

Visitation to the University of Bristol Veterinary School

29 November – 3 December 2021

Report to the Council of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS)
in accordance with Section 5 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966

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List of Visitors

Professor Liz Mossop FRCVS (Chair)

Professor Jim Anderson MRCVS

Professor Malcolm Bennett MRCVS (Australasian Veterinary Boards Council representative)

Dr David Black FRCVS

Dr Ellie Glover MRCVS (Student representative)

Dr Mandisa Greene MRCVS

Mrs Jill Nute MRCVS

Also attending

Professor Darrell Abernethy MRCVS – RCVS Observer

Mr Jordan Nicholls - RCVS Lead of Undergraduate Education

Mr Kieran Thakrar - RCVS Education Administrator

Ms Kirsty Williams - RCVS Education Quality Improvement Manager

Introduction

The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons has a statutory duty to supervise veterinary degree courses under Section 5 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966, “*for the purpose of securing that the courses of study to be followed by students training to be veterinary surgeons and the standard of proficiency required for registration in the register shall be such as sufficiently to guarantee that persons registered in the register will have acquired the knowledge and skill needed for the efficient practice of veterinary surgery*”. The Council of RCVS may appoint persons “*to visit the universities for which recognition orders...are proposed to be made...and to report on the courses of study, staffing, accommodation and equipment available for training in veterinary surgery and the other arrangements and facilities for such training.*”

For UK veterinary degrees, it is the UK's Privy Council which grants recognition to a degree enabling it to be recognised for registration purposes. Recognition is based on advice from RCVS. The visitors' report is first considered by RCVS's Primary Qualifications Sub-Committee (PQSC), then by the Education Committee which makes its recommendation to Privy Council.

The University of Bristol Veterinary School had their previous visit in 2014 where it had been awarded Full Accreditation for seven years. The visitors were present at the University from Monday 29th November to Friday 3rd December 2021. The School had prepared a Self-Evaluation Report (SER) in accordance with the RCVS standards and procedures for the accreditation of veterinary degrees which was circulated to the visitors well in advance of the visit and which formed the basis of discussions with staff during the week. The visitors met with the veterinary School staff and students, toured relevant facilities at the School, and spoke with both alumni and employers of Bristol graduates.

The visitor team would like to thank Professor Tim Parkin for the School's hospitality during the visit, as well as Tom Podesta and Stuart Pope, and their teams, for their professionalism and local arrangements. Administration, faculty, staff, partner practices and students were very accommodating throughout, and their openness was appreciated.

The findings in this report are based on the visitors' review. The visitors are not the decision-makers and their commendations, recommendations and suggestions may be subject to amendment during the committee process.

School response

The School wants to thank the RCVS team for an incredibly positive site visit. The whole visit (including pre- and post-correspondence) was very well conducted and managed throughout. Particular thanks go to the Chair of the visit team Prof. Liz Mossop and the RCVS staff who were also on the visit. We were very pleased with the comments regarding the enthusiasm of all members of staff and students alike. We feel this genuinely does reflect the atmosphere in the School, in particular on the Langford campus.

A number of commendations were pleasing to see and provide evidence that we are making good progress toward achieving some of our primary goals as outlined in our strategic plan. We will examine closely the suggestions provided and have included reference to changes already implemented or planned in the responses that follow under each standard.

Responses to each of the recommendations are noted below and we will ensure that we can report ongoing effective adjustments to our procedures or curriculum, as required, during the annual reporting cycle.

Finally, I would like to reiterate my personal thanks to the visit team and we look forward to further reflection of all suggestions to help with our continued drive for improvement in all that we do.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tim Parkin', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Tim Parkin

Head of School

Bristol Vet School

Summary of findings

Standard 1 – Organisation

- Commendations

1. Management and all staff are to be commended for their response to the Covid pandemic, which was clearly very challenging and continues to present a number of difficult issues for the School to manage.

- Recommendations

None.

- Suggestions

2. A more detailed Risk Register could be implemented combining both Covid and more general operational risks, with impacts and likelihoods assessed.

This has been done, by way of inclusion of further details and additional risks in the Risk Register maintained by the School Executive Group.

3. The pandemic has clearly impacted on a number of strategic developments and whilst this challenge is recognized, the visitors are clear that the School should seek to refocus on these key areas in a more timely fashion and adapt more permanently to this new context.

Now that we are coming out of the pandemic, and we are leaving 'fire-fighting' mode we are starting to take forward some of the longer-term objectives detailed in our strategic plan. Amongst these, we are pleased to confirm that the School was successful in its recent Athena SWAN application and we look forward to enacting many of the initiatives included in the AS action plan to be ready to submit for a Silver award in the next 5 years.

Standard 2 – Finances

- Commendations

None

- Recommendations

None

- Suggestions

4. The increase in any surplus from the expansion in overseas students should be invested appropriately in order to enhance the student experience.

We will ensure that we make a robust case for this investment, and we have the support of the Dean of the Faculty in doing so. Progress on the campus feasibility plan since the visit has been good. Architects have been appointed and we anticipate an initial report on their findings and suggestions by the end of April, with a clear 'direction of travel' for the medium and long-term vision for the campus by the end of 2022.

Standard 3 – Physical Facilities

- Commendations

None

- Recommendations

5. The School must be confident that the correct insurance is in place for all vehicles related to student travel to/from distributed sites and that all vehicles used for ambulatory practice are correctly insured.

The School has reviewed the messaging it gives the students regarding insurance that must be in place for student travel to distributed sites, and the following text has been added to handbooks:

'Students who are using their own personal vehicles on University business (such as placements or EMS, beyond commuting to/from the placement/EMS) will need to make sure that their car insurance covers business use. They should contact their own insurers to check this, as different insurers take different approaches to this.'

The School has received confirmation that all the ambulatory vehicles used, which are privately owned, have business insurance and are therefore able to transport students

6. The School must ensure that all vehicles used for ambulatory work have effective restraint devices in place between the occupants and any equipment carried.

At the time of this response it has been confirmed that 65% of our clinical partner's cars now have effective restraint devices in place and they are working on the optimum system for all vehicles across the company. The School have made it clear that no students are permitted to use cars which do not have effective restraints fitted.

7. The School must re-establish effective oversight of the review and publication of Health and Safety (H&S) policies at the level of senior management.

The School has updated its local rules and submitted a self-evaluation review to the University's Safety and Health management team in March 2022. Any updates which directly affect students will be added to student handbooks.

8. The School must ensure that their charity partner practices are accredited (by appropriate formal internal mechanism) by their relevant organisations.

All charity partners that do not have an internal licensing scheme will either apply for core PSS accreditation status, or be reviewed by the School through a robust set of quality assurance measures

9. The School must ensure that their distributed sites for core intramural rotations have dedicated study and recreation spaces.

The school is actively working with partners to identify where this may not be the case and ensure that this provision is in place for the start of 22-23 rotations.

- Suggestions

10. The infrastructure of the campuses, particularly Langford, should continue to keep pace with the rapidly increasing student numbers.

The establishment of the Langford Steering Group (August 2021) and the commissioning of a campus feasibility assessment (from February 2022) to plan for campus-wide short, medium, and long-term development will ensure that the campus continues to develop to match the needs of our students.

Standard 4 – Animal Resources

- Commendations

11. The abattoir provides an excellent introductory experience for students, not least because of the enthusiasm and commitment of the team to teaching and animal welfare. The opportunity for students to complete the Official Veterinarian training course during their elective rotation is especially commended.

- Recommendations

12. The School must increase the quality assurance of off-campus sites, particularly those used for Extra-Mural Rotations (EMR).

We have revised our approach to QA for external placements. Our previous system (pre-pandemic, for established placements) was for annual in-person QA visits with ongoing follow-up as required. From April 2022 we will be moving to a system of annual visits with quarterly monitoring visits, alternating in person and online for most practices. All partner equine practices will be visited in April, prior to the start of the new final year core rotations in May. For new practices starting in May 2022, all training and QA will be in place prior to the arrival of students, with regular ongoing support for practices as the rotations are introduced. Monthly partnership meetings will continue and BVS and practice leads will be in communication on a regular (at least monthly) basis when students are on site.

13. The School must ensure that all relevant animal handling training and assessment is successfully completed prior to students' first extra mural placements with the relevant species.

We have revised our practical teaching and assessment schedule to address this requirement, as outlined below:

All animal handling classes are delivered before EMS in the relevant species and the assessment schedule has been revised so that, from 22-23, the first diet of OSCEs occurs in Semester 1 for AGEP 1 and Semester 2 for BVSc 1, before students attend their first EMS placements.

To facilitate lambing placements which happen in February (AGEP 1) and Easter (BVSc 1 and AGEP 1) students who do not pass the sheep handling OSCE at their first attempt must attend a remedial teaching session and then must sit and pass the OSCE under examination conditions before undertaking lambing EMS.

Additional attempts at the OSCE examinations in other species will be permitted in February and July for AGEP 1 and May/June and July for BVSc 1. Students must pass the examinations before undertaking EMS in the relevant species.

Pigs, poultry and exotics are studied in BVSc Year 2 and AGEP Year 1. Students will be assessed and must pass the OSCE before undertaking EMS with those species. Assessments in BVSc 2 and AGEP 1 will be held in Semester 2, the Summer examination period and the July resit period.

Every student undertaking the OSCEs will have a timetabled revision session before each diet of OSCEs.

- Suggestions

14. The School should consider ways of increasing the exposure of students to more live animals, of all species, particularly in the early years of the curriculum, to enhance their competence and confidence in handling and husbandry, whilst maintaining full consideration for their welfare.

The closure of the live anatomy barn (for welfare reasons) has been mitigated by the introduction of "Live Anatomy" practical classes in the spring of 2022 for BVSc2. Further review of practicals and access to animals will be a priority within curriculum review for the new 2023 curriculum.

15. Efforts should continue to be made to visit larger abattoirs, particularly white meat.

This has been added to the School's Education Action Plan. The VPH team will seek every opportunity to allow students to visit white meat abattoirs, however, the difficulties in achieving this cannot be overlooked.

Standard 5 – Information Resources

- Commendations

16. The University and School is commended on their prompt provision of online resources and associated support during Covid-19.

- Recommendations

None

- Suggestions

17. The School should continue to develop study spaces and innovative resources for instructional material.

The School is seeking to develop more study spaces as part of the Campus Plan now underway and as part of the curriculum review new resources are continually being considered and developed.

18. There should be sufficient technical staff to enable this as well as maintain and expand the existing equipment in order to fulfil the requirements for the increase in student numbers.

Our technical staffing FTE and equipment needs are reviewed annually as part of the integrated planning process and we will ensure all staffing and other resources meet the requirements for any further expansion.

Standard 6 – Students

- Commendations

19. The School is commended on their high level of student engagement allowing students to be active contributors to the School community. During the pandemic the School further increased engagement with both student representatives and cohorts.

- Recommendations

None

- Suggestions

20. The School should continue to improve wellbeing provision offered in line with the increase in student numbers. More frequent in person counselling services should be available at the Langford Campus.

Currently the student counselling service provide sufficient in-person sessions at Langford. Not all slots are filled each week. The service is constantly monitoring demand and if needed would increase the number of available sessions. In-person sessions are also available in Bristol (more suitable for our early years BVSc students) and online sessions continue to be an option for those who wish to take advantage of them.

Standard 7 – Admission & Progression

- Commendations

21. Although it is not clear whether it is because of the WP programme or the cessation of the interview processes, or both, the School is to be commended on its increased intake of BAME and Polar 1 and 2 students over the past 3 years.

- Recommendations

22. The School must ensure that the website is made easier to navigate, to find key documents and criteria, including costs, and to bespoke the information to the veterinary context (for example Fitness to Practice).

Fitness to Practice is overseen at Faculty level to maintain consistency across professional programmes. The Vet School has its own team of Case Investigators and applies the process in the context of the BVSc programmes and the RCVS guidelines.

Since the visitation there has been a significant re-design of the University webpages, including the course finder pages:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/2023/vet-science/bvsc-veterinary-science/>

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/2023/vet-science/bvsc-veterinary-science-accelerated-graduate-ent/>

As a result of this re-design, fee information, including EMS implications, is clearly visible and the admissions statements are clearly signposted.

The course structure text has been amended to emphasise the requirements of the courses, including engagement with practical work in a range of settings, EMS requirements and out of hours work during rotations. We have also arranged for the fitness to practice requirements for the course to be made clear to all applicants via the admissions statements. The updated admissions statements will be published in the summer for the 2023 entry cycle.

- Suggestions

23. The School should put plans in place to closely monitor employer feedback, especially after the change in admissions process in 2018/2019 and to consider how to monitor feedback from overseas employers.

Given the historic challenges of low response rates with employer surveys, we are encouraged by the high response rates to the VetGDP survey run by the RCVS. We will continue to monitor all outcomes data, including findings from this survey, in light of both changes to admissions processes and the

new curriculum from 2023. As the number of international students we graduate grows, we are exploring how to best gather feedback from overseas employers.

Standard 8 – Academic & Support Staff

- Commendations

24. The creation and success of the Veterinary Clinical Demonstrator role, and a career progression route for those in these roles is to be commended.

- Recommendations

25. The School must ensure that all staff are appropriately qualified and prepared for their roles, particularly those involved in teaching and assessment, whether they are staff, residents or other postgraduates, adjuncts or off-campus contracted teachers.

All staff involved in teaching hold clinical qualifications appropriate to their role. Regarding training in teaching, new members of University staff are required to engage with and complete the PG Certificate in Academic Practice, which focuses on teaching. All staff, postgraduate students (including interns and residents) and partner providers also have access to the Langford Teaching and Learning programme. Whilst the scope of this was reduced during the pandemic to repeated sessions of three core workshops, from 21-22 we are offering 17 different sessions to all staff.

In April 2022 we are re-starting our "Teaching Inductions" for all new LV vets and nurses (these were on hold during the pandemic). Engagement with training in teaching and learning by LV staff is monitored through annual staff review.

Interns and residents receive bespoke introductory training in clinical teaching during their formal induction periods.

For external sites, all placement leads and mentors are required to complete our "Introduction to Clinical Teaching" training, comprising 4 modules covering an overview of the curriculum, clinic-based teaching, assessment, and student support.

All new placement leads and mentors will be trained prior to the start of the new final year in May 2022. We are also creating an online series of modules to enhance the current in-person workshop provision, to provide greater flexibility for practice staff.

In addition, a new online webinar will be available for all practice staff by May 2022, providing an overview of the curriculum and outlining the role of the practice in providing final year placements.

- Suggestions

26. The School should ensure that academic and, especially, support staff numbers are appropriate to support not only student numbers but the evolving curriculum.

We will closely map both academic and support staff to support any future growth in student numbers and these considerations are included in the business case for the new curriculum.

Standard 9 – Curriculum

- Commendations

27. The School is commended for the development, delivery and enthusiasm of staff and students for the new AGEP programme, particularly in delivering the first few years of the novel programme during the Covid pandemic.

- Recommendations

None

- Suggestions

28. The School should ensure that the effects of ongoing curriculum evolution on student experience and outcomes continue to be monitored and reported in the RCVS Annual Monitoring Report. In particular, the impact of the proposed fundamental curriculum review and transition from the current curriculum to the new approach should be monitored.

A BVS Curriculum Project Manager is due to start in April 2022. Part of their remit is to support the Academic Leadership with monitoring outcomes and impacts of the new curriculum.

29. The introduction of an interactive curriculum map should be expedited, ensuring students and staff can readily understand the linkages between ILOs and D1C explicitly articulating a cohesive underlying framework, thus facilitating understanding how any session relates to the higher-level outcomes of both School programmes should be expedited.

The CBlue Curriculum Map is being updated and will be available to students for 22-23. Additionally, as part of curriculum review, links between D1C and ILOs will be more clearly articulated as part of the programme narrative.

Standard 10 – Assessment

- Commendations

None

- Recommendations

None

- Suggestions

30. The School should expedite their plans for digitising OSCE assessments in order to decrease the administrative workload.

There is a working group looking at this as a priority across all schools in the Health Sciences Faculty. A digital method of delivering OSCEs will be rolled out as soon as possible, most likely in 2022-23.

31. The lack of inclusion of live animals for some handling OSCE stations is impacting the validity of these assessments and the School should consider ways to facilitate access to this resource, alongside appropriate welfare considerations.

We are reviewing the balance of use of live animals and models in animal management OSCEs, with regards to welfare and feasibility. Currently, live dogs, sheep, calves, horses and chickens are used, with models used for cow, cat, pig and exotic pet stations.

32. The School is encouraged to review the design of the BVSc Year 3 OSCE to optimise its reliability and validity in the context of the range and number of practical skills being assessed.

The School will keep the Year 3 OSCE under constant review to ensure reliability and validity. An Academic Lead for Practical and Clinical skills has been appointed, who is working with the Assessment Lead to update processes for reviewing OSCEs for 22-23.

Standard 11 – Research Programmes, Continuing & Higher Degrees

- Commendations

None

- Recommendations

None

- Suggestions

None

Standard 12 – Outcomes Assessment

- Commendations

None

- Recommendations

None

- Suggestions

Standard 1 - Organisation

Background

33. Bristol Vet School, founded in 1949, sits in the Faculty of Health Sciences, alongside the Schools of Dentistry, Medicine and Anatomy. The Vet School is split across two sites: Central Bristol Facilities, within the School of Anatomy, and the Langford Campus, 14 miles South-West of Bristol. The Langford Campus continues to see investment in infrastructure and an hourly weekday bus service has been introduced between the campuses.
34. The Veterinary programmes (5-year BVSc and 4-year BVSc Accelerated Graduate Entry Programme, AGEP) are wholly owned and operated by Bristol Veterinary School, Faculty of Health Sciences. Aspects of both programmes are taught by those who sit either in other Schools within the University, or within partner organisations such as charity clinics. Years 1 and 2 of the School's AGEP are taught entirely by members of staff in Bristol Vet School on the Langford campus. The two programmes join for the final 2.5-years of each programme. Ownership of the content of the taught units, their assessment and administration is retained by Bristol Veterinary School.
35. The University initiates an annual Integrated Planning Process (IPP) in September of each year resulting in a planning document which incorporates a rolling 5-year operational plan, which in turn feeds into the Faculty IPP. This process ensures a revisit of the School's strategy every year and also acts as a critical part of the budget setting enabling the School to outline and justify future priorities for investment in staff, facilities and equipment. Final budgetary sign off is through the University Finance Committee and Board of Trustees.
36. The University of Bristol is legally an independent entity whose quality is assured via The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) frameworks to deliver against the conditions of registration set out by the Office for Students, the regulator for Higher Education in England.
37. The Board of Trustees is the supreme governing body of the University, reporting to the Court on University strategic aims, ambitions and initiatives. The Court provides comment, advice and other support to the Board of Trustees at an annual meeting. The Senate of the University has delegated authority from the Board of Trustees for overseeing the teaching and research provided and carried out by the University. The Head of the Vet School sits on Senate alongside the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, other Heads of Schools and eight additional nominated colleagues from the Faculty.
38. The primary decision-making committee of each Faculty is its Faculty Board, which is responsible for advising the Dean on the development and implementation of the education and research strategies of the Faculty. The Faculty Education Committee is responsible for setting the strategic objectives for, and providing oversight of, all educational activity in the Faculty, with a dual reporting line to the Faculty Board and the University's Education Committee. Programme Committees for each professional programme report to the Faculty Education Committee.
39. Day-to-day management of the School is undertaken by the Head of School, Deputy Head of School, the School Manager, and the Operations Manager, in association with five Section Leads who have direct line management responsibility for all academic staff in the School. Section

Meetings six times a year facilitate communication between the leadership team and members of the School, alongside All Staff Meetings held quarterly.

40. Langford Vets (LV) is a wholly owned subsidiary of the University of Bristol responsible for running commercial clinical and laboratory services on behalf of Bristol Veterinary School. The focus of Langford Vets activity is on the delivery of clinical care alongside a student experience through provision of clinical teaching and appropriate clinical caseload.

Comments

41. The School has a clear mission statement covering research, teaching and diversity. There is a strategic plan in place covering 2021-2026 with a range of objectives monitored by Key Performance Indicators which are reviewed annually by the School Executive Group.
42. The annual Integrated Planning Process has recently been utilised to request additional resources for unforeseen increases in student numbers for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 entries, resulting in an uplift to financial support for the School.
43. The pandemic has inevitably impacted on the delivery of the School strategy, with many examples of delays to proposed developments or policy reviews and updates. Reassurance was provided throughout discussions that capacity to address these was improving, but at the time of the visit progress was not always evident.
44. The Head of School has appropriate control over the School budget in consultation with the Faculty and Central university. The Head of School and the CEO of Langford Veterinary Services are both veterinary surgeons.
45. A risk management process exists at School level and the register lists a broad but somewhat limited and dated set of risks with mitigations. An additional Covid risk monitoring process has been in place throughout the pandemic.
46. Bristol has more recently [2020] started using a distributed model for EMR¹ in equine after the closure of the LV equine referral hospital. Planning is underway for a similar model to add to first opinion caseload in small and farm animals.
47. The School is supported by a hardworking and talented administrative team, who are clearly engaged with the academic team and supportive of the growth trajectory of the School.
48. The relationship between the Faculty and the School appears strong, with a healthy level of robust yet supportive challenge.

Commendations

49. Management and all staff are to be commended for their response to the Covid pandemic, which was clearly very challenging and continues to present a number of difficult issues for the School to manage.

Recommendations

¹ Extra-Mural Rotations (EMR) is IMR delivered in external placements, called EMR locally and throughout this document.

50. None.

Suggestions

51. A more detailed Risk Register could be implemented combining both Covid and more general operational risks, with impacts and likelihoods assessed.
52. The pandemic has clearly impacted on a number of strategic developments and whilst this challenge is recognised, the visitors are clear that the School should seek to refocus on these key areas in a more timely fashion and adapt more permanently to this new context.

Standard 2 – Finances

Background

53. The University receives an annual block grant from the UK government for teaching and research as well as student fee income and other income from research and associated activities. To ensure sustainability in a period of continued uncertainty, the University has undertaken initiatives such as restructuring of support services, voluntary severance programmes, growth of home and overseas student numbers and changes to pension scheme arrangements.
54. The University has a structured and collegiate approach to the annual budget process providing all Heads of Schools with the opportunity to present a summary focusing on financial strengths and opportunities as well as threats. The Head of School works with the School Executive Group (SEG) to develop budget proposals that align with the School's strategic vision, and operational requirements. These proposals are presented at both Faculty and University level during the Integrated Planning Process (IPP).
55. The School IPP thumbnail is developed by the Head of School and the School Manager with input from the School Education Director and School Research Director (consulting with programme directors and the research leadership team, respectively.) It confirms and updates the School's vision and allows the School to identify opportunities and threats in particular articulating the progress toward the 5-year strategic objectives from the previous IPP, and is presented for final discussion at SEG. A major part of this process is the development of an Academic Cash Contribution target at Faculty and School level, for a five-year period. Langford Veterinary Services (LVS), now trading as Langford Vets (LV), was established in 2009 and is a wholly owned subsidiary of the University of Bristol. A service level agreement exists between LV and the School to provide clinical rotation teaching. LV is reimbursed on a per-student-per-week basis for the costs of providing this. This is offset against clinical service and teaching provided by UoB staff "in kind" and is reviewed annually.
56. Overall, income has increased over the last five years. Tuition fee income has increased significantly from 19/20 following the introduction of the School's AGEP.
57. A reduction in research income has been seen since 2016/17 with this stabilising, between 2019 to 2021, despite the changing funding environment with the Covid pandemic. The budget includes growth plans for research following a strategy review and key recruitment in this area.
58. Other income revenue streams have seen a decline and relate to short courses, consultancy and services provided.
59. The annual budget for the School is allocated during the IPP, taking into account projected income from student fees, research, commercial activities (for example, the abattoir), and external consultancy. The budget covers all operational costs associated with delivering the research and teaching of the School, including, transport of students, practical teaching, final year rotation teaching, and all academic and professional service salaries. The distribution of non-salary budget is agreed by SEG annually.

60. The University covers the costs of the following items: utilities, buildings maintenance, insurance (excluding VDS cover for individual staff), cleaning and security, staff costs for faculty and central staff supporting the School (e.g. HR and Finance), recruitment and marketing, and library resources and subscriptions, and central student support functions.
61. The Faculty holds a minor capital budget, which can be allocated for small projects, including equipment and minor refurbishments throughout the financial year. Bids for funds are presented to the Faculty Manager and agreed at Faculty Board.
62. Major capital building projects are managed by the University Campus Division through the Capital Investment Programme Board (CIPB). Where major equipment is identified as part of a building project, this is considered during the same process. All new project work proposals, with associated business cases, are considered by CIPB before approval is sought from the University Finance and Infrastructure Committee. Once approved, the project is managed by the Capital Development Team, in association with the School and Faculty.

Comments

63. The School is proud of its AVMA accreditation and sees opportunities to attract North American students particularly.
64. Revenue is predicted to increase significantly from international student fees (particularly on the AGEF programme) which should generate an increased margin. This year, due to Covid the increased number has been largely from home students.
65. The structure of LV being a wholly owned subsidiary of University of Bristol, is unique in the UK. There appears to be transparent budgeting and cross charging between the entities, and a clear service level agreement around teaching. The budgets from LV predict ongoing profitability and an improving balance sheet which is understood will be Gift Aided back to the University in the future.
66. Wyndhurst Farm is run as a commercial enterprise by Velcourt. It has recently acquired a further 59 hectares, is aiming to be carbon neutral by 2030 and has aspirations to be an exemplar of a sustainable dairy farm.
67. The School budget is negatively impacted by the net cost of running the commercial activities which in turn provide teaching resources; the farm, the abattoir and the PM service. It is expected that the additional land purchased by the University will improve the efficiency and profitability of the farm, the viability of which is currently noted in the Risk Register.
68. The visitors were assured by senior University staff that the University was committed to continue supporting the School including LV and the distributed model.

Commendations

69. None.

Recommendations

70. None.

Suggestions

71. The increase in any surplus from the expansion in overseas students should be invested appropriately in order to enhance the student experience.

Standard 3 – Facilities

Background

Teaching locations

72. Years 1-3 of the programme are predominantly taught on the Bristol Campus but with at least one day per week spent at Langford. Years 4 and 5 of the programme and the AGEP are predominantly taught on the Langford Campus.
73. The clinical rotations are delivered by Langford Veterinary Services, the majority of which are based at Langford, and a network of distributed partner practices which are varying distances from the Langford campus.
74. The Langford Campus, home of Bristol Veterinary School, occupies the grounds of the original Langford House estate, and is located approximately 14 miles south-west of the centre of Bristol. Facilities include the Small Animal Hospital (SAH), the Small Animal Practice (SAP), the Farm Animal Practice (FAP), lecture theatres, group teaching/learning rooms, laboratories, clinical skills facilities, a veterinary library, a neuter clinic, the anatomy wet lab, post-mortem suite, Langford abattoir, research laboratories and Wyndhurst Farm.
75. For BVSc and AGEP students, aspects of teaching in animal husbandry are delivered by partners at external sites.
76. The Cannington Centre of Bridgwater and Taunton College and The Equestrian Centre, an approved British Horse Society (BHS) riding School, is used for some equine handling classes. The Animal Management Facility at Cannington is also used to provide practical training in the management of exotics. Facilities on site include nocturnal and diurnal rodent, exotic and amphibia rooms.

Travel between locations

77. The Langford and Bristol campuses are connected by a direct public bus link supported by the School and Faculty. which operates hourly during the week. The service, new in 2018/19, is free for students whose teaching is primarily based at the Langford Campus (all AGEP students, and BVSc 4 and 5) and also provides convenient staff travel between the campuses.
78. Travel time to Langford is approximately 30 minutes by car from the centre of Bristol. Transport by coach is arranged for students in years 1-3 of the BVSc programme with a journey time of approximately 50 minutes. The Cannington Centre is 25 miles southwest of Langford and students are transported by coach to and from the centre for classes (approximately 45 minutes by coach).

Recreational, study, locker and food facilities available to students

Central Bristol campus

79. The University offers membership for use of the University gym, swimming pool and outdoor and indoor sports fields and courts. Cafés are located across the campus, often adjacent to or within student study spaces. At Southwell Street, veterinary students have access to a common room with basic catering facilities and vending machines, as well as study spaces within the veterinary museum. In addition, lockers are provided for students while they are studying in the building.

Langford campus

80. The University operates a small gym and tennis courts. A field is also maintained for team sports such as rugby and football. Study and social space for students is offered at Langford in the Student Barn, the Churchill Library, the Langford Bar (awaiting refurbishment), and the Langford Café. The Café and Barn also provide vending machines and microwave ovens for student use. Lockers are provided on campus for students to store personal belongings and clothing during classes. University staff have access to the same sports, recreation and study facilities as students, aside from the student only Barn. Staff (and PGR students) also have access to 'Langford House Lounges'.

Premises for animals

81. Animals used for teaching (sheep, pigs, horses and poultry) are brought in for the teaching period and housed at Langford in species specific housing.
82. The University's Wyndhurst Farm occupies approximately 100 hectares, with a 190-200 cow high-yielding Holstein-Friesian dairy herd housed in a dairy facility. The available farmland has also recently increased by 59 hectares.
83. The School operates the Langford Abattoir, a red meat facility located where sheep, pigs and cattle are slaughtered. It is a commercial service to farmers and butchers in the region and used for teaching final year rotations as well as students from Cambridge Veterinary School and the RVC.

Premises used for clinics and hospitals

84. The majority of clinical services (including laboratory diagnostic services) are delivered by LV, a wholly owned subsidiary of the University. It has grown to around 300 employees. The University continues to allow reinvestment of surplus in capital projects and staffing to further enhance the business and the student experience and improve the ratio of clinical staff to students despite increased student cohort sizes.
85. The Divisions of LV are:
- Small Animal Hospital (SAH)
 - Small Animal First Opinion Practice (SAP)
 - The Stables Equine Practice (SEP)
 - Farm Animal Practice (FAP)
 - Clinical Laboratories
86. All clinical Divisions have attained the highest relevant standard (i.e., 'General Practice' or 'Veterinary Hospital') in the RCVS Practice Standards Scheme.

Small Animal Hospital (SAH)

87. The SAH is the companion animal referral teaching hospital and provides resources for clinical teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate level, and for clinical research. The hospital is supported by the Laboratories division that delivers a range of para-clinical services of clinical

pathology, histopathology, microbiology, parasitology and molecular diagnostics. There is also direct support from the gross post-mortem service run by the School.

Small Animal Practice (SAP)

88. A commercial first-opinion practice, focussed on providing students exposure to consultations, primary care surgical procedures and medical workups, based on the Langford Campus, drawing clients from the local area.

The Stables Equine Practice (SEP)

89. The SEP, owned and managed by LV, provides a caseload of first opinion equine work accessible to students throughout the final year as part of the rotation teaching. The 6 FTE veterinarians are primarily engaged with ambulatory work but have access to purpose-built facilities for diagnostic imaging, housing and treatment of animals at the clinic. The practice is approximately 35 minutes from the Langford campus by car.

Farm Animal Practice (FAP)

90. The FAP (4 FTE veterinarians) serves and works with the local farming community to provide ambulatory veterinary services as well as routine fertility work and disease surveillance. There is no Farm Animal Hospital, although there is a growing referral service for Camelid work operated out of the FAP.

The Clinical Pathology Laboratories

91. Services are provided for haematology, biochemistry, cytology, microbiology (including feline virology), parasitology, endocrinology, serology, histopathology and immune-histochemistry. The Molecular Diagnostic Unit (MDU) offers PCR assays to detect a range of bacterial and viral pathogens in cats and dogs. It also offers a feline genetic testing service to owners and breeders as well as a service detecting clostridium spoilage in meat (*Cl. estertheticum* QPCR). The Acarus laboratory, part of the MDU, specialises in detecting arthropod-borne microbial diseases in companion animals. These services are used by all the clinical services at Langford and by external referral practices and institutions.
92. In addition to the main large teaching laboratory in the Pearson Building there is a smaller laboratory in the Churchill Building for teaching clinical pathology which has facilities for students to undertake haematology, dry biochemistry, microscopy and urinalysis.

Sites for distributed core clinical rotations

Charity practices

93. The School holds contractual arrangements with the Royal Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) and People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA) to take students on rotations at hospitals in Salford, Greater Manchester and Bristol, respectively, in order to experience first opinion charity small animal work.

CVS Equine

94. The School works in partnership with CVS UK Ltd, through an Educational Partnership Agreement, to deliver core, track, and elective Equine rotation placements, at their practices across the UK. The placements allow the students to experience equine cases in a fully

commercial setting, with a focus on primary care and clinic-based work. Additional hospital-based experience is available for students on equine track and elective placements.

Future Changes

95. The School is working with the University to convert the Winscombe Building (at the Langford campus) to provide additional problem-based learning rooms, seminar rooms, a campus reception area and delivery point. This work is expected to be completed for the start of the 2022/23 academic year. The relocation of Campus Division staff into this new facility will also allow the School to re-purpose vacated space, including provision of extra locker room space, required for student growth. The School is also planning to develop further student social space. The first of these spaces will be the re-development of the Langford Bar, allowing more flexible use by students.
96. In summer 2022, the University plans to refurbish the Hodgkin lecture theatre on the Langford Campus. The new lecture theatre will have a capacity of over 190 and also the ability to stream to allow blended learning.

Comments

97. The SVM is in a period of planned and unplanned student growth, on both the School veterinary professional programmes. There is evidence that the teaching and social spaces at Langford are becoming constrained and evidence that the School recognises this.
98. The distances travelled required to attend locations of distributed sites for intramural rotations is very variable and where possible is managed through car sharing of student owned vehicles.
99. The visitors observed that not all vehicles at distributed sites, in which students would travel, were equipped with restraining devices to separate occupants from equipment carried in the rear load area.
100. The visitors noted uncertainty over the requirements for insurance of student vehicles when used to travel to/from distributed sites and that of private vehicles used for ambulatory practice that students travel in.
101. The provision of student study and recreation facilities at distributed sites was inconsistent.
102. The H&S policies available to students through the course documentation on Blackboard was variable in their currency.
103. Notwithstanding the issues related to the pandemic, the current internal accreditation status of both charity practices is lapsed (RSPCA) or unknown (PDSA).

Commendations

104. None.

Recommendations

105. The School must be confident that the correct insurance is in place for all vehicles related to student travel to/from distributed sites and that all vehicles used for ambulatory practice are correctly insured.

106. The School must ensure that all vehicles used for ambulatory work have effective restraint devices in place between the occupants and any equipment carried.
107. The School must ensure that their distributed sites for core intramural rotations have dedicated study and recreation spaces.
108. The School must re-establish effective oversight of the review and publication of H&S policies at the level of senior management.
109. The School must ensure that their charity partner practices are accredited (by appropriate formal internal mechanism) by their relevant organisations.

Suggestions

110. The infrastructure of the campuses, particularly Langford, should continue to keep pace with the rapidly increasing student numbers.

Standard 4 – Animal Resources

Background

111. For the five-year programme, anatomy is taught in the School of Anatomy at Southwell Street, on the Clifton Campus, and for the AGEP in the Brinsea Building at Langford. Both locations use a range of materials that include articulated skeletons, isolated bones, models, radiographs, potted museum specimens, prosections and cadavers for students to dissect. Species include dog, horse, cow, goat, rabbit, trout, chicken, rat, guinea pig.
112. Cadavers are obtained through several mechanisms including pet memorial donation programme, local farms and abattoirs, including the Langford abattoir. The acquisition and use of all material and cadavers are approved by the University committee responsible for the 'Ethical Approval of Studies Involving Animals'. Materials are either stored in freezers or embalmed and stored in tanks of formaldehyde and water, or for larger cadavers in the cold room. Preparation and storage are carried out by the technical staff in both locations.
113. For pathology teaching, the School operates a farm animal diagnostic and surveillance post-mortem service (FAPS), contracted to the governmental Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA). Companion animal cases are provided through the clinics of LV, and cases are also referred from other local veterinary practices. Material (such as hearts) is also sourced from the onsite abattoir, pigs and piglets from a local farmer, and fallen stock cows from Wyndhurst farm. Case throughput was substantially affected by the Covid pandemic. The post-mortem service for companion animals for cats, dogs & horses was closed from March to August 2020, when it reopened for cats and dogs, but not horses. The FAPS remained open during the period of lock down from March to June 2020 although case submissions reduced substantially, but then recovered between July and September. The ratio of students:post-mortem animals = 1:6.58
114. Cadaveric material is also used to support the teaching of clinical skills in classes in the Clinical Veterinary Science One Health, and Clinical Veterinary Science 2 units (reproduction and dentistry practicals) and in final year teaching.
115. Wyndhurst farm has a 190 to 200-cow dairy herd, milking 3 times a day, with replacement young stock also on site. The cattle are used for classes across the BVSc and AGEP programmes; including handling and husbandry, biosecurity and housing assessment, behaviour assessment, clinical examination classes, reproduction teaching and in clinical rotations. A flock of sheep (50 shearlings) are kept for teaching handling and husbandry and clinical examination. Animal management and handling skills are also taught at Cannington College, and a local stables provide additional horses when required at Langford. Rearing pigs (25-65Kg) are purchased from market and kept on site in the Research Animal Building as required for use in handling and husbandry classes. The pigs are subsequently slaughtered and sold through the Langford Abattoir. Hens are purchased from a local egg producer for teaching and assessment purposes and housed in purpose-built accommodation. All hens are re-homed when classes are complete.
116. The School has its own commercial abattoir for red meat species which is used for students on rotations. A "Virtual" Abattoir interactive presentation has also been developed for each species, including poultry, which is made available for final year students to prepare for their rotation and for revision.

117. School works with a number of partners to deliver clinical teaching through a partially distributed model. The partners supporting core rotation teaching are Langford Vets (a wholly owned subsidiary of the University), CVS Equine, RSPCA and the PDSA to deliver a range of teaching experiences. Additional partners supporting non-core clinical teaching include CVS, IVC Evidensia and Bristol Zoological Society.
118. Administrative and logistical support for all final year IMR and EMR placements is provided by the Student Administration team in the School, including the organisation of student rotas, off-site accommodation, and management of travel expense claims by students.
119. Rotations within the School, and those provided by LV, are supervised by a Rotation Organiser (RO), who works with the Year Lead and Deputy Year Lead. RO's are experienced members of staff who have worked within their clinical service to gain an understanding of student involvement and experience before progressing into this role. Off-Campus rotations are supervised by a Placement Lead, who liaises with the provider on all aspects of the rotation. Internal quality assurance occurs through staff and student feedback and the LV/School Partnership Group.
120. Educational Partnership Agreements are in place with each provider of core clinical teaching. These agreements cover all aspects of the placement, including the curriculum, health and safety, QA requirements, staff training, and assessment and feedback. The agreements last between 3-6 years, depending on the provider, and are drafted with the assistance of the University legal team and with oversight of the University's Academic Quality and Policy Office (AQPO). Each placement has a School staff member assigned for liaison purposes.
121. A set limit on rotation group sizes (5 students) ensures hands-on experience, access to case load, and small group discussion opportunities.
122. Live animal use in teaching is managed by the School Teaching Animal Welfare Group (TAWG), which reports to the School Education Committee. Review of animal use is conducted annually via a staff survey. The annual survey of teaching staff enables Unit Organisers and Programme Directors to monitor changes in live animal use and identify areas where there may be the potential to replace live animals with alternative models.
123. Programme and Unit leads are responsible for ensuring that alternatives to live animals have been explored (based on the three guiding principles of replacement, reduction and refinement (3Rs)), that animal use is in line with the policy for that species, that appropriate monitoring protocols are in place and that the educational benefits of using live animals outweigh any potential welfare costs. In the review conducted in 2020/21, Animal Management 2 was identified by the Unit Organiser as a specific area with room to consider virtual/haptic alternatives. Advances in virtual reality techniques have been identified by several Unit Organisers as having potential for further replacement of live animals and this is an area requiring further exploration in the future.
124. Teaching staff are accountable for the care and wellbeing of animals used in their teaching activities and must therefore abide by the relevant teaching animal use policy. Clearwell RFID readers are used to scan for ear tag and chip across all species across the Veterinary School site. The scan readings are routinely downloaded and stored electronically. Any health or

welfare issues identified by teaching staff are logged against RFID chip and reported to the Farm Manager and Large Animal Practice.

Comments

125. An extensive recording and monitoring system is in place to protect the welfare of animals used in teaching, and students have experience in handling animals at a variety of sites, with many procedures practiced on models at Langford and in Bristol first to boost both confidence and competence. Access to these models, with clear procedures for practicing handling skills, was noteworthy. Revision sessions in live animal handling are organised, but many of the live animals are housed at external sites. This makes informal confidence building handling sessions difficult, and this may become more of an issue as student numbers increase. Students undertake animal handling classes and OSCEs in the first two years of the programme, however formal assessment of sheep handling often does not occur until after students have completed their lambing AHEMS.
126. The visitors were very impressed by the abattoir as a facility for use by students, and particularly by the enthusiastic and dedicated team, their clear (and internationally acknowledged) dedication to animal welfare and to student experience. Students undertaking the elective VPH rotation have the opportunity to undertake OVS training.
127. The visitors were also impressed by the enthusiasm of the adjunct and external teaching staff at both pre-clinical sites and clinical rotation sites, and also by the School's efforts to set up and maintain rotations against the backdrop on Covid. However, there was variability in the quality assurance at off campus sites, and while some sites were clearly meeting all the standards normally expected of University-owned facilities, at others there appeared to be minor differences in safety standards, student involvement in cases, and local understanding of the expectation of EMR. While students fed back to the School on their rotation experiences, School staff were not, in the visitors' view, on site regularly enough to observe directly student experience and environment.

Commendations

128. The abattoir provides an excellent introductory experience for students, not least because of the enthusiasm and commitment of the team to animal welfare. The opportunity for students to complete the Official Veterinarian training course during their elective rotation is especially commended.

Recommendations

129. The School must increase the quality assurance of off-campus sites, particularly those used for Extra-Mural Rotations (EMR).
130. The School must ensure that all relevant animal handling training and assessment is successfully completed prior to students' first extra mural placements with the relevant species.

Suggestions

131. The School should consider ways of increasing the exposure of students to more live animals, of all species, to enhance their competence and confidence in handling and husbandry, whilst maintaining full consideration for their welfare.

132. Efforts should continue to be made to visit larger abattoirs, particularly white meat.

Standard 5 – Information Resources

Background

133. Two of the universities eight libraries hold materials specific to the veterinary programme:
 - Clifton Campus: The Medical Library holds the books for the units taught in years 1-3 of the BVSc.
 - Langford Campus: The Veterinary Sciences Library holds the books for years 1-5 of the BVSc and all years of the BVSc AGEP, also serving the research and clinical communities at Langford.
 - Off-campus, the majority of University services are available from almost any internet-connected device. Most of the library's electronic resources are available to use both on-site and outside of the University, with authentication via login.
134. All libraries have PC rooms with high-speed internet links, laptop loan services, and provision of Wi-Fi and power sockets throughout. On campus and in University residences, Eduroam wireless access is available.
135. The Subject Librarian for Veterinary Sciences is professionally qualified (MA Librarianship) and the Langford Library is staffed during office hours by Customer Services staff. Faculty IT Support teams include staff based on the Langford Campus, and there is a full-time eLearning Support post embedded within School.
136. The Clinical Skills Labs provide models and simulators for students to practice clinical procedures. These include a Haptic Cow and Haptic Horse, allowing students to carry out virtual examinations using touch-feedback that mimics bovine and equine anatomy.
137. The Digital Education Office provides training and support to academic staff, notably on online teaching and assessment. The School has a full-time member of staff dedicated for eLearning support. The University runs digital education courses which are well subscribed.
138. The University strategy to revamp the digital infrastructure has meant a move to Microsoft 365, with Outlook; SharePoint; Teams and OneDrive, providing a new digital platform.
139. Evaluation of new technology is undertaken using a range of methods. Student feedback is routinely gathered on student-facing technical resources through Unit Evaluations, Student:Staff Liaison Committee and bespoke questionnaires.

Comments

140. All libraries provide a mix of study spaces for collaborative, social or quiet study. The Medical library has 300 spaces but due to Covid restrictions can currently only offer 210 places. There are 97 spaces available at the Langford Campus Veterinary Sciences Library.
141. The library has a “digital first” policy for provision of journals and books. The university strategy is to transform digital infrastructure to support students’ learning environment, recognising that the range of new technologies in everyday use is changing students’ behaviours and expectation.

Commendations

142. The University and School is commended on their prompt provision of online resources and associated support during Covid.

Recommendations

143. None.

Suggestions

144. The School should continue to develop study spaces and innovative resources for instructional material.
145. There should be sufficient technical staff to enable this as well as maintain and expand the existing equipment in order to fulfil the requirements for the increase in student numbers.

Standard 6 – Students

Background

Table 6.1 Bristol Veterinary School delivers two main veterinary programmes, BVSc Veterinary Science and Accelerated Graduate Entry Programme (AGEP)

	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Gateway to Veterinary Science	5	12	7	N/A	N/A
First year	181	153	149	150	150
Second year	151	152	157	144	155
Third year*	149	142	132	152	136
Fourth year	148	128	145	134	107
Fifth year	126	143	128	118	101
Number graduated	124	143	127	118	100

Table 6.2: Numbers of veterinary students (BVSc AGEP)

	2020-2021	2019-2020
First year	55	39
Second year	39	*
Third year	*	*
Fourth year	*	*
Number graduated	*	*

*n/a – inaugural intake Autumn 2019

146. The admissions process for 2019/20 was disrupted by the Covid pandemic and the UK's exit from the European Union which led to a larger intake for veterinary programmes in 2020, the BVSc programme has an intake of 181 students against an initial target of 150; BVSc AGEP took 55 students against a target of 40.
147. The School has increased to a target intake of 180 students for the BVSc programme and 55 Students for the Accelerated Graduate Entry Programme (BVSc AGEP) from 2021/22 intake onwards.

Postgraduate programmes

Table 6.3: Postgraduate students, including interns and residents (head count)

	Interns + PGDip *	Residents	Resident +MSc	Resident + PhD	MSc Global Wildlife, Health & Conservation	MSc (Research)	PhD
2020-2021	0	0	21	0	55	3	34
2019-2020	17	0	31	0	45	9	32
2018-2019	16	5	28	0	37	8	28
2017-2018	13	14	16	1	36	4	38
2016-2017	17	22	6	1	32	4	34

*No Interns were registered in 2020/21 due to Covid

148. The School delivers a range of postgraduate programmes, both in clinical and research training: The MSc Global Wildlife Health and Conservation – in partnership with Bristol Zoological Society –, MSc by Research and research PhDs. The School delivers two clinical postgraduate programmes in partnership with Langford Vets.
149. LV recruits Residents to salaried staff positions. These positions continue to be aligned to individual College requirements enabling Residents to achieve clinical specialist status.
150. The student handbook, available to all students electronically, provides detailed information about services, policies and procedures and information about their programme. This document is made available on Blackboard.
151. Students with any disability, or physical or mental illness, are encouraged to co-create their own Health Passport with the support of a Faculty Health Passport Champion, these are shared by the student with clinical staff prior to final year rotations, to facilitate staff understanding of affected individual student's health conditions, in addition to reasonable adjustments that should be accommodated, and additional support that can be provided.
152. All students in the University are allocated a personal tutor (PT), as their main point of contact for academic and personal development while at the University.
153. University level policies inform the way in which student grievances are both heard and resolved. There are clear guidance outlines for both a process for informal complaints and a more formalised complaint procedure.
154. Students can feedback via course reps to various committees where student facing aspects of the programme are discussed. Additionally, feedback is acquired at the end of clinical rotations, and anonymously at mid/end of unit sessions for taught units. Feedback is recorded in

committee minutes, and 'You Said... We Did...' reports. 'You Said..., We Did...' reports are published on Blackboard for both the reporting and future cohorts.

Comments

155. The University allocated additional staffing and funding for the academic years 2020/21 and 2021/22 and agreed to support further staffing and infrastructure changes to support these students as they progress through their programmes.
156. The School will be undergoing a review of the way the personal tutoring system works over the next twelve months. This will aim to ensure the system is both fit for purpose but also provides for the pastoral care, EMS and careers advice without impacting on staff workload as student numbers increase.
157. The School provides adequate provision of wellbeing support at its main campus with some online provision. The Langford campus has in-person counselling services available every two weeks.

Commendations

158. The School is commended on their high level of student engagement allowing students to be active contributors to the School community. During the pandemic the School further increased engagement with both student representatives and cohorts.

Recommendations

159. None.

Suggestions

160. The School should continue to improve wellbeing provision offered in line with the increase in student numbers. More frequent in person counselling services should be available at the Langford Campus.

Standard 7 – Admissions and Progression

Background

161. The School Strategic Admissions Committee works in partnership with the University Admissions Office to oversee admissions policies and process. This committee is responsible for overseeing matters relating to recruitment and admissions for the School's undergraduate programmes. The committee is chaired by the School's Admissions Tutor and membership includes the Head of School, School Education Director, Programme Directors, the Senior Tutor, the School's Widening Participation Lead and the Student Administration Manager. The committee is responsible for setting admissions criteria for the School's programmes and student performance, and progression on the programmes is considered including attrition rates, as a marker of the suitability of selection processes. The committee also considers the make-up of the student body, considering diversity. Once admissions criteria are set for each year the University's Student Recruitment Committee is informed and the School works with the University's Admissions Office to implement them.
162. The Committee is currently looking to recruit both current students and industry representatives to enable their views and experiences to be considered when determining the selection processes.
163. There are three routes to obtaining a veterinary science degree at Bristol Vet School. The first is a widening participation initiative, Gateway to Veterinary Science, aimed at students who have the potential to become vets but do not meet the academic entry criteria to apply directly to BVSc Veterinary Science. It is open to UK students who fulfil specific widening participation criteria. If the relevant progression criteria are met at the end of this Gateway year, students progress to the 5-year BVSc programme.
164. Alternatively, students can apply directly to either the 5-year BVSc programme aimed primarily at School leavers, or the 4-year BVSc AGEP, aimed at those who have completed an undergraduate degree in a suitable science subject.
165. Applicants have opportunities to find out about the programmes via pre-application events including the University's annual open day events which take place in June and September. In addition to this staff from the School are involved in a range of different activities aimed at those from backgrounds historically less likely to apply for veterinary science programmes:
 - **Venture into Vet Careers**, is a 3-year rolling programme aimed at year 10, 11 and 12 students, to enable students to explore veterinary based careers. This program is selective, taking only students with widening participation backgrounds. The Vet School recognises the need to increase the proportion of BAME students and also recognises a significant gender imbalance within the student population, with significantly more girls applying for, and being admitted to, the Veterinary Science programmes. Effort is therefore being made to promote this programme within high proportion BAME and low-income aspiring state Schools and secondarily boy's Schools.
 - **Animal Aspirations** are a student led team that deliver workshops in 9 Schools with a high proportion of BAME and low-income students in the Bristol area, supporting the overall program to address the underrepresentation of BAME students within the veterinary profession.

- **Pathways to Health Sciences** is 2-year programme for students in year 12 and 13 interested in studying Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Science, providing taster lectures, practical sessions and support with the application process. Priority is given to students from a widening participation background and those completing the programme are guaranteed an offer if they meet the Vet School's work experience and academic requirements (eligible for a contextual offer).
 - **Insight into Bristol:** BAME Summer School is a summer School aimed at students who have completed year 12 and offers students an insight into student life at Bristol, support with A-level or equivalent studies and application help. The programme has a veterinary science 'stream' and those completing the programme are guaranteed an offer if they meet the Vet School's work experience and academic requirements. The programme was developed in recognition of the underrepresentation of those from a BAME background within higher education more widely, and within the Veterinary Science programmes specifically.
 - **VetQuest** is a one-day event aimed at aspiring vets and vet nurses. The day includes a tour of the Vet School, an admissions session and taster activities. A number of subsidised places are available for students from a widening participation background.
166. In addition, there are shorter standalone widening participation events; Explore Bristol and Key Stage 5 conferences for Year 12 students, School academic and careers outreach for Years 6-9 students.
167. The selection process for entry for the BVSc and BVSc AGEP for 2021 entry have minimum academic and work experience requirements which are assessed on a pass/fail basis. A supplementary assessment questionnaire is utilised to rank applicants either for offer (BVSc) or interview (BVSc AGEP). Final selection for the graduate entry programme is via panel interview.
168. With the exception of the panel interviews for BVSc AGEP applicants, which are carried out by the School, all of the above processes are carried out by the university's admissions team, who apply the criteria set by the School's Strategic Admission's Committee. The School are responsible for informing Admissions of their target intake, who then use this information to inform offer making to meet these targets.
169. Students are required to pass (normally 50%) in all units to progress onto the next year of study. A student who fails to achieve the pass mark for any assessment is permitted a second attempt at the assessment. Unless there are validated extenuating circumstances, students failing to pass any assessment at the second attempt will be required to withdraw from the programme. The only exception to this is competency-based assessments where additional attempts may be allowed. Students are informed during the academic year that all marks provided to them are provisional, subject to final ratification at the relevant Faculty Examination Board. The Faculty Examination Board considers marks and agree on student progress within the parameters provided by the relevant University and programme specific regulations. Following the Faculty Exam Board all marks are made available to the students. Students who may be required to repeat or withdraw are sent a Faculty letter outlining the exact terms of their progression and/or their return to study in a subsequent year. A maximum period of study of 7 years (6 years for the Accelerated Graduate Entry Programme) to complete the programme is permitted and therefore

students are only able to retake two academic years before they are required to withdraw from the programme.

170. There are a range of mechanisms in place to both identify and then support students who are not performing adequately on the programme. Students who do not pass any component of their summative assessments are flagged to their personal tutor who will then work with the student to identify what support the student may need to enable them to improve their performance. Concerns around student performance may also be identified outwith assessments. Pastoral concerns and attendance are closely monitored by staff. Any wellbeing or attendance concerns are discussed directly with student in an Academic Support Tutorial (AST), usually with the student's personal tutor, the programme director and senior tutor. Fitness to practise concerns are highlighted via the student referral form as discussed above. Finally, students often identify issues with performance themselves and are encouraged to discuss these with their tutors. All of these mechanisms are designed to be supportive and once any issues are identified there are a range of different support services which students may be referred to including: Senior Tutors within the School; University Health and Wellbeing services; Student Finance; University Study Skills services; Disability Services; Careers Services.

Comments

171. The visitors found it difficult to find relevant online information, particularly on the extra costs of the programme - including EMS - and felt that potential applicants would be similarly challenged. Policies found on the website appropriate to the programme were at a very high (University) level and some of these could be more specifically adapted to the veterinary programme.
172. The admissions process for the 5 year BVSc is now based on academic qualifications and an additional online questionnaire, which is used to rank applicants. The questions can be viewed and downloaded, considered, and then answers uploaded during a timed window. There is a narrow band of scores for each of the 3 questions (0-2) and inevitably many students end up with similar scores.
173. The visitors noted a significant move towards increasing diversity, although it is not clear whether it is because of the WP programmes or the cessation of the interview processes, or both.

Commendations

174. The School is to be commended on its increased intake of BAME and Polar 1 and 2 students over the past 3 years.

Recommendations

175. The School must ensure that the website is made easier to navigate, to find key documents and criteria, including costs and to bespoke the information to the veterinary environment (for example Fitness to Practice).

Suggestions

176. The School should put plans in place to closely monitor employer feedback, especially after the change in admissions process in 2018/2019 and to consider how to monitor feedback from overseas employers.

Standard 8 – Staff

Background:

177. The allocation of staff to each School in the University is driven by several factors; the vision and mission of each School, the requirements of the programmes taught, the research and education strategies of the School and University, and Staff-Student ratios. Each School is responsible for its own budget and manages the allocation of staff within this to ensure the various requirements are met. Academic staff from several Schools in the University teach on the BVSc programmes, however, the majority are within Bristol Veterinary School.
178. Academic staff roles at the University are aligned to one of three 'Pathways': Pathway 1 is the 'standard' academic pathway at Bristol with a focus on research, teaching and admin/leadership; Pathway 2 is the research-only academic pathway, with roles mainly funded by external research grant income; and Pathway 3 is focused on education and pedagogy - for some this will include a growing emphasis on pedagogical research.
179. As of 1 August 2021, there were 94 Academic staff (79.36 FTE) within School across all pathways: 28 (30%, 25.8 FTE) on Pathway 1, 23 (24.5%, 17.0 FTE) on Pathway 2 and 43 (45.7%, 36.6 FTE) on Pathway 3. In addition, 13 members of School Pathway 3 staff deliver clinical caseload and teaching in LV. Of the core-funded academic staff, 28 (39%) were on Pathway 1, (1.5%) on Pathway 2, and 43 (60%) on Pathway 3.
180. In 2017, the School developed a new Pathway 3 role of 'Veterinary Clinical Demonstrator'. These staff are experienced in first opinion clinical practice and have expertise and interest in clinical teaching that is focussed on developing core day-one competency. They are responsible for assisting with delivery of clinical rotation teaching, assessment and feedback and associated administration tasks, and also contribute substantially to the delivery of practical teaching to pre-clinical students. These roles complement the clinical teaching and administration provided by the existing clinical staff.
181. Some academic staff are embedded within LV clinical teams for part of their role, through which they deliver caseload and student experience while in the clinical environment (e.g., small animal medicine and surgery, equine, farm animal science). Some clinical areas (e.g., pathology, veterinary public health) are delivered entirely by staff from the School without input from LV. In other areas (Neurology, Oncology) the clinical teaching is entirely delivered by staff employed by LV. This flexibility allows a more effective use of the establishment and the ability to recruit in either LV or the School depending on the balanced needs of the role.
182. In Years 1, 2 and 3 of the five-year BVSc programme, some teaching is undertaken by staff from the Schools of Biochemistry, Physiology, Pharmacology & Neuroscience, and the School of Anatomy. Those staff are line managed through their home Schools.
183. The School operates a partially distributed model of clinical teaching. Clinical Partners are engaged to deliver teaching to students through Education Partnership Agreements. The majority of the clinical rotation teaching is delivered by Langford Veterinary Services.
184. All clinical staff are line managed through their employers. Issues regarding staff employed by each partner are managed according to the terms of the partnership agreements between them and the University of Bristol. External specialists and consultants are engaged to provide

teaching, and oversight of the curriculum in areas where no academic appointment exists, e.g., in small animal dentistry and in pig medicine.

185. Operational staff at Wyndhurst Farm are employed by Velcourt, a Farm Management Company, to manage the facility on behalf of the University and School.
186. The University also employs support staff through the Campus Division, at Langford and in Bristol, to support delivery of campus activities, including catering, cleaning, sports, facilities management, security and others.
187. LV employs its own support staff, including a front of house reception team, nurses, animal care assistants, technicians, marketing and business development, finance and HR staff.
188. Bristol, like other veterinary Schools, faces the global shortage of specialist clinical academics, particularly clinician scientists (those with a PhD and a specialist qualification). Notwithstanding, in recent years the School has recruited a cohort of staff to new vacancies.
189. To help with recruitment and retention of clinical staff, and to ensure equality and transparency, additional salary supplements are paid to some staff in the School. This includes an Additional Veterinary Allowance (AVA) to assist staff with the costs of professional memberships and continuing professional development (CPD). There is also a Clinical Salary Supplement (CS), which is paid according to the proportion of time staff spend in clinical service delivery. For some specific clinical disciplines, a Recruitment and Retention (R&R) Allowance is paid based on market considerations.
190. Langford Vets is able to offer remuneration packages closer to market rate. This, coupled with its working culture of an academic teaching environment, continues to attract staff into LV, which has seen a significant growth in the past five years. All those staff are directly involved in student teaching. Through these mechanisms the School has been able to protect and grow the size and diversity of the combined clinical establishment of LV and the School and thereby continually enhance the clinical student learning experience.
191. There is some limited services activity in the School, for example, the abattoir, farm, meat industry training courses, PM services and development of novel diagnostics. Each of these activities generates an income, which is used to employ staff to deliver them. As essential parts of the veterinary curriculum, the abattoir, farm and PM services are subsidised by the School. Any surplus funds from these or other School activities are incorporated into the School's general budget.
192. All academic staff are encouraged to attend scientific meetings. Each academic staff member is provided with an annual allowance that can be used for this purpose, and in addition the School supports a number of staff whose activities include educational development to attend the annual VetEd Symposium each year. Alongside providing funding for their own staff, LV also provides funding for School staff to undertake CPD if they can demonstrate that it will be of benefit for clinical service delivery. Newly appointed research active academic staff are allocated start-up funding, to support the establishment of their research in the School, including attendance at scientific meetings.

193. The University has an HR team dedicated to Staff Development who provide learning and development opportunities to academic and professional services staff at the University. Many are targeted at early career colleagues and the School actively encourages staff to take advantage of these.
194. Leadership and management training has been a key priority for the School and over the last 5 years 19 academic staff have attended dedicated programmes within the University.
195. Academic staff are supported by their line managers through regular, formal 1:1 meetings and *ad hoc* catch-ups, and the annual Staff Development Review process. Meetings typically cover various issues with staff, including their current role, areas for development within that, highlighting opportunities for career and personal development (e.g., sign-posting vacant roles within the School or relevant University initiatives), maintaining contacts with clinical practice, sustainable work-life balance, and workload. Discussion of promotion and progression requirements also takes place during regular 1:1 meetings and as part of the Staff Development Review process.
196. Academic staff in the University are either employed on open-ended or fixed-term contracts. The majority of Pathway 1 and 3 appointments are open-ended and underpinned by stable core funding. Pathway 2 staff are usually employed on open-ended contracts, with fixed funding dates, as their funding is derived from external grants of varying duration. If funding comes to an end, the individual is usually subject to the University's redundancy procedures, which include efforts to redeploy the individual within the university. All staff are made aware of progression criteria in the recruitment process and their progress towards the criteria is considered and supported through normal line management interaction and the annual staff review process. It is now not possible to progress without successful completion of the University's teaching and learning programme (CREATE - Cultivating Research-rich Education and Teaching Excellence). If staff are appointed at a more senior level, they are still expected to enrol on the programme.
197. The CREATE Scheme includes the Postgraduate Certificate on Academic Practice (PGCAP) and the HEA Fellowship route (HEA):
- The PGCAP is designed for staff new to teaching at Bristol and recognises successful completers as Fellows of the Higher Education Authority (HEA). The programme consists of two 30 credit modules.
 - The CREATE HEA Fellowship scheme is the University's internal Fellowship scheme where participants are supported in reflecting on their teaching experience to gain recognition as Associate Fellow, Fellow or Senior Fellow of the HEA.
198. Academic staff may progress if:
- a) They are clearly meeting the existing role profile requirements as relevant to their current role
 - b) Their performance in all relevant aspects of these is competent and satisfactory
 - c) They have demonstrated that they are ready to fulfil the requirements of the next profile
199. Cases for accelerated progression from level b to level c (Pathway 2 staff only) may be submitted at any point. Such cases will be considered under the next termly exercise. All other cases for

accelerated progression must be submitted and considered under the annual Promotion Procedure.

200. Interns and residents are involved in the day-to-day teaching and assessment of students in Final Year rotation. Following training, they undertake DOPS assessments independently, and contribute to overall assessment of students in rotations. Neither group is involved in didactic teaching for BVSc programmes, except occasional demonstrating in the Clinical Skills Lab. PGR students are involved in teaching on an ad-hoc basis, for example, in some research projects, assisting in practical teaching and the assessment of practical and communication skills, and those with veterinary degrees may assist with specific clinical skills teaching..
201. Staff at distributed sites are employed by their home organisations (veterinary practices, charities etc), but have inductions and training in the Bristol curriculum, its ethos and in ILOs and approaches to teaching. Some have the opportunity (supported by their employers) to undertake, for example, the PGCAP.
202. Professional services staff do not have a structured promotions system and progression is based on changing or regrading of roles. Professional services staff do have access to a range of University courses and training opportunities.
203. The School, through the Faculty, will be piloting a new approach to workload modelling.

Comments

204. The visitors were impressed with all staff, particularly those who worked around the clock to ensure minimal disruption to student experience during the pandemic, enabling online teaching, student support and technical support to continue.
205. The new role of Veterinary Clinical Demonstrator has clearly been vital to the development of the evolving School's curriculum, and the visitors were impressed by the skills and passion evident in all the Veterinary Clinical Demonstrators they met. The visitors were also pleased that the School had established clear routes to career progression for those in these roles, and that some individuals had been, deservedly, promoted through this route.
206. The fact that support staff have clear opportunities and are supported, both financially and with protected time, to continue professional development was noted.
207. The visitors noted the enthusiasm of the many staff, whether academic or non-academic, and members of the University or contracted/adjunct staff at off campus sites, and were pleased to learn that some adjuncts and externally-contracted clinical teachers were pursuing further training in teaching through the University or other routes. However, there was some variation in the amount of training and preparedness at some rotation sites, evidenced by incomplete understanding of ILOs, the curriculum context and the level of student experience required by EMR.
208. The visitors got a clear sense of a supported, supportive and collegiate staff body with a real focus on the student experience.

209. The increasing numbers of students, the new AGEP programme and new technologies used in teaching animal handling and clinical skills programme all require extra resource including new staff. The visitors understand that new staff have and are being appointed, and that further staff will be appointed as student numbers increase further.

Commendations

210. The creation and success of both the Veterinary Clinical Demonstrator role, and a career progression route for those in these roles is to be commended.

Recommendations

211. The School must ensure that all staff are appropriately qualified and prepared for their roles, particularly those involved in teaching and assessment, whether they are staff, residents or other postgraduates, adjuncts or off-campus contracted teachers.

Suggestions

212. The School should ensure that academic and, especially, support staff numbers are appropriate to support not only students numbers but the evolving curriculum.

Standard 9 – Curriculum

Background:

213. The BVSc and AGEP (Advanced Graduate Entry Programme) are designed to meet the RCVS, EAEVE and AVMA competences and the UK QAA Subject Benchmark for Veterinary Science. The BVSc programme is delivered over 5 years and the AGEP over 4 years, and both are outcomes-based.
214. Year 1 and Year 5 of the BVSc curriculum were implemented in 2013/14 followed by Years 2, 3 and 4 in successive years. The design involves the learner progressively developing the knowledge and understanding of:
- Normal healthy animals: individuals, groups and populations
 - Disease: agents of disease, body's response to disease, disease management
 - Case management and clinical reasoning
215. This is complemented by the progressive development of:
- Practical and clinical skills
 - Professional behaviours and attitudes
216. The curriculum has four successive themes as well as long parallel themes:
- Animal Health Science (AHS) - There are two AHS units which encompass and integrate the traditional disciplines of Anatomy, Physiology and Biochemistry and are taught in Year 1 and Year 2. The theme begins with a 6-week introductory 'AHS Foundation' element which aims to facilitate the transition to university education, provides basic knowledge and understanding of cells, tissues, organs and body structures.
 - Animal Management (AM) – Two AM units encompass the care, management and practical handling skills for the major species of veterinary importance. In Year 1 (AM1) the emphasis is on dogs, cats, horses, cattle and sheep. Students develop their knowledge and understanding of the structure, operation and welfare of major livestock production industries and the management, husbandry and welfare of companion animal species. In Year 2 (AM2) students develop their knowledge and understanding of the management, husbandry and welfare of the species (pigs, poultry, and 'exotics') not covered in Year 1.
 - Animal Disease (AD) - There were originally two AD units encompassing the disciplines of immunology, pathology, parasitology, microbiology, basic pharmacology, veterinary public health (VPH) and food safety and were taught in Year 2 and part of Year 3. In 'AD1' in Year 2 students are introduced to disease mechanisms, immunology and general pathology, disease agents including microbes and parasites, and pharmacological principles followed by more in-depth coverage of the common parasites, therapies and control mechanisms. In Year 3, 'AD 2' provided more in-depth coverage of microbes, antimicrobials, veterinary public health and food safety. In 2020/21 AD 2 was merged with Clinical Veterinary Science 1 to create the "Clinical Veterinary Science and One Health" unit in year 3.
 - Clinical Veterinary Science (CVS) - This is the largest part of the BVSc; three CVS units span Years 3 to 5 and are predominantly based on the Langford Campus. The CVS theme

encompasses basic clinical science, farm, companion animal and exotic species, and the extended final year. Students progressively develop the skills to manage cases as individual animals, groups and populations. In Years 3 & 4, central to the development of more advanced problem solving and clinical reasoning skills, regular case-based learning sessions complement traditional lectures and promote ‘scaffolded active learning’.

217. Long themes throughout the curriculum are:

- Professional Studies – This includes a unit in each year comprising elements on i) communication skills, ii) professional conduct, ethics and the law, iii) business management, iv) health and safety, and v) study, learning, investigation and employability.
- Practical and Clinical Skills – Students develop their competences in practical, clinical and laboratory skills throughout the curriculum, culminating in clinical rotations during the extended final year.
- Embedded Themes - There are a number of ‘themes within units’, aspects of each of which are taught in most, if not all, years. For example: VPH (including food security); practical and clinical skills; EBVM and Research Skills (for more detail see associated document: Curriculum Digest).

218. Noteworthy features of the curriculum include:

- Extended Final Year - The extended final year is spread over 45 weeks. Students undertake 21 weeks of core rotations followed by 3 weeks of track rotations, and a 4-week elective, interspersed with EMS placements. They also complete a Professional Studies week, and a Global Health week both of which are attended by the whole year.
- Classroom to Clinic (C2C) – A 3-week block of teaching introduced into Year 4 between the end of 4th year teaching and the start of rotations. All students complete a range of activities designed to help them prepare for the clinical environment.
- Clinical Skills Laboratory (CSL) - A designated area where students learn, practice and improve clinical, diagnostic, surgical and animal handling skills both during instructor-led and self-directed drop-in sessions. A comprehensive set of supporting learning resources (skills booklets and videos) have been developed.
- Evidence-Based Veterinary Medicine (EBVM) & Research Skills – During the BVSc programme students develop their understanding and skills related to research and the practice of EBVM, supported through a series of online tutorials developed with RCVS funding by a Bristol-led international team. Students undertake a variety of self-directed work activities including writing a grant application and producing a Knowledge Summary. Additionally, the INSPIRE project (launched in 2015/16) further supports students considering research as a career and students are also actively encouraged to undertake an intercalated BSc.
- The BVSc Gateway programme (as part of the Gateway to the Professional Programmes initiative) was developed to support diversity and widening participation. The programme enables students to develop the knowledge and understanding of the basic sciences that underpin veterinary science and includes activities to foster professional behaviours as well

as additional veterinary and animal-related work experience. Students who successfully complete the programme can progress to Year 1 of the 5-year BVSc.

- The BVSc AGEP comprises a bespoke two-year, hybrid case-based curriculum that replaces the first three years of the five-year BVSc programme, and shares years 4 and 5 of the BVSc programme. The programme's intended learning outcomes (ILO) have been mapped to the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) Day One Competences and AVMA Standards, and the curriculum and teaching materials have been reviewed and informed by panels comprising general practitioners, current undergraduate students, veterinary specialists in relevant fields and educationalists. The first cohort of 39 students started in September 2019, and the intake number rose to 55 in 2020.

219. All final year students must pass the week-long Veterinary Public Health rotation, most of which takes place in the Langford Abattoir. The rotation prepares students for the role the veterinary surgeon plays in the food system, with an emphasis on the processes involved in producing safe meat and meat products, with links made to practice and the role of the professional in ensuring that animals are healthy when sent to slaughter and that welfare is not compromised. The students also spend time in the post-mortem room identifying rejected material and producing reports on the samples, including advice for the producer and treatment options. The rotation builds on the VPH teaching throughout years 1-4 of the curriculum and is led by a Lecturer in Veterinary Public Health. In addition, the VPH elective includes OVS training, usually only open to postgraduates.
220. The Gateway, BVSc and BVSc AGEP curricula are overseen by the Veterinary Programme Committee (VPC), chaired by the Programme Director and supported by the Student Administration Team. Annual cycles of review and curriculum evolution are based on feedback gathered from staff and students through VPC, Annual Programme Review (APR) (with "You-said-we-did" documents published to students), Unit Team Meetings, External Examiner Reports, annual University Quality Team visits, survey data (NSS, Your Bristol Survey, 15-month postgraduate survey, Vet Schools Council Employers and 3–5-year graduates surveys), and changes to RCVS and other accreditors' Day One Competences. Periodic inputs to curriculum review include University-led Periodic Programme Review, Transforming Student Experience Through Assessment (TESTA) events (2021), and Curriculum Festivals (2020/21). Changes to ILO must be approved by VPC. Significant changes to Unit descriptions, assessment or resource requirements also require approval by School Education Committee and, for teaching and assessment, Faculty Undergraduate Studies Committee. Assessment data are monitored through annual reporting of marks trends.
221. Two EMS Leads, supported by two Student Administration team staff, report directly to VPC. Policies and guidance for placements are provided in the preclinical EMS handbook. Students identify placements through discussion with their tutors and other staff, external advice, prior experience, or the School's databases of preclinical and clinical placements. Placements on the clinical database have a Student Placement Agreement in place that covers health and safety. If and SPA is not in place, the student contacts the placement to discuss the requirements and the EMS team follow up with a SPA and add the placement to the database. Students provide placements with a form that includes an invitation to providers to feedback on the student and the School's processes. This information is regularly reviewed by the EMS team and action taken

where required. Any negative feedback relating to the student is reported to the EMS coordinator for review/ response.

Comments

- 222. The visitors noted the dynamic evolution of the curriculum, including the School's rapid response to both Covid, requiring accelerated moves to online and blended learning, and the move to a 'semi-distributed' approach in final year to, in particular, equine rotations. The visitors also noted the positive feedback from staff and students to the Case-Based Learning approach in the BVSc AGEP programme. The first cohort of AGEP students (year 3 AGEP) are currently part of year 4 of the BVSc, and appear to be integrating well.
- 223. Teaching event ILOs are presented in the unit and rotation handbooks, whilst the programme handbooks refer to Aims and Objectives.
- 224. The visitors noted that the School was at a point of transition for curriculum mapping with the introduction of the revised RCVS competency framework, the introduction of the AGEP programme and an issue with the curriculum mapping software provider resulting in the current interactive curriculum map being out of date.
- 225. The School is about to embark on a fundamental curriculum review, learning from both the challenges and successes of all the above, and in particular the success of the CBL approach in integrating basic and clinical science.

Commendations

- 226. The School is commended for the development, delivery and enthusiasm of staff and students for the new AGEP programme, particularly in delivering the first few years of the novel programme during the Covid pandemic.

Recommendations

- 227. None.

Suggestions

- 228. The School should ensure that the effects of ongoing curriculum evolution on student experience and outcomes continue to be monitored and reported in the RCVS Annual Monitoring Report. In particular, the impact of the proposed fundamental curriculum review on, and transition from, the current curriculum to the new should be monitored.
- 229. Solutions for ensuring students and staff can readily understand the linkages between ILOs and D1C, through an interactive curriculum map explicitly articulating a cohesive underlying framework, thus facilitating understanding how any session relates to the higher-level outcomes of both School programmes should be expedited.

Standard 10 – Assessment

Background:

230. Assessment practice within the BVSc and BVSc AGEP involves coursework assessment, end of year assessments, assessment of practical skills and professional skills and attributes. An 'Assessment matrix' for each programme details all the assessments for each year of study and is communicated to students alongside progression requirements.
231. Assessments are mapped to curricular ILOs and the RCVS Day One Competencies. A blueprinting process is undertaken to ensure appropriate distribution of questions.
232. Animal handling skills are assessed via OSCEs in the Summer exam period of year 1 (6 species) and year 2 (poultry, pigs/exotics, year 1 for AGEP students). All stations are must pass. Clinical skills are assessed via OSCEs prior to Easter in year 3 (BVSc) and year 2 (AGEP), prior to undertaking Clinical EMS. Five out of eight stations must be passed and skills include basic surgery, anaesthesia, clinical pathology and other basic procedures. Two "must pass" OSCEs in communication skills are included in Year 4.
233. Final year rotations are mapped to the Day One Competences. Students must pass all core and track rotations, based on overall assessment of professional skills and attributes and clinical competences in each rotation. Students will also have a variety of "must-do" tasks/coursework which receive formative feedback. They must sit a formative but compulsory computer-based examination during most core rotations. They must pass a defined number of practical tasks (directly observed procedural skills; DOPS) during core rotations. They must also pass assessments associated with Global Animal Health week and Professional Studies week, as well as complete an extended piece of elective coursework. Finals comprise 150 single-best-answer multiple choice question, testing clinical application of knowledge across a wide range of clinical scenarios.
234. Thus, prior to sitting the computer-based final examinations, students are required to have:
 - passed each of the core and track rotations (Intro to Core replaced track in 20/21 and 21/22)
 - passed each of the required DOPS
 - passed the communication skills workplace-based assessment (20/21 and 21/22, replacing the BVSc4 OSCE due to Covid)
 - passed the 4-week elective period
 - completed clinical EMS
235. If students receive 3 or more borderline summative grades over the course of rotations for either "Professional Skills and Attributes" or "Clinical Competences", or 4 or more summative borderline grades in total, they will be required to undertake further rotations and/or a reflective task, to be agreed on a case-by-case basis by the rotation committee. Students failing a rotation or receiving 2 or more borderlines over the course of rotations will normally be required to meet with the Academic Support Team. Students failing 3 rotations (including first and re-sit attempts) are required to repeat the year.
236. Knowledge assessments include multiple choice examinations, short answer questions and spot tests. Students also undertake a professionalism focussed reflective portfolio across the five years which is discussed with their personal tutor. A more structured approach in the early years helps with the development of reflective practice. Assessment of professional skills and attributes is supplemented via a range of coursework, including an agribusiness task.

237. Feedback to students is delivered in a number of ways and has recently undergone some review of practice, resulting in a more dialogic approach. Failing students are given additional feedback and support with resit examinations. Students must pass each year of study in order to progress.
238. A formal approach to standard setting and post examination review is undertaken, outlined in various policies. A Faculty psychometrician provides strategic support with the review of assessment practice and is being increasingly utilised in the post examination period to assist with statistical review. Quality assurance processes are overseen at Faculty and University level.
239. Any changes to the assessments across all years and both programmes are proposed to the VPC to ensure objective and transparent ruling of changes. Significant changes are then reviewed at School Education Committee, followed by Faculty Undergraduate Studies Committee.

Comments

240. The assessment strategy is designed to ensure students are assessed across a range of domains, mapped to the Day One Competencies.
241. Assessment workload for both staff and students is high, but under frequent review. Staff workloads are closely monitored by line managers
242. The delivery of OSCEs is associated with a large workload, particularly in the context of the administrative processes.

Commendations

243. None

Recommendations

244. None

Suggestions

245. The School should expedite their plans for digitising OSCE assessments in order to decrease the administrative workload.
246. The lack of access to live animals for some handling OSCE stations is impacting the validity of these assessments and the School should consider ways to facilitate access to this resource, alongside appropriate welfare considerations.
247. The School is encouraged to review the design of the BVSc 3 OSCE to optimise its reliability and validity in the context of the range and number of practical skills being assessed.

Standard 11 – Research Programmes

Background:

248. To underpin the School's research, a School Research Strategy was implemented in 2019 together with investment in six new research-active positions – this redressing of numbers and refocus on research continues with advertisement of six further research-active positions in June 2021. The research strategy focuses on two research themes - Population Health and Global Food Security.
249. Underpinning these two overarching themes, the School also has research programmes in Animal Welfare & Behaviour; Infection, Inflammation & Immunotherapy; and Clinical Research, funded by industry, government and charities. More recently, the School has built a research programme in One Health Approaches to Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR).
250. All of these research foci integrate well with a veterinary programme which is built around research-informed teaching.
251. Research work in the School has led to impacts in Health and Welfare (clinical veterinary practice, clinical medical practice, animal health and welfare), Public Policy (governmental legislation, charity policy), Industry Production and Practice, International Development (animal health and welfare in developing countries) and Society and Culture (public attitudes informed by media activity). Postgraduate researchers (MSc and PhD students as well as post-doctoral researchers) underpin much of the research that goes on within the School and demonstrate the potential pathway from undergraduate education to independent researcher that is open to veterinary students.
252. Students are encouraged to attend research seminars and talks throughout their studies. These seminars are open to all staff and students on site and have proved to be of great value in engaging with the student body and giving insight into the current state of veterinary research across a wide range of fields. Across the BVSc programme (years 1-4) the students have a series of timetabled lectures called 'Big Ideas in Veterinary Medicine' where researchers give inspiring talks about their own career path and research area, exposing students to the myriad ways a veterinary degree can lead to a career in research.
253. All 3rd year BVSc and 2nd year BVSc AGEP students undertake a directed self-education task in which they are expected to work in a team to write a mock grant application, which provides them insight into life as a researcher. This is marked by the group's supervisor and subjected to standard moderation processes. The students in Year 4 (BVSc and BVSc AGEP) also arrange for staff to give research seminars as part of the 'Clinical Club' series for which they have attracted Industry sponsorship, and to which all years are invited. The School also takes a very proactive approach to encouraging students to intercalate as part of its mission to encourage more veterinary surgeons to consider research careers. All students have the opportunity to intercalate for the period of one year for a BSc or MSc/MRes degree with the associated substantial research projects. This opportunity to undertake research is advertised during the introductory sessions hosted for 1st and 2nd year students followed by meetings with those expressing an interest as appropriate.
254. Students receive training in research methods and are expected to understand the contribution of basic and applied research to veterinary science and clinical work. Research skills are considered essential for the practice of evidence based veterinary medicine (EBVM). Bristol has led three iterations of an RCVS-funded project that has produced an on-line EVBM teaching resource to help practitioners develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in EBVM.

255. It is expected that all School PW1 staff supervise postgraduate researchers and many in LV do so also. Research students with a clinical background often contribute to clinical teaching of undergraduates; those without a clinical background assist with tutorials, contribute to research-orientated lectures and may supervise student projects or facilitate case-based learning (CBL) or directed self-education groups. Interns and residents actively contribute to undergraduate student learning especially on clinical rotations. Residents receive specific training in clinical and small group teaching during their first two years of residency.
256. Delivering continuing education is also very important to the School. The programmes offered are prepared in a proactive way, addressing upcoming needs of the veterinary profession but are also able to respond to the needs of the local community. LV run a Continuous Professional Development programme for both veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses.
257. LV also run a Recent Graduate Support Network, working with recent graduates and School alumni to provide access to both clinical and non-clinical continuing education, providing new graduates a safe forum to discuss cases, both with each other and with LV specialists. This programme was put on hold in 2020 but has restarted in 2021.
258. The School offers animal welfare officer and poultry welfare training courses, providing unique knowledge transfer opportunities for government officials, major retailers and staff within the UK slaughter industry and overseas, including the Americas and Europe, Russia and Asia.
259. In addition, the University trains 'Official Veterinarians' responsible for supervising food safety and animal welfare controls in UK abattoirs and food establishments.
260. The University also operates an approved training centre for FDQ (Food and Drinks Qualifications), delivering slaughter license (Certificate of Competence), HACCP food safety and bespoke Halal compliance training to the UK slaughter industry. The centre also acts as the provider for pre-requisite training for a newly-launched Halal assurance program – The Demonstration of Life Protocol – launched by ministers and government in April 2021 as a mechanism to widen acceptability of stunned Halal product. The University of Bristol co-wrote the protocol and were instrumental in securing support from the Muslim community, Halal Certification bodies and DEFRA.
261. INSPIRE is a national initiative coordinated by the [Academy of Medical Sciences](#) and supported with funding from the [Wellcome Trust](#). Its aim is to encourage an interest in research amongst medical, dental and veterinary students and highlight how research can enhance their everyday lives as qualified medical practitioners. The School was the first veterinary School in the UK to be awarded an INSPIRE scheme.
262. In 2016, the Bristol Veterinary School secured BBSRC funding to establish a UK Veterinary Summer Studentship Program to fund 16 studentships per year across all UK Veterinary Schools.
263. The School offers a number of postgraduate training opportunities including the MSc in Global Wildlife Health & Conservation, MSc by Research and research PhDs. Members of the School postgraduate community are actively encouraged to interact with the undergraduate students via INSPIRE events and activities described above. A clinical research project is integrated into the MSc Veterinary Sciences (residency programme) which equips students with the knowledge and skills to initiate and complete high quality, methodologically sound and ethical clinical research.

Bristol also offers opportunities to apply for six-month funded Clinical Primers for early career clinicians to experience a research environment for the first time.

Comments

264. Progress against the new research strategy was reported to be good. It was noted the School is making significant efforts to grow their research income.

Commendations

265. None.

Recommendations

266. None.

Suggestions

267. None.

Standard 12 – Outcomes Assessment

Background:

268. The University of Bristol educational provision is regulated by the Office for Students (OfS). They monitor providers' compliance with their ongoing conditions of registration, using a risk-based approach.
269. There are multiple mechanisms in place to monitor and enhance the quality of the School's strategic and educational objectives. These are summarised in Table 12.2. Until the 16/17 graduating cohort, the University and School monitored DLHE data (gathered 6 months postgraduation, governed by HESA and run by University central team by emailing/calling graduates). The School now monitors Graduate Destinations data gathered 15 months postgraduation (most recent data-set available is the 17/18 cohort; governed and managed by HESA). Of those that respond (response rates range from 59-77%), employment rates are excellent, with data indicating that 97-100% of graduates are in graduate-level employment at the time of data collection over the last 5 years.

Outcome	Metrics used	Staff responsible	Reported to
Institutional rankings	Guardian	Head of School	School Executive Group
	Times		
	Sunday Times		
Employment rates	Good University Guide	Head of School	School Executive Group
	QSS		
	Year 1	Head of School	School Executive Group
	Beyond year 1		
Achievement of RCVS Day 1 Competence and Assessment Outcomes	Mapping of curriculum	Programme Director	Veterinary Programme Committee
	Assessment matrix and Blueprinting of assessments	Deputy Programme Director and Unit Leads	Veterinary Programme Committee
	NAVLE Results	School NAVLE Champion	Veterinary Programme Committee, APR
	15 month Graduate Survey	Student Experience Lead	Veterinary Programme Committee
	VSC 3-5 year Graduate Survey	Student Experience Lead	Veterinary Programme Committee
	VSC Employers Survey	Student Experience Lead	Veterinary Programme Committee
	VSC/RCVS 2020 (Covid) Graduate Survey	Student Experience Lead	Veterinary Programme Committee

Teaching Quality and Student Experience	National Student Survey	Student Experience Lead	Veterinary Programme Committee, School Executive Group and Faculty Board
	Your Bristol Surveys	Student Experience Lead	Veterinary Programme Committee
	Mid- and end-of-unit evaluations	Unit organisers	Veterinary Programme Committee (Annual Programme Review)
	Student:Staff Liaison Committees	Head of School	School Education Committee
	Peer Observation	School Education Director	School Education Committee
	Engagement with UoB CREATE Scheme	Section Leads	Head of School
	Teaching Awards (School, Faculty and University)	School Education Director/Deputy Head of School	School Education Committee
	Educational Research and Publications	Deputy Head of School	VetEd Research Group
	Langford Teaching and Learning Workshops	T&L Programme Lead	Deputy Head of School
Educational Partners	Rotation providers: KPIs relating to teaching quality and caseload; annual visits to external partners (more frequent for new providers)	Deputy Head of School	Partnership Meetings
	Specialist oversight of teaching: Written reports	Deputy Head of School	N/A
University QA and Enhancement processes	Education Action Plan; Annual Quality Team Visits	School Education Director	School Education Committee and Faculty Board
	Transforming Student Experience Through Assessment (TESTA); Curriculum Festivals	School Education Director Deputy Head of School	Veterinary Programme Committee Curriculum Review Steering Group

270. **NSS results:** Response rates to the NSS average 94% over the last 4 years. NSS scores are monitored closely, and specific actions linked to the NSS are agreed at APR and listed in the EAP. Examples of changes agreed at APR include: The establishment of the Student Experience project in 2018 to promote and better understand the Student Voice; the introduction of a pilot “Helpful Feedback Project” in 2018 with rollout across the curriculum in 2020-21, to encourage a more dialogic student-led approach to written feedback on coursework; the introduction of formative mid-sessional assessments in 2018-19; streamlining of BVSc3 Units AD2 and CVS1 into a single Clinical Veterinary Science/One Health Unit in 2020-21 to reduce repetition and improve integration; introduction of reflective log/assessment forms in final year to improve quality of final year rotation reflection and feedback, linked to a required portfolio task assessed by tutors.
271. **Graduate and Employer data:** Data is gathered from graduates approximately 15 months after qualification, normally at the annual VDS-sponsored reunion, with a mixture of paper and online responses (online only for 2020 responses). Low response rates mean these data need to be interpreted with caution. The Student Experience Lead reports on these findings to VPC, to inform curriculum development. Examples of changes that have been made in response to these surveys (and other data) include: Addition of an imaging practical in year 4 from 2019-20; weekly structured small group teaching sessions in final year led by Clinical Demonstrators from 2019-20, highlighting primary care decision making perspectives and practical skills; adaptations to CBL in years 1-4 to include consideration of financial and other limitations from 19-20; redesign of business/financial awareness teaching in from 2020-21, with full rollout by 23-24.
272. **Educational partners:** Final Year students provide feedback on every placement, including a score for overall experience, teaching quality and caseload. All providers are expected to score a minimum of 4/5 on a Likert scale for each parameter and this score is monitored on a rolling basis throughout the year. Further discussion and appropriate action is undertaken if concerns are identified. For example, at the start of the academic year 2020-21, the impact of Covid meant that scores for student perceptions of caseload dropped below target in 6 rotations. Measures were quickly put in place, such as altering shift patterns and room access, streaming of ultrasound and endoscopy images to allow access to students outwith the room, and increased student involvement in telemedicine consultations. In addition, a team of three new Teaching Assistants (employed by LV during 20-21) worked closely with the clinical demonstrators to enhance both in-person and remote teaching. Caseload KPIs improved in all affected rotations subsequent to these interventions.
273. Quality of provision with LV is monitored specifically through quarterly Clinical SSLC and monthly School/LV Partnership Group meetings. There are open channels of communication with long-established partners (RSPCA, PDSA and BZS) who are additionally visited annually and provided with training.
274. Since 2018, the Institutional Planning Process (IPP) ensures that the School plans and evaluates progress towards strategic targets. Prior to 2018, there was a School Review process (last Vet School Review was in 2017). From 2021 the IPP process will be further informed by assessment of performance against specific KPIs contained within the School Strategy 2021-26.

275. All teaching sessions are mapped to the RCVS Day 1 competences, with assessment blueprinted to teaching sessions. School Regulations and Standing Orders require students to pass each academic year before progressing to the next. Robust quality assurance processes are in place both pre- and post-examinations.
276. Final year students must pass all rotations before sitting final examinations. Core rotation assessments consist of Professional Skills and Attributes and a Clinical Competency component and both are “must pass”, with feedback collated by the rotation lead from the clinical team. Additional “must pass” tasks are included in several rotations including case reports. Students must also pass 12 Directly Observed Procedural Skills (DOPS) during their core rotations.

Comments

277. The School has established key performance indicators. There is clear ownership of the processes and evidence of progress towards achieving most of these goals. Where goals are not being achieved there are plans in place to progress to their achievement.
278. The School has an established quality assurance and enhancement culture which evaluate outcomes at School, programme, module and individual student levels through both long and short feedback loops. Repeated measurements are made and assessment outcomes are used by the School to determine progress towards its strategic goals and to evaluate outcomes related to the veterinary programme and individual students.
279. The School has a system of internal and external evaluation to document whether students have achieved the programme’s stated learning outcomes, including the level of competence required of an entry-level veterinarian (RCVS Day One Competences). This includes monitored student documentation of skills and experience developed in the final year rotations and achievement of Day One Competences recorded within the must-pass portfolio.

Commendations

280. None.

Recommendations

281. None.

Suggestions

282. None.

Annex 1 - AVBC Indicators

	Data name	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	Mean
a	Teachers (FTE)	160.1	142.75	131.3	144.72
b	Students	849	769	718	778.67
c	Support Staff	288.45	232.8	224.7	248.65
d	Theoretical Training (hours)	2051.5	1954.5	2029	2011.7
e1	Practical Training (hours)	856	843.5	857.6	852.37
e2	Clinical Training (hours)	1120	1120	1120	1120
f	Livestock	21600	20315	18773	20229
g	Pets	31648	28719	16591	25653
h	Postmortem examinations	532	371	946	616.33
i	Students Graduating	126	143	130	133

Indicator	SCHOOL	Satisfactory	Unacceptable
Teacher/Student Ratio	0.19	0.13	0.07
Teacher/Support Staff Ratio	0.58	1.00	2.00
Ratio of Theoretical Training/Practical and Clinical Training	1.02	1.00	1.67
Ratio of Clinical Training/Theoretical and Practical Training	0.39	0.25	0.11
Student/Animal Ratio (Livestock)	0.04	0.05	0.20
Student/Animal Ratio (Pets)	0.03	0.02	0.05
Students Graduating/Post-mortem examination Ratio	0.22	0.25	0.50