



RE-VISITATION REPORT

To the Veterinary Education Establishment (VEE) of the University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

On 16 - 18 February 2026

By the Re-visitation Team

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Introduction

The Department of Veterinary Medicine, University of Cambridge, was assessed by ESEVT on 25 - 28 February 2025. The visit was completed in agreement with the SOP 2023.

In the report that was sent to ECOVE, the previous visitation team pointed to several areas in the veterinary teaching programme worthy of praise. However, one major deficiency was identified due to an insufficient number of equine, cattle, and pig necropsies.

In addition, the visitation team identified 13 areas of concern.

These findings led to the identification of the following major deficiency under ESEVT Area 5:

- The VEE is not compliant with Standard 5.1. because of an insufficient number of equine, cattle, and pig necropsies, which may affect the acquisition by all students of the D1C concerned.

The 13 areas of concern (minor deficiencies) that were identified by the team were as follows:

1. The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 2.1. because of current uncertainties regarding the deficit reduction plan.
2. The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.2. because of the suboptimal mapping of ILO to D1C for basic sciences.
3. The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.3. because of suboptimal clinical training in exotic pets and equine.
4. The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.4. because of suboptimal clinical training in poultry.
5. The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.5. because of insufficient practical training in food processing and food microbiology.
6. The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.3. because of suboptimal biosecurity procedures in some extramural facilities used for teaching.
7. The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.4. because the dated VTH does not allow for optimal use of modern, sustainable technologies and procedures.
8. The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.6. because of suboptimal isolation facilities for equine and food-producing animals.
9. The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.9. because of suboptimal teaching and posting of biosecurity procedures.
10. The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 5.4. because of a suboptimal recording system for intra- and extra-mural patients.
11. The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 8.1. because of suboptimal review of the assessment strategy.

12. The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 8.5. because of suboptimal logbook/portfolio use for the assessment of D1C acquisition.
13. The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 9.1. because of suboptimal formal training to teach and assess for some non-academic teaching staff.

On 11 June 2025, ECOVE made the decision that the status of the VEE was Pending Accreditation.

The Re-visitation Self Evaluation Report and the Annexes were provided to the Re-visitation Team on time and contained relevant information. The RSER was informative.

The Re-visitation was well prepared and well organised by the VEE. It was performed in a cordial working atmosphere, in agreement with the ESEVT SOP 2023.

1. Correction of the Major Deficiencies

1.1. Major Deficiency 1: The VEE is not compliant with Standard 5.1. because of an insufficient number of equine, cattle, and pig necropsies, which may affect the acquisition by all students of the D1C concerned.

1.1.1. Findings

Since AY 2024/25, the VEE has implemented:

- (i) a new partnership with a local pig unit,
- (ii) an arrangement with a fallen-stock collector plus targeted recruitment of equine necropsy cases via the equine ambulatory team,
- (iii) In addition to the practicals in Year 4, a new 5th-year practical class focused on equine, porcine and ruminant necropsy technique, and
- (iv) a new final-year clinical and anatomic pathology rotation.

Robustness of cadaver supply; the arrangement with the local pig unit can easily be set up with another pig unit; the fallen-stock collector has been in operation for many years. Contingency plans for cadaver supply are in place.

Reported 2024/25 totals: 106 ruminant and pig necropsies, and 10 equine necropsies.

A projection of the number of equine necropsies going forward is approx. 20 equine necropsies in 2025/26; expected equine necropsy ratio ≈ 0.3 per graduate for a cohort of 60.

1.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The multi-pronged approach has materially increased caseload and student exposure, created longitudinal reinforcement (Year 4 Small Group Practical leading to Year 5 post-mortem class leading to Year 6 rotation), and addressed species spread.

The cadaver supply system is robust.

Three-year ESEVT indicator I16 remains marginal on the 3-year mean, but AY 2024/25 in isolation meets or exceeds minima; continued throughput in 2025/26 should clear the trailing 3-year average.

1.1.3. Suggestions

None

1.1.4. Decision

The Major Deficiency has been fully corrected.

2. Correction of the Minor Deficiencies

2.1. Minor Deficiency 1: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 2.1. because of current uncertainties regarding the deficit reduction plan.

2.1.1. Findings

Following the original report, the Council of the School of Biological Sciences recommended that the University cease the veterinary programme (December 2025); the University's General Board is considering this recommendation alongside additional departmental evidence (23 February 2026). An options appraisal, external consultancy inputs and investment case modelling are in progress; however, long-term financial sustainability and the strategic direction remain under university governance review.

2.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

While governance structures, modelling and oversight exist, there is still a continuity risk for the programme.

A plan with options and choices has been submitted to the University.

A plan for economically sustainable veterinary clinical education has been submitted to the University, and some parts have already been implemented, even if the plan has not yet been approved.

A stable, University-approved financial plan that underpins sustained delivery of clinical education has not yet been secured; thus, the uncertainty that drove the original partial compliance persists, pending the University Council's decision.

2.1.3. Suggestions

None.

2.2. Minor Deficiency 2: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.2. because of the suboptimal mapping of ILO to D1C for basic sciences.

2.2.1. Findings

A Veterinary Curriculum Policy (May 2025) mandates Intended Learning Outcome definition and mapping to the requirements of the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education and the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Day One Competences across all units; mapping completed by May 2025 and embedded in a master curriculum spreadsheet with annual review; the Veterinary Education Committee holds ultimate authority

2.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The actions taken adequately address this minor deficiency.

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.2.

2.2.3. Suggestions

None.

2.3. Minor Deficiency 3: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.3. because of suboptimal clinical training in exotic pets and equine.

2.3.1. Findings

Exotic animals: The VEE launched a small-animal first-opinion practice in April 2025 with 91 exotic animal consultations recorded to early-February 2026 (15 birds, 30 rodents, 31 rabbits, 4 carnivora (ferrets and other), 11 others (deer, wallaby, amphibian). Expanded case-based learning resources and clinical-skills activities are planned. Pre-clinical handling at the College of West Anglia continues.

Equine: The VEE's Equine Clinic strengthened staffing to four full-time equivalent experienced equine veterinarians, and outreach boosted demand. Consultations have increased from approximately 180 per month (April 2025) to over 260 per month (October 2025). Using numbers from April 2025 to the end of January 2026, the average number of consultations is approximately 250. Final-year rotations redesigned (from June 2026) to ensure very small groups. Formal agreements with external equine hospitals are under discussion for referral-level exposure.

2.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

There is a clear positive trajectory in both streams; First-opinion equine exposure is now strong, but systematic referral-level experience still depends on concluding external agreements. Exotic animal exposure is improving, but from a low base. Reliance on resources and cases needs ongoing monitoring to ensure consistent coverage of Day One Competences

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.3.

2.3.3. Suggestions

None.

2.4. Minor Deficiency 4: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.4. because of suboptimal clinical training in poultry.

2.4.1. Findings

The VEE has introduced final-year poultry flock-health visits with a specialist practice (from September 2025) covering production data review, structured flock health assessment, onsite poultry necropsy, diagnostics, and updating of welfare and health plans. Risk noted that national Avian Influenza controls have temporarily suspended non-essential farm visits.

2.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The visit model aligns with Day One Competences, but operational fragility arising from infectious disease restrictions threaten consistency; scalable compensations (enhanced simulations, case

datasets, additional integration with veterinary public health) are still needed to guarantee universal coverage.

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.4.

2.4.3. Suggestions

None.

2.5. Minor Deficiency 5: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.5. because of insufficient practical training in food processing and food microbiology.

2.5.1. Findings

The VEE is in active discussions with the University of Bristol (Langford campus) to add hands-on food microbiology and food processing aligned to the existing compulsory abattoir week, targeted for academic year 2026/2027 implementation.

2.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The plan is credible but not yet delivered.

2.5.3. Suggestions

None.

2.6. Minor Deficiency 6: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.3. because of suboptimal biosecurity procedures in some extramural facilities used for teaching.

2.6.1. Findings

Abattoir upgrades are completed, e.g. changing rooms and toilets, and a designated animal by-products area established; the University Farm has two isolation facilities with a written isolation protocol and prominent biosecurity signage added.

2.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The suboptimal biosecurity procedures have been directly addressed with infrastructure and procedural controls.

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.3.

2.6.3. Suggestions

None.

2.7. Minor Deficiency 7: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.4. because the dated VTH does not allow for optimal use of modern, sustainable technologies and procedures.

2.7.1. Findings

The FV Team suggested that the VEE should analyse the possibility of building a new VTH to align with current technological advancements and sustainable practices. On assignment of the General Board, the VEE and the School of Biological Sciences have collaborated to develop a more sustainable delivery model for clinical veterinary education (see minor deficiency under Standard 2.1).

2.7.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

Planning for a new or redeveloped hospital, given appropriate funding is obtained, has been initiated.

2.7.3. Suggestions

None

2.8. Minor Deficiency 8: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.6. because of suboptimal isolation facilities for equine and food-producing animals.

2.8.1. Findings

Separate isolation facilities for equine and food-producing animals were finished in September 2025, including the finalisation of SOPs.

2.8.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The facilities are fully operational, have been used with clinical cases, and together with the management of suspected or confirmed contagious cases at the Farm Animal Hospital (FAH) following the FAH Biosecurity Manual, the VEE maintains high standards of infection control. The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.6.

2.8.3. Suggestions

None

2.9. Minor Deficiency 9: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.9. because of suboptimal teaching and posting of biosecurity procedures.

2.9.1. Findings

Biosecurity has been more emphasised in the teaching. This includes a lecture in the first year and at the start of clinical training in the fourth year as key points for biosecurity learning.

A practical exercise is included in the second year in the course for preparing for veterinary public health. Biosecurity measures are actively enforced in the farm animal practice; e.g., PPE and cleaning sessions are included. Specific lectures, course sections and a mandatory quiz have been added.

Biosecurity protocols have been revised, and relevant signposting now ensures visibility and enhances compliance.

2.9.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

In total, the measures implemented have improved the understanding of and adherence to biosecurity standards.

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.9.

2.9.3. Suggestions

None.

2.10. Minor Deficiency 10: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 5.4. because of a suboptimal recording system for intra- and extra-mural patients.

2.10.1. Findings

The FV Team commented that there was “no unique and efficient recording system for clinical cases that limits the real-time monitoring of cases (number and diversity) seen by students and also limits the possibility of conducting retrospective studies and research”. Since the visit in February 2025, the VEE has fully implemented and is actively using the ProVet Cloud system at QVSH.

2.10.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

To ensure continuity of clinical information from the previous system, a full data migration from the AT system to ProVet Cloud has been performed. A plan is in place to integrate ambulatory records into the new system, as well as plans for student and staff training and monitoring of system performance.

The VEE is compliant with Standard 5.4.

2.10.3. Suggestions

None.

2.11. Minor Deficiency 11: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 8.1. because of suboptimal review of the assessment strategy.

2.11.1. Findings

The FV Team observed an insufficient assessment strategy for the preclinical courses, which are the responsibility of the School of Biological Sciences. Changes have now been approved, which also better aligns assessments with ILOs.

Furthermore, an overall review of the programme Assessment Strategy took place in May 2025.

2.11.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A comprehensive assessment system exists and is actively implemented. According to a change in the governing structure of the veterinary programme, the overall Programme Assessment Strategy will be reviewed annually by a new assessment operation Sub-Committee of the Veterinary Education Committee. This will ensure a holistic and coherent approach to assessment that also includes the preclinical assessments.

The VEE is compliant with Standard 8.1.

2.11.3. Suggestions

None.

2.12. Minor Deficiency 12: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 8.5. because of suboptimal logbook/portfolio use for the assessment of D1C acquisition.

2.12.1. Findings

The FV Team suggested, “that the use and review of the e-portfolio and rollout of MyProgress be optimised as soon as possible”. All students are now on the E-portfolio. Progress wheels are being rolled out on MyProgress to make it easier for students to follow their achievements of D1Cs. Training of a three-tier progression model for the attainment of D1Cs has been provided for students and relevant staff.

2.12.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

An adequate system for the assessment of D1C acquisition is now in place. A student feedback survey completed by fourth-year students in May 2025 did not reveal any major concerns. The VEE is compliant with Standard 8.5.

2.12.3. Suggestions

None.

2.13. Minor Deficiency 13: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 9.1. because of suboptimal formal training to teach and assess for some non-academic teaching staff.

2.13.1. Findings

Several initiatives have been taken to ensure that both academic and non-academic teaching staff receive formal training in teaching and assessment methods.

At the RSPCA, most of the non-academic staff have completed the IFME course, and only one is currently in the process of completing the IFME course.

Junior staff: Interns now have sessions on teaching, assessment, and feedback as part of their introduction to the role as interns. Residents also have sessions as part of their introduction to the role, and a mandatory IFME course during the first or second year.

The introduction sessions are also extended to, e.g. nurses.

2.13.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

An adequate system for training to teach and assess for non-academic staff and junior staff is now in place.

The VEE is compliant with Standard 9.1.

2.13.3. Suggestions

None.

3. ESEVT Indicators

Raw data from the last 3 complete academic years		2024–25	2023–24	2022–23	Mean
1	n° of FTE teaching staff involved in veterinary training	155	156	155	155
2	n° of undergraduate students	392	389	386	389
3	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training	104	109	107	107
4	n° of students graduating annually	60	66	50	59
5	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training	78	59	53	63
6	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	723	714	694	710
7	n° of hours of Core Clinical Training (CCT)	1084	1076	996	1052
8	n° of hours of VPH (including FSQ) training	217	217	217	217
9	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in VPH (including FSQ)	41	41	41	41
10	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally	7112	9027	8578	8239
11	n° of individual ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally	344	156	102	201
12	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally	256	260	383	300
13	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen intra-murally	22	80	58	53
14	n° of companion animal patients seen extra-murally	3858	4125	3881	3955
15	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extra-murally	444	8549	6725	5239
16	n° of equine patients seen extra-murally	1829	1994	2121	1981
17	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen extra-murally	63	119	110	97
18	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds	788	827	668	761
19	n° of visits to poultry and farmed rabbit units	17	2	2	7
20	n° of companion animal necropsies	87	156	110	118
21	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies	106	57	79	81
22	n° of equine necropsies	10	5	0	5
23	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies	106	206	248	187
24	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training	32	33	32	32
25	n° of PhD graduating annually	5	8	11	8

Name of the VEE:		University of Cambridge			
Date of the form filling:		des.25			
Calculated Indicators from raw data		VEE values	Median values ¹	Minimal values ²	Balance ³
I1	n° of FTE teaching staff involved in veterinary training / n° of undergraduate students	0,40	0,15	0,13	0,27
I2	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	1,82	0,84	0,63	1,19
I3	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	1,08	0,88	0,54	0,54
I4	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	710,33	953,50	700,59	9,74
I5	n° of hours of Core Clinical Training (CCT)	1052,00	941,58	704,80	347,20
I6	n° of hours of VPH (including FSQ) training	217,00	293,50	191,80	25,20
I7	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in VPH (including FSQ)	41,00	75,00	31,80	9,20
I8	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	207,85	67,37	44,01	163,84
I9	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	92,73	18,75	9,74	82,99
I10	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	38,88	5,96	2,15	36,73
I11	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	2,57	3,11	1,16	1,41
I12	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds / n° of students graduating annually	12,97	1,29	0,54	12,43
I13	n° of visits of poultry and farmed rabbit units / n° of students graduating annually	0,12	0,11	0,04	0,07
I14	n° of companion animal necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	2,01	2,11	1,40	0,61
I15	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	1,38	1,36	0,90	0,48
I16	n° of equine necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0,09	0,18	0,10	-0,01
I17	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	3,18	2,65	0,88	2,30
I18	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,55	0,27	0,06	0,49
I19	n° of PhD graduating annually / n° of students graduating annually	0,14	0,15	0,07	0,07

3.1. Findings

All updated Indicators are above the minimum value except I16.

3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

Three-year ESEVT indicator I16 remains marginal on the 3-year mean, but AY 2024/25 in isolation meets or exceeds minima; continued throughput in 2025/26 should clear the trailing 3-year average.

3.3. Suggestions

None.

4. Conclusions

The Minor Deficiencies have been addressed and most of them rectified by the VEE, and an ongoing process is in place to correct the remaining ones.

The Major Deficiency (Standard 5.1., because of an insufficient number of equine, cattle and pig necropsies, identified after the full Visitation on 25-28 February 2025) has been addressed extensively. With the means described, the Team concludes that the VEE has rectified the Major Deficiency.

Decision of ECOVE

The Committee concluded that the Major Deficiency identified after the Full Visitation on 25 - 28 February 2025 had been corrected and that the Minor Deficiencies have been corrected or that an ongoing process is in place to correct them.

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