Individual Report

Exam board meeting: 15-Oct-2018

RCVS Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice, 2017/18 (C Module)

Professor Ed Hall

The Programme

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

1.1 Course content

The CertAVP comprises A, B and C Modules, and I am external Examiner for the C Modules. The College offers a wide range of C modules that can now only be undertaken after completion of the A and B modules. Three C Modules need to be completed successfully for the Certificate to be awarded.
Completion of related C modules can lead to a specified certificate in a particular discipline if a final synoptic examination is passed; the synoptic examination is not offered by the RVC. Successful completion of the synoptic examination is a necessary criterion for application of RCVS Advanced Practitioner status. However, certain specialties are not designated (e.g ophthalmology, dentistry) as there are not three relevant, related C modules. This is an organisational issue related to how the RCVS set up the CertAVP, and is not a criticism of the RVC.

Response from college requested: NO

 Response from college requested: NO

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

The learning objectives for each Module are explicit on the RVC Learn website and are available to all students. They form the basis for the feedback given by staff an are met in full by students who engage in reflective practice.

Response from college requested: NO

 Response from college requested: NO

1.3 Teaching methods

This is not a taught course: the majority of the work is self-directed study and learning, involving reading of the relevant literature and attendance at any relevant CPD.58e852el-

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 reflective nature of learning in this model differs from CertAVP courses provided by other Universities and it is impossible to make direct comparisons. However, it is clear from feedback from successful students that the RVC's teaching methods do engender reflective practice that ultimately has an impact in the workplace. Data on the success rate at the synoptic assessment by students from different programmes is not available to me.

Response from college requested: NO

 Response from college requested: NO

2.2

Please comment, as appropriate, on:

3.1   Assessment methods (relevance to learning objectives and curriculum)

The assessment process encourages students to improve through reflection, thus meeting the aims of the programme. For example, for each module, students are allowed to submit one case report for formative feedback and revise and resubmit their report. The synopsis and critical appraisal of their work allows for self-reflection on their knowledge and practice, and insight into where they have already improved or where they can improve in the future.

Extensive feedback and helpful comments were evident on the many pieces of work I reviewed, although on a few occasions comments appeared to reflect the marker's personal opinion, rather than being evidence-based. Furthermore, it was not always clear how significant some comments (particularly about spelling) were, as some were quite pedantic and were not necessarily why the work was marked down. Guidance has now been given to staff not to expect diplomate level standards of investigation and management of cases, but to reward students who recognise the limitations of first opinion practice and adequately reflect on those perceived deficiencies and how they might improve.

The RVC's Common Grading scheme was applied to marked work, and the descriptors were relevant to the stated learning outcome, ensuring consistency in marking. The requirement to pass "clinically critical" work at 50% aligns with the professional requirement for competency.

Response from college requested: Confirmation that assessors have been reminded to mark at the appropriate level, recognising the limitations of cases in first opinion practice.

 Response from college requested: NO

COURSE DIRECTOR: Dr Jill Maddison

Course Director Response:

Thank you for this insightful comment and reminder. We reminded assessors of the standard expected at the Exam board and asked module leaders who were present to convey this to their assessors. However, we will follow up with a reminder to all assessors.

Action Required:

Reminder to all assessors about the standard of work expected for the CertAP, recognition of the challenges that candidates face in first opinion practice and to reward candidates for reflections on percevied deficiencies and how they might improve

Action Deadline:

07-Jan-2019

Action assigned to:

Jill Maddison and Jo Jarvis

3.2   Extent to which assessment procedures are rigorous

The assessment procedures were rigorous, and assessed not only the students' knowledge but also how they apply that knowledge in practice and how they intend to improve.

Response from college requested: NO

 Response from college requested: NO

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

The level of assessment was consistent with Masters level as defined by the FHEQ. All candidates who passed did so at the expected level.

Response from college requested: NO

Response from college requested: NO

3.4 Standard of marking

The standard of marking was consistent with the published Common Grading Scheme, and was consistent within subjects and across different subject modules.

Response from college requested: NO

Response from college requested: NO

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 were conducted fairly and awards made by the Board of Examiners were sound. Only two candidates failed and those results were carefully scrutinised and ratified as correct
During the year I was invited to comment on cases where students had appealed following second marking and discussion amongst relevant staff in order to reach a fair outcome. I consider the fair and correct outcome was reached in each case.

Response from college requested: NO

Response from college requested: NO

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

Completion of the A and B modules before undertaking C modules is now required, and is an appropriate regulation: completion of the A and B modules enhances the students' ability to reflect on their C modules.

Response from college requested: NO

Response from college requested: NO

3.7

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

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

DIscussion on appeals happens before the Examination Board in order not

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

4.8   The standards of student performance are comparable with similar programmes or subjects in other UK institutions with which I am familiar

N/A

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

Not known

 Response from college requested: NO

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

Yes

Additional comments, particularly if your answer was no:

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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:

None

 Response from college requested: NO

5.2   External Examiner comments: For College information only (Responses to External Examiners are