

ANNUAL QUALITY IMPROVEMENT REPORT

Questions	External Examiners comments		Update in 2017/18
<p>3.3 Consistency of the level of assessment with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ)</p>	<p>The assessment is consistent with the Framework, although with shorter pieces of written work (assignments and exams) it is difficult for students to easily demonstrate some of the higher academic skills.</p>	<p>Further to the issues identified by some internal markers and the External Examiners, associated with the new reduced word limits for the range of written assignment activities in this programme, making it more challenging for learners to demonstrate 'higher academic skills', in particular critical reflection, it has been agreed by the Grad Dip team that for the Extended Patient Care Reports (EPCRs), certain sections of the reports will be excluded from the total word count, which predominantly include the descriptive elements of the report including reference list, patient signalment, presenting history, and veterinary treatment. This will be clearly communicated to the learners via each module's assessment information pages.</p> <p>Action: Clear instructions for students to be included in every module's summative assessment pages and statements of word limits. Announcements to Intake 2016 students where this is new information and different to previous submissions.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Perdi Welsh & Module leaders)</i></p> <p>Deadline: October 2017</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Instructions for summative written assignments now provided to learners via each module's assessment information pages. Descriptive sections of the reports and essays (which predominantly include the reference list, patient signalment, presenting history, and veterinary treatment or clinical scenario) are excluded from the total word count, allowing learners to use their word count limits entirely for the critical discussion and reflective analysis sections of their written work. This is showing to be working well with students with good skills in academic writing and editing being able to demonstrate the higher academic skills required at this level of study.</p>

3.4 Standard of marking

discrepancies between
markers annotations and
comments but we appreciate

Collaborative Report

Exam board meeting: 31-Jul-2018

The course continues to be run by a dedicated and enthusiastic course leader, with the assistance of supportive tutors.

It is pleasing to see a small increase in student numbers.

**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 performance of students on this course is similar to other post registration qualifications.

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

3.1 Assessment methods (relevance to learning objectives and curriculum)

A broad method of suitable and innovative methods are used.

Response from college requested: **NO**

3.2 Extent to which assessment procedures are rigorous

As external examiners with limited involvement of the assessment of forum activity. It would be beneficial to see more rigorous marking criteria of how assessment decisions are made and marks awarded.

Response from college requested: **NO**

COURSE DIRECTOR: Ms Perdi Welsh

Course Director Response:

Thank you for raising this point. Following on from the ensuing discussion at the Exam Board regarding the use and suitability of the RVC's 10 point marking scheme for the discussion forums, it was agreed by the committee that a focussed marking scheme specifying the desired criteria for the learners' assessed discussion forum posts would be useful to augment the existing scheme. This would help learners identify what was required of their posts, help markers allocate their marks to the learners' posts and help sample and external examiners understand how the assessment decisions are made and how the marks are awarded.

Action Required:

Course Director, Educational Development and Professional Studies tutors to jointly agree and develop a marking criteria and descriptors sheet for assessed online forums to augment the RVC's 10 point marking scheme. Course Director to put forward to necessary scheme. Course Director t

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

It can be difficult for students to demonstrate the higher level academic skills of critical analysis, evaluation and self reflection on some of the pieces of work, which have shorter word counts.

Response from college requested: **NO**

COURSE DIRECTOR: Ms Perdi Welsh

Course Director Response:

As a result of reducing some word limits on assessed work to comply with the RVC's Assessment Tariff for credit rated modules, this issue became more apparent in the last couple of years. To address this issue, we introduced new guidelines for students and now exclude the descriptive elements of written assignments (such as patient signalment, history and presentation or the description of the clinical scenario) from the word count thus allowing learners to allocate their entire word count to their critical discussion section of course work. We have observed this year that learners who have higher level writing skills are able to demonstrate good levels of critical analysis and self reflection in their work. However, for those with less effective academic writing or editing skills, it remains a challenge to keep their discussion focussed sufficiently. However, the benefit of the shorter word counts does encourage learners to be more succinct and learn to develop a more focussed approach to their writing as they continue through the course.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

3.4 Standard of marking

The standard of marking is of good quality and consistent across the range of modules sampled. It would be good to see in addition to the use of marking rubric's, the inclusion of specific comments about students performance on every module, for consistency. Although we appreciate this can be more time consuming.

Response from college requested: **NO**

COURSE DIRECTOR: Ms Perdi Welsh

Course Director Response:

Thank you.

Response from college requested: **NO**

3.7 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the procedures

None

Response from college requested: **NO**

4.5 I attended the meeting of the Board of Examiners held to approve the results of the Examination

Yes

Collaborative Report

Exam board meeting: 09-Oct-2018

Graduate Diploma in Professional and Clinical Veterinary Nursing, 2017/18

Lead examiner: Mrs Susan Howarth

Collaborating examiner(s): Mr John Donaghy

The Programme

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

1.1 Course content

The course content reflects a suitable range of post-professional subject areas

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

Learning objective are linked between the teaching and assessment

1.3 Teaching methods

The course runs via distance learning, which fully meets the learners requirements. The teaching methods reflect this.

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

Nothing to note

1.5 Please provide any additional comments and recommendations regarding the Programme

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 students performance is generally comparable to similar level post-professional courses at other institutions. Although it might be worth considering the format and timing of examination. As some of the students exam performance appear a little rushed and superficial. Often they are just able to provide lists and bullet points, rather than displaying higher academic skill required at this level.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Ms Perdi Welsh

Course Director Response:

Thank you for your observation and comment. This feedback is particularly helpful at this time because we will be reviewing question formatting in line with the assessment changes associated with the RVC's new Assessment Tariff.

Action Required:

Review the number of questions used in the unseen exams to ensure they align with new exam timings and assessment tariff.

Action Deadline:

01-Mar-2019

Action assigned to:

2.3 performance

Although the students generally perform well. It would be worth reviewing what you are asking of candidates in the exam questions. Often they are asked to list and identify, which is not necessarily allowing students to demonstrate the higher level skills. If these were replaced with terms such as critically analyse etc. students may be more inclined to demonstrate higher level skills, which would help further differentiate grades. Although this would also take student more time to complete in an exam session. So exam timing would also need to be considered.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Ms Perdi Welsh

Course Director Response:

Thank you for your comments and subsequent discussion during the Exam Board. In line with the recent changes in allocated time for the exams (as a result of credit rating changes and RVC's Assessment Tariff), the Course Team will be reviewing the questions used in the exam and will keep the External Examiners' observations in mind as this review takes place, with view to ensure the new exam format and questions facilitates more opportunity for our learners to demonstrate QAA level 6 descriptors, criteria and objectives.

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

3.1 Assessment methods (relevance to learning objectives and curriculum)

A range of assessment methods are used. The EPCR assessment provide a good link to work/practice.

3.2 Extent to which assessment procedures are rigorous

It is clear that a rigorous assessment process is in place, this is easy to follow and clearly documented for each module.

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

Please see comments in pervious section in relation to student performance in the exam time slot.

3.4 Standard of marking

There is a high standard of marking across the majority of modules.

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 this fairly conducted

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

No change from the previous year

3.7 Please provide any additional comments and recom1 0 0 provide coatETQt0 0 m 5(i)-4(on)5(a

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

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

4.5 I attended the meeting of the Board of Examiners held to approve the results of the Examination

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

4.11 Appropriate procedures and processes have been followed

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Mr J.D

Yes

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:

This is a well run course with a clearly dedicated team committed to providing a high quality student experience. It may be worth looking at the exam format in order to get the best performance from students.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Ms Perdi Welsh

Course Director Response:

The Course Director and Course Team thank both External Examiners for their thorough and thoughtful review of the programme and associated assessments. Feedback comments in this report and the discussions during the Exam Board have been helpful in identifying areas of our assessment activities which could be further improved upon to help us ensure our learners are meeting QAA level 6 descriptors.

Action Required:

Action Deadline:

Action assigned to:

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