School of Veterinary Medicine

Addendum to the Self Evaluation Report for the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE)

December 2020
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HEAD OF SCHOOL STATEMENT

The response of both staff and students to the pandemic, and the work done to maintain an excellent learning experience, have been outstanding. When the normal was not possible, imagination, innovation and a can-do attitude have been brought to bear. Whilst the experience has been different it is clear that aspects of teaching and staff-student interaction have been enhanced. The University, the School, but most importantly the students, deeply appreciate the efforts and dedication shown by professional support and academic staff. To maintain clinical teaching/service and essential face to face classes some faculty and staff have been coming to campus to work and delivering a much greater burden of in person teaching than normal; all the while managing concerns about their own safety and that of their families. For others it has been said that “we have not been working from home” but “at home working”. The modern tendency to be always online, always working, has been exacerbated and the boundaries between work and home life further degraded. If anything, the sense of community at the School is stronger than ever and the efforts of students, faculty and staff to look after each has been humbling. I am deeply grateful to staff and faculty for their extraordinary efforts and greatly admire the work, leadership and maturity of the students during this very challenging time.

Ewan R Cameron

Head of School

December 2020
Standard 1: Objectives, Organisation and QA Policy

1.2 Status of the School
The following new appointment has been made.
• Vice-Principal & Head of College of Medical, Veterinary & Life Sciences, Professor Iain McInnes

Management Structure of the School
The following new appointments have been made.
• Deputy Head of School: Professor Christopher Loughrey
• Research Co-Conveners: Dr Collette Britton and Dr Peter Hastie
• Race Equality Co-Champions: Dr Karen MacEachern and Dr Noelia Yusta

The SER reported that the School were considering a wholly owned subsidiary company model through which to manage the small animal hospital. Identified goals were to: 1) Enhance the student experience; 2) Ensure sustainability as an excellent teaching platform; 3) Develop clear career pathways for both academic and clinically focussed staff; 4) Offer more attractive terms and conditions for specialist clinical staff; 5) Maintain and grow caseload and income streams; and 6) Ensure that the Small Animal Hospital continues to be premier provider of top-quality care to our pet owning community. This proposal has been halted and the need for this will be reviewed in the first half of 2021. The School is currently pursuing the above objectives within normal University governance structures.

1.2 Status of the School (including management and organisation) and 1.3 Strategic plan

Covid-19 impacts

Short Term - 19/20:
• No major impact at a strategic level on objectives and organisation but operational adaptations required.
• Temporary freeze on posts and additional approval process for post release but these measures have been subsequently relaxed.

Medium-Long Term - 20/21:
• Incurred/incurring additional costs of adjusting for on- and off-campus teaching.
• Delay in implementation/halt on budget proposals for 20/21.
• Annual planning and budget round for 21/22 set to proceed as normal.

COVID-19 mitigation/actions

Short Term – 19/20:
Organisational operational adaptations include:
• Working from home, shift working, furlough scheme.
• Regular online meetings with other schools (and accrediting bodies) nationally and internationally to share practice on teaching delivery, EMS, health and safety, diversity and inclusion etc.

**Medium-Long Term – 20/21:**
• Additional resources approved to deliver adjusted on- and off-campus teaching.

### 1.4 Quality assurance

### 1.5 Engagement with stakeholders

### 1.6 Management of quality assurance

**COVID-19 impacts**

**Short Term - 19/20:**
• Significant changes were needed to move teaching and support activity online. Throughout, the principles underpinning decision making were:
  • maintaining the quality of the student experience.
  • students’ health, safety and wellbeing.
  • achievement of the required learning outcomes and competences.
  • maintaining the health and safety of staff and clients.
  • proactively engaging with students and involving them in discussion of issues and possible solutions as appropriate.
  • engagement with other schools, organisations and external providers.

**Medium-Long Term – 20/21:**
• The ongoing situation means that the above principles continue to apply (as they do under “normal” circumstances, but it was, and is, important to us not to allow the pandemic to dilute our commitment in this regard).

**COVID-19 mitigation/actions**

**Short Term – 19/20:**
• The Curriculum, Facilities, Animal Resources, Students and Assessment sections detail the specific steps taken to maintain the quality of the student experience.
• School COVID-19 “pulse surveys” of staff and regular dialogue with students were undertaken to inform actions.
• Communications group with student representation established.
• Regular online meetings were held with other schools (and accrediting bodies) nationally and internationally to share practice on teaching delivery, EMS, health and safety, diversity and inclusion etc.

**Medium-Long Term – 20/21:**
• See the section above for further detail.
Standard 2: Finances

2.1 Factual Information

COVID-19 Impacts

Short Term:
- Tuition fee reductions were not offered to students as a result of teaching and course assessments transitioning to online delivery rather than being cancelled.
- National lockdown impacted revenue in commercial areas from mid-March and onwards. Activity levels returned by August onwards broadly in line with pre-COVID expectations.
- Student numbers have remained buoyant despite COVID-19; therefore, tuition fees are in line with pre-COVID expectations.
- Additional funding has been made available by the University to the school to facilitate the impact of COVID-19 on teaching.

Medium-Long Term:
- Plans to operate the Small Animal Hospital under a new company model have been put on hold. The School currently believes the desired objectives can be achieved within the current operational structure.

COVID-19 mitigation/actions

Short Term:
- Additional funding has been made available by the University to the school to facilitate the impact of COVID-19 on teaching.

Medium-Long Term:
- Additional government funding is being made available to universities to adapt to a post-COVID environment.
Standard 3: Curriculum

3.1 The BVMS Programme

COVID-19 impacts

Short Term
Teaching delivery (2019-20) - suspension of in person teaching, course materials placed online (from 14 March 2020).

BVMS1 impact: 2 weeks of didactic teaching in module 6 plus revision week.
BVMS2 impact: 1 week of didactic teaching in module 12 plus revision week.
BVMS3 impact: 4 weeks of didactic teaching in module 19.
BVMS4 impact: no impact as all didactic teaching completed.
BVMS5 impact: blocks 11 and 12 affected.

Medium-Long Term:
Teaching 2020-21 - a reduction of in person teaching on campus.

COVID-19 Actions and Mitigations:

Short Term
Teaching delivery for academic year 2019-20 moved online where possible:

• Module, rotation and course leaders created action plans to inform students how remainder of teaching would be implemented for March/April.
• Reduction in requirements for DOPS.
• Suspension of core rotations (optional EMS style placements available where possible).
• Completion of selective rotations optional.

Note: any classes that could not go online were noted and will be delivered in the future where possible.

Medium-Long Term:
Teaching delivery for academic year 2020-21 moved online where possible:

BVMS1-4
• Blended approach adopted across the curriculum with practical and clinical skills teaching prioritised for on campus instruction with appropriate physical distancing and PPE.
• Some classes which could not be delivered on campus nor converted to an online format have been noted and will be delivered in the future where possible.
• Additional weekly Q&A sessions and regular drop-in style sessions (via Zoom) have been added to the timetable to encourage engagement and interaction and provide the opportunity for staff/student discussions/contact which would normally be available through our open-door policy.

**BVMS5 approach:**

• Online teaching for all students from May-August 2020 (one week of online teaching for each Core Rotation).
• Resumption of in person rotations from end of August 2020.
• Rotations rescheduled from August 2020-May 2021 comprising seven x 3-weeks core rotations.
• Mobile clinics established on campus to enable us to continue to deliver clinical teaching associated with PDSA and Scottish SPCA.
• One x 3-week selective (internal) with limited external selectives available.

*Note - further details on adjustments to clinical rotations is provide throughout Section 5, Animal Resources and Teaching Material of Animal Origin.*

**All years** - Students supported through online collaborative software (Zoom, Teams etc) and interactive resources created in Moodle and Mahara to deliver case discussions, tutorials, Q&A discussions.

### 3.5 External Practical Training/Extra Mural Studies (EPT/EMS)

**COVID-19 Actions and Mitigations:**

• EMS requirements are under review by RCVS and latest updates can be found [here](#).
• School deadlines for preclinical EMS extended to allow for lambing.
• Individual EMS opportunities assessed for each student as they arise.
• Clear guidelines available on EMS Mahara pages: development of ‘COVID’ EMS page and ‘online’ EMS page.
• Year group and open EMS Q&A zoom sessions.
• Graduating class 2020 - requirement reduced from 38 to 30 weeks.
• Continued regular communication between UK EMS coordinators group, Vet School Council -Education Committee (VSC-EC), EMS liaison group and the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS).

**Suggestions for improvement on Standard 3**

Our curriculum undergoes an ongoing evolution and review, some planned developments were accelerated by COVID-19 including an increased use of blended and active learning. We will review these changes over the coming session to see which of these will be retained post COVID-19.
Standard 4: FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Standard 4: Facilities and equipment

4.1 Description of the location and organisation of our facilities

COVID-19 Impacts

4.1.1 Teaching Complex
• In late March 2020 the teaching complex and offices were closed due to lockdown, with teaching and assessment pivoting to online (Section 9 Curriculum).

4.1.2 Small Animal Hospital
• During the initial period of COVID-19 restrictions and lockdown, the small animal hospital continued to provide 24/7 emergency care for referred small animal cases, while elective and non-urgent procedures were temporarily suspended. Again, with the easing of lockdown restrictions the hospital was able to offer its full range of services from July 2020.

4.1.3 Glasgow Equine Hospital and Practice (Weipers Centre)
• The new primary care equine practice was due to launch in April 2020. This was delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions, but the delay was short-lived and the practice formally launched in July 2020.
• During the initial period of COVID-19 restrictions and lockdown, the equine hospital continued to provide 24/7 emergency care for referred equine cases, while elective and non-urgent procedures were temporarily suspended. Again, with the easing of lockdown restrictions the hospital was able to offer its full range of services from July 2020.

4.1.5 The Research Complex (incorporating Veterinary Diagnostic Services)
• Within the research complex veterinary diagnostic services (covering histopathology, clinical pathology, infectious disease) continued to provide their support service to the clinical areas of the School.
• All research and the research laboratories were temporarily suspended as a result of COVID-19 restrictions, with the exception of COVID-19 research itself, which was primarily limited to the MRC-University of Glasgow Centre for Virus Research on the Garscube campus. Non-COVID-19 laboratories started to open back up to staff and students from August 2020 onwards, albeit with restrictions in place with regards to occupancy levels.

4.1.7 Extramural facilities
• Access to off-site facilities were significantly impacted by COVID-19, and this is primarily detailed in addenda to Standards 3 and 5.

COVID-19 actions and mitigations

As would be expected, significant resources have been attached to dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic within the University campus, with appropriate measures and advice provided through the University’s webpages for staff and students. There is specific guidance issued to staff and students with respect to COVID-19 safety on campus, coupled with significant budget allocation devoted to determine room occupancies of every area of the campus, safe routes of transit and physical distancing measures. This has been led (in consultation with the School) by the University’s Estates department.
Standard 5. Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin

5.1. The use of animals in veterinary teaching

COVID-19 impacts and mitigations

5.1.1 COVID-19 has affected teaching in all species groups but very quickly plans were instigated to mitigate and minimise the impact on student teaching.

Due to government restrictions and health considerations final year teaching within the clinics was suspended from March-August 2020. This coincided with the companion animal clinics moving to essential veterinary services only (emergency and urgent) and therefore a significantly reduced caseload. The final year class of 19/20 received a combination of online and face-to-face teaching during Block 11, whilst Block 12 was all online. For the final year class of 20/21 teaching was online between May-August 2020 with the resumption of in person rotations from end of August 2020. Tutorial based activity that would normally have been delivered within core clinical rotations was used for online teaching in the summer of 2020 as well as additional material to prepare students for the face-to-face rotations. Clinical based and face to face rotations recommenced with a new 3-week structure rather than the normal 4-week duration.

Small Animal

- We have adapted teaching practices within the Small Animal Hospital (SAH) to enable final students to continue to gain ‘hands-on’ practical experience with clinical cases, while maintaining physical distancing. Although the SAH saw cases on an emergency-only basis during lockdown, the caseload returned to normal/near-normal levels well in advance of the final year student rotations commencing.

Farm Animal

- The summer 2-week online rotation covered tutorial-based teaching aligned with production animal learning outcomes.
- Moving the tutorials to the online rotation allowed us to maximise time for practical teaching activity which meant only one day less of practical activity in the three-week rotation compared to the four-week rotation. The 3 weeks were as follows:
  - Galloway building
  - Galloway building and herd visits (2 x days out on herd visits).
  - First opinion practice

Equine

- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the local practices were unable to provide placements for BVMS undergraduates. This was a multifactorial decision made by the private practices, taking into account the concerns of their clients and staff. Risks associated with students being present on premises and within cars could not be fully mitigated, not just for the disease but also for the threat of track and trace policies preventing in contact veterinary surgeons from working for their practice for a prolonged period.
- Teaching has therefore been focused on utilising the Glasgow Equine Hospital caseload during a three-week rotation. As has always been practised at the GEH all case-based teaching is focused on first opinion situations,
specifically day one clinical outcomes including clinical skills and clinical reasoning. This on campus clinical rotation was preceded by a two-week online course with content mapped to the Professional Phase intended learning outcomes, again with a focus on first opinion work.

- Unfortunately, due to the International, and specifically Moroccan, COVID-19 situation it has not been possible to offer the working equid rotation as a selective.
- It is hoped in early 2021 it may be possible for a proportion of undergraduates to spend Selectives with the first opinion practices for further experiential learning. This will depend on the COVID-19 situation or how risks can be mitigated in light of experience from other rotations.

Public health and Pathology

- For the class of 2019-20 the last 10 days of core PHP rotation moved to online, as did the final 4 weeks of BVMS1-3 (BVMS4 had already finished).
- BVMS3 and 4 who missed 1 Specimen Description Class had the material delivered by an online format.
- With the pandemic continuing we moved to interactive Zoom GoPro to ensure students have an interactive post-mortem examination and specimen description experience until normal teaching can resume. This has worked well, and aspects of GoPro teaching will be retained for the future.
- Submissions through Scotland’s Rural College continue.
- Submission numbers to Veterinary Diagnostic Services (VDS) returned to pre-COVID levels before our core on campus BVMS5 teaching resumed on 12 October 2020.

Management of cases by students

- Most of the management opportunities in the SAH remained unchanged, although the student numbers around each case are controlled to manage physical distancing – for example in surgery, we have a single student scrubbed in with each case, whereas before, we might have had two students. The most significant change relates to history taking, which is often being done remotely, in that the student will take the history from the client over the phone, rather than in person.
- Where previously students may have physically followed the case – for example moving from oncology into radiography to watch the imaging, physical distancing rules mean that the oncology students would wait outside the imaging suite (allowing the imaging students to process the case) and would then review the images separately.

Balance between First Opinion and Referral Cases

- Restructure of rotations due to COVID-19 has adjusted this slightly: 5 weeks first opinion small animal (2 weeks surgery, 1 week consults, 2 weeks out of hours), 2 weeks production animal first opinion (1 week external, 1 week herd visits). Equine first opinion suspended at practices request but key ILOs delivered in online rotation and in equine core rotation.
- Core weeks spent in referral environments: 3 weeks anaesthesia and imaging, 3 weeks small animal specialist, 1 week production animal specialist, 3 weeks equine specialist.

First Opinion Scottish SPCA and PDSA

- When the restrictions started and we entered lockdown, the Scottish SPCA closed its doors to non-essential staff, therefore the last 2-3 weeks of rotations ran via an online format.
- The Core SAP rotation runs over 3 weeks (= 1 block) (Monday-Wednesday: Scottish SPCA Surgery; Thursday & Friday: PDSA Surgery; Monday-Thursday: PDSA Consults).
- The 2020-2021 cohort started on their Scottish SPCA Surgery Rotation during week 2 of Block 3 once the mobile unit arrived on-site at the Garscube site.
- We aim to provide students with exposure to the four, main small animal neutering procedures: bitch and cat OVH, and dog and cat castration, depending upon case availability.
- Students will also be exposed to induction and maintenance of general anaesthesia in small animal patients.
• Students will be exposed to the admit and discharge of patients on the day - interacting with clients via telephone and physically distant.

• There will be opportunity for certain students to be offered an additional catch-up surgical day throughout the academic year should this be required.

• Students participate in afternoon case-based and procedural discussions in addition to practising hand-ties and suturing within the surgical unit.

• Cases are sourced/provided through the Scottish SPCA outpatient list, Inspectorate and the Low-Cost Neutering Scheme partnership between the Scottish SPCA and the University of Glasgow.

• The PDSA also continued in a mobile unit located outside the MSB soon after lockdown.

5.1.3 Anatomy training:

• Anatomy teaching was largely completed at the time of shutdown.

• Online anatomy review sessions were made available for session 2019-20.

• Zoom sessions used for revision purposes.

• Practical anatomy teaching is largely moved online; photographs and videos of the existing specimens (embalmed, plastinated, bones, radiographs, etc) have been created and combined into online Moodle lessons (photos, video demos and review questions). Pre-existing videos showing staged dissections of the canine and ovine abdomen which will be used during the year.

• The bone specimens for BVMS2 are currently in the process of being retrieved from last year’s students and will be distributed to the new BVMS2 class.

• Abdominal dissections (BVMS1) and thoracic dissections (BVMS2) will be onsite in the lab during modules 6/12 respectively.

• An open-lab session for review of the specimens seen online is being discussed and will go ahead subject to logistics (room occupancy, etc).

• Interactive online anatomy teaching resources developed in Articulate and delivered via Moodle rather than in Moodle itself.

• The practical spot exam will be online this year (as this is how most of the anatomy will have been taught).

Pathology training and abattoirs:

• PM submissions are at a level sufficient for the teaching despite the global pandemic.

• Due to COVID-19, the last 2 weeks of core final year Public Health & Pathology (PHP) rotation 2019-20 were delivered via online tutorials for most activities (Only 3 students didn’t have direct access to PM material). Current 2020-21 cohort have access to the post-mortem material following H&S procedures.

• BVMS4 Veterinary Public Health (VPH): All BVMS4 teaching was unaffected by COVID-19 restrictions. Current 2020-21 cohort are using interactive access to the limited number of specimens available via GoPro.

• BVMS3 Specimen Description VPH/Pathology: Online materials available as well as a newly developed Lung Inspector App which allows the students to work through the 6 most common lung “pathologies” then test their knowledge using a quiz.

• GoPro-Zoom live sessions will begin in semester 1 allowing interactive learning sessions while maintaining physical distancing, in person teaching of small groups will resume in semester 2.

• Due to COVID restrictions visits to abattoirs have been cancelled. As contingency plan, and in agreement with the RCVS, we are using the Virtual Abattoir programme, an app that simulates the experience of visiting an abattoir through an Oculus 3D device for 5 species (pig, poultry, cattle, sheep, deer).
• The app also provides with a learning tool in 2D that provides a guided tour with embedded quiz and scenarios.
• The scenarios are discussed in an on-campus session.
• In addition, the students provide a reflection (500 words) on one of the points previously covered by the audit in the context of the virtual visit.

5.2 Practical Training at external sites

COVID-19 impacts and mitigations
Small Animal – see above re PDSA and Scottish SPCA
Farm animal – there was adjustment as to farms students visited:
During the Core production animal herd visit week students attend some of the farms listed below:
• Meldrum Farm (large dairy enterprise milking approximately 800 cows) – all students.
• Cochno Farm (university farm milking approximately 50 cows, with 35 beef cows and 400 sheep) – all students.
• Kaimhill Farm (family run dairy milking approximately 200 dairy cows) – 50% students.
• Portnellan Farm (family run organic beef herd with approximately 40 breeding cows and followers) – 50% students.
• Rossiebank Farm (large dairy enterprise milking approximately 500 cows) – ~45% students.

The school has worked hard with external providers to run as many selective opportunities as possible under COVID-19 regulations (specialist sheep, dairy, Scottish wildlife and conservation) and in addition has developed several new selectives (Remote and Rural, Disease Investigation and Surveillance).
• A decision was made in March 2020 to adjust the final year rotations (core and selectives) to 3 weeks and to reassign students to those (internal) selectives that we knew we could run successfully even in a global pandemic but work continued to run as many of the external selectives as possible, in addition a new Exotics selective was developed with an external provider close to Glasgow.
• International placements e.g. Morocco, South Africa, Malawi have been problematic in the global pandemic: students have been reassigned appropriate UK based selectives or are engaging in selective related project work on a case-by-case basis.
• Some US selectives/externships have run under COVID-19 regulations.
• New selectives this year: SVM based Equine ambulatory: practice now established and selective places will be offered towards the end of Class of 2021 final year – COVID-19 regulations allowing, Ark Exotics, Remote and Rural, Disease Investigation and Surveillance also new and running under COVID-19 regulations.
• UK based selectives – fish production – cancelled at the last minute due to COVID-19 numbers in the Highland, students reassigned to alternative selectives.
• UK based selectives – some had to be adapted – e.g. altered relationship with RZSS meant that students could complete a 3-week selective at Edinburgh Zoo rather than 2 weeks Edinburgh Zoo and 2 weeks Royal Dick School of Veterinary Studies (Edinburgh).

5.3.2
• Group sizes have increased slightly to 4-5 (12-13 per 3-week Block, as opposed to 12-16 per 4-week Block).
Standard 6: Learning resources

COVID-19 impacts and mitigations

Short Term:
As noted in the original submission the School uses a blended learning approach for delivery of learning material and resources, hence we were in a strong position to pivot to an online delivery during the initial lockdown. This initial approach was used to complete teaching in BVMS 1-4 as required in March and April and also used extensively to support the new BVMS 5 students (from May 2020) for the period when access to clinical teaching environments was not possible. Medium term we aim to evaluate our blended learning delivery to identify successful pedagogy with the long-term goal of disseminating and embedding best practice.

The normal Orientation and Induction resources were expanded and supported with additional Zoom Q&A sessions in the month leading up to the start of the academic session. In place of the in person drop-in sessions we ran an equivalent using Zoom with breakout rooms to provide one-to-one support for all who required it (featured in the UoG LEADS Learning & Teaching Podcast series: Online Induction https://youtu.be/xiusjpFtub0).

The Library has a section on Glasgow Anywhere that provides access to students and staff on accessing online resources, whether they be e-books, e-journals or our databases. Changes to Library opening hours and study spaces have changed throughout the COVID-19 period depending on the various levels of Scottish Government restrictions. These changes are communicated to students through the School Weekly Newsletter and through the Library webpages.

6.2.11 Available support for development and use of instructional materials

Staff training was provided initially both locally and with support from the College and University to provide “Upskilling sessions” on a range of technologies to staff across the School; this was coupled with a series of more focussed sessions to explore the best ways to capitalise on our existing blended teaching resources, learn lessons from our early experiences and accelerate the provision of more extensive resources to support teaching in the new academic session (September 2020 onwards). Staff have embraced the challenge and used the VLE platforms to provide a range of engaging and interactive resources. Staff have presented their teaching innovations to colleagues via Zoom sessions highlighting the pedagogical and technology aspects. In the medium term we will build up a bank of staff presentations to be augmented, in the long term, by more advanced level upskilling sessions.

6.2.12 On Campus

In order to facilitate the move to remote teaching, the ‘Glasgow Anywhere Desktop’ service was launched. This is a cloud based service that can be scaled to meet teaching needs as appropriate, providing both general access virtual machines (which mimic the physical CSCE student environment) as well as reserved systems provided for classes, with specialist teaching packages on them. Students can access these systems with the University credentials via a web browser from anywhere in the world. Further information on the service is available at:

https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/anywhere/desktop/
6.2.13 Off Campus

Off-Campus access to StringSoft is now provided via a secure gateway, allowing students and staff to access the patient management system from anywhere via PC or Mac.

Medium-Long Term:

6.3 Access to learning resources

Analysis of reading lists was undertaken in June, and e-books were purchased to increase the availability of key reading for students. This analysis was repeated in December, ahead of Semester Two. As of December, 92% of titles appearing on reading lists were available in e-book format. Faculty staff have been proactively liaising with the College Librarian to source alternative textbooks where we are unable to source e-book versions.

The College Library Support and Reading List teams updated reading lists so that they linked to e-book versions of texts rather than their print equivalents; they continue to do so for new purchases.
Standard 7: Student admission, progression and welfare

7.1 Admission Procedures

Overview
The entry requirements for A-Level students were changed in 2019/20 from A*AA to AAA in line with other UK veterinary schools.

COVID-19 impacts

Short Term:
- In person Open Days cancelled.
- In person interviews for entry in 2021 unable to take place.
- Ethical Reasoning test usually taken at the SVM unable to take place.
- Applicants will not have had the opportunity for work experience prior to application.
- Applicant pools, UK and overseas, have increased.
- UK school examinations grading system has led to an almost 100% increase in applicants eligible for interview.
- Recruitment visits with partner schools in USA not possible.
- Summer School cancelled in 2020.

Medium-Long Term:
- Applicants will not have had the opportunity for work experience prior to application.
- Summer school may not be possible in 2021.

COVID-19 Actions and mitigation

Short Term:
- We have conducted two ‘virtual’ open days.
- Increased social media presence including videos of campus and hospitals as applicants will not have campus tours.
- All interviews will be conducted by Zoom.
- Interviews moved to between January and March for UK applicants to enable Admissions Committee to review the increased applicant pool.
- One interview panel for 30-minute interview consisting of two panel members for 30 minutes, rather than two 15-minute interviews.
- Ethical Reasoning test link e-mailed to applicants and they are asked to complete on-line.
• We participated in the development of a MOOC developed through the Veterinary Schools Council that centred around veterinary careers.
• We will accept an on-line MOOC relative to work experience, and applicants advised to undertake some on-line research into the veterinary profession.
• Conducted a series of virtual presentations at partner schools in the USA.

Medium-Long Term:
• We will accept an on-line MOOC relative to work experience, and applicants advised to undertake some on-line research into the veterinary profession.
Standard 8: Student Assessment

8.1 Assessment Strategy

COVID-19 impacts and mitigations

Short Term:
Suspension of on campus assessment for the 2019-20 academic year (from 13 March 2020).
Changes to assessment for academic year 2019-20:
- Years 1-4 examinations changed to formative after the formal exam period (summer 2020), portfolio submission remains a course requirement (must pass requirement for FEEPASS to enable completion of their home programme), OSCEs (years 2-4) cancelled, DOPS and EMS requirement adjusted.
- Year 5 summative examination as planned however transferred to online delivery (via Moodle) over a 24-hour period for each examination.

Medium-Long Term:
Planning towards online assessment using Moodle (Quiz/assignment as appropriate). Currently exploring options for proctoring in line with RCVS requirements.

8.2 Assessment Methods

COVID-19 impacts and mitigations

Practical outcomes for all students progressing to BVMS5 were collated across BVMS1-3 and mapped to outcomes for each individual. All students were issued with a Personal Learning Plan (PLP) at the beginning of clinical rotations, including any remediation. Extra assessment opportunities were identified for students requiring remediation to be completed as they progress through BVMS5.

Suggestions for improvement on Standard 8
The planned Assessment Review was paused whilst until we are able to establish the longer-term circumstances and impact that the pandemic has on the assessment processes overall.
Standard 9: Academic and support staff

9.1 Staff recruitment and succession planning

COVID-19 impacts and mitigations

Due to financial uncertainty the University’s scrutiny on the release of vacant posts increased and caused a delay in recruitment. However, this has now been relaxed and all vacant posts submitted by the School have been approved and released.

9.3 Opportunities for staff development

COVID-19 impacts and mitigations

The University normally runs its Performance and Development Review at the end of the summer. In light of current circumstances informal review meetings have been encouraged but formal P&DR has been cancelled for 2020. The promotion process has been slightly delayed and will commence 11th January 2021.

Financial uncertainty has impacted on non-pay expenditure as the School was working with an undefined non-pay budget from 1 August 2020. This resulted in the temporary reduction of spend on training and conference support, although this was also affected by the inability of staff to travel. This budget has subsequently been released.

Suggestions for improvement on Standard 9

The recruitment and retention of clinical staff who currently can be very well remunerated in the private sector was highlighted as a perennial issue. Workload pressures on staff have increased as the University moved to a blended learning approach and in person classes had to be repeated more often due to physical distancing and small class sizes. These additional strains have also affected the clinics where balancing clinical work and clinical teaching responsibilities has stretched staff. This together with ever increasing external competition for specialist staff has resulted in even more retention pressures, particularly for the small animal hospital.
Standard 10: Research programmes, continuing and postgraduate education

10.2 Student training in scientific method and research techniques relevant to evidence-based veterinary medicine and opportunities to participate in research programmes

COVID-19 impacts and mitigations

10.2.4 Unfortunately it was not possible to run summer projects in 2020 that had field or laboratory-based components. At the onset of the pandemic and lockdown all research activity involving the aforementioned components was ceased, with the exception of COVID-19 based research. Access to labs and fieldwork started to recommence in late July and August, unfortunately too late for summer research projects. These projects are anticipated to commence as normal in the summer of 2021.

10.3 Students registered at postgraduate clinical training

COVID-19 impacts and mitigations

10.3 As mentioned above, COVID-19 significantly affected all research activity in the University, including the progress of research projects of our postgraduate community. Similarly, progress occurred as we came out of lockdown, and where relevant (and where mitigation was not possible) students are able to apply for submission (and in some cases funded) extensions to their masters or PhD programmes.