

College of MVLS: School of Veterinary Medicine

Annual Strategic Planning Report

Strategic Planning and Budget Process: 2020-21

Head of School:

Ewan Cameron

Signature:

Date:

01/02/2020

Note: The annual planning document captures longer-term strategy and operational objectives. It is an internally focussed document designed to justify internal investment and informs budget setting with the College. As such this version has been edited to remove confidential or sensitive information.

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1. Head of School Statement

The School of Veterinary Medicine core mission is undergraduate teaching; its other activities, including the clinics, the diagnostic laboratories, the farm and our strengthening relationships with external providers, are there to serve our primary function; the training of veterinary professionals and veterinary science graduates and postgraduates.

I am firmly of the view that the quality of our teaching, the student experience and how we prepare our graduates for professional life have undergone a sea-change in the last seven years. The new BVMS curriculum has been internally reviewed through the School's septennial review and recently underwent a very successful periodic subject review. I am convinced that School staff are fiercely determined to provide the best possible foundation for a lifelong career for the students. I feel privileged to lead a group of academic and professional staff who work so hard to bring evidence-based rigour to health professional education and care so deeply about the quality of the student experience and the opportunities we create for their learning.

As a result I am very pleased with the recent PSR report that commended the School for: our ambition and the work we have done around widening participation; the range and quality of our student support activities and the work we do to support well-being; the development and student appreciation of graduate attributes; staff who are highly committed to supporting students in their learning experience and encourage meaningful engagement with the students; the School's support for the training and development of its professional support staff. It was also pleasing to note that the PSR review panel recognised the vision and meticulous work in the delivery of the School's ambitious new BVMS degree.

As previously stated, our successful international student recruitment is entirely dependent on our strong reputation and the excellent work of our student admissions team. The former is completely dependent on our accreditation with the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) whilst the latter relies on the knowledge, experience and talent of a small cadre of professional support and academic staff. With the School's next RCVS/AVMA and EAEVE visitations occurring in April and May 2020 we are working hard to prepare for these visits, mitigate any perceived areas of risk and present a strong case for achieving a highly satisfactory outcome. We expect to be judged as outstanding with regard to the student experience and the commitment of staff to teaching. However, there are a number of areas of risk identified.

The School and the College have given careful consideration to a new model to support the growth of the Small Animal Hospital with the goals of increasing staff retention, improving recruitment and overall ensuring a sustainable and high quality clinical service to the community. The hospital delivers excellent small animal teaching to our students but need to ensure its long term sustainability in a sector that is changing rapidly. In addition to these changes the School will look to strengthen its primary care companion animal teaching in the practice setting.

Other strategic goals are to improve widening participation further; ensure the continued success of our international recruitment programme; build critical mass in staff interested in educational scholarship; create more space for staff development thus improving morale; and invest in clinically relevant research.

2. Strategic Summary (Long Term Horizon)

2.1 Vision

To create an exciting, innovative and evolving educational experience that prepares our students for a rewarding lifelong career; to conduct high quality animal health and biomedical research in partnership with the institutes to inform policy and practice; and to promote knowledge and excellence in the application of veterinary medicine. Our aim is to inspire both staff and students and we cherish the values of integrity, creativity, openness, equality and academic freedom.

Objectives

Can be informed by SWOT and PESTEL analysis.

Implementation should focus on: People, Space, Technology, Time and Funding.

Key Objectives	Implementation Information
1 To achieve a successful international re-accreditation in 2020. Identifying potential deficiencies and correcting these before the visits.	There are a number of extant risks including SSRs, the lack of suitable PM facilities, staff workload; opportunities for research and scholarship and perceived lack of autonomy.
2 To ensure that the school is widely recognised as one of the world's foremost centres of veterinary education and destination of choice for many international students	Competition for international students will continue to increase and it is essential that the quality of training at Glasgow is amongst the very best available and internationally known to be such; evidenced though NSS performance, employers' surveys and external review. NSS scores have declined recently and we must work harder to convince the students of the benefits of active learning & reflection.
3 To develop a strategy for clinical activity that enhances financial performance; protects long term caseload; and meets accreditation requirements as a primary teaching resource.	Remaining competitive in a rapidly changing market is essential to protect income streams and teaching caseload. Accreditation standards require that teaching is not compromised by financial imperatives so striking the right balance and developing a business model that ensures good access for teaching whilst remaining competitive is the goal. A new hospital model is being developed.
4 To further enhance animal health research in terms of quality and volume through wider engagement of School staff and better alignment with Institute staff	The School's international reputation is dependent on animal health research within the School and partner Institutes.

3. Strategic Development Activity

3.1 Teaching - UG

Diversity

The School is determined to enhance the diversity of its student community, including but not limited to socio-economic background and ethnicity. The School has done well in reaching its current WP targets but will need to work much harder if the student population is to mirror that of the general population. The School has recently established an admissions strategy committee, whose remit will be to oversee student recruitment and take responsibility for new initiatives that drive forward WP and diversity of the student population, and subsequently the profession, more generally.

Wellbeing and resilience

Mental health and resilience are major issues of concern within the profession and the Schools have an important part to play in addressing these issues as well as a responsibility to their students. The School is very grateful that Student and Academic Services have decided (on a pilot basis) to place more support at Garscube, including a part time wellbeing officer with a trained counsellor visiting one half day a week. The School will seek ongoing feedback from students and staff on the effectiveness of this initiative.

Efficient management of assessment and feedback

It is an accreditation requirement that the School track and report on the non-clinical and clinical competencies of its students as part of its outcomes assessment. In addition, the School is required to map the curriculum and provide high quality student feedback without excessively burdening staff. A project board has been established to take forward the assessment management project. The software solution to curriculum mapping project is in place, at the time of writing tagging and data entry are being completed.

North American recruitment

The School continues to be very successful in recruiting students from North America, but this remains highly competitive and volatile. We will continue to explore ways of recruiting students before or during their college years as this will make Glasgow a more attractive destination and reduce overall student debt. The summer school planned for 2020 is an important part of our strategy to target US/Canada school leavers for direct admission.

3.1 Teaching - PGT

The School has a relatively modest offering in ODL – an MSc/PgDip/PgCert in Advanced Practice in Veterinary Nursing and a new offering in collaboration with SRUC – an MSc in Animal Nutrition. School staff contribute to other programmes within the College portfolio.

The School was investigating the development of a suite of credit-bearing postgraduate courses in veterinary medicine and surgery, but this is on hold awaiting possible staff changes in the Small Animal Hospital.

We will continue to investigate development in areas of veterinary medicine that would facilitate training for those internationally qualified veterinary surgeons wishing to gain RCVS registration. This would require a carefully developed business plan and the establishment of a series of overseas partnership agreements.

3.2 Research (including PGR)

There are significant challenges for the School in this area. Time available to clinical staff for research and scholarship is limited and there are no major funding bodies supporting companion animal veterinary medicine. This together with staff representing a large number of different specialties makes large scale coordinated research difficult in the clinical area. It is our strategy to link clinical and basic science groups and there have been some notable examples of this. Moreover, the vet fund has been very successful in supporting joint school/institute projects/people relevant to the target species and this will continue. However, for other areas there is no natural alignment between the research interests of staff in the School and the Institutes. In future years the School will consider how focused investment can catalyse high quality research that is relevant to both human and animal health.

A major dividend of the planning, design and implementation of the new curriculum was a marked increase in educational scholarship within the School. For a small number of staff pedagogy was always their primary research interest but over the past seven years the proportion of staff with an interest in this area has increased, strengthening this community and the discipline within the School. The School has seen an increase in the number of staff choosing the Teaching, Learning and Scholarship career track within the University, up from 6 in 2013 to 23 in 2019. As a school that places the educational experience at the heart of its mission it behoves us to continue to invest and support this area of activity and to continue to build critical mass to ensure our approach to education is evidenced based.

3.3 External Partners

The School/College has now signed 12 MoUs with North American based partners as part of the FEEPASS programme that allows for degree articulation with Animal Science programmes in North America and the BVMS programme. The strategy of partnering with North American Colleges is ongoing.

The School contracts a number of practices to deliver core BVMS final year teaching including equine practices, a farm animal practice and a dermatology referral practice. The School also has formal teaching arrangements with the PDSA and SSPCA. These partnerships are kept under periodic review.

3.4 Internationalisation

The School performs well in international recruitment but as mentioned elsewhere competition is growing. The Universities of Bristol, Liverpool, Cambridge and Nottingham are all on a journey to become AVMA accredited, essentially doubling the provision for international students wishing to study veterinary medicine in the UK. The School is exploring new ways of recruiting international students and continues to invest in recruiting in South East Asia. For a variety of reasons recruitment from other areas of the world is more difficult.

Student international mobility is high and this is expected to continue given the student demographics.

3.5 Social Responsibility

See above comments on widening participation, diversity and student wellbeing and the requested investments in student support.

To sustain the culture change recognised by the recent Silver Athena SWAN award, work continues on embedding the associated policies and practices throughout the School. We have our sights set on an application for Gold in due course.

3.6 Professional Services Strategic Support Requirements

Professional Service	Summary of Support Required
External Relations	External Relations support our international recruitment and greater collaboration and overlap between ER and school staff should help mitigate the risk that our current success is based on a small number of key School/RI staff.
Student & Academic Services	Following the appointment of a fixed-term part-time student support administrator and agreement to provide a counsellor on-site for a half day a week, discussion on the longer-term arrangements is required.
Other	Support from PBIS is required (and is being given) to bring the curriculum mapping project to conclusion. Support from IT Services is required (and is being given) to continue to progress the e-assessment project. Progress with Estates has continued to be slow, though as of November 2019 there is now some momentum to progress significant long-standing issues in advance of the accreditation visitations. Representatives of the School and the College Operations and

Facilities Manager are meeting regularly with Estates to progress the list of actions (available on request). The size and complexity of the Garscube campus and associated facilities requires proactive on-site management by Estates of maintenance and related projects on an ongoing basis.

4. Key Events

Awards won, major internal/external events etc.

Review Session (18/19)	Actionable Sessions (19/20 and 20/21)
Key findings from the first septennial review of the BVMS programme were shared with students and stakeholders. This is a specific accreditation requirement.	Actions arising from the review e.g. improvement in student clinical reasoning skills are being taken forward in 19/20
Successful Silver Athena SWAN application	Following the Silver award, work continues to implement the action plan and embed policies and practices throughout the School.
Periodic Subject Review	Findings from the review have been shared with students and stakeholders. Actions arising from the review are being/will be taken forward in 19/20 (and where appropriate 20/21).
The school arranged a "Test Site Visit" in May 2019 to ensure it is well prepared to undergo the full site visits in 2020	2 international accreditation site visits RCVS/AVMA/AVBC and EAEVE (April and May 2020 respectively)
Click or tap here to enter text.	RCVS Practice Standards Scheme accreditation visitation (for hospital status) (February 2020)
Click or tap here to enter text.	RCVS accreditation of MSc Advanced Practice in Veterinary Nursing (February 2020)

5. Performance Review

Primary KPIs

Update Calcs.	Performance Review			
	Actual 16-17	Actual 17-18	Actual 18-19	YOY Change
Staff Satisfaction	91.0%	81.0%	44.0%	-45.7%
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UG Satisfaction (NSS Q27)	93.6%	87.8%	87.5%	-0.3%
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Assessment and Feedback (NSS Q8-11)	70.2%	74.4%	68.1%	-8.5%
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	305.6	308.3	328.6	6.6%
PGR FTE	38.0	38.0	42.5	11.8%
Staff R&T FTE	23.6	11.5	10.0	-13.0%
PGR/Staff R&T FTE	1.6	3.3	4.3	28.6%
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Research Income	506.0	600.0	385.4	-35.8%
Staff R&T FTE	23.6	11.5	10.0	-13.0%
Research Income/Staff R&T FTE (£k)	21.4	52.2	38.5	-26.1%
	Click or tap here to enter text.			

Secondary KPIs

Update Calcs.	Performance Review			
	Actual 16-17	Actual 17-18	Actual 18-19	YOY Change
Entry Tariff	219.0	209.6	215.3	2.7%
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PGT FTE	4.7	10.1	3.9	-60.9%
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International Research Income (£k)	131.8	128.0	96.6	-24.5%
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Mobility	39.8%	44.8%	58.0%	29.5%
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UG Progression	98.8%	93.7%	93.7%	0.0%
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Staff Holding Grants	36.0%	58.3%	60.0%	2.9%
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Management Information: SSR

Update Calcs.	Performance Review			
	Actual 16-17	Actual 17-18	Actual 18-19	YOY Change
Total Student FTE	739.7	720.9	746.1	3.5%
Staff R&T FTE	23.6	11.5	10.0	-13.0%
Staff T only FTE	54.0	61.8	66.0	6.9%
SSR	9.5	9.8	9.8	-0.2%
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6. Student FTE Forecast

Prior Year Budget		18/19 Forecast	19/20 Forecast	20/21 Forecast	21/22 Forecast	22/23 Forecast
UG	Home/EU	269.9	271.6	268.3	273.7	272.2
	RUK	102.7	109.4	118.2	127.2	134.9
	Int	322.3	318.9	325.4	304.5	307.5
PGT	Home/EU	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
	Int	3.4	5.0	4.9	4.9	4.9
PGR	Home/EU	38.6	30.7	30.7	30.7	30.7
	Int	2.7	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1
PGT	Online	3.7	4.3	8.3	10.3	12.3
Total UG		694.9	699.9	711.9	705.4	714.6
On Campus PGT		3.9	5.3	5.2	5.2	5.2
Total PGT		7.6	9.6	13.5	15.5	17.5
Total PGR		41.3	33.8	33.8	33.8	33.8
Total International		328.4	327.0	333.4	312.5	315.5
Total Student FTE		740.1	739.0	750.9	744.4	753.6

7. SWOT

Strengths
Excellent educational experience, reflected in NSS and internal/external feedback
Strongly committed academic and support staff
Financially strong
Strong growth in recent years in small animal hospital case numbers with excellent standards of care
Innovative and modern curriculum at the forefront of veterinary education
Weaknesses
Research - both volume and quality. Dependent on veterinary research reputation of Institutes but not in a position to control potential drift away from veterinary topics
Staff morale due to work overload inhibiting scholarship, research and the perception of inequality of opportunity
Issues relating to governance, PM facility, SSRs and case material in some areas
Commercial contribution significantly below potential due to retention/recruitment issue
Processes and systems to support high quality course organisation
Opportunities
Ownership/partnership of primary care centres
Commercial services have greater income/contribution potential if we can increase staff retention and enhance academic/clinical working environment
Expansion of referral, first-opinion and diagnostic services
Greater UK collaboration, data sharing and bio-banking to enhance veterinary clinical research
Enhancing diversity of student population
Threats
End of AVMA accreditation, which would be catastrophic for the School and result in loss of international students
Accreditation related - PM suite
Significant reduction of clinical market share due to changes in the industry - rise of corporate practices and increased referral competition
Recruitment and retention of clinical staff
Long term investment and financial sustainability of the farm

8. PESTEL

Political

Brexit further exacerbates difficulties in recruitment of specialist clinicians and residents

Growing strength of animal health focus in East results in ScotGov concentrating funding in one location

Long term flat/reduced funding from SFC for Scottish students reducing teaching resource. Strong demand from the profession to increase UK student numbers but funding model does not support expansion

Anticipated destruction of livestock farming when CAP subsidies disappear with implication for farm animal veterinary teaching and services

Pressures to increase WP challenging but welcomed

Environmental

Lack of School autonomy with regard to decision making

Despite strong school/college support recruitment still very slow, impacting on areas of staff shortage

No effective power at local area to address outstanding estates issues or decisions

Socio-economic

Difficult to achieve sufficient movement in widening participation despite strong activity and ambition

Students, particularly overseas students, have considerable economic impact in local area.

Changing patterns in the delivery of veterinary medicine including a) growing numbers of peripatetic surgeons and b) an increase in middle-tier veterinary care by advanced practitioners etc offering "specialist" services".

Technological

Increasing fragmentation of the veterinary profession facilitated by remote suppliers (e.g. telemedicine). Will have greatest effect in primary care

Good use of software has assisted rotation feedback and it is hoped assessment management and curriculum mapping will similarly benefit.

Demand for IT Innovation at local level not supported by central organisation causing frustration e.g. curriculum mapping/assessment management/elements of VLE

Economic

Fall in value of sterling should assist international recruitment

Growth of corporate practices and establishment of linked referral practices represents a significant threat to School clinical income

Legal

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