

**European Association
of Establishments for Veterinary Education**



QUALITY ASSURANCE VISITATION REPORT

To the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Zagreb, Croatia

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Introduction

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Zagreb (FVMUZ) (called the VEE in this report) was founded in 1919 and is one of the oldest faculties in the Republic of Croatia. It was renamed the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in 1924 and it became one of the constituents of the University of Zagreb. The first ESEVT evaluation took place in October 2002 and resulted in Approval status. In the second evaluation in March 2013, one major deficiency was encountered and the Establishment was successfully re-visited in May 2015, resulting in the Approval status.

The Statute (2017) and Regulations on Internal Organization (2019) regulate the organisation of the Faculty. Departments and clinics are the basic organizational units of FVMUZ. Divisions are higher organizational units, established on the basis of the correlation of the academic, scientific and professional work of the departments and clinics. The Faculty administration is an organizational unit performing professional and administrative activities.

The Faculty conducts activities related to scientific research, clinical and field diagnostics, treatment and control of animal diseases and zoonoses, veterinary public health and environmental protection. Additionally, it is active in other areas such as supervision and expert analysis in the field of veterinary medicine and animal breeding, research and production of drugs intended for the protection of animal health, planning and organization of livestock production, as well as hygiene and technology in the production of animal foodstuffs. This active involvement of the Faculty has led to the slogan: “*At the service of One Health*”, which has been used since 2017 as the motto of all employees and students.

Since the last ESEVT visitation, the following activities have taken place:

- Several activities performed and supervised according to the standard ISO 9001, research and professional activities, international cooperation, administrative work and management;
- Digital transformation;
- Increased attention to biosafety and biosecurity at the entire VEE;
- Integrated undergraduate and graduate veterinary study program in English;
- Professional work at the VEE Clinics placed under the umbrella of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH);
- Resident and Internship programmes;
- English language and teaching skills courses for staff;
- Communication skills in Veterinary Medicine course for students ;
- Reform of the Ambulatory Clinic.

This QA Visitation was completed in agreement with the SOP 2016.

1. Outcome Assessment and Quality Assurance (see Standards 11.1 to 11.10 in Chapter 3)

1.1. Objectives and Organisation

1.1.1. Findings

The mission of the FVMUZ, as described in the Strategy 2018-2022 and available on the official web page envisages excellence in veterinary education, scientific research and professional work to become an example of a comprehensive teaching and research centre of high standards of the 21st century. The main objectives of the FVMUZ have been described in more detail for education, scientific research, professional work, financial operations, personnel policy, and international cooperation and mobility.

FVMUZ is a public institution of higher education, which organizes and conducts university study courses and life-long learning educational programmes and performs interdisciplinary scientific and professional work in the area of biomedicine and health, veterinary medicine, and other related fields. FVMUZ activities are regulated primarily by various legal Acts (Act on Scientific Activity and Higher Education, Act on Veterinary Medicine, Act on Institutions), the Statute of the University of Zagreb (UNIZG) and of the FVMUZ, the foundational documents where all processes are described.

All organizational, administrative, technical and general tasks of common interest for the overall work of the Faculty are performed by the services within the Faculty Management.

The Faculty administration includes the Deanery, the Secretariat, the Accounting office and the Library.

The election and authority of the Dean, the term of his office and the composition and manner of work of the FC, as well as of the committees, are described in detail in the Statute and in the Rules of Procedure of the FC. The Dean is assisted by up to six Vice-deans, who supervise and manage tasks in their particular fields of activity (integrated undergraduate studies and students; finances and investments; human resources, organization and management; science, postgraduate education and life-long learning; international cooperation and undergraduate studies in English and quality control). The strategic decisions and legal acts are issued by the extended Dean's board, including one student representative and also the Divisions' Heads.

The Faculty Council (FC) is the expert council of the FVMUZ, which may set up permanent and temporary committees with different aims. The student representatives' elections and mandates on the FC are stipulated in the Act on the Student Council and other Student Organizations. The FC has eleven permanent and two temporary Committees responsible of activities connected to the Statute, study programme, discipline and ethics, projects, awards, library, staff appointment, QA management, media relations and lifelong learning, biosecurity. Two councils are directing the scientific studies (the Doctoral Studies Council and the Specialist Studies Council). Other committees may be set for specific purposes (e.g. the Committee for development of the strategy is appointed every 5 years).

Based on the Statute 2017, a total of 21 departments and 4 clinics (the basic units of the Faculty) are organized into 4 divisions according to their scientific, teaching and professional activities. The *Basic and pre-clinical sciences division* includes 7 departments, the *Clinics division* 4 clinics and 3 departments, the *Animal production and biotechnology division* 5 departments, and the *Veterinary public health and food safety division* 6 departments. There is also a scientific-teaching facility (game management area), which also offers training for students.

The work of the departments/clinics is managed by their Heads, who are elected by the employees of the unit for a term of three years, with the possibility of re-election. The Head of the department/clinic is helped by the Collegium of the department/clinic, which is an advisory committee on all departmental issues. The Statute prescribes how the decisions in the advisory committees and councils are made (e.g. public vote of a simple majority, secret ballot). The Divisions are coordinated by a Division Head with a three year mandate and a Division Council.

The Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) is a new organizational unit, established to improve and coordinate the professional and clinical work. Five organizational units from the Clinical division and three units from the Veterinary Public Health and Food Safety division participate in the professional and clinical work of the VTH. The Head of the VTH, elected for three years by the Advisory Committee of the VTH and confirmed by the FC, coordinates the professional and clinical work. The Head is responsible to the Advisory Committee, the Dean and the FC. The Advisory Committee consists of the Heads of the Department/clinics that participate in the teaching and professional work of the VTH. The Advisory Committee meets at least once a month, and the Head prepares, convenes and chairs these sessions.

1.1.2. Comments

Based on the SER, the Team found the organisational structure of the Faculty very complicated and it was extremely difficult to figure out the relationships between various parts of it and the distribution of responsibilities. The somewhat varying terminology further complicated this perception, as different names could be used for the same committee or council, and the number of various committees is very high.

The Team found the organisational role of the newly established VTH especially confusing. However, responses to the questions sent to the Faculty before the visitation clarified several points and discussions in the meetings on site confirmed that the VTH had truly helped the organisation in the daily activities, in spite of the fact that the same staff had two superiors.

Departments are generally considered as higher units than Divisions, but the Faculty seemed satisfied with the current organisation having the opposite hierarchy. However, some Departments/clinics are very small, and their presence as individual units can be questioned in this sense; they all seemed to have the same responsibilities (e.g. each Department/unit has an own Head and Collegium).

The number of Vice-deans is relatively high but in the onsite meetings, each of them turned out to be very committed in the activities of their field as well as in developing them, and they also seemed to be well aware of each other's fields of responsibility.

1.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

The FVMUZ should reconsider whether the number of Departments/clinics could be decreased, based on their good experiences of the VTH in combining organisational units in a meaningful way. Strengthening the role of the Divisions and the VTH might be helpful in long term in this sense.

1.2. Finances

1.2.1. Findings

As part of the UNIZG, FVMUZ is a public institution, financed by the Government according to the guidelines of the Republic of Croatia drafted in the Proposal of the financial plan for the three-year period and reporting to the Ministry of Science, UNIZG, and Ministry of Finances, concordant with the national legislation. The Faculty funds come from the state budget (67%), from its own revenues (22.5%) and from other revenues (10.5%). To compensate the relatively low allocation of

governmental funding for higher education in Croatia, when compared to the EU average, FVMUZ tries to generate as much revenue as possible e.g. by VTH services and by organizing specialized courses and workshops/conferences, by applying for as many EU and national projects as possible. For that reason, the Office for EU projects was established in 2017, and since, 1.5 mil Euro from the European Social Fund and ERASMUS Plus was added to the FVMUZ budget in the last three years, as stated in the Appendix of the SER.

Budgetary funds are allocated for employees' salaries, overhead expenses and support scientific activities, while the Faculty's revenues are allocated based on the Regulation on standards and usage of own revenues earned on the market. FVMUZ has autonomy and flexibility only in the use of its own revenues. Decisions on allocation of Faculty's own revenues are rendered by the responsible person at each level, according to the financial plan endorsed by FC.

Financial activities at the FVMUZ are performed by the Accounting office, which evaluates, processes, and publishes information about the Faculty, and forwards it to a wider range of stakeholders. The Dean and/or Vice-dean check the documents for financing and investment in accordance with the national legislation, the financing of the FVMUZ is approved by the FC and presented to external bodies as an annual financial plan and balance sheets, for one budgetary year. A risk and opportunity analysis was prepared in accordance with ISO 9001 in 2019 and audited in the same year during the annual external audit conducted by Bureau Veritas. Measures to reduce risks were not necessary, but opportunities for improvement were identified (increased project activity, increased quota in English studies). The persons in charge of the relevant measures are the Dean, the Vice-dean for finances and investment, the Accounting Office and the Vice-dean for quality control.

1.2.2. Comments

The FVMUZ can be commended on its activity regarding EU and national projects, and how these projects have been used for the benefit of the entire Faculty.

1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

1.3. Curriculum

1.3.1. Findings

The QA of the curriculum is regulated by the Statute and the Regulations on integrated undergraduate and graduate university studies (IUGS), where the specific characteristics of the educational objectives at various levels are clearly indicated. The curriculum of IUGS and other study programmes at the FVMUZ must be approved by the FC and UNIZG, accredited by the Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE) and finally approved by the Ministry of Science and Education (MSE). The current FVMUZ certificate of approval dates from 2015 and re-accreditation was expected in 2021.

The current IUGS programme is based on the provisions of the Act on Regulated Professions and Recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications (OG, 82/15; 70/19) and EU Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications. Specifically, the recommendations set out are applied, so that the training of DVMs guarantees that a person has acquired the specific and necessary knowledge and skills. The Diploma Supplement, which students receive upon completion of the IUGS programme, clearly demonstrates the competences that the student has acquired.

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The FVMUZ has defined mechanisms for the monitoring and periodic evaluation of the curriculum. Changes in syllabus, which do not alter the expected learning outcomes (LOs) and competencies specified in the accredited syllabus (up to 20% of the curriculum per year) are considered as minor amendments. These changes to the curriculum can be initiated by course leaders or Heads of departments/clinics and must be accepted by the FC. Minor amendments are made to the curriculum every year. Changes in the content of the programme, which would significantly alter the curriculum, the final competencies of students or their qualifications (professional profile) must be approved by the FC and submitted to the UNIZG Working Group for Study Programmes.

All teachers on the course, together with the course leader, decide on the LOs of the course. The Regulation on the Study Programme Assessment Procedure of University Undergraduate, Graduate, Integrated Undergraduate and Graduate, and Vocational Studies at the University of Zagreb offers a precise description how LOs can be updated. Also, FVMUZ legal acts describe the process of analysing and updating of the LOs of the course. This procedure is described in the Regulation on integrated and graduate study programme and in the Regulation on Quality Assurance.

Since 2016/2017, a study programme of veterinary medicine in English was implemented. The programme in English completely resembles the one in Croatian and is conducted according to the same rules (approved by UNIZG and Ministry of Science) and same QA processes, except those related to enrolment. The same teachers participate in both programmes.

Study programmes are announced on the FVMUZ website and are publicly available. Syllabi are published on the website before the beginning of the academic year.

The total student workload of each study year has to be of 60 ECTS credits, and one semester equals 30 ECTS credits. Each subject is assigned a corresponding number of ECTS credits, allocated according to the main student activities and course workload. One ECTS represents 25 to 30 hours of student workload. It includes active training, exams and all the necessary activities related to examinations.

An Information Package (IP, catalogue of all courses) is available to all students and staff at the beginning of the academic year as well as the Catalogue of Knowledge and Skills for all Core Subjects/Courses and Electives, with a detailed list of knowledge and skills and proficiency levels prerequisite for defining in detail all LOs.

In accordance with the 6-year curriculum, students attain the academic title of DVM (dr. med. vet.). The students are acquainted with the structure of the study programme already in their first year of studies. During the first 3 years students take all the basic, pre-clinical and some clinical courses, and during the 4th and 5th years they participate in both theoretical and practical, mandatory and elective clinical courses. In the 10th semester, students choose a study track: Farm Animals and Horses, Small Companion Animals, or Food Hygiene and Veterinary Public Health and take mandatory clinical courses, courses related to veterinary public health and mandatory courses according to their chosen study track. During the winter semester in the 5th year of study, the Vice-dean for integrated undergraduate studies and students and the leaders of courses in each study track present the students the main characteristics of study tracks and courses during a dedicated meeting. Students also receive a small brochure with a description of the study tracks and courses. The 6th year of studies is primarily intended for practical training and extramural teaching.

FVMUZ provides extramural practical/clinical work for each student, carried out under the supervision of competent teachers and expert mentors during the study programme. The process of teaching, schedules, choosing of mentor or veterinary organisation, as well as duties of students and

mentors are described in specific documents available on the web page and are presented to all stakeholders in different meetings.

The teaching methods include case-study analysis, solving specific problems directly from practice, invited lecturers, and the use of modern teaching technology, independent research and cooperative learning. During the participation in the activities, students apply the knowledge gained through the entire learning process and widen practical knowledge and skills according to the curriculum and Day One Competences. The ERASMUS project “Pan-European soft skills curriculum for undergraduate veterinary education – SOFTVETS”, coordinated by the FVMUZ, has the goal of creating a framework, and producing an ideal version of the new soft skills curriculum that would be applicable in veterinary higher education throughout Europe. It should cover a wide range of life skills, organized in three sections: interpersonal communication, entrepreneurship and digital skills (<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplu-project-details/#project/2018-1-HR01-KA203-047494>).

Since 2005, the Faculty has used a standardised method of recording all forms of classes (Record of teaching activities delivered), and individual continuous assessment of each student and exams, through the ISVU information system. Part of the ISVU, containing all the information about the student workload of each specific course, is publicly available. Teachers are required to record the attendance and activity of students in all types of classes. Records of teaching activities delivered must be in accordance with the syllabus, and include the number of students attending and the names of the teachers who delivered the classes. The record itself is verified by the course leader, and signed by each teacher in printed form. This record is subjected to annual analysis by the Vice-dean for human resources and the Vice-dean for undergraduate studies.

The Quality Management Committee (QM), in consultation with the teachers, Heads of departments/clinics, and according to the UNIZG Plan for student surveys, decides how and when to conduct a survey, carries out preparatory activities and provides for the processing of the survey results. Occasionally the course leader carries out a survey at the end of a particular course. During the semester, according to needs observed, some internal surveys are also conducted by the QM Committee related to specific issues (e.g., Ambulatory clinic survey, English studies survey, Extramural survey, Employers’ survey). The Dean, the Vice-dean for quality control and the QM Committee are responsible for the analysis of the survey results at the FVMUZ level, and for undertaking measures to improve the quality of teaching. The surveys are available in Croatian and English, are anonymous and are done in paper-pen form or online. The response rates have been >90% in the paper-pen surveys and markedly lower online. The results of surveys are presented in FC meetings.

The QM Committee organizes every 3 years a mandatory survey for each course. In addition, each semester teachers can ask students to respond the survey on their course and students’ perception on their teaching performance, as they need this kind of feedback at least 2 times/5 years for career advancement. The survey covers the individual teacher’s performance or student perception of teachers’ expertise in the area they teach, evaluation of the quality of teaching, their attitude towards students and work motivation, and a general assessment of the teacher’s performance. The survey is conducted and organized with the technical support of UNIZG, which manages comprehensive statistical and psychometric data processing.

The survey on the study programme is conducted, according to the rules of UNIZG, at the end of the entire study programme. Employers, i.e. veterinary organizations in which External Practical Training (EPT) is conducted, evaluate the study programme through provided survey and can

comment on it. All these surveys are reviewed and analysed, and comments are recorded so that they can be used in the revision of the study programme. Active involvement of external stakeholders in the design of the new study programme has already started as a part of the VETFARM project.

Students are included in the IUGS Programme Committee, in the QM Committee, and FC, directly participating in the curriculum development. Meetings of Dean and Vice-deans with students are held as needed during the academic year and satisfaction with the study program can be discussed. Meetings with external stakeholders are organized to arrange extramural classes, clinical practice, or classes from the Ambulatory Clinic.

The QA process of study programmes lasts for the entire academic year. At the beginning of each semester each course syllabus is evaluated. Annual Activity plan and Annual Reports to the UNIZG and ASHE are usually issued in December for the following year. Throughout the year, the QM committee meetings allow an opportunity to discuss current topics. The Integrated Undergraduate and Graduate Study Programme Committee participate in the revision of the study program once a year, usually in April. Student surveys on teachers are conducted in the winter and summer semesters. During September, all achieved results are reviewed and in November the Yearbook of the Faculty is published and presented at the FC session.

In March 2019, a project entitled: “*Development of standards for occupations and qualifications and improvement of the integrated undergraduate and graduate studies of veterinary medicine at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Zagreb*” (abbreviation: the HKO project) started at the FVMUZ, financed by European Social Fund (ESF) through the MSE. This project was proposed to cover the lack of prescribed occupation and qualifications standards for the profession of Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM), mentioned in the register of the Croatian Qualification Framework (CQF). Through the CQF and the prescribed tools for securing and improving the quality of the study programme, a) an occupation standard for the profession of DVM will be developed; b) a standard of qualifications for DVM will be developed; c) the improvement of QA procedures will be assured.

Some specific activities of the HKO project include new software solutions for improving the examination system and student self-analysis; an e-project for the vertical and horizontal integration of courses; development of an online system for conducting student and teaching surveys, and new software for producing written exams. The main outcomes of the project, a modern and relevant study programme and constant improvement of quality, will have an impact on all stakeholders, including students and employees.

1.3.2. Comments

The provided SER pointed to the SER of 2013 for information regarding the curriculum, which may not be appropriate in the light of what was explained regarding annual revision and updating of the curriculum.

The qualification resulting from the programme must be clearly specified and communicated and refers to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education, and, consequently, to the Framework of Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. This is not the current case in Croatia, but the ongoing HKO project is already responding to this issue.

Revision of the curriculum for overlaps and missing parts has started from elective courses. Overlaps have already been noted and certain elective courses were combined. The current way of collecting student feedback may not be the most effective in revealing overlaps and missing parts at the curriculum level.

Until now, students have selected the study tracks sufficiently evenly. However, increased interest towards the Small animal track can be noted. The workload of studies is calculated as ECTS credits, but based on the meeting with students, the perceived workload by students may occasionally be higher than expected. Students also pointed out in the meetings that occasionally the daily schedule may be extended from early morning to the evening, with several gaps in between.

The student feedback system appears somewhat indefinite. The surveys also focus too much on assessing teachers' performance instead of students' learning. The Team felt that the survey responses are analysed in detail and presented in relevant meetings but closing the loop towards the students is incomplete.

1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

The Faculty needs to be prepared to create a mechanism to secure sufficient student participation in all study tracks also in the future.

The Faculty could set up a survey on students' perceived workload on each study year and at the same time identify and evaluate factors that enhance or hinder their learning.

The collection of feedback should be systematised, focused more on students' learning, and described as a system. In order to close the PDCA cycle, the system needs to also include the responsibility for giving feedback on feedback to students and stakeholders.

1.4. Facilities and equipment

1.4.1. Findings

FVMUZ Campus comprises 12 main buildings, protected as cultural heritage. For this reason, any structural work is subject to special permission which does not facilitate modernization and structural changes. The Faculty's infrastructure maintenance activities are carried out pursuant to the Annual Financial Plan prepared by the Accounting office, based on proposals by the Heads of Departments/Clinics approved by the FC.

Equipment and laboratories. The premises of clinics, lecture halls, and laboratories for students or diagnostic/research laboratories have been modernized. Acquisition of equipment is monitored through the Accounting office, based on the Annual Financial Plan. In case of need of a new equipment during the year, a Plan modification process is initiated at an FC session by the Dean.

Currently, five labs are accredited in accordance with ISO 17025:2007. The last re-accreditation was carried out in February 2019, according to ISP 17025:2017, bringing them into a new five-year accreditation cycle.

One staff member is assigned for waste management at the FVMUZ, serving as a contact person for all issues arising.

Biosecurity and biosafety. The FVMUZ has written guidelines on the protection of workers and students exposed to biological and chemical agents at work. A manual of implementation of biosecurity measures is available in Croatian on the official web site and, the English version was added recently. Students are provided with information about the possible risks in an introductory class immediately after admission to the Faculty, and staff during their first year of employment. Personal protective equipment is provided and used where necessary.

There is a record of accidents and procedures are set in case of students' accident. Students wear personal protective equipment during their activity in EPT and apply biosafety procedures.

FVMUZ has visible specific signage containing information on risks and instructions on measures to be taken in case of an emergency. SOPs are available on disinfection of premises and vehicles, and quarantine protocols for patients with infectious diseases, as well as a protocols for notification of outbreaks of a notifiable diseases, zoonoses or emerging disease.

The bodies involved in biosafety/biosecurity management include the Faculty Council, followed by the Dean, the responsible Vice-dean, the QM and the Biosafety Committee, the person appointed as the biosafety commissioner, the Heads of divisions, departments / clinics and other bodies, course leaders, all the staff and students. Considering the level of authority, in the top-bottom flow, the highest place is occupied by the FC, then the Dean, followed by the responsible Vice-dean and the commissioner for biosafety, and below them are Heads of departments/clinics, staff and students. When looking at the bottom-top approach, all staff, students, and Heads can contact the Biosafety Commissioner or Vice-dean and/or the relevant committees. The commissioner may address the Vice-dean. If there is a need for an urgent procedure, commissioner or any other person could refer directly to the Vice-dean or the Dean. If it is a regular procedure, it is necessary to go through the committees and the FC.

1.4.2. Comments

The SER was generally descriptive and had suboptimal description of the procedures and decisional processes regarding the management of the facilities and equipment. Nevertheless, all the necessary information was provided on site.

According to the SER, lecture rooms were modernized. However, apparently there are no modular rooms equipped for the supervised non-practical work in small groups. The biosecurity manual was prepared in Croatian language in 2014 and revised only when the English version was available (April 2021). Before that, students of the English programme were instructed orally during the lectures.

Biosafety/biosecurity manuals and documents contained multiple different procedures and appeared excessively long to be effective. Sometimes it was difficult to find in the procedure the person in charge for checking the observation of the rules.

1.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

The Faculty should consider having modular rooms to facilitate the students' active learning, including the supervised work in small groups.

Biosafety/biosecurity manuals and other documents should become more user-friendly. They should be divided in separate procedures according to the different necessities. In addition, they should clearly separate the different parts (e.g., clear description of different situations, actions to be taken, responsibilities).

Quality documents should include and highlight the persons responsible for the different actions to be taken, and for checking the observation of the rules and managing the process.

1.5. Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin

1.5.1. Findings

The FVMUZ organizes pre-clinical and clinical training at its own clinics/facilities and obligatory extramural work in veterinary and other type of establishments. The organization of the EPT and extramural practice, including activities with ruminants, horses, pigs, and poultry, is excellent and is planned to cover different activities starting from the first to the sixth year.

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EPT includes the Ambulatory Clinic (AC) and the Professional Clinical Work (PCW). External training includes training activities at slaughterhouse, food-processing factories, and markets.

External stakeholders are deeply involved in the EPT process. FVMUZ signs official collaboration agreements with veterinary establishments (clinics, the National chamber and institutes) and other institutions involving the veterinary profession (farms, reproduction centres, family farms, dairies, slaughterhouses, fish farms, apiaries, agriculture, ministries).

FVMUZ clinics operate 24/7 throughout the year and are integrated in the VTH. Establishing the VTH has largely improved the organization of the clinical activities related to students' practical teaching. The Head of the Departments/Clinics and course leaders are responsible for the planning and carrying out of obligatory clinical rotations in their facilities. The Head of the Clinical divisions and VTH coordinate the plans and, through the responsible Vice-dean send the plans to the responsible committee. Each academic year, the Faculty adopts a plan of clinical rotations arranging where students will perform obligatory extramural work, along with their mentors.

Students are required to keep a Practical Work Logbook (PWL) on a standardised form (one for Ambulatory Clinic and one for Professional Clinical Work). Day-One Skills list is available to the students, staff, and external stakeholders. The PWL is signed by the mentor and Vice-dean for IUGS and archived in each student's personal file.

If there is an inadequate number of cases for teaching purposes (has never happened before) the students can turn to case-based studies, as during the recent lockdown due to COVID-19 pandemic. The Clinical Skills Lab is currently in progress and should start its activity in the next year. Anatomy and Pathology departments cooperate to plan the supplies of material of animal origin, including for that agreements with external companies for internal organs.

Students use the software "VEF Protocol" at the VTH during their practical training at the FVMUZ, to fill the clinical records of the patients examined under the supervision of the veterinary teacher on duty.

Feedback from the students is provided at the end of the course/training activity. The feedback of the courses is mandatory every three years. Teachers can ask for feedback for their progression. Specific feedback surveys on clinical training (i.e. on the Ambulatory Clinic) can be conducted during the academic year.

Internal audits of the clinic are conducted once per year, as part of general internal audit (according to the ISO 9001) or as a specific one, only for clinical services. Auditors are members of the QM or Biosafety Committee and the results of the audit are presented to the Head of Clinic/Departments and to external auditors.

The English study programme is currently in the 5th year and students have not yet experienced a major part of EPT. Nevertheless, English language is spoken by a relevant percentage of the population and does not seem to be a problem.

1.5.2. Comments

The SER was not optimally focused on the description of the procedures and decisional processes dealing with the management of the animal resources and teaching material of animal origin. Nevertheless, all the necessary information was provided on site. The interviews during the on-site visitation helped to clarify many aspects but remained a slight concern on a properly running internal

QA system. The impression is that the FVMUZ is still not completely aware of how the cycle of the quality runs, especially how to plan actions (“act”) according to the results of the “check”.

The EPT training is very well organized, including the activities of the Ambulatory Clinic.

The Clinical Field Work (as in the SER) and Professional Clinical Work is the result of a positive integration between the Faculty staff and external colleagues. The activities are very well planned and organized. The logbook is very well structured and there is clear evidence that it is correctly used.

The website is lacking proper web pages addressed to owners of the patients and does not provide information for them: timetable, contacts, how to book a consultation and similar.

Both the description and collection of students’ feedback on clinical activities are not being done systematically.

The organization of the VTH and the relationship with Departments/clinics was not easy to understand. Nevertheless, it is quite obvious that the VTH has improved the organization of the students’ training and the professional activity with animals. Moreover, the staff has a clear understanding of their responsibilities.

The general awareness of the need for regular internal quality assurance is suboptimal.

1.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

The VEE should introduce a systematic collection of students’ feedback by planning mandatory online regular surveys and also implement, among the staff, the awareness of the “check” and “act” stages of the internal quality assurance. The self-assessment of students, including case-based learning in preclinical subjects should be improved by use of adequate strategies.

The VEE should improve the web page section addressed to the owners, describing the professional services of FVMUZ.

The VEE should develop strategies/opportunities to improve the self-assessment of students, including case-based learning in preclinical subjects.

1.6. Learning resources

1.6.1. Findings

The SER provides a general description of the dedicated facilities of the FMVUZ.

Support in the form of consultation, mentoring, and administrative services are provided on a daily basis, pursuant to the Statute and the Regulations on IUGS of the UNIZG and FVMUZ. The SER refers for further details to the 2013 SER, which unfortunately was not available in the appendix documents or as a specific link.

Library – Similarly, the SER provides general information on the library (timetable, books and scientific material storage, seats and similar). Students can have online access to the library. QA processes were poorly described in the SER and more detailed information was provided during the onsite interviews. The Library and Publishing Committee decides on proposers’ requests for the approval of manuscripts and online teaching materials, classifies manuscripts by type, proposes a reviewer, proposes the method of the renovation and additions to library.

The course leader or teacher can propose the purchase of books. Students can suggest purchasing books to the course leader. All the requests for literature purchase are reviewed by the library council, which draws up a list for the Dean's approval. The Central Library is subjected to the annual internal audit, as well as it was audited according to the ISO 9001.

E-learning and Internet – E-learning is supported by a faculty-based learning management system called VEF-LMS. VEF-LMS is a password-protected database that houses IUGS courses, and provides basic course information, student announcements and various teaching materials. Teachers and course leaders are allowed to post information and upload teaching material.

A wireless Internet connection is available on the campus. The Faculty has three computer labs, including a total of 72 computers and additional 12 computers in the FL.

IT units support students in E-learning activities.

Clinical skill lab – The CSL is not yet working but is planned to be open in the next months. The CSL should be used in the morning to support practical activities with teachers. Free attendance of students is planned to happen in the afternoon.

1.6.2. Comments

The Faculty has shown a good capacity to take great advantage from EU and international projects for the benefit of the strategic goals of the VEE.

The E-learning is considered and used in quite a traditional way and the opportunities to enhance students' active learning may not be fully utilised.

Despite the library is subjected to an annual audit, sequences of the quality process ("check" and "act") are not yet systematized.

1.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

The digital resources should be used to improve the students' active learning opportunities. To achieve this goal, proper training on pedagogical strategies and innovative teaching should be offered to teachers and staff.

The survey on the library should be extended to students.

1.7. Student admission, progression, and welfare

1.7.1. Findings

Student admission. The FVMUZ enrolls students within the quota proposed by the FC and approved by the UNIZG Senate. Since the beginning of the 2009/10 academic year, students have been enrolled based on the individual ranking list created by the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education (NCVVO). Enrolment quota is approved each year by the UNIZG Senate. Enrolment quota is proposed by the FVMUZ based on the suggestion of the Croatian Veterinary Chamber.

Specific rules apply for the admission of students to the English study programme, introduced in the 2016-2017 academic year. The school admits no more than 25 (since 2020/2021, 35) students per each year. Call for Applicants has been published on the website of the FVMUZ. Proof of B2 level of English language knowledge is requested for the admission or grades in English obtained during secondary education are also considered. The Admissions Committee (composed of 3 professors from the FVMUZ) sends notice of its decision regarding acceptance of students' applications.

Student progression. The rules for student progression are described in the Information Package and Student Guide, which is available on the internet website at the beginning of each semester/academic year, and adequately explained in the SER. LOs are described in the Information Package, the syllabus of individual courses, and on the website.

Student welfare. The rights and interests of the students of the FMVUZ are promoted, monitored and protected by the Student Office (SO), founded in the 2010/11 academic year, where the Vice-dean for integrated studies and students is available. The SO publishes printed materials for the improved well-being of students at the Faculty. UNIZG has an Office for Students with Disabilities as a reference centre. Recently, an Office for Career Development and Academic and Psychological counselling has been established. Students can address their problems and questions to the SO. A student legal attorney is available at UNIZG for mediating between individuals to assure student rights and obligations.

The mentoring system was implemented since 2010/11. From the first year of study, students are divided into smaller groups (of approximately 2 students) and can choose their mentor (from a list of the academic staff) who provides them with basic instructions for their studies.

The Ministry of Health approved the pre-exposure rabies vaccination for students from the third year of study and staff members of the FVMUZ Clinics. A medical examination in the first year of study is mandatory and undertaken to check health, gain insights into habits, behaviour, and adjustment to the study, and to determine health risks.

It is a FVMUZ continuous good practice to include student representatives in all committees that deals with student issues (curriculum, welfare, quality, student disciplinary committee, etc.) as well as in Deans Collegium.

The FVMUZ is the leading institution of the UNIZG in terms of the number of hours of student mobility.

Student associations enable students to participate in extracurricular activities and include the Students' Council of the UNIZG (SCUZ), IVSA, Equus, SportVef, Vet society or sing in *Ab Ovo* (academic FVMUZ choir).

1.7.2. Comments

The description in the SER is adequate and provides clear evidence of the attention paid by the VEE to the students. The SER describes properly the details of the scoring system to allow admission. Students consider the FVMUZ the most student-friendly establishment of the UNIZG.

The recently established Office for Career Development and Academic and Psychological counselling is greatly appreciated by students and staff. This became evident in several meetings on site.

Processes of internal QA mainly rely on course leaders' periodical reports to the Student Affairs Office. In case of problems the Vice-dean proposes actions to the FC for the approval. Regular meetings are held between the Vice-dean and students.

The information available on the website for future students does not include the students' view.

Only one Vice-dean acts as a mentor for the students in the English program, despite their yearly increasing numbers.

1.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

The web pages dedicated to the information for future students should be improved.

The Faculty should consider recruiting additional mentors for the students in the English program.

1.8. Student assessment

1.8.1. Findings

Students are assessed as described in the current UNIZG and FVMUZ criteria and rules. The assessment of students correlates with the syllabus and the whole study programme, by targeting the LOs. Assessment information for each course is available before the start of courses in the Information package and syllabus (accessible on the web page). In the introductory lecture, course leaders also provide oral information on assessment to the students.

The integrated grading system implemented by the decision of the FC of 2009 and currently in place, records the students' attendance and all the students' activities assessed throughout the whole course and at the final exam. Students can achieve up to 60% of their score through attendance and activities in different forms of classes (lectures, exercises, and seminars; preliminary exam/mid-terms) and up to 40% of the score can be achieved from the final exam.

Examination methods (oral, written, practical) and grading of the final exam are specified in the syllabus of each course, and the dates and schedules of exams are set at the beginning of each semester of the academic year. Syllabus for each compulsory course is available at the beginning of the semester and is published on the official web page, under the specific Department of the course leader. All syllabi are available via intranet and are password protected. Standardized forms are used since 2016/2017 for both Croatian and English programmes. The same exam may be taken a maximum of four times. The fourth time the exam is conducted by a three-member examination commission. Students failing the exam on their fourth attempt must enrol again in the same course in the next academic year. Students with disabilities and other learning difficulties are allowed alternative forms of examination, following a decision based on their medical history and other relevant documents, rendered by the vice-dean for IUGS. A student has the right to appeal against a grade within 24 hours after getting the results. The Dean, within 48 hours of receiving the appeal, appoints an examination committee of three members under which the exam will be repeated. The exam must be repeated within three days of the student's appeal. The number of formal appeals during the last 3 years was 8 in total. The commission keeps minutes of the exam, and the decision on the grade is made by majority of votes.

1.8.2. Comments

The grading system of the exams seems well balanced and reflects the efforts towards objective evaluation and does not rely only on the final summative assessment.

Evaluation criteria are not always detailed in the relevant documents of the specific courses. This is compensated by the explanation of the teachers during the introductory lecture.

The interviews showed that clinical competencies are assessed mainly during the seminars and practical activities. Written guidelines are also available for external colleagues involved in the EPT and discussions are carried out with teachers on proper ways to assess students.

There is suboptimal description of formative assessment methodologies, such as self-directed learning and self-assessment. The Moodle platform is used in a traditional way.

1.8.3. Suggestions for improvement

It would be useful to develop, also using the experience of the recent pandemic, self-assessment digital tools. They will help students to prepare themselves for the final exams and reinforce the process of active learning. The Moodle platform should be explored for new opportunities.

Learning opportunities on innovative assessment should be provided to teachers.

Possibilities for students to give their feedback on the assessment should be improved.

1.9. Academic and support staff

1.9.1. Findings

In line with its strategic development, FVMUZ plans for the necessary number of teachers, associates, administrative and support staff through the Annual Plan, considering the available resources, study programmes and the number of students.

Employment procedures and awards of titles are conducted in accordance with the regulations of the UNIZG and FVMUZ. The Committee for Appointment to Scientific, Scientific-educational, Educational and Associated titles is responsible for employments and new positions. FVMUZ has also a representative in the UNIZG Committee who elaborates on each position in detail.

The Periodic Annual Employment Plan is issued by the FVMUZ based on the changes in the teaching staff structure due to progression and retirement. The plan with a detailed job description is sent for approval to UNIZG and the MSE for each individual position. This is a general process for both curricula; the FVMUZ does not employ staff specifically for the English curriculum.

Calls for applications for job vacancies are prescribed by national, UNIZG and FVMUZ regulations and published in the official and public newspapers, on the website and the Euraxess portal. A decision on staff allocation is made through several levels of approval at FVMUZ, then UNIZG and MSE.

Election into a scientific title is a prerequisite for election into teaching title, and the application is evaluated by an expert committee, composed of three members in the same speciality with that of the applicant. If all criteria are met, the application is submitted to the Scientific Board of Veterinary Medicine of the Ministry of Science for approval. FC must approve each phase of these activities. The progression of the teachers follows the same pattern, the final approval being given by the Senate of the UNIZG.

A work plan is prepared for the new employee assistant, and it is evaluated every year. A mentor is appointed for each assistant on the Department/clinic level. A doctoral development plan is also prepared for new employed assistant. The support staff has a probation period of 3 to 6 months and is then evaluated. Plans are being made for new employees in the laboratories. These plans are the responsibility of the Department/clinic heads, mentors, and heads of laboratories.

In addition to their teaching, the scientific and professional work of teachers within the entire framework of their scientific and educational activities is evaluated according to the national legislation every 5 years (optionally every 3). The procedure follows the national regulations and is carried out by the Committee for the Award of Scientific, Scientific-educational, Educational and Associate titles and the FC, and forwarded to UNIZG.

Academic staff is encouraged to participate in various training courses and acquire new knowledge, mainly courses related to enhancing teaching competences, professional work, etc. These activities are organized by the FVMUZ or paid participation is available. Constant opportunities for

administrative and support staff to build their additional competences are also available. Formal promotion exists at UNIZG and FVMUZ for obtaining doctorates and master's degrees.

Support staff, especially those working in the Students Affairs Office, are evaluated on an annual basis, using the available survey form (paper-pen method). UNIZG processes the surveys and sends the results back to FVMUZ. The results are confidential and may only be shown to the respective teacher. A general analysis of the surveys is presented at the FC session by the Vice-dean for quality control.

Analysis of the teaching load for each teacher, course, and the entire Faculty is based on the database, which is linked to the syllabus and personnel data. All teachers with a scientific teaching title should have at least the minimum teaching load in accordance with the standards for the hourly schedule prescribed by the current legislation. There is a compensation mechanism regarding the teaching and research loads.

Mobility and international cooperation at the FVMUZ are carried out through participation in international projects and mobility programs, as well as multilateral and bilateral agreements with national and foreign institutions. Special workshops within the HKO project have been organized that enable teachers to upgrade their teaching competences. Also, through the SOFTVETS project (coordinated by FVMUZ, funded by ERASMUS) numerous workshops related to the acquisition of soft (life) skills of teachers and students (communication, entrepreneurial, digital skills) have been organised. English courses are provided through the project *Establishment of postgraduate specialist courses of veterinary medicine in English* for academic and support staff. The FVMUZ also aims to enrol new employees with advanced knowledge of English.

1.9.2. Comments

The recruitment and promotion criteria and procedures were clear to all categories of academic staff (Assistants, Assistant professors, Associate Professors, Professors) and a wide variety of support staff interviewed on site. The staff also considered that student friendliness of the Faculty is of high priority to them.

Academic staff did not consider that their workload significantly increased when the English study programme started, as the enrolment quota on this study line was small and represented approximately two to three additional student groups for a course. Additionally, there was also a decrease in the quota in Croatian study programme.

No systematic pedagogical training is available at UNIZG level, even though the workshops organised within the HKO project represent a good starting point. Teaching skills of the academic staff are assessed by student satisfaction surveys, and the academic staff seemed to find these surveys useful for their development. Based on the on-site meetings, trial lectures are also used, but no evidence of use of any kind of rubric or other explicit way of assessing them was provided.

Annual targets for each year are discussed at the level of the division/department/clinic, during the Collegium meetings, and in the FC, but there is no formal process for annual target and discussions on development within the staff pyramid.

There is only one representative of the support staff in the FC, but the representative's role was clear to the staff, and they pointed out ways to get their voice heard.

1.9.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the FVMUZ organises systematic continuing education for staff on university pedagogy. Pedagogical education tailored to the needs of the veterinary field would also support shifting the focus of the Faculty's feedback system from satisfaction surveys towards learning.

Annual target discussions of staff members and their hierarchical superior might be beneficial.

The FVMUZ could consider an increase in the number of support staff members in the FC.

1.10. Research programmes, continuing and postgraduate education

1.10.1. Findings

FVMUZ conducts postgraduate university Doctoral studies in Veterinary Sciences (three years/six semesters), which may be completed in a maximum of 8 years, after at least 180 ECTS are acquired. Since 2017, the Veterinary Sciences PhD programme has been a holder of the High Quality Certificate awarded by ASHE following the accreditation process.

Candidates may apply following the Call for Candidates, based on criteria proposed by the Committee for Doctoral Study, and approved by the FC. Foreign students must undertake the procedure for Recognition of Foreign Diplomas, performed by the UNIZG and ASHE.

Candidates that meet the criteria are interviewed by a three-member Committee (the chairperson, Vice-dean and one member). On an annual basis, PhD students evaluate their mentors and mentors evaluate students on standardised official forms. Doctoral students additionally fill out an annual online survey on the study, satisfaction with the mentor, etc. The Doctoral Studies council reviews all the surveys. Mentors draw up a doctoral student's development plan and submit an annual report on the implementation of that plan, which also includes an assessment and analysis which, in turn, is presented on FC session and sent for further evaluation to UNIZG. If a PhD student or mentor receives a grade 3 or lower, he/she is invited for an interview and has the possibility to have further six months to reach his/her goals.

FVMUZ also carries out postgraduate specialised study courses in 16 different areas (<https://www.vef.unizg.hr/studiranje/poslijediplomski-specijalisticki-studij/>), as part of lifelong learning, leading to the academic title of University Specialist, Master of Veterinary Medicine. These courses last from one year/2 semesters to two years/4 semesters.

Applicants to the call that fulfil the criteria are assessed by the programme committee (three professors from specific courses) and finally evaluated and accepted/rejected by the Specialised Studies Committee, while the final approval is the task of the FC.

As part of the post-graduate continuing education, FVMUZG offers several core courses (CPD, usually single day-courses) each year with a planned schedule and sometimes, *ad hoc* courses upon request from veterinarians. Each course has prescribed procedures for applications, must be completed with a final report, and offers anonymous questionnaires to participants.

Since 2018/2019, FVMUZ offers one-year educational programmes for veterinarians (Internship), focused on the clinical sciences. The rotating internship programme consists of 52 weeks of rotations across a variety of clinical disciplines (48 rotation weeks + 4 weeks annual leave) under the supervision of scientific-teaching staff and residents. Interns keep notes on their work (case logs), and participate to the journal club, book reading and professional meetings. Each intern is required to present one seminar during the programme.

Interns are selected through a yearly public competition advertised on the FVMUZ website. The

selection is made based on academic achievements and other supportive documents, while the internship is supervised by the director of the programme and 5 members of the Internship council. The certificate of successful completion of the program is issued by the internship director. To successfully complete the programme, the intern should be positively evaluated by the coordinators of each rotation, and a timely submission of those reports is requested.

Currently there are six active European veterinary specialists at the FVMUZ. Three residency programmes have been established and approved by the ECZM, ECVD and ECVP. All the programmes must follow the admission and reporting procedures proscribed by the EBVS. Furthermore, FVMUZ has initiated the ESF funded project ‘*Implementation of the specialist courses in veterinary medicine in English*’ that will enable internationalization of specialised studies and offer the possibility of continuing studies at the FVMUZ.

1.10.2. Comments

FVMUZ has a clear interest in lifelong learning and has a relevant offer, in terms of diversity and opportunities of the courses addressed to post-graduate students, including internships and residency programmes.

During the interview, post-graduate students (Croatian and international students) have shown unanimously a great appreciation of FVMUZ and pointed out the quality of the studies and the warm welcome of the staff and offices. During the on-site interview, the stakeholders have acknowledged the quality of the offer of CPD courses by FVMUZ.

The FVMUZ staff has pointed out the difficulties to start residency programmes. Nevertheless, FVMUZ realizes the importance of enrolling Diplomates among the teaching staff and is strongly committed to increase the number of Diplomates.

1.10.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

1. 11. Outcome Assessment and Quality Assurance (see Standards 11.1 to 11.10 in Chapter 3)

1.11.1. Findings

The Croatian system for QA in higher education and science is in line with the ESG. The Agency for Science and Higher Education (ASHE) has a major role in the promotion of a culture of quality, by applying the guidelines of the Bologna Process and the European higher education system. The introduction, development, and advancement of QA at the FVMUZ are aligned with the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (OG, 45/09).

A Vice-dean was appointed for quality control, regular activities of the QM Committee and networking with stakeholders some years ago to accomplish a unified QA system, accepted by all FVMUZ employees. Members of the FVMUZ QM Committee are elected according to the Regulations on the QA System of 2019 and include a student representative and an external stakeholder.

The initial QA activities at the FVMUZ were related to teaching and accredited laboratories. Since 2015, several processes have been monitored in accordance with ISO 9001. These processes relate to research and professional activities, international cooperation, administrative work, and management.

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Internal evaluation of the implemented activities and effectiveness of the QA system are carried out once a year by the QM Committee and the report is submitted along with the action plans are prepared for next academic year to the FC, UNIZG and ASHE. External evaluations are conducted at different intervals. National accreditation is conducted every 5 years; ESEVT every 7 (10) years; ISO 9001 and ISO 17025 every year (by possible extension to 18 months). The next national accreditation, expected to take place in 2020/2021 was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The external independent periodic assessment of FVMUZ QA system was last conducted in 2018 with a validity of the received certificate for 5 years (until 2023).

Within the framework of the QA culture at the FVMUZ, the QM Committee is an advisory and professional body of the FC and the Dean. The committee consists of at least seven members (currently 9 members) and includes representatives of employees in scientific research or teaching, one student representative, elected by the Student's Council, a representative of external stakeholders, and the Faculty secretary as a representative of the administrative staff. The Vice-dean for quality control chairs the Committee, which meets monthly. The tasks of the Committee are planning, coordinating, implementing, monitoring, and assessing measures and activities within the framework of the QA system at the FVMUZ. The role and composition of the QM committee is described in detail in the Regulations on the QA System.

Documents related to QA are available on both the intranet and the internet. Information related to the basic QA activities is regularly reported to employees, students, and other stakeholders at monthly FC sessions or on the intranet in the form of the minutes of the FC.

In 2018, a Quality Coordinator (QC) was appointed in each department and clinic to facilitate the communication between the Vice-dean for quality and all Faculty staff. The QCs were appointed by the Heads of the Departments/Clinics at the request of the Dean. Some of the appointed QCs have undergone training in the QA area. QCs' meetings, led by the Vice-dean for quality control are held at least once every semester, and if necessary, even more often.

Continuous improvement of overall performance is the ultimate goal of FVMUZ. The PDCA methodology and process approach is the essence of the quality management system according to ISO 9001. The methodology used in the FVMUZ is based on the Deming's Cycle and is stressed towards customer requirements and organisation policy using a process view (planning and establishing processes, applying these, measurement and monitoring of the processes, improvement of the processes). The Quality Policy (QP) is monitored annually during the internal audit and revised in accordance with needs and changes to the system and is checked regularly during the external evaluations.

Data from numerous stakeholders are collected during meetings, consultations or surveys. Additionally, external stakeholders, such as national regulatory or professional bodies, meet regularly with FVMUZ staff (active members of different committees) to discuss the state of the art or the need for improvements at FVMUZ level or their own level for the benefit of the profession as a whole. Meetings with stakeholders and their participation in the work of faculty bodies are also ways of gathering feedback.

Feedback from students and other stakeholders is collected in several ways, such as different surveys, but also informally, when they point out shortcomings or make suggestions for improvements. Depending on the matter, action may be taken immediately (e.g. introduction of an additional exam deadline), during the academic year (e.g. changes in the schedule as needed) or during the process of revision the study programme (e.g. introduction of a new subject, such as Communication in veterinary medicine).

The documents of the QA system at the FVMUZ have been systematically regulated, revised, and distributed by the Vice-dean for quality control and the QM Committee according to ISO 9001, and approved by the FC.

The basic acts and documents, available on the website and as hard copies, in addition to the Statute and regulations, are the QP and the QA Manual (both of UNIZG and of FVMUZ). The QA Manual serves as a guide and benchmark for all internal and external stakeholders to work on improvement of QA, and as an overview of the legal and common measures and activities that the UNIZG and FVMUZ implements or plans to ensure quality. The QA Manual contains a list of standards, objectives, activities, and examples of good practice for each of the areas of QA. Research Strategy of the UNIZG and of the FVMUZ, the Strategic Plan 2018-2022, University and Faculty Regulations and forms are also available.

The official website of the FVMUZ is the basic mode for informing the public of all its activities. In addition to the website, the FVMUZ uses printed materials to inform the public (a brochure with information about the requirements for admission, etc.). The FVMUZ is also presented at public events organized by the UNIZG (University Fair). It also organizes Open Door events and is active on social media.

The main source of all numerical data collected at FVMUZ is the yearbook, published every year also online. The data for the yearbook are provided by the staff, students, senior staff, Vice-deans and the Dean. The yearbook contains information on the Faculty's respective year, e.g. reports related to the work of various bodies and organisational units of the Faculty and special achievements, as well as lists of projects and various events.

1.11.2. Comments

It became evident for the Team during the on-site meetings with the staff, students, and external stakeholders that all these groups actively participate in the QA work of the Faculty. However, the Team had also the impression that the QA cycle was not always fully completed, e.g. the collected data of surveys was generally thoroughly analysed and discussed but the Act-part of the cycle was not clearly demonstrated or recorded.

The last version of the UNIZG QA Manual originates from 2014, and the FVMUZ Manual is an extension of it, therefore no updates were added.

The official website on QA is still under construction. The FVMUZ has recently updated and loaded new documents and information on the website, especially in English.

In the action plan, persons and bodies responsible for different areas, which are often listed together for one more general activity, mainly represent the management level of the FVMUZ.

1.11.3. Suggestions for improvement

The FVMUZ should consider a more pronounced involvement of the Divisions in relevant activities. The VEE needs to issue and implement additional informative numerical indicators, easy to permanently monitor online, to demonstrate the progress of their activities.

The Act-part of the quality cycle requires special attention.

The VEE should increase the impact of the internal QA system, to properly support the external QA assessment.

2. ESEVT Rubrics (summary of the decision on the compliance of the VEE for the ESEVT Standard 11, i.e. (total or substantial) compliance (C), partial compliance (PC) (Minor Deficiency) or non-compliance (NC) (Major Deficiency))

Standard 11: Outcome Assessment and Quality Assurance	C	PC	NC
11.1. The Establishment must have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders must develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.	X		
11.2. The Establishment must have processes for the design and approval of their programmes. The programmes must be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme must be clearly specified and communicated, and 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.	X		
11.3. The Establishment 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	
11.4. The Establishment must consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification.	X		
11.5. The Establishment must assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They must apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of staff.	X		
11.6. The Establishment must have appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided.	X		
11.7. The Establishment must ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.		X	
11.8. The Establishment must publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible.		X	
11.9. The Establishment must monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews must lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result must be communicated to all those concerned.	X		
11.10. The Establishment must undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis.	X		

3. Executive Summary

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Zagreb (FVMUZ) (called the VEE in this report) was founded in 1919. The first ESEVT evaluation took place in October 2002 and resulted in Approval status. In the second evaluation in March 2013, one Major Deficiency was encountered and the VEE was successfully re-visited in May 2015, resulting in Approval status.

The SER was provided on time to the Visitation Team. It has 34 pages and is supported by 12 Appendices (36 pages). The SER is mainly descriptive and contains little information on the process used for closing the Deming's cycle. However, the VEE provided a quick reply to the questions sent by the Team before the Visitation and the remaining missing information was provided during the onsite Visitation.

Because of the restrictions to travel linked to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Visitation was postponed from April 2020 to May 2021. A second Coordinator was added to the Team, since the first one was not allowed to travel. Furthermore, the time onsite was shortened. The Visitation was perfectly prepared and completed, in full agreement with the SOP and the 'Exceptional rules for ESEVT Visitations planned in 2021 considering the extraordinary circumstances linked to the COVID-19 pandemic', and in a cordial and excellent atmosphere.

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

-) Commitment of the management of the VEE to Quality Assurance;
-) Commitment of staff, students and stakeholders to work together for permanent enhancement of the veterinary training;
-) Noticeable 'student-friendly' attitude;
-) Ability to use international projects for the benefit of the strategic goals of the VEE;
-) Effective Office for psychological counselling and career development;
-) Excellent organisation and diversity of the EPTs;
-) Efficient Logbook for assessing the practical and clinical training.

Additional commendations are described in the Visitation Report.

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

-) Partial compliance with Substandard 11.3 because of suboptimal feedback to students about the learning process, which could be related to non-systematic continuing education of staff on pedagogical methods;
-) Partial compliance with Substandard 11.7 because of sub-optimal ability to fully close the QA loop, i.e. Plan-Do-Check-Act process;
-) Partial compliance with Substandard 11.8 because of sub-optimal SER.

Additional suggestions of improvement are described in the Visitation Report.

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

None.

Glossary

Ab Ovo academic FVMUZ choir
ASHE Agency for Science and Higher Education
BV Bureau Veritas
CQF Croatian Qualifications Framework
CPD Continuous Professional Development
DS Diploma Supplement
DVM Doctor of Veterinary Medicine
EAEVE European Association of Establishment for Veterinary Education
EBVS European Board of Veterinary Specialist
ECTS European Credit Transfer System
ERASMUS European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students
ESG Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
ESF European Social Fund
EU European Union
Equus Student Society at the FVMUZ
FC Faculty Council
FL Faculty library
FVE Federation of Veterinarians of Europe
FVMUZ Faculty of Veterinary Medicine University of Zagreb
HKO project *“Development of standards for occupations and qualifications and improvement of the integrated undergraduate and graduate studies of veterinary medicine at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Zagreb”*
IP Information Package (catalogue of all courses)
IUGS Integrated Undergraduate and Graduate Study
ISO International Organisation for Standardisation
ISO 9001 Manual Quality Manual according to the ISO 9001:2015
ISVU Information System of HEIs
IVSA International Veterinary Students Association
LMS Nacionalni portal za učenje na daljinu, Learning Management System
LO Learning outcomes
MSE Ministry of Science and Education
NCVVO Nacionalni centar za vanjsko vrednovanje obrazovanja, National centre for external evaluation of education
PCW Professional Clinic Work
PDCA Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle
PWL Practical Work log
QA Quality Assurance
QA Manual Quality Assurance Manual
QC Quality Coordinator at the Department/Clinics
QM Committee Quality Management Committee
QP Quality Policy of the FVMUZ
SCUZ Students’ Council of the UNIZG
SO Student Office
SER Self Evaluation Report
SOP Standard Operating Procedures
SOFTVETS ERASMUS financed project ”Pan-European soft skills curriculum for undergraduate veterinary education
SportVef Student Society at the FVMUZ

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VEF. Protocol Programme for centralized management of ambulatory protocol

Vet society Student Society at the FVMUZ

VPH Veterinary Public Health

VTH Veterinary Teaching Hospital

Decision of ECOVE

The Committee concluded that no Major Deficiencies had been identified during the QA Visitation.

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