

**European Association  
of Establishments for Veterinary Education**



**VISITATION REPORT**

**To the Veterinary Education Establishment (VEE) of the University of Padua,  
Legnaro, Italy**

**On 19 – 23 October 2020**

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## **Introduction**

Initial veterinary training was initiated in Padua in 1773 but stopped in 1873.

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Padua was formally founded in 1992. In 2012, it was included in the School of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine and subdivided in two departments, i.e. Department of Animal Medicine, Production and Health, and Department of Comparative Biomedicine and Food Sciences (which are called the Veterinary Education Establishment (VEE) in this report).

The VEE was evaluated by EAEVE in 2000 and in 2010 and granted the status of ‘Approval’ by ECOVE.

The main features of the VEE are:

- ) It is located in an area with a high concentration of farm and companion animals;
- ) Courses to further improve teaching skills are provided to staff on a regular basis;
- ) Only students with an excellent high school background are admitted.

The main developments since the last Visitation are:

- ) The abolishment of faculties and deans, the creation of the School of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, the creation of the two ‘veterinary’ Departments, and the subsequent increase in the number of staff members;
- ) The reorganisation of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) as a departmental centre with its own budget and employees, and the subsequent increase in EBVS Diplomates and patients’ caseload;
- ) The implementation of the ‘Lucio Toniolo’ Experimental Farm activities;
- ) The introduction of the National Qualification System for enhancing the scientific level of staff and of a national Quality Assurance system.

The Visitation has followed the SOP 2016 and the ‘Exceptional Rules for ESEVT Visitations linked to the Covid-19 outbreak’, as adopted by EAEVE ExCom in June 2020.

## **1. Objectives and Organisation**

### **1.1. Findings**

#### **1.1.1. Brief description of the Strategic Plan**

The VEE’s strategic plan is described in the SER and Annex 1.1. – so-called “SUA form”. It is from 2017, when the present study plan was established. This document establishes the mission, objectives and values of the Degree Course in Veterinary Medicine, which fit into the EU Directives and ESG recommendations. The core mission of the VEE is to educate and deliver competent graduates from day-1, based upon high quality educational standards in all fields of the veterinary profession. The relevance of research-based learning and the integration of a “one-health” approach to any animal health issue are highlighted.

A list of particular objectives is provided so as to define the most relevant strategic areas. Amongst them are the continuous improvement and implementation of the curriculum, the quality assurance system, the training for non-academic and newly recruited teaching staff, the standards of the research activities and the broadening of activities provided by the VTH and the *Tirocinio* (*clinical teaching*).

A SWOT analysis is available. Strengths are mainly based upon the high teaching standards of the VEE, while weaknesses are quite dependent on the financial situation of the University or the whole economic scenario. The low level of internationalization is also perceived as a weakness. A high number of promising opportunities are envisaged in the near future, while a threat for the achievement of some areas of the strategic plan is the allocation of resources according to the University government criteria.

#### **1.1.2. Brief description of the Operating Plan**

The operating plan is partly defined by the University government (Academic Senate and Board of Administration), and also by the two Departments in charge of the Veterinary degree (MAPS and BCA). These two departments have developed 3 three-year plans (2019-21) for recruitment of Personnel, Research development, and Third Mission. While the general policy of the University is to partly assign financial resources according to the number of students, the high qualifications in the quality of research (A level) of MAPS and BCA should help to allow a sufficient budget allocation to implement the operating plan.

A detailed list of objectives/actions is supplied, but information of the timeframe and indicators for its implementation is not detailed. The main impact areas are the general management of the VEE, the revision and implementation of the curriculum, the improvement of the VTH, the expansion and modernization of the teaching and research facilities, and finally, the qualifications and educational training of all the staff.

#### **1.1.3. Brief description of the organisation of the VEE**

The Degree Course in Veterinary Medicine (DCVM) is directly managed and administered by the Department of Animal Medicine, Production and Health (MAPS), with the support of the Department of Comparative Biomedicine and Food Science (BCA). The Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) is also managed by MAPS, while the Experimental Farm “Lucio Toniolo” is a research and training centre managed independently of the University.

Several operating bodies (councils, boards and committees) are responsible for managing the DCVM. Particularly relevant is the DCVM Director (*kind of Degree Dean*), who's attributions are different from the head of the MAPS. The DCVM Director is directly involved in chairing a variety of committees such as the Degree Course Council Group (DCC), Group for Accreditation and Self-evaluation (GAV), the Bi-Departmental Teaching Committee (BDTC), EAEVE Committee, Student Records Committee, *Tirocinio* Committee, ERASMUS Mobility Committee and Study Plan Committee.

Other organizational bodies are the Students-Staff Joint Committee (JTC), which gathers students and staff from the whole school (SASVM); and the VTH Management Committee, which apart from the VTH director and clinicians also includes the MAPS and DCVM directors and one representative of BCA.

#### **1.1.4. Brief description of the process and the implication of staff, students and stakeholders in the development, implementation, assessment and revision of the Strategic Plan and organisation of the VEE**

According to the requirements defined by Italian legislation, the earlier definition of the strategic plan relies on the DCC. Then, it must be approved by the MAPS and BCA departments, supervised by the UniPD and finally it is submitted to the Ministry bodies for final approval. Once it is established, its development, assessment and revision are mainly managed by the DCC. This governing body not only manages but also communicates and discusses the strategic plan with teaching staff, students and stakeholder on a yearly basis.

Curriculum implementation and assessment is done by GAV and JTC on a yearly basis, which assures a direct participation of academic staff, students and stakeholders in the process. They not only analyse, but also promote formal changes, which are communicated to DCC for further analysis and for potential correcting measures. The latest major change in the curriculum was done in 2016, and implementation started in 2017/18 academic year (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> degree years at once).

#### **1.2. Comments**

Since the latest Visitation of the EAEVE, the VEE has carried out a broad number of institutional changes. Some of them were promoted by the UniPD (i.e. degrees are run by departments instead of faculties), but most of them by the DCVM, to achieve the highest standards in teaching quality and research. In the last decade the DCVM did not only overtake serious financial constraints, but also kept a clear determination for taking advantage of every opportunity, as it is well described in both the Strategic Plan and SWOT.

The VEE has a functional frame which is mainly based on two Departments, which are well articulated.

While the Strategic Plan includes an operative plan for the implementation of the objectives/actions, there is insufficient information with regard to the timeframe and indicators to be considered.

#### **1.3. Suggestions for improvement**

It is suggested to include in the Strategic Plan timeframes and indicators of achievement.

#### **1.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.

## **2. Finances**

### **2.1. Findings**

**2.1.1. Brief description of the global financial process of the VEE and its autonomy on it**  
 UniPD like all Italian state-funded Universities gets funding (FFO, ordinary functioning budget) yearly from the Ministry of Education, Universities and Research (MIUR) according to national regulations. UniPD gets additional money from tuition fees and other public and private institutions. Overheads paid to UniPD depend on the activity and vary between 5-15%. UniPD allocates some of the money directly to MAPS and BCA. The money from UniPD is based on number of staff and students, and performance. MAPS and BCA get money also from research grants and clinical/diagnostic services. The money is managed at the department level. The VTH receives funding from UniPD and clients. The experimental farm “Lucio Toniolo” is directly funded by UniPD and gets very little support from the VEE.

### **2.1.2. Brief description of the budget (expenditures, revenues, balance) of the last 3 years**

Most of the budget is used for salaries (77%) and rest for operating and maintenance costs (20%) and equipment (3%) (Table 1).

Table 1. Annual expenditures (€) during three financial years.

Area of expenditures	Financial year		
	2018	2017	2016
Personnel	8 040 280	7 519 690	7 181 325
Operating and maintenance cost	2 049 192	1 722 876	1 771 517
Equipment	318 006	333 683	365 557
Total expenditures	10 407 478	9 576 249	9 318 399

A slight increase in the resources can be seen during the three financial years (Table 2). Tuition fees are revised every year by the University Board. In the academic year 2018-19, the tuition fee per veterinary student was 2 710 €.

Table 2. Annual revenues (€) during three financial years.

Revenue source	Financial year		
	2018	2017	2016
Public funding (including FFO)	7 934 023	7 623 735	7 436 345
Tuition fees	676 698	707 163	740 048
Clinical services	665 431	603 621	620 756
Other services	178 408	178 900	262 121
Research grants	1 865 902	2 128 113	1 060 252
Continuing and postgraduate education	114 133	9 599	10 100
Total revenues	11 434 595	11 251 131	10 129 622

There is a positive balance between expenditures and revenues during the three financial years (Table 3).

Table 3. Annual balance between expenditures and revenues.

Financial year	Total expenditures	Total revenues	Balance
2018	10 407 478	11 434 595	1 027 117

2017	9 576 249	11 251 131	1 674 882
2016	9 318 399	10 129 622	811 223

### **2.1.3. Brief description of the projected budget (expenditures, revenues, balance) of the next 3 years**

No major changes are expected in the next 3 years. However, it is expected that resources will slightly increase, especially due to increasing expenditures from clinical services and research funding.

### **2.1.4. Brief description of the planned or on-going investments**

Based on the SER, there are several investments which have started in 2019 or will be starting in the near future. The biggest investment is the refurbishment of the stables (500 000 €). There are also some smaller investments including construction of a horse walker (60 000 €), implementation of an experimental learning classroom (70 000 €), 3D printer (25 000 €) and investments related to *Tirocinio* activities (30 000 €). Additionally, there is a building plan of UniPD for 2019-21, which includes expansion of the VTH facilities.

A new building for Dept. BCA is currently under construction. It will house offices and research facilities, but will also contain didactic laboratories and facilities for students.

### **2.1.5. Brief description of the process and the implication of staff, students and stakeholders in the development, implementation, assessment and revision of the budget of the VEE**

The financial issues are dealt with through central administration spending centres according to University regulations. Both departments (MAPS and BCA) meet on a monthly basis. Decisions are communicated to UniPD, staff, students and stakeholders on the Departments' website. The management committee of VTH is responsible for decisions regarding clinical issues.

## **2.2. Comments**

In the SER, the annual revenues for the two departments (MAPS and BCA) are summed together. Therefore, it remains unclear how much money and from which sources was allocated from UniPD (including MUIR) to MAPS including VTH and BCA.

## **2.3. Suggestions for improvement**

It would be helpful to see the separation of the funding to each Department.

## **2.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 2.

# **3. Curriculum**

## **3.1. General curriculum**

### **3.1.1. Findings**

#### **3.1.1.1. Brief description of the educational aims and strategy in order to propose a cohesive framework and to achieve the learning outcome**

The structure of the Degree Course in Veterinary Medicine of UniPD is regulated by Italian Ministerial Decree n° 270/2004. It is a single cycle degree (not explicitly divided in Bachelor and Master level) with a total of 300 ECTS (8 of them Electives), distributed through a 5-year

programme. Directly related professional hands-on work (*Tirocinio*) accounts for 35 ECTS, and the final degree dissertation for 9 ECTS. The number of hours per ECTS is 25.

The main learning outcome of the DCVM is to provide the students with a deep knowledge and all the practical skills necessary for the veterinary profession from day-1 post-graduation. This is achieved through a number of subjects that are listed in Annex 1.1 (SUA form). Information about the particular learning outcomes of each individual subject or syllabus is provided to students through the online campus platform (Moodle).

**3.1.1.2. Brief statement if all EU-listed subjects are taught in the core curriculum to each student**

As displayed in Annex 1.1 (pages 45 to 49) all EU-listed subjects are included in the curriculum. All of them have been distributed into the areas listed in the SOP, with the exception of the communication skills within the professional knowledge section. The total workload for each subject is displayed in Table 3.1.2.

Most of the non-theoretical teaching is given as supervised self-learning (modality C), while a significantly lower number of hours is dedicated to other modalities of direct teacher-student interaction, such as laboratory and deskwork, non-clinical animal work and clinical animal work. In big contrast, no hours at all are devoted to seminars (10 hours only in Electives), which are ideal for running journal clubs or group discussion of cases (evidence-based medicine). On the other hand, no information of the group size is provided for any teaching modality.

After completing the first semester of the 4<sup>th</sup> year, students are required to choose one of the following intensification areas (*streams*): companion animals, farm animals or public health, for a total of 15 ECTS.

**3.1.1.3. Brief description of how curricular overlaps, redundancies, omissions and lack of consistency, transversality and/or integration of the curriculum are identified and corrected.**

Several bodies (groups, boards or committees) are in charge of guaranteeing minimum overlapping, redundancy, omissions and lack of consistencies within the curriculum. Concerns or problems in this field are reported to the DCVM Director who, if necessary, raises the issue to the quality assurance committee (GAV) or the Degree Course Council (DCC). At present, there is some overlapping between lectures and *Tirocinio*, and also between core subjects and extracurricular activities.

**3.1.1.4. Description of the selection procedures of the Electives by the students and the degree of freedom in their choice**

Students are expected to take 8 ECTS as Electives. Those credits either come from subjects included in the intensifications they have not selected, or from any other subjects offered by the whole University portfolio. Although the general approach is to leave the selection under the student's hands, in the latter case, the Study Plan committee assures that the selection made fits into the veterinary profile. No figures are given about the number of students per Elective.

**3.1.1.5. Brief description of the process and the implication of staff, students and stakeholders in the development, implementation, assessment and revision of the curriculum.**

Continuous monitoring of the curriculum is mainly carried out by the quality assurance committee (GAV), which for this purpose works in close relation with the Students-Staff Joint

Teaching Committee (JTC) and the Evaluation Unit. GAV meets 3-4 times per year. Analysing the results of the teaching, examining the syllabi and assessing the feedback surveys from the students about the quality of teaching are common duties of the GAV (a copy of the five-yearly review report is supplied in Annex 3.5).

The presence of stakeholders in the GAV guarantees their implication in the assessment and revision of the curriculum. They also participate in other less official meetings and workshops about the veterinary profession in specific scenarios.

The curriculum of the DCVM started in 2017/18 academic year. This new curriculum was developed after thorough work carried out by different academic bodies, where staff, students and stakeholders were directly involved. Students registered in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> veterinary courses at the beginning of that year were automatically assigned into the new curriculum. Therefore, the first cohort of graduates from that curriculum was expected to end by July 2020.

### **3.1.2. Comments**

The VEE has implemented a new curriculum since 2017/18 which came out after a thorough work involving academics, students and stakeholders. The new curriculum includes all the EU-listed subjects and is actively monitored by GAV and JTC committees. The study plan is built to allow the acquisition of the Day One Competences.

The relationship between the learning outcomes and competences is not consistently established throughout the study plan.

Supervised self-learning is the most frequent teaching modality, which often involves practical work carried out in labs under direct supervision.

### **3.1.3. Suggestions for improvement**

More extensive and structured teaching of communication skills is suggested and recommended throughout the study plan and particularly across the *Tirocinio*.

Easy access to the subject's syllabus, including detailed learning outcomes and related competences, should be guaranteed. All this content should be consistently structured for all the subjects of the study programme.

## **3.2. Basic sciences**

### **3.2.1. Findings**

Teaching of basic sciences is distributed amongst the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the degree. There are 610 teaching hours devoted to Basic Subjects. However, their distribution into distinguishable particular subjects -as listed in Annex 1.1 pages 45-49- is not always direct (i.e. biomedical statistics).

All Basic Sciences subjects are compulsory, and account for a total of 2325 teaching hours. 30% of them are taught as lectures and 54% as supervised self-learning. The general learning outcomes for this group of subjects are listed in Annex 1.1 (pages 10-11), but no information about their particular learning outcomes, syllabus or size group is available.

Whereas Microbiology and Immunology are separated from Infectious Diseases, Parasitology and Parasitic Diseases are included in the same subject, as it is the case for Pharmacology and

Toxicology. Biomedical statistics is included within General Zootechnics and General Improvement, Epidemiology embedded in a specific module within Infectious Diseases of Animal, and Professional Ethics included in Animal Welfare and Veterinary Profession.

### **3.2.2. Comments**

The overall weight of Basic Subjects and Basic Sciences in the curriculum is well balanced and covers all the EU-listed subjects. However, the correspondence between EU-listed subjects and the particular subjects in the curriculum -as listed in Annex 1.1- is not always direct.

### **3.2.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

## **3.3. Clinical Sciences in companion animals (including equine and exotic pets)**

### **3.3.1. Findings**

#### **3.3.1.1. Brief description of the theoretical, practical and clinical education in Clinical Sciences in companion animals**

The clinical science teaching starts in 1<sup>st</sup> year with safety training and runs through to 5<sup>th</sup> year through practical training and visits to VTH and EPT placements as well as elective programmes chosen by the students themselves. The clinical teaching known as the *Tirocinio* is set up in a way to ensure that students are competent at the end of their training by translating teaching into practical terms and being assessed.

#### **3.3.1.2. Description of the core clinical exercises/practicals/seminars in companion animals prior to the start of the clinical rotations**

The list of the activities undertaken by students prior to starting their clinical rotations (*Tirocinio*) are given in the SER in table 3.1.

#### **3.3.1.3. Description of the core clinical rotations and emergency services in companion animals and the direct involvement of undergraduate students in it**

The *Tirocinio* (clinical teaching) is designed in such a way as to guarantee that core clinical disciplines are covered, offering students the opportunity to apply their veterinary medical and professional knowledge and skills under the mentorship of experienced teaching staff members. At UniPD, the *Tirocinio* takes place from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> year and accounts for 34 ECTS, with clinical rotations and emergency services being scheduled throughout the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year. One additional ECTS is awarded upon completion of the safety training course, yielding a total of 35 ECTS. To acquire all *Tirocinio*-related credits, students shall attend the following:

- Ethology (1 ECTS)
- Small Animal Internal Medicine (2 ECTS)
- Small Animal Reproduction (2 ECTS)
- Small Animal Surgery and Anaesthesiology (2 ECTS)
- Emergency service - Nights and week-ends (8 ECTS)
- Ruminant Clinic (1 ECTS)
- Swine Clinic (1 ECTS)
- Equine Internal Medicine and Surgery (1 ECTS)
- Equine Reproduction (1 ECTS)

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- Pathological Anatomy, including Necropsies (3 ECTS)
- Avian Pathology (1 ECTS)
- Veterinary Public Health, including Microbiology and Immunology, Parasitology and Parasitic diseases (2,5 ECTS)
- Animal Production, including Animal Nutrition (5 ECTS)
- Food Safety and Quality (3,5 ECTS)

Prior to starting clinical rotations, students are divided into groups of four members each. The small group size allows students to gain comprehensive information on the activities performed with at least one teacher per group and includes collection of individual medical records, completion of electronic clinical records, collection and preservation of biological samples.

5<sup>th</sup> year students are directly involved in the VTH emergency care services. Students are further divided into groups of 2 and supervised by VTH professionals. Working shifts usually consist of 12 hours (8.00 a.m. - 8 p.m., or 8 p.m. - 8 a.m. during night shifts), with one-hour break. At the moment of the Visitation, very few equine patients were seen as emergency cases at VTH, because one of the key equine clinicians resigned recently from his position and his replacer has not yet been formally employed.

After completing the first semester of 4<sup>th</sup> year, students of the DCVM are required to choose between three different streams, namely Companion Animals, Farm Animals and Public Health, offered independently of the number of students who have selected them.

Students are also expected to complete 8 ECTS as Electives. Such subjects may be chosen either from those offered within one of the streams they have not selected (as is common practice) or from the large and varied portfolio on offer at UniPD. In the latter case, electives must be approved by the Study Plan Committee, who verifies their adequacy in relation to the course objectives.

In the new curriculum, the hours spent on the *Tirocinio* was reduced by 10 ECTS.

Students have teaching for 8 hours plus time in the VTH emergency care services and extra-curricular activities.

EPT takes place in VEEs on a list held by the UniPD. If a student wishes to go to a place not on the list, the place must meet a number of criteria in order to be placed on the list.

There is a logbook-based system to record the students' competencies which are verified by a staff member. An electronic system has now generally replaced the paper one in 2019/20.

The VEE offers voluntary trainings (called internships by the VEE) from 1<sup>st</sup> Year which take place in a number of areas of the clinical work undertaken by the VEE.

The equine cases seen by the VEE are increasing and more cases were seen in the reproductive service this year compared to last. Students are involved at all levels of reproduction as mares are brought into the VTH for foaling and insemination. There is no ambulatory equine clinic attached to the VEE. Students in small groups undertake practical cases using the teaching horses.

The students are made aware of 'exotic' animal cases in the VTH and a 0.5 academic is employed there. The VEE is a referral centre for marine mammals and students are able to witness investigations into disease processes of these animals through the cases in the VEE.

The students undertake practical sessions in which they build on clinical skills in small animals and horses.

### **3.3.2. Comments**

The hours spent by students attending curriculum activities such as lectures, as well as undertaking clinical rotations are large with them attending teaching activities for at least eight hours a day. This does not include the ER shifts at the VTH. This could put severe strain on all parties – students, teachers and admin.

There is some overlapping between lectures and *Tirocinio* of approx.15% based on year of enrolment. However, the overlap is only with lectures and these are all-online so that students can catch up on them easily.

The VEE was able to reduce the number of *Tirocinio* hours due to overlap in areas covered.

Extracurricular activities (voluntary basis) organised in some disciplinary fields (e.g. trainings at the VTH, as well as trainings in ruminants or equine clinics) also overlap with curricular activities. These allow students to increase their clinical skills and competencies.

The VEE is working with local practitioners to increase the number of equine cases available to the students as these are small; however, the ESEVT ratios are met.

There are no communication skills formally being taught in the curriculum.

### **3.3.3. Suggestions for improvement**

A review of the hours spent in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> years needs to be undertaken in order to ensure a sustainable curriculum and to allow students time for study, including time to work on and write their thesis.

Communication skills should be directly taught to students before undertaking interactions with clients/farmers/stakeholders.

The VEE should continue to seek ways to increase the equine caseload both through the VTH and through local practices for core curriculum work as well as EPT if possible.

## **3.4. Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals (including Animal Production)**

### **3.4.1. Findings**

#### **3.4.1.1. Brief description of the theoretical, practical and clinical education in Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals**

Throughout the course there is sufficient education in clinical sciences in food producing animals, with the expected increase in clinical education in later years. It starts in Year 1 with a safety training course to gain relevant information on safety issues prior to carrying out any activity in livestock holdings. In Year 2-4 the required Animal Production and breeding, Animal nutrition and Animal husbandry topics (correct approach, restraint and movement regarding farm animals; ethnology; participation in management and care activities of farm animals (cattle, sheep, goats, swine, poultry, rabbits); preparation of animals for pre- and post-milking treatments; BCS assessment; recognition of feedstuff; qualitative assessment of fodder and concentrates, reading/interpretation of feed tags; sampling of feedstuff; formulation of feeding plans for farm and companion animals; management of animal welfare; reading/interpretation of the company's reports and documents; computerized management of livestock farms) are taught.

### **3.4.1.2. Description of the core clinical exercises/practicals/seminars in food-producing animals prior to the start of the clinical rotations**

Second year, Introductory *Tirocinio* course is a 4-day programme, students are trained by a cattle vet on cattle handling as well as general and health for 2 days.

Before the *Tirocinio*, students complete the following practical classes:

- Medical semeiotics (8h). 5 students/group
- Veterinary obstetrics and pathology of reproduction (5h). 6 students/group
- Clinics in reproduction (10h). 6 students/group
- Medical clinic and veterinary therapy (8h). 8 students/group

3<sup>rd</sup> year, in Farm and Companion Animal Nutrition, the students spend 1 day dealing with ruminants, discussing cattle nutrition and welfare with the teacher of ruminant nutrition and the teacher of animal welfare, respectively. On the third day students are taken to a sheep and goat farm.

4<sup>th</sup> year, for farm animal breeding and welfare in the *Tirocinio*, the students spend 2-4 days dealing with nutrition and breeding issues with the teacher of ruminant breeding and management. Students during the 'Farm Animal Nutrition' and 'Farm Animal Breeding and Welfare days' have many opportunities to handle cows while reviewing nutrition, management practices, health, milking techniques, etc. Students also get a chance to handle cows during the practical in other courses such as Animal Husbandry, Medical Semeiotics, Veterinary Obstetrics and Pathology of Reproduction, and Farm Animals 2.

### **3.4.1.3. Description of the core clinical rotations, emergency services and herd health visits in food-producing animals and the direct involvement of undergraduate students in it**

At UniPD, the *Tirocinio* takes place from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> year and accounts for 34 ECTS, with clinical rotations and emergency services being scheduled throughout the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year. One additional ECTS is awarded upon completion of the safety training course, yielding a total of 35 ECTS. Students attend the following:

*Tirocinio* teaching in food producing animals includes:

Ruminants

- Ethology (5h). 5 students/group
- Introductory course, general and health management (10h). 5 students/group
- Farm animal breeding and welfare (15h). 5 students/group
- Farm animal nutrition (5h). 5 students/group
- Infectious diseases (5h). 5 students/group

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- Parasitic diseases (5 h). 5 Students/group (this is done only in the laboratory evaluating faecal and biological samples)
- VTH (intramural): Clinical Ruminants (5h). 4 students/group
- Ambulatory: Clinical Ruminants (15h). 4 students/group

### Swine

- Farm animal breeding and welfare (5h). 5 students/group
- Farm animal nutrition (5h). 5 students/group
- Infectious diseases (5h). 5 students/group
- Ambulatory: Clinical Swine (15h). 4 students/group

### Poultry

- Poultry breeding (5h). 5 students/group
- Avian pathology (5h intramural + 15 h ambulatory). 5 students/group

### Rabbit

- Rabbit breeding (4h). 5 students/group

After completing the first semester of 4<sup>th</sup> year, students choose between three different streams, namely Companion Animals, Farm Animals and Public Health.

Students are also expected to complete 8 ECTS as Electives. Such subjects may be chosen either from those offered within one of the streams they have not selected (as is common practice) or from the large and varied portfolio on offer at UniPD. In the latter case, electives must be approved by the Study Plan Committee, who verifies their adequacy in relation to the course objectives.

There is now an electronic logbook-based system to record the students' competencies which are verified by a staff member. This replaces the logbook described in Annex 3.2, p.72.

There are emergency services (intramural/ambulatory) but the caseload is minimal for food producing species.

Population health teaching (epidemiology, herd/flock health visits) are carried out predominantly in Year 4 and 5 and are integrated in various practical teaching activities in food producing animals, relating to reproduction, nutrition and animal production.

Undergraduate student involvement in practical clinical and non-clinical activities is encouraged as much as possible.

#### **3.4.1.4. Brief description of the theoretical and practical education in Animal Production**

Theoretical training in Animal Production, including Animal Nutrition is taught in enough detail in Year 4-5 (5 ECTS). Annex 5.1 and 5.2 provide limited information on student involvement regarding the Year 3 and Year 4 Animal Husbandry module. The areas covered are adequate and in conversations with staff, it appeared that enough practical training was provided to ensure basic competency.

For the Year 5 clinical rotations, skills are taught for each area; swine, ruminants. The ruminants teaching is mainly cattle-based.

### **3.4.2. Comments**

During the (virtual) visit, it became apparent that practical hands-on opportunities are good for students when cases arise, as the staff-student ratio is excellent in many situations and staff involved were clearly motivated to train students current practice. The ethos to get students out on farms and in contact with food producing animal clients is good, as is the dedication to ensure time is allowed for students to talk with clients and learn from working with them.

The recording of all the cases the students see during their extramural 3-day clinical *Tirocinio* is really useful to trace the number of cases seen as well as to give students an opportunity to reason and reflect on what they see.

Students' level of confidence and competence in food animal veterinary topics appeared sufficient in conversation with students. Staff seemed very aware of the limitations due to the geographic and/or economic situation and these limitations (small ruminants and/or equine cases) were handled well.

The attention to student feedback is commendable and will help to further shape the curriculum.

### **3.4.3. Suggestions for improvement**

There does not appear to be a structured path to ensure the skills and theory taught were the most relevant for students going into practice at the end of their degree.

It is suggested that the VEE develops a structured method to include evaluating new technology/knowledge for areas of veterinary medicine. At present it is left to individuals teaching and relies on them having the time and motivation to stay up to date and remove outdated material taught.

There are limited opportunities for students to experience farm animal emergency cases due to the limited caseload; EPT placements may be able to compensate for this.

It is suggested that the teaching of communication skills is aligned to assessment. Students are often driven by assessment and making communication skills a part of the 'must pass' assessment elements would ensure that some of the weaker students would have to improve and develop in this area.

## **3.5. Food Safety and Quality (FSQ)**

### **3.5.1. Findings**

#### **3.5.1.1. Brief description of the theoretical and practical education in FSQ**

There are two mandatory subjects for veterinary students: (1) Hygiene and technology for food safety (9 ECTS) in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year and (2) Food sanitary inspection methods (8 ECTS) in the 4<sup>th</sup> year. In total, 425 h are calculated for FSQ (Table 3.1.2) of which 255 h (60%) are allocated for supervised self-learning. Teaching is organized mainly by the staff from MAPS. The knowledge and skills are obtained through lectures by the professors, seminars, group works, laboratory works, excursions and practical training. The knowledge is verified with a final exam mostly with oral exam. The practical training (*Tirocinio*) in Food inspection (3.5 ECTS) including a preliminary course (0.5 ECTS) in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year and practical training (3.0 ECTS) in the 5<sup>th</sup> year are mandatory. Additionally to the mandatory courses, students can choose a 15 ECTS elective stream called Public health, which is taught in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year. This stream consists of 6 courses (totally 7 ECTS) in the 4<sup>th</sup> year and 5 courses (totally 8 ECTS) in the 5<sup>th</sup>

year related to public health issues. This stream mainly focuses on practical activities needed by the profession related to public health field. The courses are organized by 9 different disciplines. No separate elective courses in FSQ are provided, they are all courses included in the Public health stream.

**3.5.1.2. Description of the teaching in slaughterhouses and in premises for the production, processing, distribution/sale or consumption of food of animal origin**

Practical training in slaughterhouses and food processing plants is scheduled for the 5<sup>th</sup> year and is part of the *Tirocinio* activities. The UniPD has agreements with local health authorities (LHA) from 4 regions (Veneto, FVR, Trentino and Lombardia). LHAs are responsible for the supervising of students during the practical training in slaughterhouses and other food production plants. For training, students use an electronic platform and logbooks, where e.g. learning objectives are presented. The training includes diverse activities including ante and post-mortem meat inspection, control of food safety and quality, packaging/labelling and sampling/testing of food-borne hazards. The group size is small (2-4 students) during the practical training in slaughterhouses.

**3.5.2. Comments**

The staff is very dedicated and enthusiastic to teach and supervise thesis. They are also continually developing and updating the teaching. They have very good connections with stakeholders, which is a prerequisite for implementing *Tirocinio* in food safety and public health issues including external practical training in slaughterhouses.

**3.5.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

**3.6. Professional knowledge**

**3.6.1. Findings**

**3.6.1.1. Brief description of the theoretical and practical education in professional Knowledge**

The total hours of study for this course is 175 of which 70 are lectures and the remaining are supervised self-learning. The topics covered are professional ethics and behaviour, veterinary legislation, certification, communication skills, practice management and business, information literacy and data management.

Communication skills are not taught as a separate subject.

**3.6.1.2. Brief description of the organisation, selection procedures and supervision of the EPT**

The EPT is made under the supervision of both an internal member of academic staff and the Director of the DCVM. The activities done during EPT are monitored by the responsible teacher.

If the entity chosen by the student has not been already agreed by the UniPD, there is a process to follow (activity and safety standard approved, “training and orientation agreement” completed, “training and orientation project” accepted) for this entity to be approved.

**3.6.1.3. Description of the procedures used to ascertain the achievement of each core practical/clinical activity and professional knowledge by each student (independently of the tracking system)**

To guarantee that all students achieve the learning objectives, the student must fill in all activities in a logbook. The School secretariat verifies the mandatory activities which are then validated by the teacher.

A digital logbook now replaces the paper one since the beginning of academic year 2019/2020.

### **3.6.2. Comments**

Professional knowledge teaching has been expanded within the curriculum.

Communication skills are taught informally through the medium of the *Tirocinio*.

### **3.6.3. Suggestions for improvement**

Separate communication lectures and practicals should be considered to be added before students start clinical rotations.

Assessment of communication skills should form part of passing *Tirocinio* rotations in all courses – small animal, food production and equine, as these are vital in becoming a successful veterinarian

### **3.7. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.

## **4. Facilities and equipment**

### **4.1. Findings**

#### **4.1.1. Brief description of the location and organisation of the facilities used for the veterinary curriculum**

Located within the Agripolis Campus, the SASVM lies in the municipality of Legnaro, at approximately 10 km south-east of the city centre of Padua. The School, which can easily be accessed by car and public transportation, hosts the following Departments: MAPS, BCA, DAFNAE and TESAF. Also, located on the north-west side of the Campus are the VTH and the 'Lucio Toniolo' Experimental Farm, which hosts a dairy farm (with both production and teaching animals) and is within walking distance of the SASVM.

#### **4.1.2. Description of the adequacy for the veterinary training of the premises for: -) lecturing, group work and practical work -) housing healthy, hospitalised and isolated animals -) clinical activities, diagnostic services and necropsy -) FSQ & VPH -) study and self-learning, catering, locker rooms, accommodation for on call students and leisure**

The VEE uses a variety of buildings for teaching purposes many of which are shared with students from other courses undertaken on the campus.

There are 3 laboratories for practical work, 1 necropsy room, 1 microscope room, all for practical teaching.

There are 14 lecture theatres including one with a large animal stall and 3 computer rooms.

All rooms have Wi-Fi.

The Lucio Toniolo Experimental Farm houses healthy animals used in teaching and is within walking distance of the campus.

The veterinary complex has a veterinary museum, an Emergency Clinic consisting of examinations rooms, small cat and dog wards, and sleeping accommodation for both staff and students. There are also a stallion stable barn and 3 large animal barns – for horses and broodmares and cattle.

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There are temporary isolation areas for both small animals and for cattle isolation. Two large new isolation wards for dogs/cats are due to be completed in the next few months. There is also a new isolation building with a unit to house a horse, and another for a bovine. These are also nearly completed.

The VTH consists of consult areas, diagnostic imaging including MRI, CT and X-ray. There are large and small animal surgical theatres, a pharmacy and offices. There is one small kennel and treatment area where cats and dogs are held in the same facilities. If animals are in the Hospital overnight, they are transferred to the ER Unit for the night and vice versa. The waiting room has separate cat and dog waiting areas. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, clients are seen outside the VTH in a tented area and students/ staff go out to see the clients and to undertake history taking. The animals are then taken by the student into the VTH for examination and treatment.

There is a separate pharmacy manned during the day by a pharmacist. There is a controlled drug cupboard in the VTH, the key to which is always kept on 1 of 3 people at any time.

There are also a reproduction laboratory and a clinical pathology lab.

### **FSQ & VPH**

There is a necropsy room containing separate tables for small groups of students to work at. A separate room is dedicated to anatomical dissection. There is a museum with a number of bones for students to study and a new 3D printer to assist with teaching. There are changing rooms with biosecurity measures in place. Freezers were present for samples which were all labelled.

There is a small laboratory consisting of three separate areas for food hygiene and technology. In order to ensure that students receive adequate training in food safety and quality and veterinary public health, the UniPD has entered into agreements with several slaughterhouses and food processing plants located in 4 regions. Such agreements allow the involvement of students in a variety of activities, including:

- Ante- and post-mortem inspections of animals destined for slaughter;
- Control of food safety of specific food categories (e.g. meat, dairy produce, fish products);
  - Control of product labelling and packaging;
  - Implementation of sampling procedures for bacteriological/ parasitological/chemical testing;
- Recognition and identification of fish species;
- Development and implementation of procedures for the withdrawal/recall of products.

### **Self-Study**

Besides the library, there are a number of rooms around the campus for students to use for self-study. In the main university campus in Padua where many of the students live, there are multiple study rooms which they can work in.

### **Catering**

The Ca' Gialla building hosts both the Campus cafeteria with a seating capacity of up to 700 people and a bar with an outdoor area equipped with tables and chairs. Several vending machines for coffees, drinks and snacks are available in each building of the campus.

There are no separate student areas for them to heat food, or meet socially inside.

### **Locker rooms**

There are two locker rooms, one in the Pentagono building and one in the Necropsy building. Additional lockers (12) are located in the clinic for trainees' use.

There is accommodation for one night-duty students. A twin-bedded room with bathroom is available for 5<sup>th</sup> year students involved in traineeship activities (night shifts, weekends and public holiday) at the VTH. The following amenities are also available: fridge, microwave and coffee machine.

### **Leisure**

At the university level, the University Sport Centre (<http://www.cuspadova.it/impianti>) represents one of the most complete set of sport opportunities available in Padua. In addition, discounts are offered to students who wish to sign up for a gym membership at one of the two gyms available in Legnaro.

#### **4.1.3. Description of the adequacy for the veterinary training of the vehicles used for students transportation, ambulatory clinic, live animals and cadavers transportation**

The VEE has an arrangement with local transport companies to transport students as required. There is one vehicle used for the mobile clinic with a mobile X-ray unit and an ultrasound machine.

A van is used and registered for the collection of cadavers from farms, shelters, etc.

There is an animal trailer available for the collection of live animals.

#### **4.1.4. Description of the adequacy for the veterinary training of the equipment used for teaching purposes and clinical services**

The SER describes in detail the equipment in the diagnostic areas including imaging, laboratory and pathology equipment which are adequate for purpose. However, some are quite old and not at state-of-the-art level.

#### **4.1.5. Description of the adequacy of the biosecurity rules in the VEE**

Any decision regarding facilities, equipment and biosecurity procedures is made jointly by both Departments. The implementation, assessment and revision of policies for health and safety management for people and animals, including waste management, is discussed and carried out in collaboration with safety management experts for clinical and laboratory activities, as well as university consultants (Department of Industrial Engineering).

Students undertake and must pass a health and safety course at the beginning of the first year and must continue to undertake training throughout their course.

There is a comprehensive biosecurity manual. Due to Covid-19, many new measures are in place, e.g. one way systems throughout buildings, signs for masks to be worn, hand washing to be performed and sanitisers are available in all areas.

The SOPs describing the biosecurity procedures to be applied in laboratories and during clinical services are updated periodically and made available both online (<https://www.agrariamedicinaveterinaria.unipd.it/en/safety>) and in printed form in every laboratory and clinical room. Students are constantly informed and purposely trained to implement the procedures established by the SOPs. In order to verify whether SOPs are correctly implemented, periodical internal audits are carried out by independent staff members who are competent in the area. These audits also allow the identification of potential issues concerning the implementation or updating of the SOPs, which shall be discussed and resolved within the DCC.

**4.1.6. Brief description of the process and the implication of staff, students and stakeholders in the development, implementation, assessment and revision of facilities, equipment and biosecurity rules of the VEE**

Any strategy or planning activity related to the maintenance of facilities is suggested by both Departments and, to some extent, by the SASVM. The final decision to trigger and economically support financial investments lies entirely with UniPD.

Any strategy or planning activity related to the maintenance and upgrade/purchase of equipment, including any financial support provided for them is suggested by the two Departments and the VTH, through the use of either their own funds or the participation in specific tendering procedures promoted by UniPD and directed to the purchase of new equipment.

Small items of new equipment for the VTH are bought by it directly. Larger items are requested through the Departments. Major building and maintenance projects are funded through the UniPd.

**4.2. Comments**

Facilities for practical, clinical and didactic teaching are adequate for the student cohorts; however, some areas are small, especially in the VTH, which has an increasing caseload.

Although there is sufficient equipment in the VTH, some of it is old and replacements should be considered as budgets allow.

Some offices have up to 5 people sharing which is crowded and of course not possible with Covid-19.

Many teaching labs are small and crowded when students are there.

The VTH is small and there are only 4 consult rooms and two small animal theatres. With the increasing caseload, the hospitalisation and treatment area will not be adequate and is not appropriate as the hospital expands. For example, cats and dogs should not be housed together due to welfare issues.

The movement of animals from the ward to the ER clinic and back again is not ideal.

Some of the teaching facilities at the Lucio Toniolo farm are not modern e.g. the milking parlour.

There are a number of catering areas on site and students and staff use the facilities in Legnaro as well as Padua to meet and discuss issues, but there is no dedicated student social area

Some controlled drugs were found in a cupboard and not in the locked cupboard. A number of breached injectables did not have an open date written on them. Open packages with items e.g. vials removed, were not always marked as open.

The controlled drug register was up to date. Although the team was told that the register and cupboard contents were checked overall once a month, there was no evidence that this took place. Although this is not a legal requirement, it would be considered a good practice to do so.

Although first aid boxes were available in all areas, they had variable items in them and there was no indication or log of when they were checked, which would be good practice to ensure all items needed are there.

#### **4.3. Suggestions for improvement**

The VTH should be expanded as soon as possible with separate wards and treatment areas being built. More consult areas should be included as well as some breakout areas for clinicians and students to discuss cases.

Joining the ER facilities and the VTH together would help to prevent animals being moved each day.

New offices to reduce the number sharing in the new administration building should be considered.

Enlarging some of the teaching labs or using other larger ones if possible should be considered. To create a dedicated student recreational area inside to meet and discuss projects and with some facilities to heat food e.g. a microwave would be beneficial.

All drugs must be correctly stored.

The controlled drugs logbook and safe must be regularly checked e.g. weekly, and the book should be signed to show evidence of this.

First aid boxes should have a list of contents which are regularly checked and signed.

Teaching animals usage is not monitored as to the frequency of use and so they could be overused if usual staff is not there.

#### **4.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4, except for Substandards 4.3, 4.6 and 4.7.

The VEE is partially compliant with Substandard 4.3 because of sub-optimal size of some buildings, in view of the expected increase in caseload and junior staff.

The VEE is partially compliant with Substandard 4.6. because of sub-optimal storage and recording of pharmaceutical products and sub-optimal first-aid boxes.

The VEE is partially compliant with Substandard 4.7. because of sub-optimal recording of the use of teaching animals.

### **5. Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin**

#### **5.1. Findings**

##### **5.1.1. Brief description of the global strategy of the VEE about the use of animals and material of animal origin for the acquisition by each student of Day One Competences**

The provision of practical training periods is just as important as theoretical teaching. In order to allow veterinary students to acquire the right combination of knowledge, skills and experience to enter the veterinary profession, hands-on learning sessions involving the use of animals and materials of animal origin must be guaranteed. To this end, the degree course aims to ensure both an adequate number of animals and animal material and that animal health and welfare rules are met. In addition to complying with national and community legislation, the VEE recognizes and values the principles of the 3Rs, *Replacement*, *Reduction* and *Refinement*. On the basis of such principles, UniPD is working towards a) optimizing the number of animals used for scientific and teaching purposes to obtain the same (or more) research information, b) improving animal welfare while reducing any potential pain or distress and c) replacing or avoiding altogether the use of animals by means such as new models and tools. With regard to the latter, although a number of measures have already been taken, the costs related to the purchase of alternative teaching resources (dummies, simulators, virtual laboratories, etc.) have slowed down the replacement process.

**5.1.2. Description of the adequacy for the veterinary training of the enrolled students of:**

- ) the number and diversity of cadavers and material of animal origin used in anatomy, necropsy and FSQ;
- ) the number and diversity of healthy live animals used for pre-clinical training;
- ) the number of visits in herds/flocks/units of food-producing animals;
- ) the number and diversity of patients examined/treated by each student;
- ) the balance between species, between clinical disciplines, between first opinion and referral cases, between acute and chronic cases, between consultations and hospitalisations, between individual medicine and population medicine

Table 5.1.1 until 5.1.8 (p.41-43) indicate a sufficient and diverse number of cadavers, material of animal origin used in anatomy, necropsy and FSQ, healthy live animals, herd visits and individual patients for students to examine/treat intra- and extra-murally. Small ruminants and equine is underrepresented compared to other major disciplines.

In order to obtain the necessary cadavers and materials of animal origin the VEE has entered into agreements with several different suppliers, such as farms, kennels and slaughterhouses, as well as private practitioners. Animals which were euthanized or died spontaneously within the VTH may also be used for teaching purposes upon owner's consent.

Finally, regarding storage, carcasses and viscera are either frozen or kept in refrigerated units. The disposal of cadavers and animal material is carried out by contract companies, according to community and national legislation (Council Regulation (EC) No. 1069/2009).

The balance between species, clinical disciplines, first opinion and referral cases, between acute and chronic cases, between consultations and hospitalisations, between individual medicine and population medicine is as follows:

- Clinical disciplines: internal medicine (including dermatology and diagnostic imaging) 50%, surgery (including anaesthesia and neurology) 30% and reproduction 20%;
- First opinion cases (70%) vs. referral cases (30%);
- Acute cases (40%) vs. chronic cases (60%);
- Consultation (80%) vs. hospitalisation (20%).

**5.1.3. Description of the organisation and management of the VTH and ambulatory clinics**

From the organisational and managerial point of view, the farm's steering board is composed of the Rector (or their delegate), the General Director of UniPD, the four Directors of the SASVM departments, the Director and the administrative secretariat of the Experimental Farm and one representative of the Department of DAFNAE with technical/managerial expertise in animal husbandry. In addition to supporting student's practical training, the farm's Teaching Animal Facilities (TAF) hosts a dairy herd, as well as poultry, sheep and equine units (Annex 1.6.). The TAF's staff are composed of the farm manager, full-time technicians and part-time workers.

The VTH is open Monday-Friday from 8.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. for routine appointments, including consultations, check-ups, spaying/neutering, vaccinations and examination of emergency cases. A round-the-clock emergency care service is also provided in case of an emergency outside of the usual opening hours. In order to ensure that all patients are dealt with in the most efficient way possible, the hospital has been organised in operative units and laboratories (Annex 1.5.), each with specific tasks and responsibilities.

Finally, as concerns the organisation and management of the mobile clinic, this has been furnished with the necessary equipment for the clinical care of ruminants and equines. In order to ensure the effective running of the mobile clinic, an updated online calendar is kept and made available both to the staff of the VTH and the students, whose participation is limited to groups composed of up to three members. In addition to covering any routine activity, the mobile unit also provides 24/7 emergency care. This service is not busy.

**5.1.4. Description of the group size for the different types of clinical training and of the hands-on involvement of students in clinical procedures in the different species**

In order to take part in clinical training in small animals, ruminants, equine and swine, students are divided into groups of 2-4 students each depending on the type of activity considered.

- Small animals, ruminants, swine, equine and poultry: 4 students/group;
- Small animals (emergency service): 2 students;
- Voluntary clinical training: 2-3 students/day throughout the academic year. Such students are referred to as “Interns” (Chapter 5.1.2). The number of students involved may vary according to student activities calendar (lessons, exams, etc.).

**5.1.5. Description of the patient record system and how it is used to efficiently support the teaching, research, and service programmes of the VEE**

The patient record system currently in use at the VTH is EasyVet™, which is a bespoke system. Besides providing a central platform to keep track of patients visited, the software combines a number of different functions, which make the work of the hospital’s clinicians easier and more productive. In particular, it supports veterinary professionals in the following areas: management and issuance of veterinary certificates, billing, collection of data for statistical purposes, sending of reminders and notifications for vaccinations and follow-up appointments, management of pharmaceutical warehouse, etc. Furthermore, EasyVet™ plays a very important role in supporting teaching and research too. In fact, not only does the software provide teachers with clinical cases to be used in class, but it also allows students to access data and information that may be used for research purposes. In addition to the aforementioned, two more programmes are used, namely SIMBAVET and a large animal-specific portal.

**5.1.6. Description of the procedures developed to ensure the welfare of animals used for educational and research activities**

In addition to implementing the existing Community and national legislation on the protection of animals, all relevant decisions on animal welfare are discussed and endorsed by the Animal Welfare committee (<https://www.unipd.it/opba>), the animal welfare body responsible for overseeing the correct application of Legislative Decree No. 26/2014 and promoting the health and welfare of animals used for scientific and educational purposes. All animals present on the premises of the “Lucio Toniolo” Experimental Farm are kept following strict Community and national health requirements.

**5.1.7. Brief description of the process and the implication of staff, students and stakeholders in the development, implementation, assessment and revision of the number and variety of animals and material of animal origin for pre-clinical and clinical training, and the clinical services provided by the VEE**

The number and variety of animals and animal material to be used for pre-clinical and clinical training takes into account the learning objectives as defined in the various syllabi. Any choice regarding the type of specimen or animal material to be used in class lies with the teacher or instructor concerned. However, the main body responsible for any decision relating to the use of animals, offal and any other material of animal origin is the DCC (Degree Course Council).

The logbook and the outcomes of student assessment questionnaires have proven to be useful tools for gathering information on whether or not the number and variety of animals and animal material used for the carrying out of specific activities is sufficient.

## **5.2. Comments**

Animal resources are sufficient for all students to learn from, although some areas are underrepresented (equine/small ruminant cases), this is managed by staff by providing relevant material in online sessions or by using models. The teaching animals in the Lucio Toniolo are limited in number but sufficient for the small number of students in each group.

The biosecurity processes are well documented and the staff were very knowledgeable about their roles of responsibility and the risks involved when, for example, admitting cadaver material to the teaching areas. Students are made aware of how to manage biosecurity risks early in the course and this is applied when coming into the necropsy room. Clear decisions were made when not to include students until a safe environment could be ensured.

Isolation areas were adequate, even when the number of cases for farm animals were expected to be very limited.

Medical records complied with GDPR; students signed a confidentiality agreement before getting access to patient records. Clients signed a waiver so their records could be used for training purposes. Financial data was not available for students, all other data was accessible but could only be edited by staff. In addition, the system can provide information on every log in, so one could verify who accessed each record.

There is the intention of introducing applied behavioural teaching in the ethology course and desire to introduce VTH activities in Year 1 and 2 of the course; peer teaching could be used in this format and would prepare junior students well for what is expected of them in Year 4 and 5.

## **5.3. Suggestions for improvement**

It is recommended to consider practising a skill with potential animal welfare concerns on cadaver material first whenever possible to protect animal welfare; an example is the hoof trimming in cattle, it is important that students can practise this on live animals; however, it would be recommended if that session would be preceded with a session using cadaver material from the abattoir, and positioned in a frame similar to a lifted cow's foot. In that situation students can learn about anatomy and trim feet rigorously without causing potential damage to a live animal.

A formal recording system of animal use would ensure that animal welfare is not compromised when using animals in teaching. Currently the teachers know when to change animals used and ensure their welfare to their best ability; however, when someone would challenge the situation, it would be currently impossible to evidence this unwritten procedure. A transparent procedure/guideline would also help new staff understand the limitations when using animals in teaching.

As finances are removed from view for students in the patient recording systems, it is important to make students aware of the financial implications of their suggested advice to clients for both companion animal and food producing animals. Being aware of treatment cost and their cost benefit to a farm clients is important to help inform the client to make a decision.

#### **5.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 5.

### **6. Learning resources**

#### **6.1 Finding**

##### **6.1.1. Brief description of the main library**

The “Pietro Arduino” Central Library, part of the University Library System (ULS), is on the second floor of the “Pentagono”, and has a total area of 1254 m<sup>2</sup> with 688 m<sup>2</sup>. It is open to the public and has 3 storerooms for scientific journals and theses. There are a number of individual reading desks available and a total seating capacity of 58.

There are 2 adjacent reading rooms connected to the main library space.

The staff is composed of a head librarian and 5 full-time staff members.

An IT technician is available when necessary.

The library is open from Monday to Friday from 8.20 am to 6.00 pm. It is closed for Christmas, Easter and 2 weeks in August.

The budget is approximately 170 000 € per year, mainly invested in electronic resources, hard copies and journals.

The main citation management software are Mendeley, Zotero and EndNote Basic.

##### **6.1.2. Description of the available electronic information and e-learning courses, and their role in supporting student learning and teaching in the core curriculum**

Over the past five years, there has been a concerted effort to move to e-learning platforms. These are now the most used learning method.

For this, the Moodle platform is used (self-learning, learning outcomes, interactivity, supplementary activities, etc).

The IT staff are available to help the students use this platform.

Other software and tools are available ( cf Annex 6.1).

At the entrance to the Library, there are 12 computers and 2 computers for catalogue consultation.

Wireless internet connection is available throughout the Campus.

There are further 3 computer classrooms for exclusive educational use with 22, 54, 24 computers respectively.

##### **6.1.3. Description of the accessibility for staff and students to electronic learning resources both on and off campus**

Wireless internet connection (Eduroam) is available through 120 access points.

The set up on smartphones and laptops can be helped by IT technicians.

An account is compulsory to access the proxy server of UniPD, where teachers and students can find electronic library resources and learning materials.

##### **6.1.4. Description of how the procedures for access to and use of learning resources are taught to students.**

From October to June, training sessions are held monthly (100-200 students) for the use of electronic resources and services.

Other sessions are available for PhD students.

##### **6.1.5. Brief description of the process and the implication of staff, students and stakeholders in the development, implementation, assessment and revision of learning resources**

The library is administered by a Library Committee responsible for coordination and book choice. Books recommended by teachers are purchased within the limit of the budget. New purchases are communicated to students and staff during the meeting of the DC.

## **6.2. Comments**

The extensive lessons and self-learning requirements for students now delivered through e-learning requires the library to increase the number of e-books and e-resources.

## **6.3. Suggestions for improvement**

There are insufficient books and periodicals in English for the required demand from students and the library should consider purchasing more of these.

## **6.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 6.

# **7. Student admission, progression and welfare**

## **7.1. Finding**

### **7.1.1. Brief description of the admission procedures for standard and for full-fee students**

All students of veterinary medicine at the UniPD have to pay an annual tuition fee. The University Board set and revise tuition fees every year. The average cost per veterinary student in the academic year 2018-19 was 2 710 €. There are no full fee students.

Admission of students encompasses awareness initiatives directed towards potential applicants, and a selection procedure.

The number of applicants per year is between 850 and 900.

The number of available study places is between 70 and 78.

A MIUR Decree establishes admission procedures and criteria and the number of admitted students. The selection process is managed exclusively at the MIUR level.

Rules governing the admission criteria for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties are set out in the admission guidelines that are made available every year on the UniPD's website.

Awareness initiatives:

A three-day orientation session on topics such as admission procedures, teaching programmes, further orientation initiatives, tutoring services, is held every year in February. The orientation session is advertised every summer on the website of UniPD. During the orientation session, specific info points are distributed throughout the campus providing training materials to students, in addition to allowing them to meet tutors, teachers and experts.

Other orientation initiatives include both pre-orientation visits in high schools, as well as educational trainings for potential applicants.

A smartphone application is also available, enabling potential applicants to receive information concerning future orientation programmes, notifications and newsletters.

All information concerning criteria and procedures for admission, announcements, number of places available and subject areas addressed in the admission test is available on the websites of UniPD and MIUR.

Selection procedure:

Access to the Veterinary Medicine curriculum is regulated by a *numerus clausus* system, according to which the number of students admitted every year is established by a MIUR

Decree.

To be admitted, students are required to successfully pass a national admission test, which is drawn up and distributed by MIUR to all other Italian veterinary educational VEEs. The responsibility for the drafting of the national admission test lies entirely with the MIUR. The test is specifically designed for veterinary medicine.

The test takes place on the same day and applies equally to both EU (Italian and non-Italian citizens) and non-EU candidates. Applicants must pre-register via the UniPD website and provide a list, in order of preference, of the universities at which they would like to study Veterinary Medicine.

The list of candidates eligible for enrolment at UniPD is published by MIUR and CINECA. Non-EU students living abroad make an exception to the selection process and are ranked separately based on test results.

The terms for appealing against the selection procedures are regulated by Italian legislation. Unsuccessful applicants may lodge an appeal with the Administrative Court of the Veneto Region within 60 days of the date on which the national ranking is published. Once an appeal has been lodged, documents are evaluated by the competent Administrative Court of the Lazio Region. If the appeal is rejected, students may further appeal to the Italian Council of State (second appeal).

Applicants who have not met the necessary number of correct answers (50+1) in Biology, Chemistry and Physics/Mathematics in their admission test can still be admitted based on their test results and ranking. However, in order to sit first-year examinations, they would be requested to meet Additional Learning Requirements, commonly referred to as OFA. For this purpose, further training material is made available via the Moodle platform. The passing of the OFA, in addition to certifying that the student has acquired the relevant knowledge to continue studying veterinary medicine, is a necessary prerequisite to sit first-year examinations in the very subjects for which the OFA were to be satisfied. If students do not pass the OFA test prior to time limits, they will be registered as first-year students (“repeating students”) again.

### **7.1.2. Description of how the VEE adapts the number of admitted students to the available educational resources and the biosecurity and welfare requirements**

The total number of students admitted every year is established by a MIUR Decree.

The number of admitted students mainly reflects the concept of sustainability in terms of both human and instrumental resources. Other factors are also taken into account, e.g. the professional needs at the national level, the proposals put forward by the Degree Course Council (DCC) to MIUR and the suggestions formulated by the Department (MAPS) and UniPD, in consultation with stakeholders (represented by the President of the FNOVI, the National Federation of Italian Veterinarians).

If the number of students admitted per year increases, a re-planning of activities and services offered will also be needed. The number of students is fairly constant.

Influenza vaccinations are offered to staff only.

Tetanus and Hepatitis B vaccinations are mandatory before starting practical activities.

### **7.1.3. Description of the progression criteria and procedures, the available remediation and supports, the rate and main causes of attrition**

Students enrolled in the veterinary medicine curriculum must attend at least 50% of lectures and 80% of practical activities.

A test is administered to students at the end of every course to verify that the relevant skills and competences have been acquired.

According to the teaching regulation of the DCVM in some specific cases, students must

complete propaedeutic courses before being able to sit an examination.

Information concerning exam timetables and venues is available online.

Enrolment in the following academic years will automatically take place upon payment of fees until the fifth year. After that, if students do not graduate by the 5<sup>th</sup> year's last graduation session (April of the following year), they will qualify as students enrolled outside of the prescribed time and will have to pay extra fees.

With regard to graduation procedures specifically, students will only be able to submit the graduation application forms upon completion of all subjects included within their study plan.

#### **7.1.4. Brief description of the services available for students**

Students Services at UniPD provides students with the support and guidance in a variety of areas, including student registration and fees, student progression, study support, career counselling, Erasmus programmes, etc. Additional student services are available via the central administration in different areas such as Student health, Student inclusion, Psychological counselling, Disability and dyslexia, Gender equality and inclusion, Student accommodation, Student transport.

With regard to biosecurity and welfare requirements specifically, first-year students are required to attend a safety training course divided into 3 parts with final tests: General part (4 hours), Part A-Chemical, and Part B-Biological.

First-year students must also pass the test on the zootechnical risk, and undergo a medical examination at the Preventive Medicine Service of UniPD. The safety training and the zootechnical risk courses, as well as the related tests, are available (also in English) on the Moodle platform.

Regulations concerning biosecurity and welfare requirements are reported in the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) manual that is also displayed online.

#### **7.1.5. Brief description of the process and the implication of staff, students and stakeholders in the development, implementation, assessment and revision of the admission procedures, the admission criteria, the number of admitted students and the services to students**

The UniPD, staff, students and immediate stakeholders have no direct control on the number of students admitted as this is controlled by the university (MIUR) based on the *numerus clausus* system dictated by Italian law. Indirectly, the UniPD may influence the Ministry (MIUR) and more distantly, the Government by proposing the total number of student to be admitted.

#### **7.2. Comments**

At the [public website](#), only the ESEVT status is listed with no reference to the latest SER and Visitation Report.

The *numerus clausus* system is dictated by Italian law. The system appears to favour students with good scores in disciplines such as mathematics, physics or logics, while attaching less importance to aspects such as farm culture or the candidate's attitude towards animals of all species. This is perceived as a weakness by the UniPD but several attempts to influence a change in the system has so far not succeeded.

All rules concerning admission criteria for students with disabilities and learning difficulties are established by MIUR.

A number of appeal processes relating to the selection procedure have been submitted over the last few years, especially since a national ranking list of eligible students has been adopted.

Students who fail an examination can obtain advice by talking to the teacher, to the director of the course, or the tutorial service at the university.

Procedures for handling incidents of e.g. student harassment are present.

Students can convey their needs and wants to the VEE e.g. by talking to the teacher, to the director of the course, or to the committee for student inclusion. In addition, students can give suggestions, complaint anonymously e.g. to the student representatives.

The VEE is to be commended for supporting the recent national Inclusive University initiative, where as an example of this initiative at the SASVM, a specific, quiet office has been identified and a contact person for student and staff concerns regarding inclusiveness is present.

The VEE is to be commended on effective and efficient response to student's feedback.

### **7.3. Suggestions**

The VEE must advertise the last SER and Visitation report on their website.

### **7.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7, except for Substandard 7.3.

The VEE is partially compliant with Substandard 7.3. because the SER and Visitation Report of the previous ESEVT Visitation are not easily available on the VEE website.

## **8. Student assessment**

### **8.1. Findings**

#### **8.1.1. Brief description of the student's assessment strategy of the VEE**

The Teaching Regulation is approved by the Degree Course Council (DCC) and establishes the organization and delivery of courses, according to specific guidelines established by UniPD.

The actual planning of the scheduling of examinations is done by the Director of the Degree Course in Veterinary Medicine (DCVM), who is responsible for proposing, modifying and approving the examination schedule, which is established yearly and published on the School's website at the beginning of each academic year. The participation of students in the scheduling of exams is also guaranteed through their representatives.

The examination method is decided by the single teacher or group of teachers (in case of integrated courses), according to the terms established by both UniPD and the SASVM.

The DCC approves the form of assessment, which is then reported in the syllabus and communicated to students at the beginning of the academic year.

The DCC defines the minimum criteria to ensure that a homogeneous and coherent assessment of students takes place.

The Teaching Committee is responsible for ensuring and certifying (both theoretically and practically speaking) that learning objectives are achieved.

#### **8.1.2. Description of the assessment methodology to ensure that every graduate has achieved the minimum level of competence, as prescribed in the ESEVT Day One Competences**

After their degree, each student is evaluated by the State Examination Committee, which is responsible for assessing the general knowledge and capacity to apply the Day One Competences. The examination procedure consists of a practical test involving four main areas of veterinary medicine: internal medicine, surgery and reproduction, food hygiene (including pathological anatomy), animal husbandry and nutrition (including herd health management). The State Board Examination to obtain the national veterinary qualification is the only phase during which the student's level of competences and skills are assessed by external committee members.

### **8.1.3. Description of the processes for providing to students a feedback post-assessment and a guidance for requested improvement**

Students who wish to receive feedback may do so by either e-mailing their teacher or seeing them during their office hours. Further meetings outside the office hours are arranged when needed.

Students who feel they have been disadvantaged in their academic standing, either by an unfair substantive academic judgement of their work, or by a factor not involving substantive academic judgement, may appeal the outcome of the assessment to the director of the degree course. Should the problem not be resolved at this level, the director of the degree course may rely on the opinion of external experts, who could be asked to either re-mark the test or be present throughout a subsequent examination.

### **8.1.4. Brief description of the process and the implication of staff, students and stakeholders in the development, implementation, assessment and revision of the student's assessment strategy**

Students are included in advisory and decision-making committees relevant for the assessment strategy, i.e. the Degree Course Council (DCC), the Group for Accreditation and Evaluation (GAV), and the Student-Staff Joint teaching Committee (JTC).

The JTC is composed of at least 8 members, among which are:

- At least three (3) teachers appointed by the School and selected among the Department's academic staff;

- The Director of the School Council;

- One student for every teacher.

The Director of the JTC is appointed from among its members.

All students enrolled within the prescribed time may run for the position. Student representatives will eventually select the student/s to be appointed. Overall, in appointing such members, attention is given to ensure there is an equal distribution of representatives amongst the various degree courses.

The annual exam timetable is discussed and assessed by the GAV, taking into account the suggestions put forward by student representatives.

Stakeholders in the form of, at present, one companion animal external practitioner and one veterinarian from the veterinary public health service, are members of the GAV.

External stakeholders are part of the State Board Examination committee that assesses the student's knowledge and skills.

## **8.2. Comments**

The JTC is responsible for drafting an annual report including advice on critical issues. Such a report is first submitted to the Directors of the various degree courses who have a representation within the JTC and then presented during the GAV or DCC.

The JTC receives input through several ways, e.g. UniPD data, outcomes of the meetings with students, outcomes of the meetings with GAV, documents presented during the "Week for the Improvement of Teaching", outcomes of students' opinions questionnaires.

## **8.3. Suggestions for improvement**

It is suggested to develop a global and coordinated assessment strategy.

#### **8.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 8, except for Substandard 8.8.

The VEE is partially compliant with Substandard 8.8. because of no coordinated overall assessment strategy.

### **9. Academic and support staff**

#### **9.1. Findings**

##### **9.1.1. Brief description of the global strategy in order to ensure that all requested competences for the veterinary programme are covered for both academic and support and that they are properly qualified and prepared for their roles**

Most of the permanent teaching staff are full time, which ensures that they have adequate time to assist students and implement their knowledge and skills. Moreover, a high percentage of teaching staff are doctors of veterinary medicine (Table 9.1.2.). The number of academic staff holding the European Board of Veterinary Specialization (EBVS) diplomate status increased significantly (15) since the 2010 EAEVE evaluation visit, although the number of diplomates in core clinical disciplines should be further enhanced.

Various opportunities exist for staff to improve their teaching practice. The programme ‘Teaching for Learning, T4L’ (Teaching4Learning@unipd; <https://elearning.unipd.it/t4l>) was launched in 2017 and is now active to provide teaching staff with new methodologies to foster student participation in the learning process and encourage collaborative support in teaching practises (Learning Community). Teachers may enrol in the proposed T4L courses voluntarily.

Departmental projects on innovative teaching (including those from MAPS and BCA) were presented to UniPD and funded over the last few years. In addition to T4L and change agents, UniPD further improves the quality of teaching through other specific courses (e.g. KALTURA and Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment, Moodle, etc. – <https://elearning.unipd.it/dlm/>). Continuing education programmes offered by UniPD allow academic staff to further develop their skills and competences through different exchange programmes, including the Erasmus+ Staff Mobility for Training programme (<https://www.unipd.it/erasmus-staff>), the Staff Mobility for Teaching Assignment, the Mobility programme for EU and extra-EU countries (<https://www.unipd.it/staff-mobility-teaching>), and the Visiting Scientist programme (<https://www.unipd.it/visiting-scientist>).

##### **9.1.2. Description of the adequacy of the number of academic and support staff in the different departments/units with the number of students to be taught**

Academic staff (FTE) on programme;

Permanent staff: 67.8

Temp staff: 8 interns, 0.4 resident, 15.5 practitioners, 1 other

Support staff (FTE) on programme:

Permanent staff: 35.5

Temp staff: 2.6

Research staff (FTE) on programme:

Temp only: 44.3

71.3% of academic staff are veterinarians, 'temp' staff includes junior staff who are not on tenure.

**9.1.3. Brief description of the process and the implication of staff, students and stakeholders in the development, implementation, assessment and revision of the strategy for allocating, recruiting, promoting, supporting and assessing academic and support staff**

Every year, UniPD receives funding (FFO) to cover institutional costs. Additional funding is made available according to performance criteria, e.g. quality of teaching, VQR and internationalization. Departments involved in the DCVM decide how to allocate the economic resources they receive over the three-year planning. The Budget Committee of each Department develops a strategic plan for the maintenance of the course in terms of academic staff, credits (hours) and type of teaching activity (lectures, practicals and hands-on activities).

Whenever a vacancy occurs, the Department Council publishes a public competition announcement, outlining the main criteria used for the selection procedure. Candidates' application will be assessed by an Exam Board composed of 3-5 professors from the academic discipline or academic recruitment field for which the public competition was announced. The members of the Exam Board are chosen by the Department Council and subsequently appointed by the Rector. Once all applications have been submitted, the Exam Board will assess the candidate's profile taking into account a number of parameters, including candidate's previous teaching experience (including student's evaluation of teacher performance) and curriculum, scientific publications, etc. If the candidate is suitable for the announced position, a contract will be drawn up.

The total number of students admitted every year to the DCVM is approved by MIUR. Therefore, the student-to-academic staff and student-to-academic/support staff ratios (for practicals and hands-on activities) are predetermined and, to a certain degree, not subject to variations. However, there are some differences with regard to practicals/hands-on activities, which are essentially the result of capacity constraints and difficulties arising from specific training activities. Taking into consideration the current recruitment and replacement initiatives of the Rectorate, it is expected that the number of FTE academic and support staff will not be significantly increased in the next three academic years.

Whereas the involvement in the strategy for allocating, recruiting, promoting, supporting and assessing academic and support staff of staff and students takes place within the DC, that of stakeholders is limited to the assessing stage as members of the GAV, in compliance with national legislation.

**9.2. Comments**

The positive motivation of teachers is evident and their dedication towards their job and workplace is admirable. The progress made, by the ministry, university and the departments to develop teaching quality in academic and support staff is clearly demonstrated. Exchange

opportunities between veterinary schools within and outside of Italy and between different degree courses within the University are encouraged for staff as well as students.

Evaluation of teaching (by students) is more and more becoming part of career progression. There are many opportunities for teachers to improve their teaching skills with various courses offered within the university and beyond.

Recent changes in the recruitment show an improvement with regards to reducing bias when selecting applicants, by removing staff already familiar with certain applicants from the selection team. This will give a more equal opportunity to all applicants applying.

### **9.3. Suggestions for improvement**

Developing attractive incentives for staff to progress in a teaching focused career or receive other rewards for providing excellence in teaching would help motivate some staff members who may struggle to meet the other criteria by which staff get promoted/acknowledged for their work.

### **9.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 9.

## **10. Research programmes, continuing and postgraduate education**

### **10.1. Findings**

#### **10.1.1. Brief description of how the research activities of the VEE and the implication of most academic staff in it contribute to research-based undergraduate veterinary education**

Each undergraduate student has to write and defend a final degree thesis (9 ECTS), which is based on experimental work or a review of a paper. Around 80% of the thesis are based on experimental studies, which shows that most of the students get in touch with research during undergraduate studies. Thesis is typically written in Italian. Additionally, there are some optional courses related to research (e.g. use of online databases, citation management software and English course), which are available for undergraduate students. Undergraduate students have also possibilities to attend courses and seminars given by invited scientists and scientific events occurring at the Agripolis Campus. They are also encouraged to participate in continuing education events.

UniPD promotes research by awarding funding to top-quality researchers. In the national research evaluation, both veterinarian departments (MAPS and BCA) were ranked at the top. This active research environment gives good possibilities also for undergraduate students to get the first touch with research projects. For postgraduate studies, there are 2 doctoral programmes: (1) Veterinary sciences and (2) Animal and food sciences with 26 and 5 registered doctoral students, respectively. Most of the veterinarians belong to the Veterinary science PhD programme.

#### **10.1.2. Description of how the postgraduate clinical trainings of the VEE contribute positively to undergraduate veterinary education and how potential conflicts in relation to case management between post- and undergraduate students are avoided**

There are currently Residency Training programmes in 4 disciplines (reproduction, bovine

health management, pathology, and pharmacology-toxicology). During the last 3 years, the number of residents has varied between 5 and 7. The residents help in teaching undergraduate students. Postgraduate students often share clinical cases and herd-related problems with undergraduate students, which helps them in improving both their knowledge and practical skills.

### **10.1.3. Brief description of the process and the implication of staff, students and stakeholders in the development, implementation, assessment and revision of research, continuing and postgraduate education programmes organised by the VEE**

Research grants distributed by the UniPD are allocated within departments according to criteria based on the quality of projects and researchers established by the Department Councils. Research teams are also supported by other national and local grants, and international grants. All postgraduate programmes (PhD, Residencies, Master and Specialisation) must comply with quality assessment standards and general rules. Stakeholders provide important information on the needs of professional training but also community needs.

## **10.2. Comments**

The number and quality of research projects carried out by MAPS and BCA are extremely good. Undergraduate students have excellent possibilities to be involved in high-quality research projects, which can be seen as high number of final degree thesis based on experimental studies.

Only few continuous education courses are mentioned in the SER and therefore, it remains unclear what input the departments have on lifelong learning of graduated veterinarians.

## **10.3. Suggestions for improvement**

It is suggested to enhance activities aligned with CPD and lifelong learning and to increase the number of course given for the profession.

Increasing the number of disciplines offering residencies would be advantageous to the VEE in future years.

## **10.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.

# **11. Outcome Assessment and Quality Assurance**

## **11.1. Findings**

**11.1.1. Description of the global strategy of the VEE for outcome assessment and Quality Assurance (QA), in order to demonstrate that the VEE:**

- ) has a culture of QA and continued enhancement of quality;**
- ) operates *ad hoc*, cyclical, sustainable and transparent outcome assessment, QA and quality enhancement mechanisms;**
- ) collect, analyse and use relevant information from internal and external sources for the effective management of their programmes and activities (*teaching, research, services*);**
- ) informs regularly staff, students and stakeholders and involves them in the QA processes;**
- ) closes the loop of the QA Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle;**
- ) is compliant with ESG Standards.**

From 2013, a number of initiatives developed by both MIUR and UniPD to comply with the standards established by ENQA have led to the introduction of structured quality management systems at the degree course level, thus involving the DCVM too.

A number of QA initiatives has been set up to sustain and develop the culture of QA and continued enhancement of quality. Briefly, the QA initiatives are at three levels, i.e. National level, University level, and School level.

National level consists of ANVUR, the ENQA accredited agency of the Italian Ministry of University and Research in charge of assessing university performance. ANVUR performs periodic accreditation of Universities and their programmes. The VEE's QA system is reviewed annually based on self-evaluation reports to be submitted to ANVUR.

ANVUR conducted an evaluation in 2018 where UniPD was found to be the best university in Italy for teaching and research quality.

The University level has the following QA initiatives:

The University Evaluation Unit (Nucleo di Valutazione, NdV) responsible for verifying and assessing the quality and effectiveness of teaching programmes, research activities, buildings and the overall organization, with the aim of promoting talent and enhancing performances. Student representatives, internal and external stakeholders are part of this unit.

The University Quality Department (PQA) is responsible for promoting a culture of quality, providing advice on QA-related issues to the University governing bodies, monitoring QA procedures and supporting their implementation. A number of commissions is established within the PQA, one of which is the CPQD.

The CPQD is responsible for promoting, coordinating and monitoring any activity aimed at evaluating and improving teaching at the University level, while supporting QA and teaching innovation initiatives. Student representatives and internal stakeholders are part of this in the teaching commission.

School level has the Staff-Student Joint Teaching Committee (JTC), which is a body of the SASVM that meets periodically to make judgments on both teaching activities and the organization of the degree courses offered within the SASVM.

In particular, the Committee is responsible for: evaluating the functionality and effectiveness of teaching facilities, evaluating the quality of teaching activities, and ensuring the operation and effectiveness of guidance and mentoring programmes.

Finally, the Committee can provide opinions with regard to the activation of new degree courses, as well as the deactivation of the already existing ones.

The Committee is chaired by the Director of the School and composed of an equal number of representatives of professors and students.

The quality management process at the DCVM is set-up as an "extended PDCA", with QA tools being included within a systematic process that ensures the feasibility of actions in a long-term strategic vision.

Using the cycle of Analyse, Plan, Prepare, Do, Check, Improve allows the DCVM to:

- operate ad hoc, cyclical, sustainable and transparent outcome assessment, QA and quality enhancement mechanisms;
- collect, analyse and use relevant information from internal and external sources for the effective management of their programmes and activities (teaching, research, services); inform staff, students and stakeholders regularly and to involve them in the QA processes; close the loop of the QA Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle.

### **11.1.2. Brief description of the specific QA processes for each ESEVT Standards**

#### **Objectives and Organisation:**

At the university level, the Academic Senate and the Board of Administration initiated the Strategic Lines 2016/2018 and the Plan for Recruitment of Personnel for the period 2019/2020. These documents provide guidelines to the DCVM.

At the School level, the Single Annual Report (SUA) forms the strategic plan of the DCVM and it gives the overall direction of the DCVM and the veterinary education. The strategic plan is initiated by the DC of MAPS based on the suggestions put forward by the DCC, the various internal committees, the labour market and the EAEVE SOPs. Staff and student participate in the preparation of the strategic plan.

The strategic plan is finally adopted by University of Padua through the University Quality Department, the Academic Senate and the Board of Administration.

Further, the departments have prepared their own Three-year Plan for the Recruitment of Personnel (2019/21) with a description of both departmental policies with regard to personnel recruitment and promotion procedures, and the strategies to increase teaching efficiency and quality. Each department must also develop a Three-year Plan for Research Development (2019/21) and a Three-year Plan for Third Mission (2019/21). These documents will be subsequently evaluated by UniPD's Committee for the Quality of Research (CPQR) in 2022.

#### **Finances:**

Administrative, accounting and financial issues are handled in accordance with the University Regulations for Administration, Financing and Accounting through central administration spending centres.

At the DCVM, the spending centres are both departments through their Departmental Councils (DC). The DC is responsible for making decisions on expense management through the approval of a provisional budget. Both DCs meet on a monthly basis and decisions are communicated to UniPD, staff, students and stakeholders through publication on the Departments' website.

At the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH), a management committee has also been appointed to set up potential strategies for clinical development.

Tuition fees are set and revised every year by the University Board.

When resources for new activities/initiatives are needed, the two departments form a joint application that is sent to the Rector, who then sends it to the Academic senate and ultimately to the Board of Administrators.

A 5-year plan for facilities development is in place.

#### **Curriculum:**

The Group for Accreditation and Evaluation (GAV) and the Student-Staff Joint Teaching Committee (JTC) constantly and at least annually monitored the curriculum, and they communicate their analyses to the Degree Course Council (DCC). Based on the evaluations made by GAV and the Bi-Departmental Teaching Committee (BDTC), and the modifications proposed by BDTC, the DCC discussed and approved the present curriculum. Measures approved by the DCC must also be approved by the department responsible for managing and administering the degree course. In the case of the DCVM, both MAPS and BCA are expected to approve any measure adopted by the DCC. Any curriculum change is scrutinized by UniPD (CPQD and NdV), and substantial changes are subject to the evaluation and approval by MIUR/ANVUR.

Every year, courses are assigned to teaching staff members based on academic disciplines and/or the Professor's teaching/research background. Each professor must approve the learning contents and any other information making up the course syllabus, for which they take full

responsibility.

**Facilities and equipment:**

Any strategy or planning activity related to the maintenance of facilities shall be suggested by both Departments and, to some extent, by the SASVM. The final decision to trigger and economically support financial investments lies entirely with UniPD.

Any strategy or planning activity related to the maintenance and upgrade/purchase of equipment, including any financial support provided for them, shall be suggested by the two Departments and the VTH, through the use of either their own funds or the participation in specific tendering procedures promoted by UniPD and directed to the purchase of new equipment.

The two departments (MAPS and BCA) jointly decide regarding facilities, equipment and biosecurity procedures.

The implementation, assessment and revision of policies for health and safety management for people and animals, including waste management, is discussed and carried out in collaboration with safety management experts for clinical and laboratory activities, as well as university consultants.

The SOPs describing the biosecurity procedures in laboratories and during clinical services are updated periodically and made available both online and in printed form in every laboratory and clinical room.

Students are informed and purposely trained to implement the procedures established by the SOPs. To verify whether SOPs are correctly implemented, periodical internal audits are carried out by independent staff members who are competent in the area. These audits also allow the identification of potential issues concerning the implementation or updating of the SOPs, which are discussed and resolved within the DCC.

SOPs are prepared, updated and accepted by the individual department, taking into account the suggestions put forward by the degree course. The latter is then responsible for their dissemination and implementation. The update of SOPs is carried out on a yearly basis.

Responsibility for implementation, assessment and revision of policies for health and safety management for people and animals, including waste management lies within every department with respect to its spaces and the Polo Multifunzionale for common spaces. The University acts as supervisor.

**Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin:**

All relevant decisions on animal welfare are discussed and endorsed by the Animal Welfare committee (OPBA) which is the animal welfare body responsible for overseeing the correct application of Legislative Decree No. 26/2014 and promoting the health and welfare of animals used for scientific and educational purposes.

Decisions regarding the type of specimen or animal material to be used in class lies with the teacher or instructor concerned and is mostly based on the topic covered during the lesson. However, the main body responsible for any decision relating to the use of animals, offal and any other material of animal origin is the Degree Course Council (DCC). To this end, both the logbook and the outcomes of student assessment questionnaires are used to assess if the number

and variety of animals and animal material used for the carrying out of specific activities is sufficient.

**Learning Resources:**

The library is supported by the University Library Centre (ULC), which coordinates, manages and fosters the development of library services for the benefit of scientific research and teaching.

The library is administered by a Library Committee, which is composed of the coordinator of the scientific areas (Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine), the head librarian, two representatives from the SASVM's Departments and two PhD students.

The Library Committee supervises the activities run by the library, drafts the budget and balance sheet, and it is also responsible for the coordination and final verification of cultural and scientific choices with regard to the purchasing and services of the library. Books recommended by teachers are purchased taking into account the limits indicated in the annual balance sheet. Subscription to new scientific journals or databases are suggested by members of the academic staff and approved by the Library Committee if at least a five-year coverage of the expenses is guaranteed. New purchases are communicated to staff and students through the representatives of the Library Committee during the meetings of the Departmental Council (DC). In addition, a regularly updated online search engine has also been made available to users to obtain information concerning any new purchase (books, magazines, databases, etc.) made by the libraries. In addition to the above, the ULC administers a student satisfaction questionnaire with regard to library services, collecting about 8.000 answers every year.

Adequacy and accessibility of learning resources and student support are assessed by student evaluations, input from stakeholders, input from national indicators, and the annual educational day where staff, students can express their input.

**Student admission, progression and welfare:**

The UniPD, staff, students and immediate stakeholders have no direct control on the number of students admitted as this is controlled by the university (MUIR) based on the numerus clausus system dictated by Italian law. Indirectly, the UniPD may influence the university (MUIR) and more distantly, the Government.

Enrolment in the following academic years will automatically take place upon payment of fees until the fifth year. After that, if students do not graduate by the 5<sup>th</sup> year's last graduation session (April of the following year), they will qualify as students enrolled outside of the prescribed time and will have to pay extra fees.

Students are asked to evaluate the course they attended via a web-based University platform. The data collected is submitted to the GAV, which evaluates the results, communicates with teachers and addresses any matter arising from low passing rates, low teaching performances or difficulties in contacting or discussing problems with teachers.

**Student assessment:**

Students enrolled in the veterinary medicine curriculum must attend at least 50% of lectures and 80% of practical activities.

A test is administered to students at the end of every course to verify that the relevant skills and competences have been acquired. The examination method is decided by the single teacher or group of teachers (in case of integrated courses), according to the terms established by both

UniPD and the SASVM. The form of assessment is approved by the DCC and reported in the syllabus. Teachers provide students with any information concerning the evaluation system in place to assess oral, written and practical tests during their first lecture. In case the test format changes, students are promptly informed of the new test typology.

The Degree Course Council (DCC) defines the minimum criteria to ensure that a homogeneous and coherent assessment of students takes place.

The Student-Staff Joint Teaching Committee (JTC) is responsible for ensuring and certifying (both theoretically and practically speaking) that learning objectives are achieved.

Furthermore, the continuous monitoring of examination outcomes by the GAV are used to identify exams that may be either too “hard” or too “easy” to pass which may a) slow down the student’s career or b) be considered too “easy”.

After their degree, each student is evaluated by the State Examination Committee, which is responsible for assessing the general knowledge and capacity to apply the Day One Competences. The examination procedure consists of a practical test involving four main areas of veterinary medicine: internal medicine, surgery and reproduction, food hygiene (including pathological anatomy), animal husbandry and nutrition (including herd health management).

#### **Academic and support staff:**

The selection and recruitment of permanent academic and support staff falls within the competence of UniPD Rectorate.

Italian law dictates the academic staff structure. To move to a new position, Assistant and Associate Professors must first gain the National Scientific Qualification (NSQ). Passing criteria are essentially represented by the candidate’s number of publications related to the specific academic discipline, the overall number of citations, and the H-index, whose magnitude depends on the specific academic discipline. Additional criteria are the research and teaching value of the candidate (e.g. competitive projects, responsibility and/or experience in teaching), and the involvement in scientific and institutional collegiate bodies.

The recruitment procedure is transparent; in fact the Ministry has been very keen to secure this and initiated a process nationwide to obtain uniform recruitment processes across all universities.

Academic staff management is dealt with at the departmental level. According to Italian Law, the total amount of time that full-time academic staff shall devote to teaching-related activities is 350 hours a year. These activities include lectures, practicals, exams, thesis tutorship and participation in collegiate bodies and related activities.

The required skills for the DCVM can be inferred from the Italian University website. The skills have been transposed into UniPD’s educational offer, which is approved on a yearly basis.

Evaluation of both the DCVM and teaching staff is carried out in different ways and at different times during the academic year:

Once reviewed by each professor, the educational offer (including syllabi) is firstly approved by the course coordinator and then by both the DCC and the DC.

Every semester, students are administered open online questionnaires, which allow to gather information on the level of satisfaction, organization and teaching skills of the teachers involved in the DCVM.

The GAV, which meets to make a critical review of the course, taking into consideration both students' opinions and external stakeholders' suggestions.

During the "Week for the Improvement of Teaching", teachers, support staff, students and stakeholders discuss, review the course and propose solutions whenever a problem arises. A review report is subsequently drafted and sent to the Rector.

As soon as the JTC and the University Evaluation Unit have read the aforementioned review report, they provide the course coordinator with a final report which may include recommendations (if any) to improve the quality of the DCVM.

Mandatory biosecurity training for support and teaching staff is provided through the UNIFOR web platform of UniPD.

Training of teachers is done e.g. through the programme "Teaching For Learning, T4L", launched in 2017 which was initially coordinated by the Vice Rector for Teaching, and is now active to provide teaching staff with new methodologies to foster student participation in the learning process and encourage collaborative support in teaching practises. Teachers may enrol in the proposed T4L courses voluntarily.

Thus, all students and staff must complete required courses in biosecurity.

Relevant SOPs are present throughout the premises as well as online, e.g. the SOP on sample handling.

The selection and recruitment of support staff falls within the competence of the Rectorate and takes into account the economic resources allocated in the three-year planning document. The selection procedure is based on a profile describing the required specific/general skills.

#### **Research programmes, continuing and postgraduate education:**

Research activities are regularly planned within the Three-year Research Plan and monitored by specific committees with the aim of achieving scientific excellence.

Students actively participate in the different phases of a research project during the final dissertation (9 ECTS),

The two PhD-programmes within Veterinary sciences and Animal and Food sciences are subject to an annual national accreditation system, which is run by ANVUR based both on teachers' scientific performance indicators and PhD students' performance indicators. The number of fellowship to be allocated per programme is established by UniPD.

The three postgraduate specialization schools are assessed by the Osservatorio per la formazione specialistica post-lauream (observatory for post-graduate specialised training).

#### **11.1.3. Brief description of the process and the implication of staff, students and stakeholders in the development, implementation, assessment and revision of the QA strategy of the VEE**

Using self-evaluation reports, data collection from internal and external stakeholders and inputs from national (ANVUR) and international (EAEVE) agencies, the internal QA system and strategy are revised.

QA changes and SOPs are communicated to internal (staff and students) and external stakeholders during meetings of different officially recognized groups, committees and boards, as well as by email and on the website in public or access-controlled areas.

## **11.2. Comments**

The VEE has to be complimented for installing procedures for QA that are up to national and international standards in a relatively limited period and for the enthusiasm of those involved in the work.

An overall unifying quality assurance policy is not present as the QA is divided between three levels. At the School level it has the form of a Strategy plan to which students and staff contribute.

Self-evaluation reports are course management documents and are drafted on a regular basis. Such documents may not only be accessed by ANVUR but are also evaluated by the JTC, the University Quality Department and the University Evaluation Unit.

To further verify the compliance with the QA system, on-site visits by the Committee of Evaluation Experts (CEV) are carried out every five years.

The degree course based on the suggestions put forward by the GAV decided that students enrolled in the veterinary medicine curriculum must attend at least 50% of lectures and 80% of practical activities.

As an example on the process for designing and approval of the programme, for the recent programme update a commission between the two departments was set up. External stakeholder's input was included. Suggestions went to the programme Council and when accepted there to the relevant departmental committees – then to academic senate for approval. Thus, student and staff input was possible in several ways. Some specific learning goals were included because of the process, e.g. within rural economics and practice management. The Ministry then approved it in a specific council.

Examples on how students take an active role in creating the learning process and the assessment of students to reflect this approach include thesis work, which often includes practical laboratory work, and initiatives/experiments with alternative forms of teaching, e.g. flipped classroom.

Teaching competency is assessed when recruiting associate professors who have to give a public lecture. Student evaluations are used for ongoing assessment of teaching competency. If a need for additional competence in an individual teacher is identified, the head of the GAV discuss this with the teacher. Ample help and advice is easily available from the pedagogical department. Further, there is a web site at the UNIPD office for the teacher training.

EPT teachers have to complete a course on teaching, and they are also evaluated by the student evaluation. Non-academics involved in teaching, e.g. interns, residents, are urged to take courses in didactics, and it is believed that this will become a requirement within the next 5-10 years.

Student evaluations, the ANVUR indicators, and subsequent discussions in appropriate committees are among the means to collect and analyse the effectiveness of the programme. As an example, the inclusion of topics within rural economics and practice management in the curriculum.

The programme as a whole is periodically reviewed, e.g. at the annual educational day, otherwise every 4-5 year. The changes are communicated to all concerned by minutes, updates

on websites, via email, and indirectly also among the students on different SoMe-platforms.

Apart from the EAEVE/ESEVT evaluation, the university, and therefore also the veterinary area, undergo external quality control by other means such as the ANVUR system, the Internal auditing offered by university, HR excellence on research, and the Inclusive University initiative.

### **11.3. Suggestions for improvement**

It is suggested to prepare and display an overall unifying quality assurance policy.

### **11.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 11.

## 12. ESEVT Indicators



### ESEVT Indicators

Name of the Establishment:					
Date of the form filling:					
Calculated Indicators from raw data		Establishment	Median	Minimal	Balance <sup>3</sup>
		values	values <sup>1</sup>	values <sup>2</sup>	
<b>I1</b>	n° of FTE academic staff involved in veterinary training / n° of undergraduate students	0,217	0,16	0,13	0,091
<b>I2</b>	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	1,252	0,87	0,59	0,662
<b>I3</b>	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,667	0,94	0,57	0,100
<b>I4</b>	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	738,000	905,67	595,00	143,000
<b>I5</b>	n° of hours of clinical training	688,000	932,92	670,00	18,000
<b>I6</b>	n° of hours of FSQ & VPH training	483,667	287,00	174,40	309,267
<b>I7</b>	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in FSQ & VPH	158,333	68,00	28,80	129,533
<b>I8</b>	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	54,959	70,48	42,01	12,950
<b>I9</b>	n° of ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	1,287	2,69	0,46	0,823
<b>I10</b>	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	1,871	5,05	1,30	0,573
<b>I11</b>	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	1,632	3,35	1,55	0,087
<b>I12</b>	n° of companion animal patients seen extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	2,193	6,80	0,22	1,970
<b>I13</b>	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	19,123	15,95	6,29	12,828
<b>I14</b>	n° of equine patients seen extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	6,316	2,11	0,60	5,721
<b>I15</b>	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds / n° of students graduating annually	3,526	1,33	0,55	2,979
<b>I16</b>	n° of visits of poultry and farmed rabbit units / n° of students graduating annually	0,947	0,12	0,04	0,903
<b>I17</b>	n° of companion animal necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	4,807	2,07	1,40	3,407
<b>I18</b>	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	5,708	2,32	0,97	4,737
<b>I19</b>	n° of equine necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0,468	0,30	0,09	0,375
<b>I20</b>	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	13,450	2,05	0,69	12,758
<b>I21*</b>	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,325	0,20	0,06	0,261
<b>I22*</b>	n° of PhD graduating annually / n° of students graduating annually	0,474	0,15	0,09	0,386
<sup>1</sup>	Median values defined by data from Establishments with Approval status in April 2016				
<sup>2</sup>	Recommended minimal values calculated as the 20th percentile of data from Establishments with Approval status in April 2016				
<sup>3</sup>	A negative balance indicates that the Indicator is below the recommended minimal value				
*	Indicators used only for statistical purpose				

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

<b>Standard 1: Objectives and Organisation</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>PC</b>	<b>NC</b>
1.1. The VEE must have as its main objective to provide, in agreement with the EU Directives and ESG recommendations, adequate, ethical, research-based, evidence-based veterinary training that enables the new graduate to perform as a veterinarian capable of entering all commonly recognised branches of the veterinary profession and to be aware of the importance of lifelong learning.	X		
1.2. The VEE must develop and follow its mission statement which must embrace all the ESEVT standards.	X		
1.3. The VEE must be part of a university or a higher education institution providing training recognised as being of an equivalent level and formally recognised as such in the respective country.	X		
1.4. The person responsible for the veterinary curriculum and the person(s) responsible for the professional, ethical, and academic affairs of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) must hold a veterinary degree.	X		
1.5. The organisational structure must allow input not only from staff and students but also from external stakeholders.	X		
1.6. The VEE must have a strategic plan, which includes a SWOT analysis of its current activities, a list of objectives, and an operating plan with timeframe and indicators for its implementation.	X		
<b>Standard 2: Finances</b>			
2.1. Finances must be demonstrably adequate to sustain the requirements for the VEE to meet its mission and to achieve its objectives for education, research and services.	X		
2.2. The finance report must include both expenditures and revenues and must separate personnel costs, operating costs, maintenance costs and equipment.	X		
2.3. Resources allocation must be regularly reviewed to ensure that available resources meet the requirements.	X		
2.4. Clinical and field services must function as instructional resources. Instructional integrity of these resources must take priority over financial self-sufficiency of clinical services operations. Clinics must be run as efficiently as possible.	X		
2.5. The VEE must have sufficient autonomy in order to use the resources to implement its strategic plan and to meet the ESEVT Standards.	X		
<b>Standard 3: Curriculum</b>			
3.1. The curriculum must be designed, resourced and managed to ensure all graduates have achieved the graduate attributes expected to be fully compliant with the EU Directive 2005/36/EC as amended by directive 2013/55/EU and its Annex V.4.1.	X		
3.2. The learning outcomes for the programme must be explicitly articulated to form a cohesive framework.	X		
3.3. programme learning outcomes must be communicated to staff and students and: -) underpin and ensure the effective alignment of all content, teaching, learning and assessment activities of the degree programme; -) form the basis for explicit statements of the objectives and learning outcomes of individual units of study; -) be regularly reviewed, managed and updated to ensure they remain relevant, adequate and are effectively achieved.	X		
3.4. The VEE must have a formally constituted committee structure (which includes effective student representation), with clear and empowered reporting lines, to oversee and manage the curriculum and its delivery. The committee(s) must: -) determine the pedagogical basis, design, delivery methods and assessment methods of the curriculum, -) oversee QA of the curriculum, particularly gathering, evaluating, making change and responding to feedback from stakeholders, peer reviewers and external assessors, and data from examination/assessment outcomes, -) review the curriculum at least every seven years by involving staff, students and stakeholders, -) identify and meet training needs for all types of staff, maintaining and enhancing their competence for the on-going curriculum development.	X		
3.5. The curriculum must include the subjects (input) listed in Annex V of EU Directive 2005/36/EC and must allow the acquisition of the Day One Competences (output) (see Annex 2). This must concern all groups of subjects, i.e. Basic Sciences, Clinical Sciences, Animal Production, Food Safety and Quality, and Professional Knowledge.	X		
3.6. External Practical Training (EPT) are training activities organised outside the VEE, the student being under the direct supervision of a non-academic person (e.g. a practitioner). EPT cannot replace the core intramural training nor the extramural training under the close supervision of academic staff (e.g. ambulatory clinics, herds visits, practical training in FSQ).	X		
3.7. Since the veterinary degree is a professional qualification with Day One Competences, EPT must complement and strengthen the academic education by enhancing for the student the handling of all common domestic animals, the understanding of the economics and management of animal units and veterinary practices, the communication skills for all aspects of veterinary work, the hands-on practical and clinical training, the real-life experience, and the employability of the prospective graduate.	X		
3.8. The EPT providers must have an agreement with the VEE and the student (in order to fix their respective rights and duties, including insurance matters), provide a standardised evaluation of the performance of the student during their EPT and be allowed to provide feedback to the VEE on the EPT programme.	X		
3.9. There must be a member of the academic staff responsible for the overall supervision of the EPT, including liaison with EPT providers.	X		
3.10. Students must take responsibility for their own learning during EPT. This includes preparing properly before each placement, keeping a proper record of their experience during EPT by using a logbook provided by the VEE and evaluating the EPT. Students must be allowed to complain officially or anonymously about issues occurring during EPT.	X		
<b>Standard 4: Facilities and equipment</b>			
4.1. All aspects of the physical facilities must provide an environment conducive to learning.	X		
4.2. The veterinary VEE must have a clear strategy and programme for maintaining and upgrading its buildings and	X		

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equipment.			
4.3. Lecture theatres, teaching laboratories, tutorial rooms, clinical facilities and other teaching spaces must be adequate in number, size and equipped for the instructional purposes and must be well maintained. The facilities must be adapted for the number of students enrolled.		X	
4.4. Students must have ready access to adequate and sufficient study, self-learning, recreation, locker, sanitary and food services facilities.	X		
4.5. Offices, teaching preparation and research laboratories must be sufficient for the needs of the academic and support staff.	X		
4.6. Facilities must comply with all relevant legislation including health, safety, biosecurity and EU animal welfare and care standards.		X	
4.7. The VEE's livestock facilities, animal housing, core clinical teaching facilities and equipment must: - ) be sufficient in capacity and adapted for the number of students enrolled in order to allow hands-on training for all students - ) be of a high standard, well maintained and fit for purpose - ) promote best husbandry, welfare and management practices - ) ensure relevant biosecurity and bio-containment - ) be designed to enhance learning.		X	
4.8. Core clinical teaching facilities must be provided in a VTH with 24/7 emergency services at least for companion animals and equines, where the VEE can unequivocally demonstrate that standard of education and clinical research are compliant with all ESEVT Standards, e.g. research-based and evidence-based clinical training supervised by academic staff trained to teach and to assess, availability for staff and students of facilities and patients for performing clinical research and relevant QA procedures. For ruminants and pigs, on-call service must be available if emergency services do not exist for those species in a VTH. The VEE must ensure state-of-the-art standards of teaching clinics which remain comparable with the best available in the private sector.	X		
4.9. The VTH and any hospitals, practices and facilities (including EPT) which are involved with the curriculum must meet the relevant national Practice Standards.	X		
4.10. All core teaching sites must provide dedicated learning spaces including adequate internet access.	X		
4.11. The VEE must ensure students have access to a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic facilities, including but not limited to: pharmacy, diagnostic imaging, anaesthesia, clinical pathology, intensive/critical care, surgeries and treatment facilities, ambulatory services and necropsy facilities.	X		
4.12. Operational policies and procedures (including biosecurity, good laboratory practice and good clinical practice) must be taught and posted for students, staff and visitors.	X		
4.13. Appropriate isolation facilities must be provided to meet the need for the isolation and containment of animals with communicable diseases. Such isolation facilities must be properly constructed, ventilated, maintained and operated to provide for animal care in accordance with updated methods for prevention of spread of infectious agents. They must be adapted to all animal types commonly handled in the VTH.	X		
4.14. The VEE must have an ambulatory clinic for production animals or equivalent facilities so that students can practise field veterinary medicine and Herd Health Management under academic supervision.	X		
4.15. The transport of students, live animals, cadavers, materials from animal origin and other teaching materials must be done in agreement with national and EU standards, to ensure the safety of students and staff and to prevent the spread of infectious agents.	X		
<b>Standard 5: Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin</b>			
5.1. The number and variety of healthy and diseased animals, cadavers, and material of animal origin must be adequate for providing the practical training (in the area of Basic Sciences, Clinical Sciences, Pathology, Animal Production, Food Safety and Quality) and adapted to the number of students enrolled.	X		
5.2. It is essential that a diverse and sufficient number of surgical and medical cases in all common domestic animals and exotic pets be available for the students' clinical educational experience and hands-on training.	X		
5.3. In addition to the training provided in the VEE, experience can include practical training at external sites, provided this training is organised under direct academic supervision and at the same standards as those applied in the VEE.	X		
5.4. The VTH must provide nursing care skills and instruction in nursing procedures.	X		
5.5. Under all situations students must be active participants in the workup of patients, including physical diagnosis and diagnostic problem oriented decision making.	X		
5.6. Medical records must be comprehensive and maintained in an effective retrieval system (preferably an electronic patient record system) to efficiently support the teaching, research, and service programmes of the VEE.	X		
<b>Standard 6: Learning resources</b>			
6.1. State-of-the-art learning resources must be available to support veterinary education, research, services and continuing education. Timely access to learning resources, whether through print, electronic media or other means, must be available to students and staff and, when appropriate, to stakeholders. State-of-the-art procedures for bibliographical search and for access to databases and learning resources must be taught to undergraduate students.	X		
6.2. Staff and students must have full access on site to an academic library, which is administered by a qualified librarian, an Information Technology (IT) unit, which is managed by an IT expert, an e-learning platform, and the relevant human and physical resources necessary for development by the staff and use by the students of instructional materials.	X		
6.3. The VEE must provide students with unimpeded access to learning resources which include scientific and other relevant literature, internet and internal study resources, and equipment for the development of procedural skills (e.g. models). The use of these resources must be aligned with the pedagogical environment and learning outcomes within the programme, and have mechanisms in place to evaluate the teaching value of innovations in learning resources.	X		
6.4. The relevant electronic information, database and other intranet resources must be easily available for students and staff both in the VEE's core facilities via wireless connection (Wi-Fi) and from outside the VEE via Virtual Private Network (VPN).	X		
<b>Standard 7: Student admission, progression and welfare</b>			
7.1. The selection criteria for admission to the programme must be consistent with the mission of the VEE. The number of students admitted must be consistent with the resources available at the VEE for staff, buildings, equipment, healthy and diseased animals, and materials of animal origin.	X		

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7.2. In relation to enrolment, the VEE must provide accurate information in all advertisements regarding the educational programme by providing clear and current information for prospective students. Further, printed catalogue and electronic information must state the purpose and goals of the programme, provide admission requirements, criteria and procedures, state degree requirements, present VEE descriptions, clearly state information on tuition and fees along with procedures for withdrawal, give necessary information for financial aid programmes, and provide an accurate academic calendar.	X		
7.3. The VEE's website must mention the ESEVT VEE's status and its last Self Evaluation Report and Visitation Report must be easily available for the public.		X	
7.4. The selection and progression criteria must be clearly defined, consistent, and defensible, be free of discrimination or bias, and take account of the fact that students are admitted with a view to their entry to the veterinary profession in due course.	X		
7.5. The VEE must regularly review and reflect on the selection processes to ensure they are appropriate for students to complete the programme successfully, including consideration of their potential to meet all the ESEVT Day One Competences in all common domestic species (see Annex 2).	X		
7.6. Adequate training (including periodic refresher training) must be provided for those involved in the selection process to ensure applicants are evaluated fairly and consistently.	X		
7.7. There must be clear policies and procedures on how applicants with disabilities or illnesses will be considered and, if appropriate, accommodated in the programme, taking into account the requirement that all students must be capable of meeting the ESEVT Day One Competences by the time they graduate.	X		
7.8. The basis for decisions on progression (including academic progression and professional fitness to practise) must be explicit and readily available to the students. The VEE must provide evidence that it has mechanisms in place to identify and provide remediation and appropriate support (including termination) for students who are not performing adequately.	X		
7.9. The VEE must have mechanisms in place to monitor attrition and progression and be able to respond and amend admission selection criteria (if permitted by national or university law) and student support if required.	X		
7.10. Mechanisms for the exclusion of students from the programme for any reason must be explicit.	X		
7.11. VEE policies for managing appeals against decisions, including admissions, academic and progression decisions and exclusion, must be transparent and publicly available.	X		
7.12. Provisions must be made by the VEE to support the physical, emotional and welfare needs of students. This includes, but is not limited to, learning support and counselling services, careers advice, and fair and transparent mechanisms for dealing with student illness, impairment and disability during the programme This shall include provision of reasonable accommodations/adjustments for disabled students, consistent with all relevant equality and/or human rights legislation.	X		
7.13. There must be effective mechanisms for resolution of student grievances (e.g. interpersonal conflict or harassment).	X		
7.14. Mechanisms must be in place by which students can convey their needs and wants to the VEE.	X		
7.15. The VEE must provide students with a mechanism, anonymously if they wish, to offer suggestions, comments and complaints regarding compliance of the VEE with the ESEVT standards.	X		
<b>Standard 8: Student assessment</b>			
8.1. The VEE must ensure that there is a clearly identified structure within the VEE showing lines of responsibility for the assessment strategy to ensure coherence of the overall assessment regime and to allow the demonstration of progressive development across the programme towards entry level competence.	X		
8.2. The assessment tasks and grading criteria for each unit of study in the programme must be clearly identified and available to students in a timely manner well in advance of the assessment.	X		
8.3. Requirements to pass must be explicit.	X		
8.4. Mechanisms for students to appeal against assessment outcomes must be explicit.	X		
8.5. The VEE must have a process in place to review assessment outcomes and to change assessment strategies when required.	X		
8.6. programme learning outcomes covering the full range of professional knowledge, skills, competences and attributes must form the basis for assessment design and underpin decisions on progression.	X		
8.7. Students must receive timely feedback on their assessments.	X		
8.8. Assessment strategies must allow the VEE to certify student achievement of learning objectives at the level of the programme and individual units of study.		X	
8.9. Methods of formative and summative assessment must be valid and reliable and comprise a variety of approaches. Direct assessment of clinical skills and Day One Competences (some of which may be on simulated patients), must form a significant component of the overall process of assessment. It must also include the quality control of the students logbooks in order to ensure that all clinical procedures, practical and hands-on training planned in the study programme have been fully completed by each individual student.	X		
<b>Standard 9: Academic and support staff</b>			
9.1. The VEE must ensure that all staff are appropriately qualified and prepared for their roles, in agreement with the national and EU regulations. A formal training (including good teaching and evaluation practices, learning and e-learning resources, biosecurity and QA procedures) must be in place for all staff involved with teaching. Most FTE academic staff involved in veterinary training must be veterinarians. It is expected that greater than 2/3 of the instruction that the students receive, as determined by student teaching hours, is delivered by qualified veterinarians.	X		
9.2. The total number, qualifications and skills of all staff involved with the programme, including teaching staff, 'adjunct' staff, technical, administrative and support staff, must be sufficient and appropriate to deliver the educational programme and fulfil the VEE's mission.	X		
9.3. Staff who participate in teaching must have received the relevant training and qualifications and must display competence and effective teaching skills in all relevant aspects of the curriculum that they teach, regardless of whether they are full or part time, residents, interns or other postgraduate students, adjuncts or off-campus contracted teachers.	X		
9.4. Academic positions must offer the security and benefits necessary to maintain stability, continuity, and competence of the academic staff. Academic staff should have a balanced workload of teaching, research and service depending on their role; and should have reasonable opportunity and resources for participation in scholarly activities.	X		
9.5. The VEE must provide evidence that it utilises a well-defined, comprehensive and publicised programme for the	X		

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professional growth and development of academic and support staff, including formal appraisal and informal mentoring procedures. Staff must have the opportunity to contribute to the VEE's direction and decision making processes.			
9.6. Promotion criteria for academic and support staff must be clear and explicit. Promotions for teaching staff must recognise excellence in, and (if permitted by the national or university law) place equal emphasis on all aspects of teaching (including clinical teaching), research, service and other scholarly activities.	X		
<b>Standard 10: Research programmes, continuing and postgraduate education</b>			
10.1. The VEE must demonstrate significant and broad research activities of staff that integrate with and strengthen the veterinary degree programme through research-based teaching.	X		
10.2. All students must be trained in scientific method and research techniques relevant to evidence-based veterinary medicine.	X		
10.3. All students must have opportunities to participate in research programmes.	X		
10.4. The VEE must provide advanced postgraduate degree programmes, e.g. PhD, internships, residencies and continuing education programmes that complement and strengthen the veterinary degree programme and are relevant to the needs of the profession and society.	X		
<b>Standard 11: Outcome Assessment and Quality Assurance</b>			
11.1. The VEE 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 VEE 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 VEE must ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.	X		
11.4. The VEE 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 VEE 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 VEE 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 VEE must ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.	X		
11.8. The VEE must publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible.	X		
11.9. The VEE 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 VEE must undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis.	X		
<i>C: (total or substantial) compliance; PC: partial compliance (Minor Deficiency); NC: non-compliance (Major Deficiency)</i>			

## **Executive Summary**

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Padua was formally founded in 1992. In 2010, it was included in the School of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine and subdivided in two departments, i.e. Department of Animal medicine, Production and Health, and Department of Comparative Biomedicine and Food Sciences (which are called the Veterinary Education Establishment (VEE) in this report).

The VEE was evaluated by EAEVE in 2000 and in 2010 and granted the status of ‘Approval’ by ECOVE.

The SER was provided on time and written in agreement with the SOP 2016. Replies to the pre-Visitation questions from the experts were provided before the start of the Visitation. Minor inaccuracies in the SER were corrected before the start of the Visitation. In agreement with the Exceptional Rules for ESEVT Visitations linked to the Covid-19 outbreak, an Addendum was also provided on time for explaining how the outbreak has affected the VEE and what actions have been taken to alleviate the impact of the lockdown.

Because of the restrictions to travel linked to the Covid-19 outbreak, the Visitation was postponed from March to October 2020 and three experts had to complete the Visitation remotely, as agreed by ECOVE. Webinars were organised daily between the onsite and remote team members and, whenever it was necessary, between the remote experts and the relevant local colleagues.

Despite this difficult context, the Visitation was very well organised and was in agreement with the ‘Exceptional Rules for ESEVT Visitations linked to the Covid-19 outbreak’ and with the ‘Minimum requirements concerning health and safety measures to protect ESEVT Experts’ health and to prevent the spread of COVID-19’, as adopted by ExCom in June 2020. The Liaison Officer did a great job to adapt the schedule of the Visitation, to search for the requested information, to organise the relevant meetings and e-meetings, and to ensure the health and safety of the Visitors.

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

- ) commitment of staff to provide research-based education;
- ) high level of availability of staff to undergraduate and graduate students;
- ) effective collaboration with local stakeholders, e.g. shelters, farms, public health services;
- ) effective implementation of biosecurity rules in general and efficient adaptation to the Covid-19 challenge in particular;
- ) effective and efficient response to student’s feedback;
- ) excellent teacher to student ratio;
- ) support of the recent national ‘Inclusive University’ initiative;
- ) formal training opportunities for all categories of staff;
- ) access of undergraduate students to a broad range of research projects for their final year thesis.

Additional commendations are described in the Visitation Report.

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

- ) partial compliance with Substandard 4.3. because of sub-optimal size of some buildings, in view of the expected increase in caseload and junior staff;
- ) partial compliance with Substandard 4.6. because of sub-optimal storage and recording of pharmaceutical products and sub-optimal first-aid boxes;
- ) partial compliance with Substandard 4.7. because of sub-optimal recording of the use of teaching animals.
- ) partial compliance with Substandard 7.3. because the SER and Visitation Report of the previous ESEVT Visitation are not easily available on the VEE website;
- ) partial compliance with Substandard 8.8. because of no coordinated overall assessment strategy.

Additional suggestions for improvement are described in the Visitation Report.

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

None.

## **Glossary**

BCA: Department of Comparative Biomedicine and Food Science

EAEVE: European Association of VEEs for Veterinary Education

EBVS: European Board of Veterinary Specialisation

ECOVE: European Committee on Veterinary Education

EPT: External Practical Training

ESEVT: European System of Evaluation of Veterinary Training

ESG: Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area

FSQ: Food Safety and Quality

FTE: Full-Time Equivalent

IT: Information Technology

MAPS: Department of Animal Medicine, Production and Health

PDCA: Plan Do Check Adjust

QA: Quality Assurance

SER: Self Evaluation Report

SOP: Standard Operating Procedure

UNIPD: University of Padua

VEE: Veterinary Education Establishment

VPH: Veterinary Public Health

VTH: Veterinary Teaching Hospital

## **Decision of ECOVE**

The Committee concluded that no Major Deficiencies had been identified.

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