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VISITATION REPORT

To the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Teramo, Teramo, Italy

On 08 – 12 November 2021

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Contents of the Visitation Report

Introduction

Brief history of the VEE and of its previous ESEVT Visitations (if any)

This Veterinary Education Establishment (VEE onwards) is one of 13 Schools of Veterinary Medicine in Italy. It is located in Abruzzo, which claims to be the greenest region of Europe.

The VEE in Teramo was initially established in the early 1960s as it was generally perceived that the Abruzzo Region needed a Veterinary School as many students from the region were attending Bologna or Bari to study veterinary medicine. However, Teramo, with the cooperation of Bologna, established the first two years of a Degree Programme.

In 1990 the University of Chieti started the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in Teramo and in 1994 the University of Teramo was established with the Faculties of Veterinary Medicine, Law and Political Science.

In 1997, two new facilities were introduced: the Molinari building that hosted the pre-clinical sciences and the Cartecchio facility that hosted the clinical sciences and the 24h emergency service. Later, the Faculty obtained the Chiareto Teaching Farm (CTF) to host livestock for teaching and research. Finally, the Faculty was established in the Piano D'Accio Campus (2013). Unexpectedly, the Molinari building was structurally condemned, and all the pre-clinical activities had to move to the Piano D'Accio Campus, modifying the organization of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) (2015).

In 2019 an investment of 18 million euros was agreed between the Abruzzo region and the University of Teramo, to build a new permanent facility that will host all the teaching rooms, the pre-clinical sciences laboratories and the pathology room. The new facility located in the Piano D'Accio Campus will be ready within the next three years.

The VEE in Teramo was evaluated by EAEVE in 2007 for the first time with major deficiencies identified as:

- The lack of separation between anatomy and necropsy facilities
- Lack of a 24hr emergency service

Despite the L'Aquila earthquake causing delays in implementing the necessary changes, the VEE was re-evaluated by EAEVE for a second time in 2010, receiving full approval.

Main features of the VEE and Main developments since the last Visitation
The SER clearly lists improvements introduced within the last ten years.
Major regulatory changes have recently taken place for all Universities at a National level.
Since 2012, the development and implementation of an internal Quality Assurance (QA) system has been a major change when compared to the last EAEVE evaluation. The Educational QA Committee has contributed to raise teaching staff awareness on teaching quality issues and to help appropriate bodies to improve DVMP quality. One of the primary objectives of the internal QA system is the achievement of continual improvement of processes through a Plan-Do-Check-Act process.

The 2019 ESEVT SOP as amended in September 2021 was utilised for this Visitation.

Area 1: Objectives, Organisation and QA Policy

Standard 1.1 The VEE must have as its main objective the provision, in agreement with the EU Directives and ESG recommendations, of adequate, ethical, research-based, evidence-based veterinary training that enables the new graduate to perform as a veterinarian capable of entering all commonly recognised branches of the veterinary profession and to be aware of the importance of lifelong learning.
The VEE must develop and follow its mission statement which must embrace all the ESEVT standards.

1.1.1. Findings
The main objective of the VEE is in agreement with the EU Directives, ESG recommendations and national QA Agency (ANVUR) guidelines and is given at the beginning of the SER. The mission statement consists of 6 different targets, mentioning animal health and production, food safety, knowledge of veterinary organizations and laws, as well as adequate research-based and evidence-based veterinary lifelong education and training. The VEE ensures that new graduates can perform as veterinarians through specific meetings with alumni and stakeholders. This, together with the analysis of data in the AlmaLaurea database on the employment situation 1, 3 and 5 years after graduation provide an assessment and communication of the mission statement outside the university and a resource for revision of the mission statement.

1.1.2. Comments
- It is obvious that the VEE is implementing student-centred and research-led teaching with a strong commitment to continuous improvement for the benefit of students.
- It is not entirely clear how the objective and the mission statement is decided and revised.

1.1.3. Suggestions for improvement
- The VEE should define better the decision-making flowchart and the periodical revision of the objectives and mission

1.1.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.1.

Standard 1.2 The VEE must be part of a university or a higher education institution providing training recognised as being of an equivalent level and formally recognised as such in the respective country.

The person responsible for the veterinary curriculum and the person(s) responsible for the professional, ethical, and academic affairs of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) must hold a veterinary degree.
The decision-making process, organisation and management of the VEE must allow implementation of its strategic plan and of a cohesive study programme, in compliance with the ESEVT Standards.

1.2.1. Findings
Details of the VEE are provided. Organisational chart in brief shows the decision making process. As mentioned in SER, this VEE is not divided into departments or units and all the activities are carried out by the Faculty. Employees are set according to the academic areas. Two separate internal facilities are VTH and Teaching Farm. List of the councils/boards/committees presents 12 different boards or committees and 5 delegates (active at the University committees) with brief descriptions of their composition and functions. Name of the person responsible for the veterinary curriculum and for the VTH are available. Both full term and part-time staff are represented in the decision-making boards.

1.2.2. Comments
- There is a good flow of information between committees and a general awareness of the importance and potential of using the committee work to improve the curriculum.
- Coordination between committees takes place at a personal level and supported by efficient administrative staff which takes care of agenda and minutes from the meetings.

1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

1.2.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.2.

Standard 1.3 The VEE must have a strategic plan, which includes a SWOT analysis of its current activities, a list of objectives, and an operating plan with a timeframe and indicators for its implementation.

1.3.1. Findings
The Current Strategic Plan was accepted in 2019 and it will be valid for 3 next year (2019-2021). It is aimed to improve quality and performance in three areas – teaching, research and third mission. SWOT analysis shows strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The List of objectives and the operating plan with a timeframe and indicators for its implementation is part of SER. For one of the Actions, “Animal models and dummies acquisition” (in progress), a grant of 10,000 EUR has been given and studies toward how it is best used have been initiated.

1.3.2. Comments
None.

1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

1.3.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.3.

Standard 1.4 The VEE must have a policy and associated written procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of its programmes and awards. It must also commit itself explicitly to the development of a culture which recognises the importance of quality, and quality assurance, within their VEE. To achieve this, the VEE must develop and implement a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality. The development and implementation of the VEE's strategy must include a role for students and other stakeholders, both internal and external, and the strategy must have a formal status and be publicly available.

1.4.1. Findings

The University of Teramo has a quality assessment system that all the Faculties have to comply with. The VEE has developed a QA system to reach high-quality standards of teaching. As mentioned in the SER Appendix 4, QA policy was identified by the University of Teramo, together with different documents and guidelines.

The VEE provides two documents yearly, Yearly report for the Veterinary Medicine Degree Programme and Yearly Monitoring Report, both described as key components of the QA system. The Educational Quality Assurance Committee is the responsible unit for the analysis and implementation of all initiatives for improvement and correction interventions, but it also serves as a coordinating unit between other committees dealing with QA. There is also a Committee for Research Quality Assurance dealing with publications, databases and rescue strategies. The VEE informs regularly, at least once per year, different stakeholders on the main activities and involves them in the QA process. From the SER it is not evident if a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality (QA strategy) is available for the VEE, but during the visit it was found that it is clearly available to students and staff in every teaching room and that it has a formal status in the VEE.

1.4.2. Comments

- The visited VEE benefits from a very strong structuring of the quality approach at university level, which is then applied at the level of faculty and departments with perfectly interlinked and formalised procedures.
- It is noted for the strong leadership and participative management of the VEE with excellent student participation.
- It is worthy of praise for the highly supportive links and services the VEE provides to the Abruzzo region and the community.

1.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

1.4.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.4.

Standard 1.5 The VEE must provide evidence that it interacts with its stakeholders and the wider society. Such public information must be clear, objective and readily accessible; the information must include up-to-date information about the study programme, views and employment destinations of past students as well as the profile of the current student population.

The VEE's website must mention the ESEVT VEE's status and its last Self Evaluation Report and Visitation Report must be easily available for the public.

1.5.1. Findings

The VEE informs different stakeholders mainly through websites – the one of the Italian Ministry, University of Teramo and of the VEE itself. Information on education, research and VTH are clearly visible and publicly available. Current EAEVE status is mentioned on the web page, together with documents such as the Visitation Report and SER from 2007. The University of Teramo annually organizes a Career Day where students meet veterinarians and other employment providers. The lists of employment destinations of past students or profiles of current student population are available for statistical analysis in the AlmaLaurea database.

1.5.2. Comments
None.

1.5.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

1.5.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.5.

Standard 1.6 The VEE must monitor and periodically review its activities, both quantitative and qualitative, to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. The VEE must make public how this analysis of information has been utilised in the further development of its activities and provide evidence as to the involvement of both students and staff in the provision, analysis and implementation of such data.
Any action planned or taken as a result of this data analysis must be communicated to all those concerned.

1.6.1. Findings
The Strategic Plan of the VEE was done according to the Dean's electoral programme and it was presented in 2019, discussed at the Faculty board (VMFB) and then published on the website. According to the national legislation and the VEE's procedures, all decisions are published on the website (as Degree Programme Annual Factsheet). Activities regarding QA in teaching are discussed in different Committees sessions. It could be verified that the VEE is strongly committed to the QA-driven improvement of teaching.

1.6.2. Comments
None.

1.6.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

1.6.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.6.

Standard 1.7 The VEE must undergo external review through the ESEVT on a cyclical basis. Evidence must be provided of such external evaluation with the assurance that the progress made since the last ESEVT evaluation was linked to a continuous quality assurance process.

1.7.1. Findings

The VEE was visited for the first time by EAEVE in 2007. A major deficiency (inadequate facility for necropsy) was detected, with a re-visit and final approval done in 2010. Advice (recommendations, minor deficiencies) are mentioned in the SER as well as actions taken. Suggestions from the EAEVE team and current situations were described for i) Objectives, Strategy and Research, ii) Organisation and Finances, iii) Curriculum, iv) Facilities and Equipment, v) Animals and Teaching Materials of Animal Origin, vi) Teaching Quality and Evaluation, vii) Library and Educational Resources, viii) Admission and Enrolment, ix) Academic and Support Staff, x) Continuing and Postgraduate Education.

1.7.2. Comments

- The major deficiency encountered by the EAEVE in 2007 was related to the inadequate facility for necropsy procedure. Although this deficiency was resolved (a new premise was built at Piano D'Accio campus), currently, there is still one premise used for both anatomy and pathology activities with also some practicals of surgery in cadavers and study of condemned organs in FSQ. The latter is the consequence of the closure of Molinari building in 2015, due to the earthquake damage.
- The VEE organises the practicals on different days and follows appropriate methods of cleaning and disinfection.

1.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

1.7.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.7.

Area 2. Finances

Standard 2.1 Finances must be demonstrably adequate to sustain the requirements for the VEE to meet its mission and to achieve its objectives for education, research and services. The description must include both expenditures (separated into personnel costs, operating costs, maintenance costs and equipment) and revenues (separated into public funding, tuition fees, services, research grants and other sources).

2.1.1. Findings

The SER gives an overview of the income and expenditures at the VEE (Tables 2.1.1 and 2.1.2). It receives income in the form of:

1) A share of the Ordinary Function Fund provided by the Ministry to the University of Teramo (UNITE) and distributed to Faculties according to a three-year strategic plan by the Senate of UNITE.
2) Scholarships for PhD programs.
3) Other University contributions (ear-marked funding to specific initiatives).
4) External research grants from public sources including a Department grant of Excellence of 6,635,000 Euro in the period from 2018-2022. VEE obtains 5% overhead from all external research grants.
5) Research agreements with third parties. The University obtains 12% overhead to the central university and 5% overhead to the VEE from such contracts.
6) Revenue from own diagnostic/clinical activities

Cost of personnel, utilities and operating costs related to animal management and cleaning are paid directly by the University and were not shown in the revenue table in the SER. During the visit, Tables were provided where this was included for the sake of overview (see Tables below).

Table 2.1.1. Annual expenditures during the last 3 academic years (in Euros) (compilation of main figures from revised Tables 2.1.1a and 2.1.1.b)

	2019	2018	2017	Mean
Personnel[a]	4,659,738	4,369,282	4,207,479	4,412,166
Utilities (e.g)[a]	286,977	283,851	292,743	287,857
Operating Cost[b]	206,700	221,079	187,009	204,929
Maintenance Cost	69,668	69,668	69,668	69,668
Equipment[b]	3,180	6,276	1,011	3,489
VTH – Operating Cost[b]	160,855	139,382	155,189	151,809
Teaching farm	102,937	105,474	95,853	101,422
Total	**5,490,058**	**5,195,014**	**5,008,953**	**5,231,342**

Table 2.1.2. Annual revenues during the last 3 academic years (in Euros) (revised)

Revenues source	2019	2018	2017	Mean
Public authorities such as the Ministry*	4,436,433	4,147,616	4,086,9242	4,223,658
Public authorities such as the University**	553,651	553,063	552,334	553,016
Tuition fee (standard and/or full fee students)***	-	-	-	-
Faculty contribution****	66,695	70,837	88,800	75,444
VTH - Clinical and Diagnostic Services	314,904	274,016	332,506	307,142
Research grants				
University Funds	154,173	233,428	145,772	177,791
Faculty funds	93,826	23,775	47,551	55,051
Post-graduate Education				
National specialisation school and masters	398,500	467,500	586,750	484,250

PhD - University Funds	576,232	440,175	495,928	504,112.
Scholarships	76,000	108,391	56,085	80,158
Donations	-	-	-	-
Total	**6,670,417**	**6,318,805**	**6,392,652**	**6,460,624**

Table 2.1.3. Annual balance between expenditures and revenues (in Euros) (revised)

Academic year	Total revenues	Total expenditures	Balance***
AY-3 2016-2017	6,392,652	5,008,9547	+ 1,383,697
AY-2 2017-2018	6,318,805	5,195,015	+ 1,123,789
AY-1 2018-2019	6,670,417	5,490,058	+ 1,180,358

The average expenditure 2017-2019 was 5,231,342 Euro, the average revenue 6,460,624 Euro and the average balance >1,000,000 Euro. The positive balance is because the revenue table includes money transferred directly to grant holders of external grants and to directors of Schools of Specialization, while the expenses of running the external grants and the Schools are not all counted in the expenditures. The VEE characterizes its financial situation as non-optimal, as income from the Ministry has gradually been reduced. However, collaboration with external partners, increased income from the VTH and the income from School of Specialization and Master programmes helps to overcome the reduction through shared use of consumables, facilities and equipment. It was noted that, in addition to contribution to running costs, UNITE has made a 2017-2022 investment plan (13 mill. Euro) to extend the campus of the VEE.

2.1.2. Comments

- The figures provided suggest that there are sufficient resources to sustain the activities of the School, and they clearly demonstrate that the University supports the activities and the development of the VEE.

2.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

2.1.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 2.1.

Standard 2.2 Clinical and field services must function as instructional resources. Instructional integrity of these resources must take priority over financial self-sufficiency of clinical services operations.
The VEE must have sufficient autonomy in order to use the resources to implement its strategic plan and to meet the ESEVT Standards.

2.2.1. Findings

The VEE operates at a VTH with seven services dedicated to teaching. Revenue from these activities, 307,142 Euro on average over three years, are deducted 12% in favour of the University and 5% in favour of the running of the VEE. The remaining income is split 80:20 between the service which generated the income and common expenses in the clinics (shared across services).
According to the University Status, the VEE has full control of its own budget, and the revenue from the VTH can be used according to how the VEE wishes to do so. However, the costs of personnel and some central operating costs are paid directly from the University and are outside the control of the VEE.

2.2.2. Comments

- The VEE has full autonomy on the use of budgets within the limits set by Italian law. The budget does not include the cost of personnel.
- In the case of vacancies in permanent positions, the VEE cannot immediately allocate personnel according to its own strategic plan, for example to replace the person or to establish a permanent position in another speciality. This is under the control of the central University, and the VEE needs to negotiate this with the University.

2.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

2.2.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 2.2.

2.3 Resources allocation must be regularly reviewed to ensure that available resources meet the requirements.

2.3.1. Findings

The University has an annual budget process during which the budget situation is reviewed and suggestions for changes are put forward. The strategic three-year plan is used as a guide for the VEE in this process.

2.3.2. Comments

None.

2.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

2.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 2.3.

Area 3. Curriculum

Standard 3.1 The curriculum must be designed, resourced and managed to ensure all graduates have achieved the graduate attributes expected to be fully compliant with the EU Directive 2005/36/EC (as amended by directive 2013/55/EU) and its Annex V.4.1. The curriculum must include the subjects (input) and must allow the acquisition of the Day

One Competences (output) listed in Annex 2. This concerns Basic Sciences, Clinical Sciences in companion animals (including equine and exotic pets), Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals (including Animal Production and Herd Health Management), Food Safety and Quality, and Professional Knowledge.

3.1.1. General findings

3.1.1.1. Findings

Curriculum general goals are set accordingly to four Ministerial Decrees and Directive EC/2005/36. Competences are set in full compliance with the Day One Competences listed in Annex 2 of the ESEVT SOP 2019 as amended in September 2021.

The contents of the study programme, as well as major changes, must be approved by the University and the National QA agency (ANVUR, associate member of ENQA). The Degree Veterinary Medicine Programme Board (DVMPB) under the supervision of the Director of the degree programme oversees the implementation of the curriculum. Monitoring and improvement of the curriculum is the responsibility of the Internal QA Committee (EQAC) that applies the Internal QA System (IQAS). EQAC proposes improvements by collecting suggestions from other Faculty, DVMP (Programme Year Committee, JSTEC) or University (UQAC) committees, external stakeholders, and the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR, see next paragraph).

The VEE revises the curriculum every 10 years (last new curriculum implemented in 2010/11 and a new proposal expected in 2020 that was delayed for the pandemic). The Italian QA agency (ANVUR) performs an external evaluation every 5 years and, as a follow up procedure, the VEE must submit to ANVUR a Degree Programme Annual Factsheet (DPAF) and the Annual Monitoring Report.

Before graduation students must complete 300 ECTS, or CFU for Italian Universities (1 ECTS or CFU=25 h of student work) in 5 years of study (10 semesters), with an average duration of studies around 6 years (Table 7.2.5 of the SER) in 2018-2019. The 300 ECTS are divided into core subjects (282 ECTS) + Electives (8 ECTS) + Final degree thesis (10 ECTS). At the time of the Visitation the curriculum in place started in 2010/11. As addressed in the SER, the total amount of hours of training required for graduation is 3,582h (Table 3.1.1) but according to the hours provided in Appendix 2 it is 3,652h. Graduates are awarded with a qualification of Doctor (*Laureato*) in Veterinary Medicine (DVM).

All students must do research work in the core subject "Dissertation thesis" of the 5th year which would be bibliographic review or experimental research (the latter approximately 59% as read on p.77 of the SER).

The VEE uses new teaching methods such as interactive lectures, seminars and discussions, work in groups, student's presentations, case analyses, and problem-based learning (PBL).

Computer aided or e-learning courses are developed by using the Intranet where all teachers publish materials, teaching contents, descriptions of laboratory practicals, recommended bibliographies, etc.

The VEE addresses only 11 hours of training in supervised self-learning as obligatory in table 3.1.2, column C (p.20 of the SER).

From the ESEVT Visitation in 2010 the team recommended to increase the number of practicals in basic sciences, and to integrate anatomy, physiology, epidemiology, infectious diseases, pharmacology, and pathology with clinical subjects; more integration of clinics and Herd health veterinarians; to improve LA surgery and Radiology; and to enhance the practicals in Food Hygiene & Technology and VPH (page 14 SER).

3.1.1.2. Comments

- All groups of subjects addressed on p.32 of the SOP 2019 as amended in September 2021 (Annex 2) and listed in the Annex 5.4.1 of the Directive 36/2005/EC are covered, even when no hours of training appear in Table 3.1.2 for *Information literacy and data management*, onsite the team verified these contents are taught elsewhere (see 3.1.2.2). The VEE should map the curriculum properly to demonstrate in public documents, as in Table 3.1.2 of the SER that it covers all groups of subjects addressed on p.50 of the SOP 2019 as amended in September 2021 and listed in the Annex 5.4.1 of the Directive 36/2005/EC.
- The curriculum conforms to the duration, and contents, addressed in the Directive EC/2005/36, and covers all domestic species.
- There is a sufficient integration and balance among core, electives & EPT training.
- The total amount of hours of training required for graduation in Table 3.1.1 (3,582h) do not fit with the total number of hours in Appendix 2 (3,682h), and is inaccurate in both since onsite it was evident the misunderstanding of the VEE by including only the partial hours of training in core subjects (282 ECTS-3,582 or 3,682h, that must add the real hours of oriented self-learning not included in column C of Table 3.1.2) and not the hours in electives (8 ECTS, around 100h) + the hours in Dissertation thesis (10 ECTS, around 250h).
- Despite the recommendation of the Visitation report in 2010, the core curriculum in general still offers a poor balance between theoretical and practical work in years 1 to 4 with a ratio of 3.2:1 in 1st year; 2.8:1 in 2nd year; 1.6:1 in 3rd year; and 1.5:1 in 4th year.
- The hours of training appear lower than expected since, if core subjects amount for a total of 3, 582h (282 ECTS) that means 1 ECTS=12.7h.
- The 5 years of the curriculum do not have a balanced number of hours of training and ECTS, (Table 3.1.1 of the SER and Appendix 2). The equivalence in hours is totally different every year: 1st year 56 ECTS=462h (8.25h/ECTS), 2nd year 49 ECTS=623h (12.7h/ECTS); 3rd year 40 ECTS=564h (14.1h/ECTS); 4th year 74 ECTS=863h (11.7h/ECTS), and 5th year 69 ECTS (without the 10 ECTS in Final degree thesis) =1140h (16.5h/ECTS).
- The team verified on-site with students and teachers that many subjects at the VEE use the supervised-self learning training of students, which is the base for student-centred learning, even when they did not include the hours in column C of table 3.1.2 of the SER because of concept misunderstanding.
- The VEE did not map properly the number of hours of training of undergraduates in the Final Degree thesis in Tables 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 of the SER; this obligatory subject accounts for 10 ECTS and was roughly estimated onsite by the team, after asking teachers and students, in 250h of training for experimental thesis, and half of this number for bibliographic review. This estimation points out a discrimination of students following the experimental final degree thesis, who employed double the workload that the students following the bibliographic review, getting both types the same recognition in their curriculum of 10 ECTS.

3.1.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

- The VEE should fix a more homogeneous distribution of ECTS between semesters (around 30 ECTS) and years (around 60 ECTS), and a more homogeneous equivalence as well of working hours per ECTS in the different subjects to get a more balanced number of hours of training in the 5 years of studies.
- The VEE should offer a better balance (at least 1:1) between theoretical and practical work in the subjects by decreasing the theoretical hours (lectures, seminars, oriented self-learning) and increasing the practical hours.

- The VEE must correct the inaccurate data regarding the hours of training in Table 3.1.1, 3.1.2 and Appendix 2, in all groups of subjects addressed on p.32 of the SOP 2019 as amended in September 2021 and listed in the Annex V.4.1 of the Directive 36/2005/EC, and in supervised self-learning in the SER (column C of table 3.1.2) before it is made public.
- The VEE is suggested to publish accurate Guidelines for graduation, summarising the total number of ECTS, the number of ECTS in Core subjects, in Elective subjects and in (Dissertation) Final degree Thesis.
- The VEE should consider encouraging training in the subjects as supervised self-learning to promote student-centred learning.
- The VEE must properly map the amount of hours of training in the Final degree thesis and allocate a different number of ECTS to both types of work: research thesis and bibliographic review, which should be consistent with the estimated total amount of hours workload for an average student in each type.

3.1.1.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1 because of inaccurate data addressed in Table 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 of the SER and Appendix 2, regarding the total number of hours in the curriculum and the partial number of hours of training in all groups of subjects:

- the core subjects as addressed in p32 of the SOP 2019 as amended in September 2021 and listed in the Annex 5.4.1 of the Directive 36/2005/EC,
- the electives,
- and the Dissertation (Final degree) thesis.

3.1.2. Basic Sciences

3.1.2.1. Findings

All groups of Basic subjects are covered (Medical Physics, Chemistry, Animal Biology, Plant Biology and Biomedical statistics) and Basic Sciences (Anatomy, Histology & Embryology, Physiology, Biochemistry, Genetics, Pharmacology, Pharmacy and Pharmacotherapy, Pathology, Toxicology, Parasitology, Microbiology, Immunology, Epidemiology, Information literacy and data management, Professional Ethics and communication, Animal health economics and practice management. Animal ethology, Animal Welfare and Animal nutrition) addressed on p.32 of the SOP 2019 as amended in September 2021 (Annex 2) and listed in the Annex 5.4.1 of Directive EC/2005/36, are also covered.

All subjects considered as “Basic Sciences” are taught in the first 5 years of the course and Basic Subjects during the first year. Overall Basic Subjects and Basic Sciences account for a substantial number of ECTS (128), about 43% of the whole curriculum (300 ECTS).

Students undergo a specific course on biosecurity and safety measures during the first and second year of studies that includes the hazards (physical, chemical and biological) and protective measures applying to the activities in laboratories, clinics and field practice.

The size of the group for Laboratory practicals of Basic Subjects and Basic Sciences is around 12-15 students per group with 1 teacher and 1 PhD assisting student.

For practicals in topographic Anatomy the group of 12-15 students splits in 4 tables to hands-on 3 students/corpse/organ. Some cadavers are fresh (small ruminants, carnivores and poultry) or kept in refrigeration until their use. No formalin fixed materials are used. The vascular system is explained by using organs modelised with polyurethane foam. Also, parts of cadavers, bones, radiographs, and anatomical models are used for teaching. For cattle, pigs and horses there are

no practicals with whole carcasses, using only female genital organs (plus limbs in the case of horses). In the first year, Clinical Anatomy is taught by a surgeon on live animals (3-4 cows, horses and dogs).
Groups of 12-15 students in Pathology are attending practicals at the necropsy room with 1 teacher. Cadavers come from the VEE's Clinics, outside clinics, farms, etc. For performing the necropsy, students wear (his/her own surgical pyjamas and rubber boots; the service provides boot plastic covers, lab coats and gloves).

3.1.2.2. Comments

- The curriculum includes the major Basic subjects and Basic sciences, addressed on p.32 of the SOP 2019 as amended in September 2021 and in Directive EC/2005/36, required for veterinary training so, the most important items of the basic disciplines are taught.
- Table 3.1.2 does not include any hour of training on *Information literacy and data management* which are core competencies for veterinarians. During the on-site Visitation the team verified that these contents are taught in a seminar on "How to write a degree thesis", in a Module on Statistical and Computer Technology, and on Final degree thesis, amongst others.
- The Basic Sciences has a good veterinary orientation; both in the content and practical work and are not well coordinated to avoid overlapping or gaps.
- The number of ECTS for basic subjects is too high (43% of total ECTS) when compared to other Specific veterinary subjects (Clinical Sciences, Animal Production, Food Safety and Quality).
- For Basic subjects and sciences, the core curriculum offers a very poor balance between theoretical (976 h in total) and practical work (252 h in total) with a ratio of 3.9:1.
- For some subjects (*Biomedical statistics, Professional ethics and communication, Animal Ethology, Animal Welfare*) Table 3.1.2 of the SER reflects absence of practicals.
- Even when the students are instructed in the first year on biosafety and biosecurity and before starting practicals in the different subjects, there is not a signature required from the students on their knowledge and compromise of fulfilment of the rules.
- Despite the recommendations by the evaluation report in 2010, some Basic Sciences have very few practicals and without any clinical approach (Table 3.1.2 of the SER and Appendix 2): Physiology 28h (laboratory/desk, 17% of total hours in the subject); Biochemistry 8h (laboratory/desk, 7.7%); Pharmacology, pharmacy and pharmacotherapy 5h (laboratory/desk, 7%); Epidemiology 4h (laboratory/desk, 17%); and others have no practicals: Microbiology; Information literacy and practice management; Ethology; Animal Welfare.
- Unfortunately, as it will be stated in more detail in Standard 5.1, there is a low number of cadavers of cattle for use in Pathology to guarantee hands-on training of all the students. On site, it was verified that Table 5.1.6 of the SER, p.59 does not offer accurate data since necropsies performed by students during the mandatory extramural Professional Practical Training (PPT), are not included (i.e, media of 3 necropsies in cows per year with the practitioner).

3.1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

- Basic Subjects and Sciences should improve the coordination to avoid gaps and/or overlapping.
- The curriculum should be adapted to reduce the number of contact hours for Basic Subjects and Sciences and to increase the number of contact hours in other Specific veterinary subjects (Clinical Sciences, Animal Production, Food Safety and Quality).

- The VEE should offer a better balance (at least 1:1) between theoretical and practical work in the Basic Subjects and Sciences by decreasing the theoretical hours (lectures, seminars, oriented self-learning) and increasing the practical hours.
- The VEE should guarantee hands-on training of students in live animals to secure the acquisition of competences on evaluation of normal behaviour and animal welfare.
- The VEE should train students in communication skills and practice management through practicals with owners, farmers, and public presentations. etc.
- The VEE must secure the availability of cadavers from cattle to guarantee the acquisition of competences in necropsy and sampling.
- It is suggested that the VEE asks for the signature of students' knowledge and compromise of fulfilment of the biosafety and biosecurity measures applying in the different practicals.

3.1.2.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.2.

3.1.3. Clinical Sciences in companion animals (including equine and exotic pets)

3.1.3.1. Findings
All groups of Clinical Sciences (Obstetrics, reproduction and reproductive disorders, Diagnostic pathology, Medicine, Surgery, Anaesthesiology, Clinical practical training in common animal species, Preventive medicine, Diagnostic imaging, Therapy in common animal species, Propaedeutics of common animal species) addressed on p.32 of the SOP 2019 as amended in September 2021 (Annex 2) and listed in the Annex 5.4.1 of Directive EC/2005/36, are covered.
All subjects considered as Clinical Sciences in companion animals (Semeiotics and Veterinary Medical Pathology, Semeiotics and Surgical Pathology (partially), Anesthesiology and Veterinary Surgical Medicine, Obstetrics, Pathophysiology of Animal Reproduction and Artificial Insemination Techniques (partially), Special Veterinary Pathological Anatomy II and Forensic Pathology, Diagnostic Imaging and Laboratory, Veterinary Clinical Medicine, Therapy and Legal Medicine (partially), Veterinary Clinical Surgery (partially), Veterinary Clinical Obstetrics Andrology and Gynaecology (partially)) are taught from the 3rd to the 5th year of the course. Overall Clinical Sciences Subjects account for a substantial number of ECTS (62), about 21% of the whole curriculum (300 ECTS).
In total, 626 hours of lectures, 10 hours of seminars, 5 hours of supervised self-learning, 69 hours of laboratory and desk-based work, 147 hours of non-clinical animal work and 172 hours of clinical animal work are listed in the curriculum under this subject.
No references were found in the SER related to core courses in medical genetics and clinical modules in exotic pets.
The practical contents of the course are provided as compulsory practical rotations under academic staff supervision namely in clinical rotations (8 ECTS) and Professional Practical Training (PPT) (30 ECTS) which includes one week of External Practical Training (EPT) with groups with a small number of students.
Clinical rotations consist of a total of 5 weeks of purely practical activity with 12 consecutive hours to be carried out in daily and night shifts (7 days or 7 nights including weekdays and holidays) and are developed from the 2nd to the 5th year in ambulatory and at VTH. After any 7-day rotation, each student provides the Clinical Rotation Committee with a final report that includes all cases followed up and this process is completed in 5th year with the completion of the Rotation Logbook that encompasses all activities performed in the full rotation period.

Before the clinical rotations, students are involved in various activities along with the practical units provided for in each teaching curricular module. The first week of clinical rotations (second semester of the 1st year) provides them with one approach to the clinical practical activities focusing on basic theoretical and practical aspects of clinical rotations, including theoretical classes, theoretical seminars and practical lectures focus on various subjects such as health status monitoring and basic assessment of major systems and basic knowledge about the collection of biological samples for laboratory exams.
During the 5th year, students undertake a mandatory intramural/extramural practical training, the Professional Practical Training-PPT, compulsory for the final degree exam and for admission to the State Exam.
The activities for each area of the PPT (Internal Medicine, Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Infectious Diseases, Animal Production, Food Inspection and Pathology and Parasitology and parasitic diseases) included in the internship take place in 3 weeks (a total of 12 weeks/student) and include 1 external week (30 h/week) in private or public providers and 2 internal weeks (35 h/week) at both intramural work (VTH, Chiareto facility and in the laboratories of the relevant professional areas) and extramural work (dog shelters, small and large ruminant farms, swine farms). At the end of PPT period, a PPT logbook, which reports daily activity, is due.
Out of the total 300 ECTS required by the Veterinary Curriculum, 8 ECTS are dedicated to electives, choosing from scientific seminars/conferences/symposia, optional courses, courses offered in other Teramo University degree programmes consistent with the DVM programme or Erasmus Traineeship. SER Table 3.1.4 lists the electives offered to the students. Among elective subjects in clinical sciences in companion animals are First aid for exotic animals: when there is no time to waste, Advanced ultrasound of the abdomen and neck, Imaging and Clinical medicine of skeletal diseases in the growth of small animals, Small Animal Emergency Medicine and Intensive Care; Oncology, Tomographic imaging diagnostic, Medicine, Surgery and Pathology of pet rabbits, Neurology; Basic Ultrasound of the Abdomen; Training Event Medical School: Horse rehabilitation, Training Event: Acme products for orthopaedic management of the horse, Imaging and clinical aspects of canine discospondylitis and feline nasal disease, Problem solving in Feline Medicine with a special focus on geriatric cats and management of feline colonies, Orthopaedic TPLO practical course, Top ten surgeries (soft tissue), Diagnostics imaging in Oncology, Radiology of the Thorax and Radiology of the Abdomen.
At the beginning of the II semester of the A.Y. 2018-2019 and to verify the fulfilment of each core practical/clinical activity a new “Day one competences” Logbook was adopted. This logbook must be filled out in all its parts to allow students to be admitted to the final degree exam.
In Table 3.1.2 of the SER Diagnostic imaging has only 4 hours of practical training in laboratory/desk work (column D) with no practicals on live animals (column F).

3.1.3.2. Comments

- Onsite, the team verified that Diagnostic imaging training in live companion animals (X-Ray, ultrasound, MRI) is done during the Clinical Rotation and Professional Practical Training.
- Even when there is no reference to exotic pets throughout the core curriculum in the SER, it was verified that this training is provided in PPT and in three elective courses.
- For Clinical sciences in companion animals, the core curriculum offers a poor balance between theoretical (636 h in total) and practical work (393 h in total) with a ratio of 1.6:1.
- Currently Medical genetics is only available as an elective course.

3.1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

- The inclusion of an exotic animals medicine module in the core curriculum, as well as efforts to increase the clinical caseload of these species in the CR and PPT activities are strongly recommended.
- Given the current context and requirements of the medical sciences field, the elective course in medical genetics must be included in the core curriculum.

3.1.3.4 Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.3.

3.1.4. Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals (including Animal Production and Herd Health Management)

3.1.4.1. Findings

All topics listed in the Annex 5.4.1 of the Directive 36/2005/EC are covered both in Basics sciences, animal production and clinical sciences: animal husbandry and genetics; Agricultural economics, animal science, animal nutrition and feeding, veterinary clinical medicine (partially), veterinary clinical surgery (partially), veterinary clinical obstetrics and gynaecology (partially). Training lasts from the 2nd to the 5th year and represents 65 ECTS for Animal Production, Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals and Herd Health Management. Most of the training time in these fields is devoted to lectures.

Students are involved in clinical activities during Clinical Rotations (from 2nd to 5th year – 84h each year for SA and LA) and Professional Practice Training during 5th year. Size group is 4 students for CR (2 at day and 2 at night) and 6-7 for PPT.

Each of 6 thematic PPT (internal medicine, surgery, obstetrics and reproduction, animal production and herd health management, infectious diseases and veterinary public health) combines intramural rotations (2 weeks) and Extramural Practical Training (1 week supervised by external collaborators). Among these PPT and excluding EPT, 5 weeks (175h) are devoted to food producing animals. Regarding EPT, 3 weeks are specifically devoted to these species and 3 other ones are mixed (SA/LA).

The Chiareto Teaching Farm supports practical training in veterinary semiology, animal husbandry, feeding, animal handling and obstetrics. Agreed farms receive students for ambulatory clinics.

In Table 3.1.2 of the SER Diagnostic imaging has only 4 hours of practical training in laboratory/desk work (column D) with no practicals on live animals (column F).

3.1.4.2. Comments

- The team verified onsite that Diagnostic imaging training in live Food producing animals (X-Ray, ultrasound, MRI) is done during the clinical core modules in LA in IV and V year and during the Clinical Rotation and Professional Practical Training.
- The current design and writing of the curriculum makes it difficult to provide an accurate evaluation of the amount of hours dedicated to ruminants received by every student. The team's estimation is that it does not exceed a third part of the clinical training (including lectures and practices) devoted to large animals.
- Moreover, the opportunity for students to perform their EPT - directly linked to the 3 PPT (Veterinary obstetrics, veterinary surgery and veterinary medicine) - with the same species does not guarantee a sufficient training in ruminants for each one of them.

3.1.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

- The syllabus should clearly identify the distribution of contents among the different species of Large Animals, only some of which are Food Producing Animals.
- The amount of activities dedicated to ruminants should be increased for every student, for example through a stricter monitoring of the EPT choices.
- It is suggested to better define the objectives, outcomes and assessment method of each PPT.

3.1.4.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.4 because there is suboptimal focus on medical and surgical teaching regarding ruminants within the curriculum.

3.1.5. Food Safety and Quality

3.1.5.1. Findings

Food safety and quality is covered during the last two years of the curriculum in the form of courses in Food technology, Food hygiene and microbiology, Zoonoses, Control of food, feed and animal by-products and Veterinary legislation including official controls. In total, 174 hours of lectures, 27 practical hours and 171 hours of non-clinical animal work are listed in the curriculum under this subject.

The practical contents of the course are provided under academic staff supervision in collaboration with local food producing companies with student groups of 20-25. The professional practical training in Meat and Food Inspection is covered in the 5th year (2 weeks = 70 hours) in groups of 4-5 students. It is mandatory for all students to spend 1 week in external practical training (EPT) in a food safety and quality relevant enterprise/institution.

The VEE has contracts with two slaughterhouses (one for ungulates and one for poultry) located 35 km and 17 km from the VEE. The SER lists 10 food producing factories where students can undergo training in food technology and inspection. Collaboration with these factories is based on written agreements. About 10 students carry out their thesis project in the field of Food Safety and Quality for each Academic Year.

3.1.5.2. Comments

- The VEE is commended for providing a very broad and thorough training in food safety and quality.

3.1.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.1.5.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.5

3.1.6. Professional Knowledge

3.1.6.1. Findings

The curriculum includes in total 786 mandatory hours related to professional knowledge. They are taught starting from 1st year and can be more specified as follows: Professional ethics and communication: 6 hrs, Animal health economics and practice management: 24 hrs, Clinical practical training in common animal species: 636 hrs, Herd health management: 60 hrs,

Veterinary legislation: 60 hrs. Besides that, within the elective courses of the curriculum students can choose Practice management (8 hrs), Efficacy, efficiency, time organisation strategies (5 hrs), Emotion and leadership (5 hrs) and The new Veterinary Medicine from Teaching to Professional work (8 hrs.). However, "Information literacy and data management" is not a separate course included in the curriculum. Information literacy is included in the topics taught during the Welcome day to all first year students and on a yearly basis in a 1-day seminar on "How to write a degree thesis".
Data management is included in the first year of the curriculum with a Statistical and Computer Technology Module (3 ECTS/35 hours) included in the Biomedical statistics course. Both skills are also usually trained by each single Supervisor in the framework of the activities attended by each single student for their Degree thesis. Furthermore, both skills have been taught at different moments during the entire curriculum (e.g. PPT and CR).
As part of the education in professional behaviour, cooperation might be considered as being very important. In the day shift of the Clinical Rotation, students of 2nd year and 4th/5th year are forming groups. So, students have to work together by discussing cases, problem solving, but also by operational work. They will learn from each other that way.
The Professional Practical Training (PPT) in the 5th year consists of 2 "internal weeks" and 1 "external week (30 hrs.). Just the external week gives the opportunity for orientation on the later work environment and networking (clinics, companies). In the SER this is also clearly described as one of the major purposes of the external week. In the practical training, slaughterhouse students follow the Official Veterinarian in charge. They might discuss with the veterinarian several dilemmas s/he (regularly) meets.
Last but not least, in the practical training in food companies, students have to study and discuss the HACCP manual. Students are provided with the basis of the quality management system, and notions of voluntary certification.

3.1.6.2. Comments

- The VEE is acknowledged for the strong involvement of practitioners in student's training.
- The VEE is commended for the Professional knowledge that is well organised and integrated throughout the curriculum.
- The fact that studying HACCP principles is included in the curriculum of the VEE is very useful, not only for working in some specific companies, but thinking about and knowledge of quality systems is more generally valuable.
- Of all the items belonging to professional knowledge, information literacy and data management are not clearly defined in the curriculum. This subject has been taught, not only by teachers at the start of different courses, but also by the day organised for students to prepare for the Thesis.
- Practice management is very important for future vets. However, it might only be chosen as 8 hrs elective lectures (yearly training event)(see comments and suggestions under 3.5.2/3.5.3)

3.1.6.3 Suggestions for improvement

- The VEE must correct Table 3.1.2 by mapping the real number of hours devoted to professional knowledge, information literacy and data management.

3.1.6.4 Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.6.

Standard 3.2 Each study programme provided by the VEE must be competency-based

and designed so that it meets the objectives set for it, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme must be clearly specified and communicated and must refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.
The VEE must provide proof of a QA system that promotes and monitors the presence of an academic environment highly conducive to learning including self-learning. Details of the type, provision and updating of appropriate learning opportunities for the students must be clearly described, as well as the involvement of students.
The VEE must also describe how it encourages and prepares students for self-learning and lifelong learning.

3.2.1. Findings
The VEE ensures that the study program meets the objectives by promoting hands-on training and the acquisition of Day One Competences. Both of these parameters are available to students through the Teaching Course Description Form. Also, analysis done by EQAC, meetings with alumni and different stakeholders during the academic year detect the level of student's satisfaction and the quality of accomplished objectives.
A lower number of students and an appropriate number of teachers assures mutual collaboration and quick resolution of any concern.
Continuing education can be achieved on the VEE through Master and Specialization programs.
Self-learning is stimulated through participation in different training events.

3.2.2. Comments
None.

3.2.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

3.2.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.2.

Standard 3.3 Programme learning outcomes must:

- **ensure the effective alignment of all content, teaching, learning and assessment activities of the degree programme to form a cohesive framework**
- **include a description of Day One Competences**
- **form the basis for explicit statements of the objectives and learning outcomes of individual units of study**
- **be communicated to staff and students**
- **be regularly reviewed, managed and updated to ensure they remain relevant, adequate and are effectively achieved.**

3.3.1. Findings
Educational aims of the VEE are similar to those found in EU Directive 2013/55/EU.
It is stated that these aims represent learning outcomes of individual units. Training processes are annually reviewed through student's feedback (evaluation form) and data collected in the Annual Monitoring Report. The minimal goal of the curriculum is based on Day One Competences (D1C). At the end of the 1st year students receive a logbook that will be used by the end of the study (D1C are listed inside). The Logbook has to be certified by each teacher as

an assessment process. DVMP Board (all teaching staff and 15 students) is the responsible body for learning outcomes, decision and declaration. General learning outcomes are assessed and revised once per year by EQAC, combining suggestions from different sources. Learning outcomes of specific teaching units are described in the Teaching Course Description Form and further published on the official website.

3.3.2. Comments
None.

3.3.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

3.3.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.3.

Standard 3.4 The VEE must have a formally constituted committee structure (which includes effective student representation), with clear and empowered reporting lines, to oversee and manage the curriculum and its delivery. The committee(s) must:

- **determine the pedagogical basis, design, delivery methods and assessment methods of the curriculum**
- **oversee QA of the curriculum, particularly gathering, evaluating, making change and responding to feedback from stakeholders, peer reviewers and external assessors, and data from examination/assessment outcomes**
- **perform ongoing and periodic review of the curriculum at least every seven years by involving staff, students and stakeholders; these reviews must lead to continuous improvement. Any action taken or planned as a result of such a review must be communicated to all those concerned**
- **identify and meet training needs for all types of staff, maintaining and enhancing their competence for the ongoing curriculum development.**

3.4.1. Findings
Design of the curriculum is based on EU Directive 2005/36, national regulations and ESEVT recommendations. It was founded as a single-cycle degree program of 300 ECTS. Formally constituted committee structure dealing with QA is described in more details in chapter 3.3. Briefly, EQAC and DVMP Board are the main structures involved in evaluation, assessment and change of the curriculum, taking into account feedback from students, teachers and stakeholders. Stakeholders and students' suggestions are both used as improvements of teaching quality and efficiency of the courses. Periodic review of the curriculum is conducted both internally and externally. External audits are conducted by national (ANVUR) and international QA bodies (EAEVE). Current curriculum was built in 2010/2011, taking into account inputs received during the EAEVE visit and revisit. National visitation took place in 2017 and was successful.
3.4.2. Comments
None.

3.4.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

3.4.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.4.

Standard 3.5 External Practical Training (EPT) is compulsory training activities organised outside the VEE, the student being under the direct supervision of a non-academic person (e.g. a practitioner). EPT cannot replace the core intramural training nor the extramural training under the close supervision of academic staff (e.g. ambulatory clinics, herd health management, practical training in FSQ and VPH).
Since the veterinary degree is a professional qualification with Day One Competences, EPT must complement and strengthen the academic education inter alia by enhancing student's professional knowledge.

3.5.1. Findings
6 weeks (30 hrs. each week) compulsory EPT has to be undertaken during the 5th year, in each of the following subjects: Internal Medicine, Small and Large Animal Surgery, Small and large animal obstetrics and reproduction, Food quality and safety, Infectious diseases and VPH, and Herd Health Management and Animal Production. The EPT weeks are spent in veterinary practices, farms, slaughterhouses, public institutions and veterinary government services.
EPT activities are regulated by the PPT committee (DVMP director and 8 teachers - 6 of whom are in charge of a specific area of EPT). The aim is to complement intramural academic training and verify work "in the field" by comparison with veterinarians already working in the various disciplines. Regarding this, attention for Practice Management is only included in the curriculum as an elective training event.
150 External Providers are contracted and provide a questionnaire on the student evaluating training, knowledge, interest and commitment. Students complete a questionnaire on the providers and the results are analysed by the EQAC and evaluated by the PPT committee which provides quality control for the providers and monitors learning outcomes of students.

3.5.2. Comments
- It is commendable that about 150 providers have been contracted to take responsibility for teaching veterinary students. EPT activities are very important to introduce students to the future work field.
- Practice Management is important for future vets in the field. According to the SER (p.30), one of the objectives of EPT is "orientation purposes, which aim to make the "outside world" known and compared through direct contact with companies and population medicine (stables, dog shelters, pig, sheep and cattle farms) or veterinary private structures (clinics, laboratories)". This could lead to the conclusion that inclusion of Practice Management in the regular curriculum is a logical consequence of the defined objectives of EPT.

3.5.3. Suggestions for improvement
- At the moment, Practice Management as part of Professional Knowledge, might be, if possible, incorporated in the EPT, especially in the veterinary practices.

3.5.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.5.

Standard 3.6 The EPT providers must have an agreement with the VEE and the student (in order to state their respective rights and duties, including insurance matters), provide

a standardised evaluation of the performance of the student during their EPT and be allowed to provide feedback to the VEE on the EPT programme.
There must be a member of the academic staff responsible for the overall supervision of the EPT, including liaison with EPT providers.

3.6.1. Findings

The PPT committee defines criteria (minimum requirements) for the selection of the EPT providers in order to guarantee a correct learning process. Veterinary practices providing EPT must have 24h availability of service, be at least a 3-man practice with integrated specialties, housing for hospitalised animals, radiography and ECG, internal laboratory analysers, gaseous anaesthetic equipment, and a sufficient case load to meet the needs of the student.
Providers have contracts (see SER Appendix 8) with the VEE which includes the roles and duties of the persons involved. The EPT provider has to write a standardised assessment of the student which in turn provides a report on the establishment, guaranteeing the quality of the EPT learning process. Agreement renewals are undertaken by the DVMP board overseen by the PPT committee. Feedback is analysed by the EQAC. It is the PPT committee's role to assess the evaluations made by the placement and also the students at the end of each EPT week. The PPT committee consists of 8 academic staff. Different members of the PPT committee are within their field of expertise responsible for the overall supervision of the students.

3.6.2. Comments

- It is important that EPT providers has been assessed by students including the role of EQAC. Assessment of the students (general functioning, professional behaviour, knowledge and practical skills) has been clearly defined.

3.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.6.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.6.

Standard 3.7 Students must take responsibility for their own learning during EPT. This includes preparing properly before each placement, keeping a proper record of their experience during EPT by using a logbook provided by the VEE and evaluating the EPT. Students must be allowed to complain officially and/or anonymously about issues occurring during EPT. The VEE must have a system of QA to monitor the implementation, progress and then feedback within the EPT activities.

3.7.1. Findings

Students choose their own EPT provider from a list of acceptable placements (the link provided in the SER does not work). Each student has to formulate his/her personal purposes for the EPT; at least 1 week prior the student must complete a training project form set by the EPT provider, which is authorised by the provider and the VEE Secretary. Students complete their worksheets which they sign and are countersigned by the referring veterinary surgeon from the VEE. At the end of each EPT, students must fill in an attendance and activity table and the "Professional Practical Training logbook", both of which require signatures to verify the achievement.
Difficulties and problems can be reported by the student, directly or anonymously to the specific person in charge of that PPT area or the PPT committee via the post placement questionnaire.

Then, if necessary, these can be brought up with the DVMP Director to solve them and if necessary, terminate the agreement.
In the SER no clear description is given about remediation or how to handle if students malfunction during the 6-week period as well as at the moment of assessment by the mentor of the organisation, especially when students do not meet the requirements. Moreover, the SER gives no insight into whether the Training Project form has been compared with the results of the EPT. In other words: Has the student achieved the goals?

3.7.2. Comments

- It is up to the students to contact one of the providers, including a proposal with the learning goals for her/his EPT. It might be imagined that the popularity of providers differs, but that seems not to be problematic.
- The possibility of anonymously reporting problems is well arranged.
- Apparently, there is no involvement of the PPT Committee, or the EQAC in the QA monitoring of EPT.

3.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.7.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.7.

Area 4. Facilities and equipment

Standard 4.1 All aspects of the physical facilities must provide an environment conducive to learning, including internet access. The veterinary VEE must have a clear strategy and programme for maintaining and upgrading its buildings and equipment. Facilities must comply with all relevant legislation including health, safety, biosecurity, accessibility to people with reduced mobility, and EU animal welfare and care standards.

4.1.1. Findings

The facilities of the VEE are located in the region of Piano D'Accio - Teramo and are spread over three different locations: the Piano D'Accio campus, the faculty's teaching farm in Chiareto (8 Km distant), and the Coste S. Agostino main campus (6 km distant) where the team could find some laboratories. Wi-Fi is available at both campuses, but not at Chiareto Teaching Farm.
Piano D'Accio campus has lecture theatres, study spaces, practical laboratories, library, cafeteria, canteen, academic, support staff and administration offices, and the VTH. Slaughterhouses are located 17 and 35 kms away, 10 food and food processing plants are located within 35 kms of the University, three dairy farms within 50 km and a pig farm 77 kms away. A dog shelter and a Sanitary Public Kennel are both located at a distance of 16 km.
A new building has been approved and funded with work starting in 2020 and due for completion in 2022. This will house a new necroscopy room, 10 teaching classrooms, 2 laboratories for practicals, a 250-seat lecture hall (Aula Magna), a new library and research laboratories for Pathological Anatomy, Embryology/Anatomy, Microbiology, Infectious Diseases, Parasitology, Inspection of food of animal origin and stables for cattle and horses with the animal reproduction laboratories, pet therapy and veterinary rehabilitation services.
The University Technical office oversees the maintenance of facilities and the VEE ensures that they comply with the relevant legislation on safety and security (P38 of the SER).

The service of Infectious Diseases at the VTH is devoted to the diagnosis of viral diseases (Annex VI, p.107 of the SER Appendices).

4.1.2. Comments

- All visited buildings are accessible and keep excellent signalling of emergency exits, fire extinguishers, eye-washers, etc., fulfilling EU relevant legislation on health, safety and biosecurity of people and EU animal welfare and care standards.
- It is unclear the procedure to verify/audit and guarantee maintenance and upgrading of facilities and equipment (QA loop).
- The new building has mixed characteristics of an academic/pedagogical building, a research building and has some hospital features.
- It is highly recommended to provide Chiareto teaching farm with internet resources.

4.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

- The VEE should pay attention to the flowcharts of movement between the various areas in the new building in order to guarantee the biosecurity of users.
- The VEE should establish a clear procedure to verify/audit and guarantee maintenance and upgrading of facilities and equipment including the responsible persons.

4.1.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.1.

Standard 4.2 Lecture theatres, teaching laboratories, tutorial rooms, clinical facilities and other teaching spaces must be adequate in number, size and equipped for the instructional purposes and must be well maintained. The facilities must be adapted for the number of students enrolled. Students must have ready access to adequate and sufficient study, self-learning, recreation, locker, sanitary and food service facilities.
Offices, teaching preparation and research laboratories must be sufficient for the needs of the academic and support staff.

4.2.1. Findings

Annually, an average of 47 students are enrolled in the VEE. Total teaching area is 1,391.53 sq. m and total area for other activities such as study and self-learning, library, catering, locker rooms, accommodation for on-call students, leisure, are 1,519.09 sq. m. Staff offices consist of about 1,000 sq. m and the area for research laboratories is not described.
The class size is currently 51 students. Lecture theatres are situated on the Piano D'Accio campus and described as of adequate size as are the small rooms for group work. They have appropriate AV apparatus for lecturing purposes. Since the earthquake caused the old Molinari teaching building to be dismissed, the VEE has not had a dedicated teaching laboratory for microbiology, infectious diseases and food microbiology. Practical teaching is carried out in small groups in research laboratories. Laboratories at Coste S. Agostino have sufficient chairs for students, The Motti laboratory has a PCR, 2 spectrophotometers, 1 UV transilluminator, 4 magnetic stirrers and 2 centrifuges. The Barone laboratory has 30 optical microscopes, 2 inverted microscopes, 1 chemical hood, 2 histology embedders and an optical microscope connected to a projector.
Student facilities for study and self-learning are all located in the teaching area and VTH with 15 tables and seats in the library, a cafeteria and canteen, male and female locker rooms, and dormitories for male, female students and staff; appropriate sanitation facilities are provided in all buildings.

There is a sporting Centre, theatre and Centre for modern languages within the University.

4.2.2. Comments

- The Piano D'Accio campus teaching spaces visited: 6 lecture theatres, study rooms, computer room (16 computers) are well sized, well equipped, handy and fit for the purpose. Even when the size of the lecture theatres accommodates up to 60 students each, currently for Covid-19 special measures each week half of the students of the year receive face-to-face teaching and the other half follow the lecture on-line via Google Meeting, switching every week.
- The multipurpose laboratories seen at Sant Agostino's main campus are shared with other degrees (Welfare of Animals, Sustainable production,...). They are modern, well sized for the group of 12-15 students and well equipped with equipment and devices to safely develop practicals on Biochemistry, Physiology, Pharmacology, Toxicology, microscopy (Cytology, Histology, Functional anatomy, Parasitology), etc.
- The Faculty library located in the Piano d'Accio campus has space limitations, planning its expansion into the new building under construction.
- The canteen and cafeteria present some constraints to their functioning, namely due to the current pandemic situation. Because of this, spaces (tents) were created for outdoor meals.
- Although there are already some models in use, the VEE does not yet have a place to install the skills lab.

4.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

- In order to minimize the negative impact associated with the use of animals for training propaedeutic skills, a place for the installation of skills lab must be found and funds allocated for the acquisition of animal models.

4.2.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.2.

Standard 4.3 The livestock facilities, animal housing, core clinical teaching facilities and equipment used by the VEE for teaching purposes must:

- **be sufficient in capacity and adapted for the number of students enrolled in order to allow safe hands-on training for all students**
- **be of a high standard, well maintained and fit for the purpose**
- **promote best husbandry, welfare and management practices**
- **ensure relevant biosecurity and bio-containment**
- **be designed to enhance learning.**

4.3.1. Findings

Healthy horses, ruminants and pigs are housed in the Chiareto Teaching Farm (CTF) and on Piano D'Accio campus. At CTF there are four uncovered paddocks totalling 8180 sq m, stabling for 6 stallions and 14 mares, 9 horse boxes, 9 horse stables, 4 boxes for pigs/ donkeys, 4 bull boxes, 8 cow boxes, 3 sheep/goat boxes and 25 boxes with external paddocks for dogs.
Hospitalised animals are located in the VTH. There are separate dog and cat wards which are separated into medical and surgical units, each with its own equipment. There is a fully equipped ICU and intensive care room for small animals. Two fully equipped ICU boxes are available for horses; there are 14 horse stalls, 2 nurses' boxes for horses and 1 bovine stall.
Quarantine and isolation facilities are provided for cats and dogs with basic equipment. There are two isolation boxes for horses.

There is an enclosure for zebra fish on the Piano D'Accio campus where research into the toxic effects of substances on the health and welfare of this species is studied. It is used by students as part of the practical courses of toxicology and pharmacology.
There are 4 examination rooms in the VTH, for dogs, cats and small animal obstetrics and reproduction. One room is kept for emergency use. There is an extra consulting room within the infectious diseases area (Isolation Unit). These rooms contain the necessary basic equipment.
The SA hospital has a preparation room, a clean operating theatre for neurological and orthopaedic surgery, two theatres for clean/contaminated surgery, a room for endoscopic examination and a sterilisation area. Piped oxygen is available in all areas. There is a physiotherapy unit with treadmill and appropriate equipment.
The LA hospital is used mostly for equine patients and has two induction/recovery boxes, two theatres for clean and contaminated surgery and two consulting rooms, one of which is used for endoscopy and standing surgery. Radiography and ultrasound are carried out in this room. The large animal surgery is provided with all the appropriate instrumentation for soft tissue, orthopaedic surgery, arthroscopy and endoscopy. Surgical rooms are provided with fluid aspiration and air pressurised sockets for pneumatic instrumentation.
Diagnostic imaging is divided into SA and LA sections. The SA unit has an ultrasound room, radiology room, console and image reading room, an MRI room and an endoscopy room. The radiology unit has annexed fluoroscopy and images produced via direct and indirect radiological devices. The two ultrasound scanners have probes and software for B mode and M mode studies, contrast studies, sonoelastography and Doppler.
The MRI unit serves both large and small animal units.
Intramural food inspection is carried out in a laboratory with small groups of 5 students working under supervision.
2 Slaughterhouses and 10 Food Processing are used - distances are listed in 4.1.
4 Livestock farms - 3 dairy and 1 pig are visited, as are 2 dog kennels / shelters. Distances from the campus are listed in 4.1.
Necroscopy room is used for practicals on cadavers in Pathology, in Anatomy, in Surgery (sutures), and in Food Safety on condemned organs, on different days of the week. The necroscopy room has a winch and ceiling sledges for LA necropsy, 6 necroscopic tables, 3 freezers, chemical hood, microtome and a preparation room connected to a fridge and a freezer of 10m^2 capacity, -20ºC.

4.3.2. Comments

- From the point of view of biosecurity and biocontainment it is not appropriate to have the same room for practicals in Pathology on cadavers, or Food Safety on condemned organs, with a high level of risk in the manipulation of cadavers from sick animals that demand specific clothing and IPEs, with practicals in Anatomy or Surgery on "normal", low-level risks organs, which do not demand exhaustive protective measures. It is extremely difficult to guarantee a complete disinfection of the necroscopy room by regular methods, but Italian law does not allow necropsies of cadavers with a suspicious infection at the VEE (this must be done at the Zooprophylactic Institutes) and the floor and equipment of the necroscopy room is easy to clean and disinfect which is done every day, with a thorough weekly disinfection; the team verified onsite that the students and staff enter the room with appropriate protection provided by the VEE to cover the shoes and clothes. Before leaving the room, students must disinfect the boots on one of the two small boot-pools.
- The farm visited by students for the PPT (and EPT), the "Allevamento Martin" with nearly 200 dairy cows, is one of the ten best producing farms in Italy. The capacity for training purposes is nearly endless. The cows are provided with ear-tags which are registering

behaviour as lying, ruminating, walking, and eating. Attention cows can be detected at every moment. With a GPS-system, the cows are easily found. Students and teachers have access to the management system on the VEE. So, students are able to prepare farm visits in the context of Animal Production and Herd Health Management. Especially the involvement of the farmer with teaching students was remarkable. The biosecurity was of high quality. The cleanliness of the office/lecture room was nearly unprecedented compared to other farms. The VEE including the students might be very happy to have a close relationship with this farm.

4.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

- The VEE should allocate different rooms for practicals in Anatomy/Surgery and Pathology/Food Safety in the new building.

4.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.3.

Standard 4.4 Core clinical teaching facilities must be provided in a veterinary teaching hospital (VTH) with 24/7 emergency services at least for companion animals and equines. Within the VTH, the VEE must unequivocally demonstrate that standard of education and clinical research are compliant with all ESEVT Standards, e.g. research-based and evidence-based clinical training supervised by academic staff trained to teach and to assess, availability for staff and students of facilities and patients for performing clinical research and relevant QA procedures.
For ruminants, on-call service must be available if emergency services do not exist for those species in a VTH.
The VEE must ensure state-of-the-art standards of teaching clinics which remain comparable with or exceeding the best available in the private sector.
The VTH and any hospitals, practices and facilities (including EPT) which are involved with the curriculum must meet the relevant national Practice Standards.

4.4.1. Findings

The VTH meets the relevant national practice standards. Research-based and evidence-based clinical training are provided by an academic staff trained.
The VTH provides a 24 h 365-day service for emergency cases with companion animals. Out of the hours from 09:00AM to 17:00PM, the service is provided with contract collaborators. The VTH is also used by the Public Health Service to provide first aid for companion animals on a 24 h basis.
First opinion cases and referral cases are seen between 09:00AM and 17:00PM on weekdays.
Patients suspected of infection are seen in the dedicated consulting room (Isolation Unit).
Large and small animals are hospitalised in separate areas and there is a room available for peripartum assistance of dogs and cats.
The ICU has a consulting room with anaesthetic machine, emergency oxygen and monitoring devices. X rays, ultrasound, blood gas and blood analysis are available 24/365.
Case histories and patient records are available on a computer system which allows case study discussion and interpretation of clinical data between staff and students.
The VTH has an autonomous management structure supported by a Technical Coordination body, comprising the Hospital Director and the coordinators for the services provided: Veterinary Emergency, Small Animal Internal Medicine, Equine Medicine and Surgery, Diagnostic Imaging and Small Animal Surgery, Small Animal Theriogenology, Large Animal

Theriogenology, Veterinary Pathology and Microbiology and Infectious and Parasitic Diseases. The ambulatory clinic is manned by VTH staff and external collaborators during the day with visits by appointment to clinical equine and ruminant cases where 1-3 students are involved at a time. Included also are herd management, gynaecological examinations of ruminants and podology, sports medicine and basic surgery in equines.
Within the VTH students take part in daily clinical rounds with case discussions and monitoring of hospitalised cases, therapy administration and taking part in the diagnostic and therapeutic procedures under supervision.
The VEE meets the national Practice Standard (Resolution 750 dated 30th July 2007, BUR 52 of 19/9/07) of the Abruzzo Regional Board.

4.4.2. Comments

- The clinical case record system in use (Case histories and patient records) has not always proved to be properly effective.
- The location of clinical diagnostic support laboratories greatly facilitates the effectiveness of clinical procedures. The team could see the professionalism and commitment of those responsible for these structures in their essential mission of supporting the clinical staff.
- There is a laboratory in which students are able to analyse food samples of silage from visited farms in the frame of Animal Production and Herd Health Management. This allows students to get insight in the analysis of the ration of cows, which is important knowledge for future practitioners.
- Because in the VTH no ruminants are housed, the level of equipment for clinical diagnostics is dependent on the veterinary practices which have an agreement with the VEE for the EPT.
- According to the SER (p.36) the EPT providers must meet minimum requirements as 24-hrs availability and services; Minimum number of 3 veterinarians with integrated specialties; Animal housing; Conventional radiographic and echocardiographic equipment; Internal laboratory analysis; Gas anaesthetic equipment and sufficient clinical (internal medicine, surgery and gynaecologic) caseload.
- The yearly questionnaire gives the opportunity to the VEE to evaluate the EPT providers.

4.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

- We advise replacing the patient and clinical history registration program with one more suited to a teaching/learning environment.

4.4.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.4.

Standard 4.5 The VEE must ensure that students have access to a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic facilities, including but not limited to: diagnostic imaging, anaesthesia, clinical pathology, intensive/critical care, surgeries and treatment facilities, ambulatory services, pharmacy and necropsy facilities.

4.5.1. Findings

Students since the 2nd year have access to several clinical services in three different modalities, practical training during the core clinical courses, Clinical Rotations and Professional Practical Training.
In the VTH students are divided into groups. Students undergoing Clinical Rotations in the VTH spend 7 consecutive days or night shifts in the Hospitalisation Unit. Each group of 4 or 5 students has at least one student from each year, who is supervised by VTH staff and provides

initial training in the handling and care of hospitalised animals.
Students involved in Professional Practical training are trained in the management of hospitalised and referred patients, clinical assessment and writing of reports on the database. One or two students are assigned a case and they take part in the clinical diagnostic work up and treatments. They assist during major surgery and perform minor surgical procedures under supervision.
Students may also volunteer to be involved in a service - the schedule is agreed with a supervisor.
All students involved in the VTH take part in both small and large animal clinical rounds on a daily basis.
Diagnostic imaging provides 2 ultrasound machines, 3 electrocardiographs, with tables and probes. There is 1 SA X-rays machine, a remotely controlled table with positioning aids, a fluoroscopic monitor and the required PPE. In the LA Department there is 1 X-rays machine, 1 X-rays digitiser, an X-rays control panel, cassettes and PPE. There is an MRI scanner, Faraday cage and positioning aids, etc. In the endoscopy room there are endoscopes of varying sizes, a video endoscope and an endoscope washing machine. Piped oxygen is standard and waste anaesthetic gas is disposed of by an interface.
Anaesthesia is provided in all LA and SA surgical departments, preparation rooms, theatres and diagnostic imaging areas; students are involved during the rotations.
The VTH gives students access to clinical pathology and necroscopy in the Anatomic and Necroscopic room (see 4.3), and the intensive/critical care area, surgeries and treatment areas. Students' involvement is listed above.

4.5.2. Comments

- The VTH facilities are adequate in size for the purpose they serve and are well maintained. The VEE is well equipped and there is an effective maintenance system for the equipment in use.
- In the VTH, a pharmacy is available organised according to the ruling legislation.
- Access to clinical services in food producing animals will mainly be extramural during Animal Production, Herd Health Management, PPP, and EPT, because they are not present in the VTH.
- In the Chiareto teaching farm a basic pharmacy is available for the provision of drugs if needed. All used medicines are well registered on lists.

4.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

4.5.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.5.

Standard 4.6 Appropriate isolation facilities must be provided to meet the need for the isolation and containment of animals with communicable diseases. Such isolation facilities must be properly constructed, ventilated, maintained and operated to provide for animal care and for prevention of spread of infectious agents. They must be adapted to all animal species commonly handled in the VTH.

4.6.1. Findings

Specific isolation facilities for infectious companion, equine and farm animals are provided and are in a separate location from other animals. SA patients' accommodation operates

autonomously with forced airflow through HEPA filters with close circuit surveillance.
Liquid and solid waste material is collected by an external contractor, licensed to transport infected waste. Floor and cage washing fluid drains into a manhole which has a tray with a filter to which sodium hypochlorite is added according to Italian legislation.
2 boxes for large animals/horses are located distant from uninfected stock. The layout has been designed for personnel, animal and biological material flows. All the biosafety standards respected by the staff are detailed in the "Biosafety manual/Manual of Biosafety) (Appendix 7).

4.6.2. Comments

- In SER table 4.3.3, as far as infectious diseases are concerned, only horses are mentioned in the large animals' column. Therefore, there is no availability of isolation places for ruminants in the VTH installations. On site, at Chiareto teaching farm the team visited two open-air stalls for multispecies quarantine, separated from the stables.
- The two boxes for large animals are suitable for their purpose. They are clean and big enough to house them properly.
- The isolation rooms that the team visited in detail were well designed and have all the necessary equipment for their operation. They are in use with adequate routines and the cleaning/disinfection procedures, as well as the treatment of the effluents used, respect good practices.

4.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

4.6.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.6.

Standard 4.7 The VEE must have an ambulatory clinic for production animals or equivalent facilities so that students can practise field veterinary medicine and Herd Health Management under academic supervision.

4.7.1. Findings

The SER (p.50) speaks about a pickup truck serving as a mobile clinic unit to perform ambulatory emergency and planned clinical procedures.
The ambulatory clinic developed in the pickup truck transports 4 persons. It is equipped as a mobile clinic and contains equipment, etc., required for preplanned visits and any emergency that may arise.
Field Veterinary Medicine and Herd Health Management are taught during PPT. The main teaching takes place at the Chiareto facility which has an AI Centre, rooms and boxes (video surveillance) for the observation of labour and birth.
Students visit farms which have an agreement for teaching and research to learn about Herd Health Management and Obstetrics. The pickup truck is equipped to deal with dystocias, caesareans, uterine/vaginal prolapses, AI and interventions related to bovine hypo fertility.

4.7.2. Comments

- According to the SER, the pickup truck has been used as a mobile clinic. The raised expectations by using the term "mobile clinic" are only partially fulfilled. The equipment consisted for the most part of obstetric instruments including surgery equipment in one box. The other box contained some other material, but it is questioned whether other

problems rather than obstetrics can be diagnosed, treated, and taught in an appropriate manner.
- The hygienic situation within the pickup truck was a poor one and absolutely not a good example for students. The risk for spreading infectious diseases like BVD is there.

4.7.3. Suggestions for improvement
- The VEE should keep the mobile clinic car according to Good Veterinary Practice rules.
- The VEE should discuss with the students how they can set up a car in an appropriate way to prevent spreading infectious diseases by vets.

4.7.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.7.

Standard 4.8 The transport of students, live animals, cadavers, materials from animal origin and other teaching materials must be done in agreement with national and EU standards, to ensure the safety of students and staff and to prevent the spread of infectious agents.

4.8.1. Findings
Students are transported for external training by buses provided by a company certified for people transportation, or in small groups of four by the ambulatory clinic pickup truck (4 students+clinician).
Certified companies are used to transport live animals, cadavers or organs, but there is also an alternative such as a dedicated car guided by a licenced technician or a member of the internal staff.

4.8.2. Comments
- It is not clear what legal support allows the safe transport of cadavers and/or organs in a dedicated car driven by a licensed technician or member of the in-house staff.
- The university guarantees school health insurance to all students, protecting them during their journeys between the various spaces allocated to teaching (intramural and extramural) and during their stay in them.
- A number (2 out of 15) restraint devices (seat belts) used within the buses transporting students, were broken, although the number of students are fewer than 15.

4.8.3. Suggestions for improvement
- The VEE must replace the missing safety devices in the means of transport in use or consider the acquisition/rental of a new one.

4.8.4. Decision
The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.8 because of the need to replace the damaged safety devices in the student transport and because of suboptimal respect of biosafety rules in the pickup truck serving as a mobile clinic.

Standard 4.9 Operational policies and procedures (including e.g. biosecurity, good laboratory practice and good clinical practice) must be taught and posted for students, staff and visitors and a Biosafety manual must be available. The VEE must demonstrate a clear commitment for the delivery of biosafety and biosecurity, e.g. by a specific

committee structure. The VEE must have a system of QA to monitor and assure clinical, laboratory and farm services, including a regular monitoring of the feedback from students, staff and clients.

4.9.1. Findings

Prior to the access to the VTH all the students since the 2nd year follow a mandatory training course regarding safety and health in the workplace dealing principally with chemical, physical (electrical, fire) and microbiological hazards, good laboratory practice and waste management, particularly with reference to medical hazardous waste. There is a biosecurity committee which produces a manual of SOPs (Biosecurity Manual, annexed to the SER) which all staff members and students must comply with.
Clinical activity procedures are implemented by the Services Committee and the Director of Curriculum. Changes are communicated to staff and students via regular meetings, e-mails and on the website. Potential owners/farmer complaints are discussed and managed by the VTH Director and by the service coordinators.
There is a radio protection course for new persons working within the radiology unit (p51 of the SER).
Any proposed changes to the rules and policies are considered and approved by the Faculty Board or competent collegiate body.

4.9.2. Comments

- According to what was observed at the site, the biosafety standard at the VTH is high and the staff demonstrated that they had acquired routine in the execution of the procedures related to it.
- The existence of protocols for guidance in emergency situations was proven on site.

4.9.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

4.9.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.9.

Area 5. Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin

Standard 5.1 The number and variety of healthy and diseased animals, cadavers, and material of animal origin must be adequate for providing the practical and safe hands-on training (in the areas of Basic Sciences, Clinical Sciences, Pathology, Animal Production, Food Safety and Quality) and adapted to the number of students enrolled.
Evidence must be provided that these data are regularly recorded and that procedures are in place for correcting any deficiencies.

5.1.1. Findings

According to the SER (column F in table 3.1.2 p.25), Physiology, Animal Welfare and Diagnostic Imaging are not teaching practicals with live animals.
Healthy live animals are used in the training during pre-clinical years 1 and 2 (physiology, animal handling, propaedeutics). The VEE owns healthy live animals to be used for teaching purposes which include an adequate number of cattle, donkey, horses and small ruminants. Healthy companion animals used in teaching are not owned by the VEE and teaching depends on the use of employee and student owned animals. There are signed agreements with the

Abruzzo region for stray companion animals and military corps for military dogs and horses but these are mainly diseased animals used in clinical training. There is no pre-clinical training of healthy exotic animals or poultry. Healthy pig number is low (n=3) but students have the opportunity to visit big farms during EPT.
Live diseased animals of all species are seen for hands-on training at the VTH during the last 4 years of the course and extra-murally in ambulatory clinics. The VTH sees a variety of first opinion and referral cases (30% of first opinion for companion animals and 20% for equines). Conversely, food producing animals' cases are first opinion during ambulatory clinics; patients seen intramurally are very limited (49 ruminants in 2018-2019).
Carcasses used for training in anatomy and pathology are duly removed by a specialized company responsible for their destruction. Data on animal resources used for training are routinely recorded.
Practicals in Anatomy are described under 3.1.2.2. In Topographic Anatomy, students do not dissect the whole carcasses nor the key viscera such as the lung, liver, heart or kidney of cattle, pigs and horses (Table 5.1.1 p.57 of the SER).
Training in FSQ and VPH is performed extramurally at multispecies abattoirs (ungulates and poultry) and during supervised activities with public regional health centres.
As regards pathology training, the cadavers used are mostly provided by the VTH services, private practitioners or kennels and slaughterhouses. Students perform necropsies in all common animal species (Table 5.1.6 of the SER, p.59) but the media of cadavers per year is very low for cattle (1) and in some years also for horses (1 in 2016-17).
The VTH CR Committee (CRC), the PPT Committee (PPTC) and the EQAC are in charge for monitoring the sufficient and wellbalanced caseload for training.

5.1.2. Comments

- Students must be trained in Anatomy of the common animal species through the dissection of whole carcasses or, at least, a set of the most important parts of the body and organs since the basic knowledge of the normal structure is essential for discriminating the abnormal findings in professional practice, mainly in the clinics and during meat inspection. Even when Clinical Anatomy trains students on live cows, horses and dogs (see 3.1.2.2), at the VEE, students do not dissect the whole carcasses or the key viscera of cattle, pigs and horses, which is detrimental to their progression in preclinical and clinical sciences.
- Appropriate numbers of cadavers for practicals in pathology (necropsy) in the common animal species reflected in the Indicators I17 (companion animals), I18 (ruminants and pigs), I19 (equines) and I20 (rabbits, rodent, birds and exotics) of the SOP 2019 are essential for the acquisition by the students of several Day One Competences as listed in Annex 2, p.32 of the SOP 2019 as amended in September 2021. In the case of cattle, the number of cadavers is too low to guarantee the adequate hands-on training of all the students. In the case of horses, the number of cadavers is balanced with the number of students, but in 2016-17 there was only 1 cadaver. On site, the team verified that students perform necropsies with the practitioner during PPT that are not included in SER table 5.1.6, for instance, a media of 3 necropsies per year in cows. Some limiting factors were explained on site for the shortage of cattle cadavers: small herds in the mountains, far away from the VEE, prohibition by law to manipulate cadavers suspicious of an infectious disease (must be necropsied at the Zooprophylactic Institute).
- The caseload of clinical cases in cattle is considered low at the mobile and ambulatory clinics and it is only partially balanced with the PPT to ensure hands-on training of students.

5.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

- Topographic Anatomy should use fresh organs (heart, kidney, lung, liver) from horses, ruminants and pigs to train students in practicals.
- Pathology should guarantee sufficient supply of cadavers from horses and cattle to train students. In the case of the most common infectious diseases, Pathology should provide videos or photos from the Zooprophylactic Institute on real necropsy cases to complement students' training.
- The VEE must correct table 5.1.6 of the SER including also the necropsies performed by the students with the practitioners during PPT.
- It is suggested to better monitor the LA clinical activities that every student carries out, especially in terms of balance between horses and ruminants. A special attention should be paid to increase cattle caseload at the VEE clinics.

5.1.4. Decision

The VEE is not compliant with Standard 5.1 because the number of bovine cadavers in pathology as well as the clinical caseload of bovines are insufficient to guarantee training for every student, with no clear procedure in place for correcting this deficiency.

Standard 5.2 In addition to the training provided in the VEE, experience can include practical training at external sites, provided this training is organised under direct academic supervision and following the same standards as those applied in the VEE.

5.2.1. Findings

Students must validate at least 6 weeks of External Practical Training (EPT) in a list of more than 150 structures after the signature of a formal agreement between the third-party and the VEE (see. 3.5 & 3.6). Moreover, during PPT periods, clinical training in Large Animal is completed through visits to industrial pig and dairy cows supervised by teaching staff. Because these farms vary widely regarding size, management, feeding and housing system, the students can get a good impression of the food animal husbandry.
For FSQ training, students can visit two slaughterhouses (domestic ungulates and poultry) and food companies among a list of ten agreed facilities aiming to different sectors (meat, seafood, and feedstuff).

5.2.2. Comments

- The VEE is commended for providing a close interaction between contracted practitioners or professionals and undergraduates in a wide range of areas.
- It is not fully clear how, on an individual level, students are able to get more or less the same education in the different species.

5.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

- The VEE should develop a better registration of the subjects taught per individual student at external sites in order to track the progression of acquisition of competencies.

5.2.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 5.2.

Standard 5.3 The VTH must provide nursing care skills and instruction in nursing procedures. Under all situations students must be active participants in the clinical

workup of patients, including problem-oriented diagnostic approach together with diagnostic decision-making.

5.3.1. Findings

Prior to clinical rotations, students undertake a 1-week animal handling course. There is no formal training or practicing on common nursing procedures. In years 2 and 3 a further week respectively is spent in the VTH practicing nursing and patient care skills, under the guidance of practitioners and students in older years.
Clinical workup of patients is organized through CR and PPT activities on a weekly basis, using a Problem Oriented Approach. Senior staff (VEE or LA practitioners) discuss the clinical cases with students. An emphasis on active contribution by the students is given through oral presentations, written reports, group decision making and critical thinking. Since December 2019, a daily clinical round has been formally set at the beginning of the VTH clinical activities.

5.3.2. Comments

- Problem-oriented diagnostic approach with diagnostic decision-making is used during the different PPT.
- Students are not formally taught nursing care (during a dedicated rotation) but learn on these tasks during the CR in the different services; moreover, students do not have the possibility to practice clinical/nursing skills using dummies or manikins.

5.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

- It is recommended to pay more attention to the acquisition of nursing care skills prior to practical application in the VTH.

5.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 5.3.

Standard 5.4 Medical records must be comprehensive and maintained in an effective retrieval system (preferably an electronic patient record system) to efficiently support the teaching, research, and service programmes of the VEE.

5.4.1. Findings

For all species attended at the VTH, the system used by the VEE since the academic year 2015-2016 to record the patients is called FENICE. It allows a complete retrieval of demographic info, case management and can also be used for retrospective studies. Students are trained to use it and are in charge of filling the patient form and recording the data under the supervision of faculty staff. Data on activities carried out during the EPT are still recorded on dedicated paper records.

5.4.2. Comments

- FENICE is only accessible on computers within the VTH. There are few places in the hospital for this access (consult rooms, reception and ultrasound room) and no area students can actively access to read up on cases and write reports.

5.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

- It is suggested to allocate a computer room for undergraduates within the VTH so students can comfortably access FENICE for learning purposes.

5.4.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 5.4.

Area 6. Learning resources

Standard 6.1 State-of-the-art learning resources must be adequate and available to support veterinary education, research, services and continuing education. When the study programme is provided in several tracks/languages, the learning resources must be available in all used languages. Timely access to learning resources, whether through print, electronic media or other means, must be available to students and staff and, when appropriate, to stakeholders. State-of-the-art procedures for bibliographical search and for access to databases and learning resources must be taught to undergraduate students.

6.1.1. Findings
Learning Resources include library facilities, electronic resources, online catalogues and databases and the e-learning platform and are provided mainly in the Italian language with English available as necessary. Library staff, the e-learning platform team and the Information and Communication technology team are available to assist students. Students are taught bibliographic search techniques, access to databases and learning resources during the first months of the course and during the "Welcome day" which introduces students to procedures for accessing and using learning resources. Training and updating courses are also provided as necessary for staff members.
A second moment of orientation on learning resources is in the one day's course on "How to write a Degree Thesis", provided on an annual basis. A Joint Students-Teachers Evaluation Committee (JSTEC) assesses, revises and proposes improvements and updates to the learning resources. An annual report is produced by this committee which is submitted to the Director of the Degree in Veterinary Medicine programme and the Educational Quality Assurance Committee.
Teachers can decide to make learning resources available in the English language.
Library staff is always available if needed. In the first lesson of each course the teacher explains the specific learning resources for that course.
Learning resources on the e-learning platform are available in a timely manner at the beginning of each semester.

6.1.2. Comments
- Nowadays, for the students more possibilities are open to consult external sources. Open sources will be more and more used by students. So, the function of the faculty library staff might be changed more and more from management of updating the different textbooks (nowadays 1,500) to help in bibliographic search by students.
- Learning resources are mainly in the form of online material, there is little scope for other forms of learning.

6.1.3. Suggestions for improvement
- Students need to be taught in reviewing papers, how to recognise different types of paper, detect bias and learn how to critically analyse sources. The experience of library staff, but also teachers, might be very helpful. It is suggested that there should be formal teaching in the curriculum in this area.
- It is suggested that learning resources are expanded beyond online material as students should be able to learn using a variety of approaches - for example access to whiteboards

for group learning, access to modals for practical learning, access to plastinated specimens for anatomy learning etc.

6.1.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 6.1.

Standard 6.2 Staff and students must have full access on site to an academic library administered by a qualified librarian, an Information Technology (IT) unit managed by an IT expert, an e-learning platform, and all the relevant human and physical resources necessary for the development of instructional materials by the staff and their use by the students.
The relevant electronic information, database and other intranet resources must be easily available for students and staff both in the VEE's core facilities via wireless connection (Wi-Fi) and from outside the VEE through a hosted secured connection, e.g. Virtual Private Network (VPN).

6.2.1. Findings

The library (1,500 books and subscription to veterinary periodicals) is situated on the ground floor of the Piano D'Accio building. There are also many other veterinary textbooks situated in offices of relevant professors. Physical textbooks are able to be loaned by students for 1 day or 1 month. There is no access to e-books online. The library contains an office, main library area and a room for autonomous learning seating 25 persons. In addition, there is a room with 15 seats for self-study on the first floor and the computer room with 17 computers is available if not being used. There are 3 FTE staff including the Director. There is no employed IT expert for direct availability for the students.
Students are recruited as part time workers to assist staff during opening hours which are Mon, Wed, Fri 09.00 – 13.00, Tues, Thurs 09.00 – 13.00, 14.30 – 17.00. The library is closed during the weekend, national and religious holidays and during August. According to the VEE, no requests from students are known to increase opening hours.
There is no annual budget and it does not manage its own resources which are provided by the University. In 2020 the amount spent was €192,443. The VEE provides new books and annually deals with requests for new publications. However, in the library of the VEE not all latest versions are present. Professors and PhD students play an active role in the purchase of newly up to date textbooks for their research and teaching, these also become available for student use if warranted. The inter-library loan and document delivery service (NILDE) allows circulation of documents etc. between libraries.
There is a Wi-Fi network throughout the main campus Coste Sant'Agostino, Piano D'Accio campus and VTH available to staff and students with a print service (myprint.unite.ie) available to students using their own PCs. The library website, complete and regularly updated, is available to all users of the general website of the University and provides details of the library, resources and allows bibliographic research from within and outside the VEE.
IT Facilities, the UNITE wireless network, and the e-learning platform are managed by UNITE staff who are responsible for assistance and training to website users. UNITE has its own official app giving general information to students but also allows access to instructional materials on the e-learning platform.
The e-learning platform supports teaching in a learning environment and includes lecture notes and slides, self-assessment tests, directed learning sessions, etc., and allows communication between students and staff through forum discussions etc.
In addition, the Abruzzo region has recently opened an on-line library which is free to students

and staff.

6.2.2. Comments

- Easy accessibility is very important for students. The opening hours seem to be sufficient according to the SER. The IT facilities make it possible to have access to the journals of ScienceDirect and Scopus, both on and off campus.
- Many books are held in private studies of professors and accessibility for students could be improved.
- There is no access to e-books online, meaning if single copies of textbooks are loaned from the library there is therefore no further access for other students.
- There is no employed IT expert, but students can turn to the IT-department of the UNITE.

6.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

- Students' access to e-books online should be addressed.

6.2.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 6.2.

Standard 6.3 The VEE must provide students with unimpeded access to learning resources, internet and internal study resources, and equipment for the development of procedural skills (e.g. models). The use of these resources must be aligned with the pedagogical environment and learning outcomes within the programme and have mechanisms in place to evaluate the teaching value of changes in learning resources.

6.3.1. Findings

The VEE library has around 1,500 books stored. The library, during term time, is open only Monday, Wednesday and Friday, all day (except lunch time) Tuesday and Thursday and closed at the weekends. Students can also use the main library of the UNITE campus (256 seats) located in Coste Sant' Agostino. This is open 09.00 – 19.00 Monday to Friday.
The UNITE e-learning platform allows access to learning materials at any time. According to the SER (p.64), "all the bibliographic details are available "on-line" for consultation to all users both in and from outside the Faculty". This is not completely correct, because only the journals of ScienceDirect and Scopus are available for students. There is no skills lab. Animal models are available from academic staff upon students' request. The new building of the VEE, planned to be built in the near future, will include a skills lab and will house veterinary simulators, training models and dummies to focus on veterinary clinical/surgery skills on small and large animals.

6.3.2. Comments

- The UNITE-e-learning platform allows access to learning materials at any time, both on and off campus. There is off campus no access to e-books online.
- There is no availability for students to practice procedural skills at this current time.

6.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

- Whilst awaiting a new clinical skills lab to be built, there are many non-expensive procedural modals that can be made for students to practice clinical skills prior to performing these skills in the VTH. For example, use of stuffed toys for bandaging, ability to practice surgical instrument use, suturing, practicing gowning/gloving.
- Access to e-books online can improve students' learning resources and prevent issues if

single copies are not available in the library.

6.3.4. Decision
The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 6.3 because of an inadequate clinical skills lab to practice procedures prior to performing on live animals.

Area 7. Student admission, progression and welfare

Standard 7.1 The VEE must consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e.g. student admission, progression and certification.
In relation to enrolment, the VEE must provide accurate and complete information regarding all aspects of the educational programme in all advertisements for prospective national and international students.
Formal cooperations with other VEEs must also be clearly advertised.

7.1.1. Findings
Guidance with description of curriculum and requirements of all phases of the student "life cycle" are based on general guidelines of the University of Teramo with the aim to reduce dropout, extension of university path and unemployment. These guidelines are managed by the VEE, specifically by the Guidance Committee and are published on the official Facebook page, or advertised to potential students by phone, email or onsite contact. Also, the VEE in October starts with the advertising of the study program by using activities as Open Day, visits to the high schools, or Summer Schools or pre-courses (Biology, Chemistry, and Physics). Documents as Student Guide, Guide to Fees and Contribution and official website are the sources of information for the students (about curriculum, administrative deadlines, enrolment procedure, etc.). Information in English is available for international students on the official website of the University and of the VEE.

7.1.2. Comments
None.

7.1.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

7.1.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.1.

Standard 7.2 The number of students admitted must be consistent with the resources available at the VEE for staff, buildings, equipment, healthy and diseased animals, and materials of animal origin.

7.2.1. Findings
SER Table 7.2.1 shows the number of new veterinary students admitted by the VEE in three consecutive academic years, from 2016/2017 to 2018/2019, with a mean value of 47. It could be seen from the table that there is a slight increase of enrolled students (from 45 to 51). Full fee students are not enrolled.
SER Table 7.2.2 shows the number of veterinary undergraduate students registered at the VEE.

Mean value for all three academic years is 388 students. There is a significant increase in the number of students in the fifth year of study. SER Table 7.2.2 also mentions so called *off-course* students, *on-course* students and *part-time* students.
SER Table 7.2.3 shows the number of veterinary students graduating annually, with a mean value of 41. Further, Table 7.2.4 shows average duration of veterinary studies with 54.84% of students graduating after 5 years (+0) and 12.9% graduating with +3 years or more.
The number of postgraduate students is shown in Table 7.2.5. Interns and residents are not mentioned, and numbers of other categories are as follows: PhD students (mean 26), Postdoctoral fellowships (mean 30), National Specialization school students (mean 112) and Postgraduate master students (mean 35). The number of all of these categories seems stable throughout the years.

7.2.2. Comments
None.

7.2.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

7.2.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.2.

Standard 7.3 The selection and progression criteria must be clearly defined, consistent, and defensible, be free of discrimination or bias, and take into account the fact that students are admitted with a view to their entry to the veterinary profession in due course. The VEE must regularly review and reflect on the selection processes to ensure they are appropriate for students to complete the programme successfully. If the selection processes are decided by another authority, the latter must regularly receive feedback from the VEE.
Adequate training (including periodic refresher training) must be provided for those involved in the selection process to ensure applicants are evaluated fairly and consistently.

7.3.1. Findings
Admission procedure and quota for standard students is regulated by national legislation and is under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, University and Research. Admission test is basis for enrolment and it is conducted on the national level (60 multiple choice questions to be answered in 100 minutes). Students that achieve minimal scores are listed on the national ranking list and could be enrolled based on scores obtained, number of available places, and geographical preferences. For students with disabilities special rules for admission can be ensured. As the selection process is under the Ministry, the VEE has only a surveillance and monitoring role during the admission process (supervisory commission is annually designated by the VEE). Students, if not satisfied with the admission procedure, can appeal to the regional Administrative Court. Admission criteria and procedure is published on Ministry and University websites.
Full fee students are not enrolled at this VEE.
Each year the VEE reports the number of potentially enrolled students to the Ministry of Education, University and Research. This number depends upon available resources, the number of employees, teaching facilities, etc., (all described in the Degree Programme Annual Factsheet). Quota requested by the VEE was from 65 to 85 students. The same number should be proposed to the Ministry for the next three academic years.

7.3.2. Comments
None.

7.3.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

7.3.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.3.

Standard 7.4 There must be clear policies and procedures on how applicants with disabilities or illnesses are considered and, if appropriate, accommodated in the programme, taking into account the requirement that all students must be capable of meeting the ESEVT Day One Competences by the time they graduate.

7.4.1. Findings
Assistance services and support measures are based on individual needs of the student. Appointment of a Tutor teacher is made when needed to support the student and adapt teaching, lesson plan and exam.
The University Committee for the Integration of Disabled Students is the official body nominated by the rector, involved in the preparation of the action plan, specific projects and maintaining of the teaching standards for students with disabilities.

7.4.2. Comments
- There are currently only 2 students who have declared disability or illness and there has been no need for specific changes as yet.

7.4.3. Suggestions for improvement
- Clear policies on adaptation of course or support for common disabilities and/or illnesses should be published on the university website. In this way students are able to see what is available to them should they need it.

7.4.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.4.

Standard 7.5 The basis for decisions on progression (including academic progression and professional fitness to practise) must be explicit and readily available to the students. The VEE must provide evidence that it has mechanisms in place to identify and provide remediation and appropriate support (including termination) for students who are not performing adequately.
The VEE must have mechanisms in place to monitor attrition and progression and be able to respond and amend admission selection criteria (if permitted by national or university law) and student support if required.

7.5.1. Findings
Progression criteria and procedures for all students are discussed annually and further approved by the VEE Board (VMDP). Two documents, the Degree Programme Annual Factsheet and the Degree Programme Teaching Regulations contain all the information on educational objectives, training path, competences, students support and curriculum.

According to the national regulations, students that do not perform adequately cannot be excluded from the study program. On the VEE level, such students can be individually advised, tutor or Degree Program Director analyses the reasons for their failure and seeks the best solution for the continuation of studies.
All of that information is advertised to the students through institutional websites.
Current attrition rate in the academic year 2018/2019 was 11.1%. Main reasons for attrition are difficult courses or modules that prevent students from collecting a sufficient number of credits.
Admission procedure, quota and criteria are determined on the national level and made public on the official website.

7.5.2. Comments
None.

7.5.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

7.5.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.5.

Standard 7.6 Mechanisms for the exclusion of students from the programme for any reason must be explicit.
The VEE's policies for managing appeals against decisions, including admissions, academic and progression decisions and exclusion, must be transparent and publicly available.

7.6.1. Findings
According to the national legislation, students can postpone their graduation without time limit (there is no limitation to the enrolment on supplementary year). On the other side, the University of Teramo has enacted a measure to significantly increase the tuition fees for students who do not progress appropriately.

7.6.2. Comments
None.

7.6.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

7.6.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.6.

Standard 7.7 Provisions must be made by the VEE to support the physical, emotional and welfare needs of students. This includes, but is not limited to, learning support and counselling services, career advice, and fair and transparent mechanisms for dealing with student illness, impairment and disability during the programme. This shall include provision of reasonable adjustments for disabled students, consistent with all relevant equality and/or human rights legislation.
There must be effective mechanisms for resolution of student grievances (e.g. interpersonal conflict or harassment).

7.7.1. Findings

Students who need more information on enrolment, progression or teaching activities can approach the Central Teaching Division or Student Service Office, by internet or personally.
Upon enrolment, each student is assigned to an individual tutor-teacher, for guidance and tutoring until the end of study.
Each study year has two assigned teachers with a task of monitoring the progress and dealing with critical issues (reported later to the EQAC).
Assistance in case of illness or impairment is possible through the medical service available at the University campus, by appointment. Free medical services can be booked through a website or mobile application.
The VEE provides outdoor space with benches and tables, and at the University level there is a sporting centre, theatre centre, centre for modern languages available to the students of VMT.
In case of grievance, students can report to the nominated tutor. In case of violation of the Code of Ethics, the Dean has to be informed about the situation and the procedure should be followed, leading to the necessary investigation and solving the problem.

7.7.2. Comments

- On site it was obvious the enthusiasm and pride the students had for their VEE.

7.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

7.7.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.7.

Standard 7.8 Mechanisms must be in place by which students can convey their needs and wants to the VEE. The VEE must provide students with a mechanism, anonymously if they wish, to offer suggestions, comments and complaints regarding compliance of the VEE with national and international legislation and the ESEVT standards.

7.8.1. Findings

If a student has a suggestion, comments or a complaint, s/he may refer to several different places, from the Director to the representatives of different committees or boards.

7.8.2. Comments

None.

7.8.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

7.8.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.8.

Area 8. Student assessment

Standard 8.1 The VEE must ensure that there is a clearly identified structure within the VEE showing lines of responsibility for the assessment strategy to ensure coherence of the

overall assessment regime and to allow the demonstration of progressive development across the programme towards entry-level competence.

8.1.1. Findings

To obtain the degree of Doctor (*Laureato*) in Veterinary Medicine (DVM), students must complete the 300 ECTS (CFU in Italy) through the completion and approval of the following activities: 292 ECTS in core subjects (including out-of-hours shifts in VTH clinical rotations and internship), plus 8 ECTS in Electives, plus 10 ECTS in the preparation and defence of the Dissertation thesis.

The highest final degree mark is 110 (DVM *cum laude* or with honour). Final degree mark of the graduate is calculated by multiplying his/her average mark by 110, and then divided by 30. Some 11 extra points may be obtained with an experimental Dissertation thesis or 7 points by a bibliographic review Dissertation thesis. Some additional points would be granted from the international mobility programme, or international research activity performed by the student.

There are no examination periods without face-to-face teaching but 10 examination sessions per year (the SER states 11 sessions, p.73), on a monthly basis, divided in 3 periods: 1st ordinary period (January, February, and March); 2nd ordinary period (May, June, and July); and 3rd ordinary period (September, October, November, and December).

Subjects or modules offer, on a voluntary basis, midterm examinations normally based on written or multiple-choice-question tests, and a final oral and/or practical exam. Practical exams are performed by a board of 2 teachers with expertise in the given subject.

Apart from specific prerequisites, a prerequisite for all subjects is that students must attend, at least, 70% of the theoretical and practical sessions of each subject to be allowed to sit the final exam.

External examiners are not used by the Italian Universities.

Italian law allows students to retake exams as many times as necessary to get the passing mark of a given subject without any limitations.

Students keep (for 1 year) the passing grade of one part of a subject until s/he gets the passing grade of the remaining part.

The methods for assessing the students depend on the subjects, being mainly summative with voluntary use of continuous assessment; the teaching staff chooses the assessment methods as follows: theoretical knowledge is assessed by written (essay, short answer, multiple-choice, true/false or open questions) or oral exams (20-45 minutes discussion between student and teacher); preclinical (from 1st to 3rd year) and clinical skills (from 3rd to 5th year) are assessed by means of the exams mentioned above plus some skills that are recorded and signed by the teacher in the student (Day One Competences) Logbook, in the Clinical Rotation Logbook and in the PPT Logbook.

Non-professional, soft skills, such as oral communication, teamwork, self-confidence, mental attitude, time management, etc. are assessed by means of oral exams, individual or group presentations to classmates, role playing or case based training, and direct observation of students during the Clinical rotations (3rd to 5th year) and Internship (5th year).

The assessment objectives and criteria fall in the responsibility of the teachers for the given subjects and are checked periodically by the EQAC (Education QA Committee) whose chairman is the Director of the Degree; EQAC analyse, plan and implement initiatives to improve the teaching process at the VEE, including assessment. Also, students evaluate the fit for the purpose assessment methods and criteria through the yearly evaluation questionnaire that is sort of compulsory, since students are not allowed to sit the exam if they have not filled the online questionnaire first.

In Italy for getting the license to practice graduates must sit a licensure National Exam (not explained in the SER).

8.1.2. Comments

- The constant overlapping of exams with face-to-face teaching for 10 months instead of being helpful is seen to be detrimental for the progression of on course students. Since it is compulsory to attend at least 70% of theoretical or practical hours, students do not have enough time for the proper self-study before sitting the exams.
- There is no design of an overall assessment strategy of the VEE to ensure coherence of the different pieces of assessment developed by the teachers in the subjects.

8.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

- The VEE should limit the examination periods to avoid coincidence with face-to-face teaching, for instance to the end of first semester, end of second semester, and a third period for retakes of subjects of both semesters.
- It is essential that the VEE designs an overall strategy to define the criteria and methods to evaluate and harmonise the practical training of students in the curriculum as a whole in order to guarantee the progression in the acquisition of Day One Competences by the students.

8.1.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 8.1.

Standard 8.2 The assessment tasks and grading criteria for each unit of study in the programme must be published, applied consistently, clearly identified and available to students in a timely manner well in advance of the assessment. Requirements to pass must be explicit.
The VEE must properly document the results of assessment and provide the students with timely feedback on their assessments.
Mechanisms for students to appeal against assessment outcomes must be explicit.

8.2.1. Findings

Teachers publish the Teaching Course Description Form (TCDF), or subject Factsheet, in the VEE website: https://www.unite.it/UniTE/Didattica/Ricerca_insegnamenti; in the TCDF there is a description of prerequisites (for instance, to approve Propaedeutic before studying Special Veterinary Pathology I), learning objectives, study programme, and recommended bibliography/ e-resources, but no assessment tasks or evaluation criteria are found. Teachers explain the assessment tasks and methods, orally, to the students during the first lesson of the subject.
The 10 monthly examination sessions per year are published at the VEE website (the link provided in the SER is not working):
(https://www.unite.it/UniTE/Esami_Facolta_di_Medicina_veterinaria).
The general description of midterm examinations voluntarily offered by subjects or modules is found at https://www.unite.it/UniTE/Linee_guida_verifiche_intermedie), that is normally based on written or multiple-choice-question tests, and a final oral and/or practical exam.
Students register to sit every exam.
Regulation for the preparation, defence and assessment of the Dissertation thesis are published at the VEE website:
https://www.unite.it/UniTE/ENgine/RAServePG.php/P/474151UTE0104/M/20011UTE0104
Marks grading of students for Italian Universities is given on a scale of 30, being 18 the minimum passing grade and 30 the *cum laude* or highest qualification in a subject. The final degree mark goes from 66 to 110.

At the website, with his/her credentials, students may log in to see the exam outcomes and follow up of their progression. Feedback of written exams is published in the VEE notice boards under the student's enrolment number (no names). After every oral or practical exam, the student receives the mark and signs his/her acceptance together with the teacher. In the case of failure, students may request revision of written exams.
There is no formal procedure for assessment appeal of students but, in case of failure, students have the possibility to ask for guidance to his/her tutor (a teacher assigned in the first year), or to the Year Committee. Students may complain to the students' representatives who have a voice in all the committees and will report the appeal to the EQAC, the Student-Teacher Committee, the Degree Board (DVMPB) and the Director.

8.2.2. Comments

- The regulations, assessment tasks and methods concerning practical examinations should be more transparent, harmonised, and clear, for instance with the publication in the Teaching Course Description Form of the evaluation methods and not only being provided to the students orally in the first theoretical lesson of the subject.
- The VEE is encouraged to use grading criteria (rubrics) for the more objective assessment of practicals which should be included in the TCDF of each subject, and in the Logbooks, as an objective evaluation of student's acquisition of competences.
- Instead of an explicit appeal procedure against assessment outcomes there is a transmission of the students of his/her disagreement through the students' representatives who report to too many committees to deal with the situation.

8.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

- The TCDF must include the assessment tasks and methods to be used in the subjects.
- The subjects have to develop grading criteria (rubrics) for the objective assessment of practicals which must be published in the TCDF, as well as for the Logbooks.
- The VEE must design and publish a formal appeal mechanism against students' assessment.

8.2.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 8.2.

Standard 8.3 The VEE must have a process in place to review assessment outcomes, to change assessment strategies and to ensure the accuracy of the procedures when required. Programme learning outcomes covering the full range of professional knowledge, skills, competences and attributes must form the basis for assessment design and underpin decisions on progression.

8.3.1. Findings

The Degree Board (DVMPB) and VEE Board (VMFB) set the guidelines for some parts of the assessment strategy (methods, committees, number of exams). Both Boards follow the guidelines settled by the University regulations and the proposals from the EQAC and JSTEC. Board decisions are registered in the minutes but are not communicated to internal (staff and students) or external stakeholders. Students and teachers address the implementation, assessment, and actions to take to improve the assessment outcomes to the degree Board (DVMPB), who prepare a report for approval by the VEE Board (VMFB).

8.3.2. Comments

- The QA PDCA of the assessment strategy of the VEE is not clear since, for instance, contrary to what is written in the SER, at the website the team verified that TCDF of the subjects do not always include the assessment tasks, the assessment methods, and the grading criteria (rubrics) for the objective assessment of practicals.
- The VEE should include in the assessment strategy some important tasks to promote student-centred learning. For instance, it is essential to discuss and set a quoted value in the final mark for continuous assessment in all subjects. The activities already developed as supervised self-learning at the VEE, i.e., public presentations to classmates, individual or group homework for preparing necropsy reports, clinical cases reports, role playing, etc, should be considered as continuous assessment, and quoted in the final mark of the subjects, proportionally to the hours of work by the student. This change in the assessment strategy would widen the basis for assessment and progression which is too focused in theoretical or practical exams, with a poor encouragement of student-centred learning activities.

8.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

- The VEE should change the assessment strategy to promote student-centred assessment tasks and continuous assessment.
- The review of the assessment strategy at the VEE must ensure that the assessment tasks, assessment methods and grading criteria (rubrics) for the objective assessment of practicals in the subjects are available in the TCDF.

8.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 8.3.

Standard 8.4 Assessment strategies must allow the VEE to certify student achievement of learning objectives at the level of the programme and individual units of study.
The VEE must ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.

8.4.1. Findings

The methods for assessing the students depend on the subjects, being mainly summative with voluntary use of continuous assessment; the teaching staff chooses the assessment methods as follows:
Theoretical knowledge is assessed by written (essay, short answer, multiple-choice, true/false or open questions) or oral exams (20-45 minutes discussion between student and teacher).
Preclinical skills are assessed from 1st to 3rd year by means of the exams mentioned above plus some skills that are recorded and signed by the teacher in the student (Day One Competences) Logbook or in the Clinical Rotation Logbook.
Clinical skills are assessed from 3rd to 5th year where students follow clinical subjects plus one mandatory week for clinical rotation at the VTH: in the 5th year there is also a mandatory internship of 18 weeks where 12 of these 18 weeks are devoted to clinical training in Internal Medicine (3 weeks), Surgery (3 weeks), Obstetrics and reproduction (3 weeks), and Infectious diseases (3 weeks); in each one of these 4 clinical areas the internship allocate 2 weeks intramural at the VTH and mobile or ambulatory clinics, and 1 week at external placements (Tirocinio).

Regarding student-centred learning, some subjects assess student's short oral presentations in front of their classmates, or short essays, necropsy reports, clinical cases report, etc., to be evaluated by the teacher (supervised self-study), but not all these activities are quoted as an assessment task in the final mark of the subject.
The Final Degree Thesis is designed to encourage student active participation in the experimental design, search and critical review of the bibliography.

8.4.2. Comments

- The student-centred design of the Degree Thesis developed at the VEE is worthy of praise.
- Some subjects assess student's presentation of a given topic in front of their classmates, but these hours are not addressed as practicals in SER Table 3.1.2 under *Professional ethics and communication*.
- Some subjects voluntarily use continuous assessment of students but there is no grading assessment (rubrics) of these tasks, and they are not always quoted in the final mark of the subject.
- Many subjects assess student's preparation of an essay, a report on necropsies or clinical cases, etc., but these hours of homework training of students, individually or in group, are not mapped as supervised self-learning in column C of SER Table 3.1.2, which address only 11 hours in total, because of a concept misunderstanding by the VEE. Since supervised self-learning promotes student-centred learning, these activities should be assessed properly, i.e., through assessment criteria (rubrics) previously known by the students, and quoted in the final mark, to encourage students to take an active role in the learning process.

8.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

- All activities developed by the students that promote his/her active participation in the learning process (i.e., continuous assessment through the reporting or public presentation of a task) must be assessed with basis in grading criteria, and quoted to the final mark of the subjects.
- The VEE must revise the inaccuracies in SER Table 3.1.2, mapping properly the number of hours as supervised self-learning in column C developed by the different subjects.

8.4.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 8.4.

Standard 8.5 Methods of formative and summative assessment must be valid and reliable and comprise a variety of approaches. Direct assessment of clinical skills and Day One Competences (some of which may be on simulated patients), must form a significant component of the overall process of assessment. It must also include the quality control of the student logbooks in order to ensure that all clinical procedures, practical and hands-on training planned in the study programme have been fully completed by each individual student.

8.5.1. Findings

Apart from theoretical and practical exams (written, oral, practical tests or a combination of the 3), students must demonstrate the acquisition of Day One Competences by means of the recording of students' skills in the 4 logbooks for Day One Skills (Student logbook), CR, Electives and PPT.

Assessment of each individual competence in the logbooks is mainly observational and verified by the teacher's signature once the student has performed the given skill properly for several times. There is some qualitative scoring (bad, average, good, excellent) in the assessment of clinical skills or assessment of the student during CR and EPT, but not in the Day One Skills Logbook.
Clinical subjects assess practical skills by means of a final oral exam on top of the daily verification, report and signing of the Student logbook and Clinical Rotation logbook plus the evaluation of the student weekly report of the clinical cases followed during the Clinical rotations, and the preparation and resolution of a clinical case. For the assessment of clinical skills at external places (Tirocinio) the practitioner verifies, reports, and signs the PPT Logbook, and this evaluation is taken into consideration in the qualitative analyses of the PPT. There is no direct formative assessment of clinical skills or soft skills.

8.5.2. Comments

- The assessment of practical skills to verify the acquisition of Day One Competences by the students is not optimal. When considering the individual variation of students' clinical training, there is an evident risk that not all clinical competences are fulfilled. Confirming the attainment of clinical Day One Skills would require, in addition to the already used logbooks, clinical cases or rotation reports, direct assessment of the skills. Simulated patients and models could be used to complement the assessment.
- There is no grading of the degree of acquisition of competences in the Day One Skills logbook (i.e., 0 not good, 1 average, 2 good, 3 excellent, etc.) nor any monitoring of any of the 4 logbooks to analyse the progression of students, especially with respect to the balance between cases (acute *versus* chronic, first-opinion *versus* referrals, consultation, hospitalisation), species, and soft skills (leadership, team working, decision making, adaptation, ability of lifelong learning, self-audit, interpersonal interaction, communication,…), then there is no periodical analysis of the student progression in the acquisition of general and professional skills.
- There is no final OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical Examination) exam based on assessment criteria (rubrics) to avoid subjectivity of students' assessment of Day One Competences, and no Direct Observation of Procedural Skills (DOPs) or mid-term assessments of students after completing every clinical rotation.

8.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

- It would be advisable to design a rubric with clear assessment criteria for the scoring of student's performance of the Day One Skills logbook. Rubrics would be useful too for the objective continuous assessment of students during practicals in any subject.
- The VEE should develop periodical assessments (biannual or annual) and a final evaluation of the logbooks to assess and keep tracking of the progressive acquisition of Day One Competences by the students.
- It would be helpful for the VEE to assess students' performance of practical skills after the completion of the different rotations, i.e., via DOPs, to an early detection of any underperformance that may allow reinforcement of student's training.
- The VEE should apply a summative assessment of clinical skills based on predefined criteria (rubrics) in the final year and before graduation by methods such as OSCE, to guarantee that all graduates have acquired the expected learning outcomes (Day One Skills).

8.5.4. Decision

The VEE is not compliant with Standard 8.5 because of insufficient direct assessment of clinical

skills in the overall process of assessment, and insufficient quality control of logbooks to ensure all clinical procedures, practical and hands-on training have been fully completed by each individual student.

Area 9: Academic and support staff

Standard 9.1 The VEE must ensure that all staff are appropriately qualified and prepared for their roles, in agreement with national and EU regulations and must apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of staff.
A formal training (including good teaching and evaluation practices, learning and e-learning resources, biosecurity and QA procedures) must be in place for all staff involved with teaching. Most academic staff (calculated as FTE) involved in veterinary training must be veterinarians. It is expected that more than 2/3 of the instruction that the students receive, as determined by student teaching hours, is delivered by qualified veterinarians.

9.1.1. Findings

The number of FTE academic staff employed has increased over the last 3 years.
The large majority of the academic staff involved in veterinary training (86% of the permanent staff in 2018/2019, calculated as FTE) are veterinarians. Moreover, the instruction that the students receive is delivered by qualified veterinarians.
Academic staff is composed of two categories of people:
- Permanent staff divided into Full professors (n=10), Associate professors (n=13) and Researchers (n=15). Although the contracts of the latter do not require them to participate in teaching activities, they are involved in.
- Temporary researchers (n=4) and external staff (practitioners, n=20).
Staff recruitment (teaching and support staff) at UNITE is governed by national regulation which imposes a public call when opening places and a national scientific qualification (called SSD) for candidates to teaching positions.
The VEE allocates courses to the teachers based on their training and their Ministry accredited SSD (Scientific Area).
UNITE provides a mandatory formal training for all academic staff in the topic of biosecurity and prepares them in order to comply with University QA procedures. No information is available regarding support staff training.

9.1.2. Comments

- It is worthy of praise, the enthusiastic staff (Academic and Support) who are proud of their VEE.
- The number and background of the members of the academic staff make it possible to cover all the subjects. The supervision rate is accurate.
- Evidence of lifelong learning of staff is not systematically collected nor monitored at VEE level.

9.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

- A training policy for academic staff should be formalized, especially for new recruits, to help them start their teaching activity.
- Training courses attended by staff should be recorded in order to facilitate the monitoring of the objectives set for the development of staff competences.

9.1.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 9.1.

Standard 9.2 The total number, qualifications and skills of all staff involved with the programme, including teaching staff, 'adjunct' staff, technical, administrative and support staff, must be sufficient and appropriate to deliver the educational programme and fulfil the VEE's mission.
A procedure must be in place to assess if the staff involved with teaching display competence and effective teaching skills in all relevant aspects of the curriculum that they teach, regardless of whether they are full or part time, residents, interns or other postgraduate students, adjuncts or off-campus contracted teachers.

9.2.1. Findings
Recruitment of permanent teaching staff is made through a competitive procedure. Temporary staff are selected by the VMFB after an evaluation of the applicants' curricula. The VEE provides the opportunity to the latter to improve their didactic competences thanks to an online course proposed by an Italian specialized inter-university centre.

9.2.2. Comments
- The number and composition of the academic staff (Table 9.2.1 of the SER and Appendix 1), including researchers and temporary staff involved in training activities (Table 9.2.4) - calculated as FTE- are adequate to deliver the educational programme.
- The SER reports in Table 9.2.4 that no permanent researchers are employed by the VEE. This information is inaccurate.
- Contracts offered to external staff through an open procedure are useful to cover specific topics.
- The SER does not provide evidence that a procedure is in place to assess if the staff involved with teaching display competence and effective teaching skills in all relevant aspects of the curriculum that they teach.

9.2.3. Suggestions for improvement
- The VEE must correct SER Table 9.2.4 to include permanent researchers' staff.
- It is recommended that the VEE enables researchers and contracted practitioners to reinforce their didactic skills (training and assessment methods) by way of specific courses to guarantee the teaching quality.

9.2.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 9.2.

Standard 9.3 Staff must be given opportunities to develop and extend their teaching and assessment knowledge and must be encouraged to improve their skills. Opportunities for didactic and pedagogic training and specialisation must **be available. The VEE must clearly define any systems of reward for teaching excellence in operation.**
Academic positions must offer the security and benefits necessary to maintain stability, continuity, and competence of the academic staff. They must have a balanced workload of teaching, research and service depending on their role. They must have reasonable opportunities and resources for participation in scholarly activities.

9.3.1. Findings

Opportunities are provided to the staff to develop and extend their teaching and assessment knowledge through courses organized by UNITE or online seminars (e-learning). UNITE can financially support external training courses and encourages international mobility (Erasmus programme for example). No information is provided regarding the way the promotion of academic and support staff is organized, except the importance of research performance for full and associate staff and the absence of rewards for teaching excellence.
Following the regulation entered into force in 2010, academic staff are no longer evaluated on their pedagogical skills at the time of recruitment. Moreover, research activity is crucial for the promotion of academic staff. By law, permanent academic staff (professors and associate professors) have to carry out at least 120 hours of face to face teaching yearly and 350 hours dedicated to teaching activities. The SER reports that the balance between their different activities (teaching, research and professional and academic roles) and their workload is monitored by the VEE to prevent unbalanced situations. Staff have opportunities (and resources) to participate in scholarly activities (i.e. organized clinical discussions and conferences).

9.3.2. Comments

- No information was provided about how the VEE balances the activities of its academic staff in practice.
- Data from the evaluation of teaching quality by students are inputs to improve contents and didactic methods but no incentives exist to reward high quality.

9.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

- It would be convenient for the VEE to individually monitor the activities of its staff in order to prevent unbalanced or excessive workload.
- The establishment of a policy to foster academic excellence and participation in VEE administration is recommended.

9.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 9.3.

Standard 9.4 The VEE must provide evidence that it utilises a well-defined, comprehensive and publicised programme for the professional growth and development of academic and support staff, including formal appraisal and informal mentoring procedures.
Staff must have the opportunity to contribute to the VEE's direction and decision-making processes.
Promotion criteria for academic and support staff must be clear and explicit. Promotions for teaching staff must recognise excellence in, and (if permitted by the national or university law) place equal emphasis on all aspects of teaching (including clinical teaching), research, service and other scholarly activities.

9.4.1. Findings

Staff have the obligation to participate in decision-making processes and contribute to the VEE's direction through direct participation in the decisional bodies or working groups (i.e VMFB participation, elaboration or revision of the Teaching schedule).

The VEE drives the recruitment and promotion policy according to available financial resources, training needs and the achievement of National Scientific Qualification (ASN) of potential candidates for promotion.
Regarding support staff, the University promotes the professional growth of the VEE administrative staff by offering several courses. Improvement of the professional skills for laboratory staff is dependent on the available economic resources at the unit level.

9.4.2. Comments

- The career development of support staff at the VEE is managed by the way of horizontal and vertical promotions. A procedure of performance assessment is set up by the University but does not include a systematic yearly individual interview between a support staff member and his/her supervisor to define individual objectives, contribution to general ones and to evaluate achievements.

9.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

- A mentoring system under clear line management and annual review of activities could be implemented for all staff.
- It would be appropriate to set up a policy to make the professional growth of laboratory staff less dependent on the available funds of the latter.

9.4.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 9.4.

Standard 9.5 A system for assessment of teaching staff must be in operation and must include student participation. Results must be available to those undertaking external reviews and commented upon in reports.

9.5.1. Findings

The VEE has put in operation a system for the assessment of teaching staff which includes student participation (SER Appendix 4.III). The system utilises mainly quantitative indicators (appreciation scale). The Educational Quality Assurance Committee (EQAC) is in charge of the operation of these surveys in order to address critical issues. Moreover, for each year, a Programme Year Committee, composed of 2 lecturers and 2 students, is in charge of the early detection of problems (overlapping, excessive teaching load…).
A comprehensive assessment methodology called “Teaching evaluation procedure” is implemented. Evaluation results can be made available to undertake external reviews.

9.5.2. Comments

- Student participation in the evaluation of teaching is effective and reflects VEE's commitment to a process of continuous quality improvement. The role of the different committees is clearly defined and monitored.

9.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

9.5.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 9.5.

Area 10. Research programmes, continuing and postgraduate education

Standard 10.1 The VEE must demonstrate significant and broad research activities of staff that integrate with and strengthen the veterinary degree programme through research-based teaching.

10.1.1. Findings

The teaching at the VEE is based on the principles and methods of scientific research and provided by academic staff with background in basic, applied, and clinical research.
In terms of quantity and quality, the contribution of the VEE to the research of the University of Teramo is sound: 26 financed ongoing projects during the academic year 2018/2019 have been developed at the VEE to drive advancements and excellence in various research fields (listed in Table 10.1.1 of the SER). Research is funded mainly through private –feed and pharmaceutical- companies (14 projects amounting 302,874€ per year), University (1 project amounting 51,000€), national (6 projects amounting 12,824,235€) and European projects (5 projects amounting 1,363,496€) attracted by the VEE's researchers through competitive programmes. Postgraduate students participating in the projects collaborate in the practical teaching of undergraduates.
The VEE has been granted an Excellence project (Demetra") with 6.6 Million Euro.
Equipment bought with research funds are used also for teaching purposes.
Clinical research projects have a positive impact in the increase of the caseload for training undergraduates.

10.1.2. Comments

- The team acknowledges the high number of research projects, and collaborative works with national and foreign researchers that prove the commitment of the VEE to lifelong veterinary education.
- Excellence in some fields is evidenced by EU projects, one Excellence project, and high-scoring publications.
- There is no doubt that undergraduate students receive research-based and evidence-based training at the VEE and that the research funds have a very positive impact in teaching, in terms of equipment and caseloads.

10.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

10.1.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.1.

Standard 10.2 All students must be trained in scientific method and research techniques relevant to evidence-based veterinary medicine and must have opportunities to participate in research programmes.

10.2.1. Findings

Since the preparation and defence of the final degree thesis is obligatory, accounting for 10 ECTS, all undergraduates can perform research in the 5th year, which could be of two types: an experimental research work (approximately 60%), lasting around 8 months part-time dedication, or a scientific critical review of the bibliography (*Compilativa*), for around 6 months part-time dedication. Experimental final degree thesis scores 1 to 4 extra points in the final

degree mark. For preparing and defending the final degree thesis, undergraduates are assigned a supervisor from the permanent teaching staff, and a co-supervisor from postgraduate students. A third external supervisor is allowed upon the approval by the Degree Board (DVMPB).
First introduction of undergraduate students to research is done by postgraduate students and reassured by the teachers. Undergraduates are encouraged to develop an experimental final degree thesis by means of his/her work in the various laboratories and Clinics at the VEE that participate in any of the multidisciplinary projects which are active at the VEE.
Independently of the type of the Final degree thesis, all undergraduates and practitioners are invited to attend to PhDs defence, or any scientific event organised at the VEE and, to encourage students' participation, the VEE recognises some equivalence of the hours in such events as ECTS for undergraduates.
Undergraduates are also offered specific courses on how to prepare and defend a final degree thesis. Once the undergraduate elects the subject to develop his/her final degree thesis, s/he is introduced in the scientific critical review of bibliography by postgraduate students. Soon after, the undergraduate is introduced in the laboratory and/or clinical research training and they are offered the possibility to draft a scientific paper.

10.2.2. Comments

- The VEE is commended for the active way in which undergraduates integrate in research, and the motivating method to recognise extra points in the final mark of the degree of students electing the experimental type of final degree thesis.

10.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

10.2.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.2.

Standard 10.3 The VEE must provide advanced postgraduate degree programmes, e.g. PhD, internships, residencies and continuing education programmes that complement and strengthen the veterinary degree programme and are relevant to the needs of the profession and society.

10.3.1. Findings

Graduated students participate in research at the VEE through different approaches: 1) As PhD students enrolled in the PhD programme "Veterinary Medical Sciences, Public Health and Animal Welfare" (media of 9 PhD students/year); 2) as MSc students enrolled in any of the two Master's programmes available at the VEE: Master in Diagnostic Imaging or Master in nutrition and feeding of dogs and cats (media of 23.5 students/year); 3) as students enrolled in advanced courses on Management of recovered, critical and intensive patients: small animals, or on Veterinary Rehabilitation (media of 17.5 students/year); 4) as graduates enrolled in any of the 4 Specialisation programmes leading to Italian Specialist qualification: Equine Medicine and Surgery, Reproductive physiology of domestic animals, Animal health livestock breeding and production, and Inspection of food of animal origin (media of 112 students/year); 5) or as residents in any of the two Residency programmes in place, ECVI and ACVSMR (media of 2.5 students/year). Considering the number of undergraduates at the VEE (media 388), the total number of postgraduate students is sound (media 164.5),
Graduated students in the clinic are actively involved in the out of hour's duties and cooperate with undergraduates in the clinical management of cases.
The VEE alone, or in association with the Teramo Veterinary Chamber, or the Zooprophylactic

Institute of Health offers, on average, 16 continuing education courses per year for free to practitioners, where teachers from the VEE and external speakers participate actively.

10.3.2. Comments

- The high number of postgraduate programmes (MSc, PhD, Specialisation Courses, Residency) at the VEE, prove the commitment of the VEE to lifelong veterinary education.
- The VEE proposes a substantial number of continuing education programmes for practitioners.
- The number of postgraduate students is high considering the size of the VEE.
- The number of postdoctoral places available will remain stable for the years to come, with some possible increase in the number of PhD seats if a recent project application is financed to this purpose.
- The VEE does not have international PhD-programmes, but students can apply for ERASMUS mobility or internships in foreign laboratories.

10.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

10.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.3

Standard 10.4 The VEE must have a system of QA to evaluate how research activities provide opportunities for student training and staff promotion, and how research approaches, methods and results are integrated into the veterinary teaching programmes.

10.4.1. Findings

The general research goals are set by the University and are in particular tailed towards the strategic interest of the region. A new Committee for Research Quality Assessment (RQAC) with one student and 1 teacher from each one of the 6 main veterinary education fields was recently established. This Committee reports to the University QA Committee (UQAC) and is the body responsible for assessing the quantity and quality of the publications at the VEE, the control of the institutional database updates, and proposing rescue measures for inactive teaching staff. The decisions are communicated to internal stakeholders (staff and students) by means of the VEE Research Office. The Italian agency of QA (ANVUR) assesses the research at the VEE every 4 years and the report is made public on the agency website. If some suggestions are addressed in the ANVUR report, the UQAC should propose actions to take at the VEE.

University allocates the number of sites for PhD at the VEE, every year, according to the budget from the government plus the research funds obtained by the VEE.

There is a Doctoral Programme Academic Board who meets 3 times a year, in charge of the assessment of the research and teaching activities developed by the PhD students. For this assessment, PhD students submit a report on the research activities developed, attendance to meetings, etc. The PhD degree is granted after assessing the global research activity developed by the students and the defence of the Doctoral thesis work, which is written in English, and previously evaluated by two external peers.

The Specialisation courses grant the postgraduates with a degree of specialist recognised in Italy under the rules set by the Ministry of Education (MIUR). These courses last for 3 years of compulsory theoretical and practical training plus the preparation and defence of a final thesis. The number of sites available for these courses is set by the University and the selection of

candidates is based on CV and written admission tests. A Board composed of teaching staff with expertise in the given specialisation course and 2 postgraduate students, meets twice a year to revise the course development and prepare the exams and evaluations.
Students, staff, or external stakeholders may suggest continuing education events that are approved by the VEE and, in some cases, funded.

10.4.2. Comments

- The main research areas and strategies are regularly discussed, decided, assessed, and revised by the VEE.
- Research, continuing and postgraduate education programmes are published at the website of the VEE together with the places offered and the selection criteria. Candidates apply through the relevant link of the website and the Selection Committee of Qualifications, composed by staff from the VEE, revise the applications and select the candidates.
- For staff promotion (p.82 of the SER) at National level research is the main profile for excellence, being clinical work or teaching quality secondary.

10.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

10.4.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.4.

11. ESEVT Indicators

Raw data from the last 3 full academic years		AY 2018/2019	AY 2017/2018	AY 2016/2017	Mean
1	n° of FTE academic staff involved in veterinary training	50,1	48,2	42,4	46,89
2	n° of undergraduate students	391	388	386	388,33
3	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training	42,4	37,3	34,9	38,21
4	n° of students graduating annually	44	37	41	40,67
5	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training	34,75	34,75	34,75	34,75
6	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	785	785	785	785
7	n° of hours of clinical training	834	834	834	834
8	n° of hours of FSQ & VPH training	453	453	453	453
9	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in FSQ & VPH	165	165	165	165
10	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally	2191	1858	1877	1975,33
11	n° of ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally	51	6	1	19,33
12	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally	238	190	147	191,67
13	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen intra-murally	104	13	11	42,7
14	n° of companion animal patients seen extra-murally	764	700	650	704,7
15	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extra-murally	556	656	353	521,7
16	n° of equine patients seen extra-murally	93	17		55,0
17	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds	37	37	37	37,0
18	n° of visits of poultry and farmed rabbit units	7	7	7	7,0
19	n° of companion animal necropsies	111	52	46	69,7
20	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies	97	96	95	96
21	n° of equine necropsies	6	9	1	5,3
22	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies	197	134	134	155,0
23	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training	9	9	9	9,0
24	n° of PhD graduating annually	6	6	6	6,0

Calculated Indicators from raw data: 26/02/2020		Establishment values	Median values[1]	Minimal values[2]	Balance[3]
I1	n° of FTE academic staff involved in veterinary training / n° of undergraduate students	0,121	0,16	0,13	-0,005
I2	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,940	0,87	0,59	0,350
I3	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,855	0,94	0,57	0,288
I4	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	785,000	905,67	595,00	190,000
I5	n° of hours of clinical training	834,000	932,92	670,00	164,000
I6	n° of hours of FSQ & VPH training	453,000	287,00	174,40	278,600
I7	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in FSQ & VPH	165,000	68,00	28,80	136,200
I8	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	48,574	70,48	42,01	6,564
I9	n° of ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	0,475	2,69	0,46	0,012
I10	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	4,713	5,05	1,30	3,415
I11	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	1,049	3,35	1,55	-0,496
I12	n° of companion animal patients seen extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	17,328	6,80	0,22	17,105
I13	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	12,828	15,95	6,29	6,533
I14	n° of equine patients seen extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	1,352	2,11	0,60	0,757
I15	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds / n° of students graduating annually	0,910	1,33	0,55	0,363
I16	n° of visits of poultry and farmed rabbit units / n° of students graduating annually	0,172	0,12	0,04	0,127
I17	n° of companion animal necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	1,713	2,07	1,40	0,313
I18	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	2,360	2,32	0,97	1,390
I19	n° of equine necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0,131	0,30	0,09	0,038
I20	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	3,811	2,05	0,69	3,119
I21*	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,221	0,20	0,06	0,158
I22*	n° of PhD graduating annually / n° of students graduating annually	0,148	0,15	0,09	0,060

- Indicator I1 (FTE academic staff involved in veterinary training/nº of undergraduate students) is below but very close to the balance and it is not a concern since all research staff collaborate with the academic staff by voluntarily performing teaching activities at the VEE.

- Indicator I11 (nº of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic seen intra-murally/nº of students graduating annually) is below the minimal values, but this is not a concern since students are exposed to poultry and rabbits' infectious diseases during PPT being these cases not included in the tables to calculate the Indicator.
- Indicators I9 (nº of ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally/nº of students graduating annually) and I13 (nº of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extra-murally/nº of students graduating annually) are above but very close to the minimum values, with low cases in cattle. The VEE proposes to increase the number of incoming students but, if approved by the Ministry, a parallel increase in the caseload of pigs and ruminant cases must be secured.
- Indicator I18 (nº of ruminants and pigs' necropsies/nº of students graduating annually) is clearly above the minimum values, but this figure is made up mainly with necropsies in pigs, being the necropsies in cows very low (media of 1 per year; this figure must be corrected by adding another 3 necropsies as media done during PPT with the practitioners). As suggested in the report, the VEE must secure enough cadavers of cattle intramurally.
- With regard to necropsies in equines, the indicator (I18) is above but very close to the minimum values so the VEE must pay attention to it too.

12. ESEVT Rubrics (summary of the decision on the compliance of the VEE for each ESEVT Standard, i.e. (total or substantial) compliance (C), partial compliance (PC) (Minor Deficiency) or non-compliance (NC) (Major Deficiency))

Area 1: Objectives, Organisation and QA Policy	C	PC	NC
Standard 1.1 The VEE must have as its main objective the provision, in agreement with the EU Directives and ESG recommendations, of adequate, ethical, research-based, evidence-based veterinary training that enables the new graduate to perform as a veterinarian capable of entering all commonly recognised branches of the veterinary profession and to be aware of the importance of lifelong learning. **The VEE must develop and follow its mission statement which must embrace all the ESEVT standards.**	X		
Standard 1.2 The VEE must be part of a university or a higher education institution providing training recognised as being of an equivalent level and formally recognised as such in the respective country. **The person responsible for the veterinary curriculum and the person(s) responsible for the professional, ethical, and academic affairs of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) must hold a veterinary degree.** **The decision-making process, organisation and management of the VEE must allow implementation of its strategic plan and of a cohesive study programme, in compliance with the ESEVT standards.**	X		
Standard 1.3 The VEE must have a strategic plan, which includes a SWOT analysis of its current activities, a list of objectives, and an operating plan with a timeframe and indicators for its implementation.	X		
Standard 1.4 The VEE must have a policy and associated written procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of its programmes and awards. It must also commit itself explicitly to the development of a culture which recognises the importance of quality, and quality assurance, within their VEE. To achieve this, the VEE must develop and implement a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality. The development and implementation of the VEE's strategy must include a role for students and other stakeholders, both internal and external, and the strategy must have a formal status and be publicly available.	X		
Standard 1.5 The VEE must provide evidence that it interacts with its stakeholders and the wider society. Such public information must be clear, objective and readily accessible; the information must include up-to-date information about the study programme, views and employment destinations of past students as well as the profile of the current student population. **The VEE's website must mention the ESEVT VEE's status and its last Self Evaluation Report and Visitation Report must be easily available for the public.**	X		
Standard 1.6 The VEE must monitor and periodically review its activities, both quantitative and qualitative, to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. The VEE must make public how this analysis of information has been utilised in the further development of its activities and provide evidence as to the involvement of both students and staff in the provision, analysis and implementation of such data. **Any action planned or taken as a result of this data analysis must be communicated to all those concerned.**	X		
Standard 1.7 The VEE must undergo external review through the ESEVT on a cyclical basis. Evidence must be provided of such external evaluation with the assurance that the progress made since the last ESEVT evaluation was linked to a continuous quality assurance process.	X		
Area 2: Finances			
Standard 2.1 Finances must be demonstrably adequate to sustain the requirements for the VEE to meet its mission and to achieve its objectives for education, research and services. The description must include both expenditures (separated into personnel costs, operating costs, maintenance costs and equipment) and revenues (separated into public funding, tuition fees, services, research grants and other sources).	X		
Standard 2.2 Clinical and field services must function as instructional resources. Instructional integrity of these resources must take priority over financial self-sufficiency of clinical services operations. **The VEE must have sufficient autonomy in order to use the resources to implement its strategic plan and to meet the ESEVT Standards.**	X		
Standard 2.3 Resources allocation must be regularly reviewed to ensure that available resources meet the requirements.	X		
Area 3: Curriculum			
Standard 3.1 The curriculum must be designed, resourced and managed to ensure all graduates have achieved the graduate attributes expected to be fully compliant with the EU Directive 2005/36/EC (as amended by directive 2013/55/EU) and its Annex V.4.1. The curriculum must include the subjects (input) and must allow the acquisition of the Day One Competences (output) listed in Annex 2. This concerns Basic Sciences, Clinical Sciences in companion animals (including equine and exotic pets), Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals (including Animal Production and Herd Health Management), Food Safety and Quality, and Professional Knowledge. **3.1.1. General findings**		X	
3.1.2. Basic sciences	X		
3.1.3. Clinical Sciences in companion animals (including equine and exotic pets)	X		
3.1.4. Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals (including Animal Production and Herd Health Management)		X	
3.1.5. Food Safety and Quality	X		
3.1.6. Professional Knowledge	X		

Standard 3.2 Each study programme provided by the VEE must be competency-based and designed so that it meets the objectives set for it, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme must be clearly specified and communicated and must refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. **The VEE must provide proof of a QA system that promotes and monitors the presence of an academic environment highly conducive to learning including self-learning. Details of the type, provision and updating of appropriate learning opportunities for the students must be clearly described, as well as the involvement of students.** **The VEE must also describe how it encourages and prepares students for self-learning and lifelong learning.**	**X**		
Standard 3.3 Programme learning outcomes must: ● **ensure the effective alignment of all content, teaching, learning and assessment activities of the degree programme to form a cohesive framework** ● **include a description of Day One Competences** ● **form the basis for explicit statements of the objectives and learning outcomes of individual units of study** ● **be communicated to staff and students** ● **be regularly reviewed, managed and updated to ensure they remain relevant, adequate and are effectively achieved.**	**X**		
Standard 3.4 The VEE must have a formally constituted committee structure (which includes effective student representation), with clear and empowered reporting lines, to oversee and manage the curriculum and its delivery. The committee(s) must: ● **determine the pedagogical basis, design, delivery methods and assessment methods of the curriculum** ● **oversee QA of the curriculum, particularly gathering, evaluating, making change and responding to feedback from stakeholders, peer reviewers and external assessors, and data from examination/assessment outcomes** ● **perform ongoing and periodic review of the curriculum at least every seven years by involving staff, students and stakeholders; these reviews must lead to continuous improvement. Any action taken or planned as a result of such a review must be communicated to all those concerned** ● **identify and meet training needs for all types of staff, maintaining and enhancing their competence for the ongoing curriculum development.**	**X**		
Standard 3.5 External Practical Training (EPT) is compulsory training activities organised outside the VEE, the student being under the direct supervision of a non-academic person (e.g. a practitioner). EPT cannot replace the core intramural training nor the extramural training under the close supervision of academic staff (e.g. ambulatory clinics, herd health management, practical training in FSQ and VPH). **Since the veterinary degree is a professional qualification with Day One Competences, EPT must complement and strengthen the academic education inter alia by enhancing student's professional knowledge.**	**X**		
Standard 3.6 The EPT providers must have an agreement with the VEE and the student (in order to state their respective rights and duties, including insurance matters), provide a standardised evaluation of the performance of the student during their EPT and be allowed to provide feedback to the VEE on the EPT programme. **There must be a member of the academic staff responsible for the overall supervision of the EPT, including liaison with EPT providers.**	**X**		
Standard 3.7 Students must take responsibility for their own learning during EPT. This includes preparing properly before each placement, keeping a proper record of their experience during EPT by using a logbook provided by the VEE and evaluating the EPT. Students must be allowed to complain officially and/or anonymously about issues occurring during EPT. The VEE must have a system of QA to monitor the implementation, progress and then feedback within the EPT activities.	**X**		
Area 4: Facilities and equipment			
Standard 4.1 All aspects of the physical facilities must provide an environment conducive to learning, including internet access. The veterinary VEE must have a clear strategy and programme for maintaining and upgrading its buildings and equipment. Facilities must comply with all relevant legislation including health, safety, biosecurity, accessibility to people with reduced mobility, and EU animal welfare and care standards.	**X**		
Standard 4.2 Lecture theatres, teaching laboratories, tutorial rooms, clinical facilities and other teaching spaces must be adequate in number, size and equipped for the instructional purposes and must be well maintained. The facilities must be adapted for the number of students enrolled. Students must have ready access to adequate and sufficient study, self-learning, recreation, locker, sanitary and food service facilities. **Offices, teaching preparation and research laboratories must be sufficient for the needs of the academic and support staff.**	**X**		
Standard 4.3 The livestock facilities, animal housing, core clinical teaching facilities and equipment used by the VEE for teaching purposes must: ● **be sufficient in capacity and adapted for the number of students enrolled in order to allow safe hands-on training for all students** ● **be of a high standard, well maintained and fit for the purpose** ● **promote best husbandry, welfare and management practices** ● **ensure relevant biosecurity and bio-containment** ● **be designed to enhance learning.**	**X**		
Standard 4.4 Core clinical teaching facilities must be provided in a veterinary teaching hospital (VTH) with 24/7 emergency services at least for companion animals and equines. Within the VTH, the VEE must unequivocally demonstrate that standard of education and clinical research are compliant with all ESEVT Standards, e.g. research-based and evidence-based clinical training supervised by academic staff trained to teach and to assess, availability for staff and students of facilities and patients for performing clinical research and relevant QA procedures. **For ruminants, on-call service must be available if emergency services do not exist for those species in a VTH.** **The VEE must ensure state-of-the-art standards of teaching clinics which remain comparable with or exceeding the best available in the private sector.**	**X**		

The VTH and any hospitals, practices and facilities (including EPT) which are involved with the curriculum must meet the relevant national Practice Standards.			
Standard 4.5 The VEE must ensure that students have access to a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic facilities, including but not limited to: diagnostic imaging, anaesthesia, clinical pathology, intensive/critical care, surgeries and treatment facilities, ambulatory services, pharmacy and necropsy facilities.	**X**		
Standard 4.6 Appropriate isolation facilities must be provided to meet the need for the isolation and containment of animals with communicable diseases. Such isolation facilities must be properly constructed, ventilated, maintained and operated to provide for animal care and for prevention of spread of infectious agents. They must be adapted to all animal species commonly handled in the VTH.	**X**		
Standard 4.7 The VEE must have an ambulatory clinic for production animals or equivalent facilities so that students can practise field veterinary medicine and Herd Health Management under academic supervision.	**X**		
Standard 4.8 The transport of students, live animals, cadavers, materials from animal origin and other teaching materials must be done in agreement with national and EU standards, to ensure the safety of students and staff and to prevent the spread of infectious agents.		**X**	
Standard 4.9 Operational policies and procedures (including e.g. biosecurity, good laboratory practice and good clinical practice) must be taught and posted for students, staff and visitors and a Biosafety manual must be available. The VEE must demonstrate a clear commitment for the delivery of biosafety and biosecurity, e.g. by a specific committee structure. The VEE must have a system of QA to monitor and assure clinical, laboratory and farm services, including a regular monitoring of the feedback from students, staff and clients.	**X**		
Area 5: Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin			
Standard 5.1 The number and variety of healthy and diseased animals, cadavers, and material of animal origin must be adequate for providing the practical and safe hands-on training (in the areas of Basic Sciences, Clinical Sciences, Pathology, Animal Production, Food Safety and Quality) and adapted to the number of students enrolled. **Evidence must be provided that these data are regularly recorded and that procedures are in place for correcting any deficiencies.**			**X**
Standard 5.2 In addition to the training provided in the VEE, experience can include practical training at external sites, provided this training is organised under direct academic supervision and following the same standards as those applied in the VEE.	**X**		
Standard 5.3 The VTH must provide nursing care skills and instruction in nursing procedures. Under all situations students must be active participants in the clinical workup of patients, including problem-oriented diagnostic approach together with diagnostic decision-making.	**X**		
Standard 5.4 Medical records must be comprehensive and maintained in an effective retrieval system (preferably an electronic patient record system) to efficiently support the teaching, research, and service programmes of the VEE.	**X**		
Area 6: Learning resources			
Standard 6.1 State-of-the-art learning resources must be adequate and available to support veterinary education, research, services and continuing education. When the study programme is provided in several tracks/languages, the learning resources must be available in all used languages. Timely access to learning resources, whether through print, electronic media or other means, must be available to students and staff and, when appropriate, to stakeholders. State-of-the-art procedures for bibliographical search and for access to databases and learning resources must be taught to undergraduate students.	**X**		
Standard 6.2 Staff and students must have full access on site to an academic library administered by a qualified librarian, an Information Technology (IT) unit managed by an IT expert, an e-learning platform, and all the relevant human and physical resources necessary for the development of instructional materials by the staff and their use by the students. **The relevant electronic information, database and other intranet resources must be easily available for students and staff both in the VEE's core facilities via wireless connection (Wi-Fi) and from outside the VEE through a hosted secured connection, e.g. Virtual Private Network (VPN).**	**X**		
Standard 6.3 The VEE must provide students with unimpeded access to learning resources, internet and internal study resources, and equipment for the development of procedural skills (e.g. models). The use of these resources must be aligned with the pedagogical environment and learning outcomes within the programme and have mechanisms in place to evaluate the teaching value of changes in learning resources.		**X**	
Area 7: Student admission, progression and welfare			
Standard 7.1 The VEE must consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e.g. student admission, progression and certification. **In relation to enrolment, the VEE must provide accurate and complete information regarding all aspects of the educational programme in all advertisings for prospective national and international students.** **Formal cooperations with other VEEs must also be clearly advertised.**	**X**		
Standard 7.2 The number of students admitted must be consistent with the resources available at the VEE for staff, buildings, equipment, healthy and diseased animals, and materials of animal origin.	**X**		
Standard 7.3 The selection and progression criteria must be clearly defined, consistent, and defensible, be free of discrimination or bias, and take into account the fact that students are admitted with a view to their entry to the veterinary profession in due course. **The VEE must regularly review and reflect on the selection processes to ensure they are appropriate for students to complete the programme successfully. If the selection processes are decided by another authority, the latter must regularly receive feedback from the VEE.** **Adequate training (including periodic refresher training) must be provided for those involved in the selection process to ensure applicants are evaluated fairly and consistently.**	**X**		
Standard 7.4 There must be clear policies and procedures on how applicants with disabilities or illnesses are considered and, if appropriate, accommodated in the programme, taking into account the requirement that all students must be capable of meeting the ESEVT Day One Competences by the time they graduate.	**X**		
Standard 7.5 The basis for decisions on progression (including academic progression and professional fitness to practise) must be explicit and readily available to the students. The VEE must provide evidence that it has	**X**		

mechanisms in place to identify and provide remediation and appropriate support (including termination) for students who are not performing adequately. The VEE must have mechanisms in place to monitor attrition and progression and be able to respond and amend admission selection criteria (if permitted by national or university law) and student support if required.			
Standard 7.6 Mechanisms for the exclusion of students from the programme for any reason must be explicit. The VEE's policies for managing appeals against decisions, including admissions, academic and progression decisions and exclusion, must be transparent and publicly available.	X		
Standard 7.7 Provisions must be made by the VEE to support the physical, emotional and welfare needs of students. This includes, but is not limited to, learning support and counselling services, career advice, and fair and transparent mechanisms for dealing with student illness, impairment and disability during the programme. This shall include provision of reasonable adjustments for disabled students, consistent with all relevant equality and/or human rights legislation. There must be effective mechanisms for resolution of student grievances (e.g. interpersonal conflict or harassment).	X		
Standard 7.8 Mechanisms must be in place by which students can convey their needs and wants to the VEE. The VEE must provide students with a mechanism, anonymously if they wish, to offer suggestions, comments and complaints regarding compliance of the VEE with national and international legislation and the ESEVT standards.	X		
Area 8: Student assessment			
Standard 8.1 The VEE must ensure that there is a clearly identified structure within the VEE showing lines of responsibility for the assessment strategy to ensure coherence of the overall assessment regime and to allow the demonstration of progressive development across the programme towards entry-level competence.	X		
Standard 8.2 The assessment tasks and grading criteria for each unit of study in the programme must be published, applied consistently, clearly identified and available to students in a timely manner well in advance of the assessment. Requirements to pass must be explicit. The VEE must properly document the results of assessment and provide the students with timely feedback on their assessments. Mechanisms for students to appeal against assessment outcomes must be explicit.	X		
Standard 8.3 The VEE must have a process in place to review assessment outcomes, to change assessment strategies and to ensure the accuracy of the procedures when required. Programme learning outcomes covering the full range of professional knowledge, skills, competences and attributes must form the basis for assessment design and underpin decisions on progression.	X		
Standard 8.4 Assessment strategies must allow the VEE to certify student achievement of learning objectives at the level of the programme and individual units of study. The VEE must ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.	X		
Standard 8.5 Methods of formative and summative assessment must be valid and reliable and comprise a variety of approaches. Direct assessment of clinical skills and Day One Competences (some of which may be on simulated patients), must form a significant component of the overall process of assessment. It must also include the quality control of the student logbooks in order to ensure that all clinical procedures, practical and hands-on training planned in the study programme have been fully completed by each individual student.			X
Area 9: Academic and support staff			
Standard 9.1 The VEE must ensure that all staff are appropriately qualified and prepared for their roles, in agreement with national and EU regulations and must apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of staff. A formal training (including good teaching and evaluation practices, learning and e-learning resources, biosecurity and QA procedures) must be in place for all staff involved with teaching. Most academic staff (calculated as FTE) involved in veterinary training must be veterinarians. It is expected that more than 2/3 of the instruction that the students receive, as determined by student teaching hours, is delivered by qualified veterinarians.	X		
Standard 9.2 The total number, qualifications and skills of all staff involved with the programme, including teaching staff, 'adjunct' staff, technical, administrative and support staff, must be sufficient and appropriate to deliver the educational programme and fulfil the VEE's mission. A procedure must be in place to assess if they display competence and effective teaching skills in all relevant aspects of the curriculum that they teach, regardless of whether they are full or part time, residents, interns or other postgraduate students, adjuncts or off-campus contracted teachers.	X		
Standard 9.3 Staff must be given opportunities to develop and extend their teaching and assessment knowledge and must be encouraged to improve their skills. Opportunities for didactic and pedagogic training and specialisation must be available. The VEE must clearly define systems of reward for teaching excellence in operation. Academic positions must offer the security and benefits necessary to maintain stability, continuity, and competence of the academic staff. Academic staff must have a balanced workload of teaching, research and service depending on their role. They must have reasonable opportunities and resources for participation in scholarly activities.	X		
Standard 9.4 The VEE must provide evidence that it utilises a well-defined, comprehensive and publicised programme for the professional growth and development of academic and support staff, including formal appraisal and informal mentoring procedures. Staff must have the opportunity to contribute to the VEE's direction and decision-making processes. Promotion criteria for academic and support staff must be clear and explicit. Promotions for teaching staff must recognise excellence in, and (if permitted by the national or university law) place equal emphasis on all aspects of teaching (including clinical teaching), research, service and other scholarly activities.	X		
Standard 9.5 A system for assessment of teaching staff must be in operation and must include student participation. Results must be available to those undertaking external reviews and commented upon in reports.	X		
Area 10: Research programmes, continuing and postgraduate education			

Standard 10.1 The VEE must demonstrate significant and broad research activities of staff that integrate with and strengthen the veterinary degree programme through research-based teaching.	**X**		
Standard 10.2 All students must be trained in scientific method and research techniques relevant to evidence-based veterinary medicine and must have opportunities to participate in research programmes.	**X**		
Standard 10.3 The VEE must provide advanced postgraduate degree programmes, e.g. PhD, internships, residencies and continuing education programmes that complement and strengthen the veterinary degree programme and are relevant to the needs of the profession and society.	**X**		
Standard 10.4 The VEE must have a system of QA to evaluate how research activities provide opportunities for student training and staff promotion, and how research approaches, methods and results are integrated into the veterinary teaching programmes.	**X**		
C: (total or substantial) compliance; PC: partial compliance (Minor Deficiency); NC: non-compliance (Major Deficiency)			

Executive Summary

Brief history of the VEE and its previous EAEVE Visitations

This VEE is one of 13 Schools of Veterinary Medicine in Italy and is located in Abruzzo. It was established as it was generally perceived that the Abruzzo Region needed a Veterinary School as many students from the region were attending Bologna or Bari to study veterinary medicine. In 1994 the University of Teramo was established with the Faculties of Veterinary Medicine, Law and Political Science.

In 1997, two new facilities were introduced: the Molinari building that hosted the pre-clinical sciences and the Cartecchio facility that hosted the clinical sciences and the 24h emergency service. Later, the VEE obtained the Chiareto Teaching Farm (CTF) to host livestock for teaching and research. Finally, the VEE was established in the Piano D'Accio Campus. Unexpectedly, and due to earthquake damage, the Molinari building was structurally condemned, and all the pre-clinical activities had to move to the Piano D'Accio Campus and Sant Agostino Campus, greatly modifying the organization of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH).

In 2019 an investment of 18 million Euros was agreed between the Abruzzo region and the University of Teramo, to build a new permanent facility that will host all the teaching rooms, the pre-clinical sciences laboratories and the pathology room. The new facility located in the Piano D'Accio Campus, will be ready within the next three years.

The VEE at Teramo was evaluated by EAEVE in 2007 for the first time with major deficiencies identified as:

- The lack of separation between anatomy and necropsy facilities
- Lack of a 24hr emergency service

Despite the earthquake causing delays in implementing the necessary changes, the VEE was re-evaluated by EAEVE for a second time in 2010, receiving full approval.

The 2019 ESEVT SOP as amended in September 2021 was utilised for this Visitation.

Brief comment on the SER

The SER was well written and provided useful information about the VEE and the activities developed within but, during the onsite visit the team detected inaccuracies in several data as a result of VEE misunderstanding. As suggested in:

- 3.1.1.3, the VEE must correct the inaccurate data regarding the hours of training in Table 3.1.1, 3.1.2 and Appendix 2
- 5.1.3, the VEE must correct table 5.1.6 of the SER including also the number of necropsies performed by the students with the practitioners during PPT
- 9.2.3, the VEE must correct table 9.2.4 to include permanent researchers' staff.

As the SER will be a public document with sensitive information on the VEE and its activities that will be published at the VEE website, EAEVE website, and DEQAR (Database of EQAR), it is the opinion of the team that the corrected SER must be sent to the team and the ECOVE before the discussion of the VEE's status.

Brief comment on the Visitation

Answers to the questions sent to the VEE prior to the Visitation had been provided well before the Visitation due to the series of postponements. Additional information was provided on site.

Although the Visitation had been postponed, the ESEVT team utilised the original SER with some late updates from the VEE.

The Visitation programme itself was well organised and the VEE dealt efficiently with several requests from the ESEVT team for alterations and additional visits.

Areas worthy of praise (i.e. Commendations), e.g.:

- It is obvious that the academic staff is implementing student-centred and research-led teaching with a strong commitment to continuous improvement for the benefit of students
- The visited VEE benefits from a very strong structuring of the quality approach at university level, which is then applied at the level of faculty and departments with perfectly interlinked and formalised procedures
- Enthusiastic students and staff (Academic and Support) who are proud of their VEE
- Strong leadership and participative management with excellent student participation
- Highly supportive links and services the VEE provides to the Abruzzo region and the community.
- Strong involvement of practitioners in students' training
- The VEE is commended for the active way in which undergraduates are involved in research through the final degree thesis
- Professional knowledge is well organised and integrated throughout the curriculum.

Additional commendations are described in the Visitation Report.

Areas of concern (i.e. Minor Deficiencies):

1. Partial compliance with Standard 3.1 because of inaccurate data addressed in Table 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 of the SER and Appendix 2, regarding the total number of hours in the curriculum and the partial number of hours of training in all groups of subjects:
    - the core subjects as addressed in p32 of the SOP 2019 as amended in September 2021 and listed in the Annex 5.4.1 of the Directive 36/2005/EC,
    - the electives,
    - and the Dissertation (Final degree) thesis.

2. Partial compliance with Standard 3.1.4 because there is suboptimal focus on medical and surgical teaching regarding ruminants within the curriculum.

3. Partial compliance with Standard 4.8 because of the need to replace the damaged safety devices in the student transport and because of suboptimal respect of biosafety rules in the pickup truck serving as a mobile clinic.

4. Partial compliance with Standard 6.3 because of an inadequate clinical skills lab to practise procedures prior to performing on live animals.

Items of non-compliance with the ESEVT Standards (i.e. Major Deficiencies):

1. Non-compliance with Standard 5.1 because the number of bovine cadavers in pathology as well as the clinical caseload of bovines are insufficient to guarantee training for every student, with no clear procedure in place for correcting this deficiency.

2. Non-compliance with Standard 8.5 because of insufficient direct assessment of clinical skills in the overall process of assessment, and insufficient quality control of logbooks to ensure all clinical procedures, practical and hands-on training have been fully completed by each individual student.

Additional suggestions for improvement are described in the Visitation Report.

Glossary

DEQAR: Database of the European Quality Assurance Register
DVMPB: Degree Veterinary Medicine Programme Board
DOPs: Direct Observation of Procedural Skills
D1C: Day One Competences
EAEVE: European Association of VEEs for Veterinary Education
EBVS: European Board of Veterinary Specialisation
ECOVE: European Committee on Veterinary Education
EPT: External Practical Training
ESEVT: European System of Evaluation of Veterinary Training
ESG: Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
EQAC: Educational Quality Assurance Committee
FSQ: Food Safety and Quality
FTE: Full-Time Equivalent
IT: Information Technology
JSTEC: Joint Students-Teachers Evaluation Committee
QA: Quality Assurance
SER: Self Evaluation Report
SOP: Standard Operating Procedure
TCDF: Teaching Course Description Form
UNITE: University of Teramo
VMFB: Veterinary Medicine Faculty Board
VPH: Veterinary Public Health
VTH: Veterinary Teaching Hospital

Decision of ECOVE

The Committee concluded that the following Major Deficiencies had been identified:

1. Non-compliance with Standard 5.1 because the number of bovine cadavers in pathology as well as the clinical caseload of bovines are insufficient to guarantee training for every student, with no clear procedure in place for correcting this deficiency.

2. Non-compliance with Standard 8.5 because of insufficient direct assessment of clinical skills in the overall process of assessment, and insufficient quality control of logbooks to ensure all clinical procedures, practical and hands-on training have been fully completed by each individual student.

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