

Collaborative Report

Exam board meeting: 08-Jul-2024

Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine, Year 5, 2023/24

Lead examiner: Professor Nicholas Jonsson

Collaborating examiner(s): Professor Gayle Hallowell, Miss Carolyn Morton, Professor Alastair Macrae

The Programme

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

1.1 Course content

The external examiners did not consider the course content.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

Noted thank you.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

The external examiners did not consider the learning objectives.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

Noted thank you

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

1.3 Teaching methods

The external examiners did not address teaching methods.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

Noted thank you

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

The resources available were not considered by the external examiners.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

Noted thank you

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

1.5 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the Programme

The Programme is accredited by the RCVS and regularly reviewed by other bodies. It is considered a priori to be appropriately designed and taught, and the necessary resources available.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

Thank you for that supportive comment.

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

Student performance was as expected - consistent with previous years in this course, and consistent with levels of performance of students in the external examiners' institutions. The final year examination overall provides a very clinically oriented, rigorous and fair examination.

Professor G.H

Agree

Professor A.M

I agree with the lead examiner's comments

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

Thank you. We are very pleased to learn of your satisfaction with the assessment.

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 candidates performed well overall, particularly in small animal clinical practice, marginally worse in equine, and clearly worse in farm animal areas, although still overall quite acceptably. The relatively poorer performance in farm animal areas appears to be linked with relative lack of interest or enthusiasm among the student cohort, consistent with other universities in the UK and reflecting their likely proportional disposition post graduation. Failing students' levels of knowledge were clearly inferior to students who passed. Only a very small number of students performed very poorly.

Professor A.M

I agree with the lead examiner's comments

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

It is very reassuring to know that you felt students performed well overall. We note the comment on performance in production animal areas and it is something we are conscious of. We are aware of this trend and it seems to reflect attitudes and interest generally. There does not seem to be an obvious answer or solution for this.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

Nil.

Assessment Procedures

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

3.1 Assessment methods (relevance to learning objectives and curriculum)

The assessment methods are relevant to the learning objectives. The combination of OSCEs, research project and written exam is a broad approach to assessment that allows students to demonstrate excellence in practical as well as theoretical knowledge. The balance has not changed substantially. Over the years during and since Covid the assessment process evolved to adapt to circumstances, but have been mostly quite consistent over time. The OSCEs were considered to be more appropriate to a final year assessment compared with previous years.

Professor G.H

The OSCEs were more appropriate to a final year assessment compared with previous years.

Professor A.M

I agree with the lead examiner's comments

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

Thank you for your generally positive comments which are very helpful. We are looking at how the OSCE stations could be redesigned in future but there is no firm decision on this as yet.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

3.2 Extent to which assessment procedures are rigorous

The external examiners considered the assessment procedures to be very rigorous. Appropriate checks are in place and any problems are dealt with promptly and professionally.

Professor A.M

I agree with the lead examiner's comments

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

We are very grateful and reassured by this comment. Thank you

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

The level of assessment is consistent with all accreditation requirements. Overall, for written papers, the external examiners consider that the marking is quite stringent, but very fair.

Professor A.M

I agree with the lead examiner's comments

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

Thank you for this

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

3.4 Standard of marking

A high standard of marking is applied, with appropriate quality control. In most subject areas the feedback to students was very good, sometimes quite exceptional.

Professor A.M

I agree with the lead examiner's comments

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

We are very pleased to learn that you feel marking is of a high standard. Thank you.

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)

The procedures for assessment and determination of awards were sound and fairly conducted. All the necessary resources were made available to the external examiners.

Professor A.M

I agree with the lead examiner's comments

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

Thank you for this feedback.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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

Minor changes to procedures were introduced to address the potential challenges of AI use in an open-book examination. These included a restriction in the access to resources for students. The external examiners consider that these changes were appropriate and have been effective.

Professor A.M

I agree with the lead examiner's comments

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

The challenge of AI and online assessment continue to be a major challenge. We are pleased to know that you feel our approach was appropriate. We continue to monitor the situation and consider approaches for the future.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

3.7 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the procedures

The assessment of this course is extraordinarily resource-intensive. The staff involved should be commended for their professionalism throughout. Discussion at the meeting of examiners indicates a high level of care for student welfare together with strong determination to apply high standards throughout the programme.

Professor G.H

Agree

Professor A.M

I agree with the lead examiner's comments

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

Thank you for this. The resources are indeed a huge burden on everyone involved. We continue to look at options for how this could be improved in future iterations.

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:

Professor G.H

yes

Professor A.M

N/A as Alastair Macrae first year as examiner

4.2 An acceptable response has been made

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Professor G.H

yes

Professor A.M

N/A as Alastair Macrae first year as examiner

4.3 I approved the papers for the Examination

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Professor G.H

yes

Professor A.M

YES

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:

The online platform has been quite slow but had been improved this year.

Professor G.H

yes

Professor A.M

YES

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

Thank you for this. We are pleased to know the performance of the online platform has improved.

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:

Professor G.H

yes

Professor A.M

YES

Miss C.M

I was not able to attend the BoE meeting in June due to an extended period of illness. I did attend to all EE business prior to this including the boards relating to RP2.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

Thank you

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

4.6 Candidates were considered impartially and fairly

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Professor G.H

yes

Professor A.M

YES

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

Thank you

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:

Professor G.H

yes

Professor A.M

YES

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

Thank you

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:

Professor G.H

yes

Professor A.M

YES

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

This is very reassuring to know. Thank you.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

4.9 I have received enough training and support to carry out my role

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Professor G.H

yes

Professor A.M

YES

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

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:

Professor G.H

yes

Professor A.M

YES

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

Thank you

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:

Professor G.H

yes

Professor A.M

YES

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

Thank you for this feedback

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:

Professor G.H

yes

Professor A.M

YES

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

Thank you for this feedback

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:

No areas for improvement were identified. The examiners are encouraged to continue to ensure OSCE's are appropriate for final year vet students. Challenges for the future are similar for all HE institutions, relating to AI, plagiarism and changes to the common understanding of the roles of teachers and students.

Professor G.H

Continue to ensure OSCE's are appropriate for final year vet students

Professor A.M

Agree with Lead Examiner's comments

COURSE DIRECTOR: Mr John Fishwick

Course Director Response:

This is very reassuring. We continue to consider how best to deal with the challenges of AI and potential plagiarism.

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)