



RE-VISITATION REPORT

**To the Faculty of Veterinary Sciences, University of Extremadura,
Cáceres, Spain**

On 17 – 19 October 2022

By the Re-visitiation Team:

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Contents of the Re-visitation Report

Introduction

1. Correction of the Major Deficiencies
2. Correction of the Minor Deficiencies
3. ESEVT Indicators
4. Conclusions

Introduction

The Faculty of Veterinary Sciences, University of Extremadura (FVUEx), Cáceres, (called the Veterinary Education Establishment (VEE) in this Report) was evaluated by the ESEVT on March 28 - April 1, 2022, according to the 2019 SOP, as amended in December 2020.

In the report that was submitted to ECOVE, the previous Full Visitation Team pointed to several areas in the veterinary teaching programme worthy of praise. However, insufficient number of hours of hands-on clinical training on real companion animal patients under the supervision of academic staff was identified as a Major Deficiency. In addition, the Visitation Team identified some Minor Deficiencies.

These findings led to the identification of the following Major Deficiency under ESEVT Standard 3:

- Non-compliance with Substandard 3.1.3 for Clinical Sciences in companion animals because of insufficient number of hours of hands-on clinical training on real patients under the supervision of academic staff in order to achieve Day One Competences for each individual student.

Additionally, these areas of concern (Minor Deficiencies) were identified by the team:

- Partial compliance with Substandard 3.1.4 because of suboptimal time spent in farm animal clinical training to achieve day one competencies for each individual student.
- Partial compliance with Substandard 4.3 because of suboptimal compliance with the biosecurity manual and procedures in some areas, especially during the necropsy activities.
- Partial compliance with Substandard 5.1 because the number of rabbits, rodents, birds, and exotic patients is not adequate for the number of students involved and the number of companion animal (including equine and exotics) necropsies provided to the students is suboptimal.

On June 8, 2022, ECOVE made the decision that the status of the VEE was Conditional Accreditation.

The Re-visitation Self-Evaluation Report (RSER), and the Annexes were provided to the Re-visitation Team on time and contained relevant information. The RSER was informative, and some pending issues were answered before the on-site Re-visitation.

The Re-visitation was well prepared and well organised by the VEE. It was performed in a cordial

working atmosphere, in agreement with the ESEVT 2019 SOP, as amended in December 2020.

1. Correction of the Major Deficiencies

1.1. Major Deficiency 1: Non-compliance with Substandard 3.1.3 for Clinical Sciences in companion animals because of insufficient number of hours of hands-on clinical training on real patients under the supervision of academic staff in order to achieve Day One Competences for each individual student.

1.1.1. Findings

The VEE has increased the time spent per student by 22 hours for clinical companion animal exposure. This has been achieved by increasing the number of days spent by students on companion animal rotations from 18 to 32 days. Eight of the additional hours will be spent with exotic and wildlife species to overcome the previous absence of clinical training with these species. The remaining 14 additional hours are to be allocated across the existing companion animal species rotations.

Additionally, clinical practical teaching in different semesters before the 5th year has increased by 41 hours (from 13 to 54), this was associated with a reallocation of laboratory hours in clinical subjects, so they have been reduced from 144.5 to 102.5.

1.1.2. Comments

The university is acknowledged for the granting of new positions to the VEE to enable increased student time with real clinical cases. The current rector (leaving his position towards the end of 2022) has been very supportive of the faculty and has helped enable these additional appointments. The Los Hornos Wildlife Centre also helps with the number on clinical hours in companion animals / exotics.

The planned acquisition of additional clinical skills models was in progress at the time of the Re-visitation. The increased use of such models will be an excellent introduction to clinical procedures before trying on live animals.

1.1.3. Suggestions

The VEE should consider location of the additional clinical skills models into a central clinical skills laboratory as a way to provide “open access” to students for developing their clinical competency / skills.

1.1.4. Decision

The Major Deficiency “Non-compliance with Substandard 3.1.3 for Clinical Sciences in companion animals because of insufficient number of hours of hands-on clinical training on real patients under the supervision of academic staff in order to achieve Day One Competences for each individual student” has been fully corrected.

2. Correction of the Minor Deficiencies

2.1. Minor Deficiency 1: Partial compliance with Substandard 3.1.4 because of suboptimal time spent in farm animal clinical training to achieve day one competencies for each individual student.

2.1.1. Findings

Two new part time farm animal clinical positions have been approved and are being filled by the VEE, the contracts for existing part-time clinical staff have also been changed to increase time available for farm animal clinical teaching and tutoring. This has resulted in an increase from 12 to 30 taught hours per week and an increase from 9 to 25 hours of tutoring per week, and allowed an increase from 40 to 80 hours spent by each student in the ambulatory farm animal clinic.

The operation of the Ambulatory clinic works as a hybrid model, i.e. a mix of in house ambulatory clinic and a distributed model with practising veterinarians on part time contracts. This is an effective means of providing farm animal cases and training for students.

2.1.2. Comments

The increase in hours per student in the ambulatory clinic is working towards a correction of this minor deficiency and it will be helped further when the additional part time clinical staff are appointed.

2.1.3. Suggestions

None.

2.2. Minor Deficiency 2: Partial compliance with Substandard 4.3 because of suboptimal compliance with the biosecurity manual and procedures in some areas, especially during the necropsy activities.

2.2.1. Findings

Additional specific Biosafety Protocols have been developed for each type of activity, adjusting each of them to the risks of each service. These specific prevention protocols have been approved for laboratories in general, the VTH, the VTF, and importantly the necropsy room protocol. This document presents a series of measures that must be taken into account when performing necropsies. All the staff of the Establishment are involved in the adoption of preventive measures and recommendations.

An additional biocontainment tank for large animal necropsy has been secured and is also helping in this area. A new large animal table for the necropsy room has been procured and this allows large animals to be taken from the containment tank or the hoist to perform post-mortem examinations.

A new assistant professor has been appointed to pathology to improve and to add to the capacity to conduct necropsies. Associated with this has been a switch from 20 hours of seminar-based teaching in this area to practical necropsy activities with students in two groups of seven students in each, in contrast to the previous one group of 15 students.

2.2.2. Comments

Improvements in biosecurity around the necropsy room and the appointment of an additional staff member in this area has improved biosecurity and necropsy teaching.

The Minor Deficiency 2 has been corrected.

2.2.3. Suggestions

The VEE is encouraged to continue to develop an alternative means of getting external cadaver material into and out of the necropsy room.

2.3. Minor Deficiency 3: Partial compliance with Substandard 5.1 because the number of rabbits, rodents, birds and exotic patients is not adequate for the number of students involved and the number of companion animal (including equine and exotics) necropsies provided to the students is suboptimal.

2.3.1. Findings

The consulting room for exotic animals is reopened for four hours per week with the attendance of groups of four students. This service is provided by Dr. Alejandro Gutiérrez who now contributes to both the exotics and companion animal clinics. At this point it is unclear what the patient load for these species will be. Students also spend five hours per week in groups of four at the Centre for Wildlife Recovery and Environmental Education “Los Hornos” for clinical practices. An additional 12 hours of class time is now dedicated to exotic and wildlife species across various subject areas in the curriculum.

2.3.2. Comments

The Los Hornos Centre is a valuable asset for exposing the students to different wildlife. The centre was very positive to receiving a group of students every week. Students are dealing with both clinical cases, necropsies, and routine health checks on these species. It should have sufficient caseload for all students to get exposure on exotic animal species.

The changes in teaching of clinical pathology, the reduced group sizes (due to the extra staff member) and the increase in exotic animal cases (live and necropsy) are working towards a correction of this minor deficiency.

2.3.3. Suggestions

None.

3. ESEVT Indicators

3.1. Findings

The table below shows the new calculated indicators based on the raw data from the academic years 2019/2020, 2020/2021, and 2021/2022.

Calculated Indicators from raw data		Facultad de Cáceres	Median values	Minimal values	Balance
I1	n° of FTE academic staff involved in veterinary training / n° of undergraduate students	0,170	0,16	0,13	0,044
I2	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary	0,837	0,87	0,59	0,248

FINAL REPORT AS ISSUED BY ECOVE ON 13 DECEMBER 2022

	training / n° of students graduating annually				
I3	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,962	0,94	0,57	0,396
I4	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	744,750	905,67	595,00	149,750
I5	n° of hours of clinical training	696,500	932,92	670,00	26,500
I6	n° of hours of FSQ & VPH training	586,800	287,00	174,40	412,400
I7	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in FSQ & VPH	50,000	68,00	28,80	21,200
I8	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	104,694	70,48	42,01	62,685
I9	n° of ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	0,351	2,69	0,46	-0,113
I10	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	6,249	5,05	1,30	4,951
I11	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	0,306	3,35	1,55	-1,239
I12	n° of companion animal patients seen extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	0,045	6,80	0,22	-0,178
I13	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	56,479	15,95	6,29	50,184
I14	n° of equine patients seen extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	0,034	2,11	0,60	-0,561
I15	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds / n° of students graduating annually	5,302	1,33	0,55	4,755
I16	n° of visits of poultry and farmed rabbit units / n° of students graduating annually	1,385	0,12	0,04	1,340
I17	n° of companion animal necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0,660	2,07	1,40	-0,740
I18	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	1,140	2,32	0,97	0,169
I19	n° of equine necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0,117	0,30	0,09	0,024

I20	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0,589	2,05	0,69	-0,104
I21*	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,079	0,20	0,06	0,016
I22*	n° of PhD graduating annually / n° of students graduating annually	0,091	0,15	0,09	0,003

3.2. Comments

I9: The low n° of ruminant and pig patients seen intramurally / n° of students graduating annually is largely compensated for by better than minimal numbers of ruminant and pig patients seen extramurally in the ambulatory clinic.

I11: The n° of rabbits, rodents, birds, and exotic seen intramurally is increasing due to the reopening of the exotic animal consulting room at the VEE and the new agreement with the Centre for Wildlife Recovery and Environmental Education “Los Hornos”.

I12: The low n° of companion animal patients seen extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually is largely compensated for by better than minimal numbers of companion animal cases seen intramurally.

I14: The low n° of equine patients seen extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually is largely compensated for by better than minimal numbers of equine patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually.

I17: The additional necropsies of wildlife and exotics being done at the Los Hornos Wildlife Centre will compensate for the low n° companion animal necropsies done at the VEE.

I20: The n° of rabbits, rodents, birds, and exotic necropsies is increasing due to the reopening of the exotic animal consulting room at the VEE and the new agreement with the Centre for Wildlife Recovery and Environmental Education “Los Hornos”.

3.3. Suggestions

None.

4. Conclusions

The Major Deficiency has been fully corrected.

One of the Minor Deficiencies (no. 2) has been fully corrected, and there is an ongoing process to correct the remaining two.

Decision of ECOVE

The Committee concluded that the Major Deficiency identified after the Full Visitation on 28 March – 01 April 2022 had been corrected.

The Veterinary Education Establishment (VEE) of the University of Extremadura, Cáceres, is therefore classified as holding the status of: **ACCREDITATION**.