external and internal examiners and provides timely responses to all matters raised regarding assessment.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

Marking schemes have improved. Comments to students made by examiners on scripts should be valuable for feedback.

Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The internal examiners have objectively scrutinised exam scripts and wherever possible made comments on the scripts. The comments have been particularly helpful not only for sample markers but also as a useful guidance for exam debrief for failing students.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

3.7 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the procedures

None.

Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

4.1 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

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

Every effort is made to address all matters raised by the external examiners.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

4.2 An acceptable response has been made

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The comments made by external examiners are taken seriously and addressed in a timely manner.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

4.3 I approved the papers for the Examination

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: **NO**

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The RVC greatly appreciate the constructive engagement, commitment and dedication of our external examiners.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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:

Response from college requested: **NO**

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The RVC applaud the exam office and in particular Lauren Christian, for availing the scripts and all relevant materials required by the externals.

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:

Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

4.6 Candidates were considered impartially and fairly

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The process of sample marking and the reviews and scrutiny by the external examiners is aimed at making sure that the exams are marked fairly and impartially.

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:

Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The standards are high and at the appropriate level for the awards.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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:

Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

4.9 I have received enough support to carry out my role

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The RVC aims at providing all the required support to enhance the performance of the examiners roles.

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:

Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The RVC provides all materials necessary or the ones requested by external examiners to carry out their mandate.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

4.11 Appropriate procedures and processes have been followed

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

RVC deeply appreciates this positive comment.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

4.12 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

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

Agreed

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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:

One possible addition would be considering a "paper-less" exam approach. This type of exam could either be proposed at similar time as the traditional assessments or either anticipated along the year (in course assessment). This could help some of the students to "familiarise" more with the expectations, in order to anticipate professional assessments such as NAVLE.

Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

The college is currently exploring this possibility.

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)

Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Raymond Macharia

Course Director Response:

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

