VISITATION REPORT

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

On 20 – 24 March 2023

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Introduction

The Royal Institute of Veterinary Medicine was established in 1928 and proclaimed the first graduates in 1932. In 1934, it became the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Sassari (UNISS). Since 1987, it has been called the Department of Veterinary Medicine (called the Veterinary Education Establishment (VEE) in this report), which is one of the 10 Departments of UNISS.
The VEE was originally located in the city centre but moved to its current location in the city's outskirts in 1982.
The VEE is the only veterinary teaching establishment on the island of Sardinia.

The VEE's last ESEVT full Visitation was completed in May 2013, resulting in the Approval status granted by ECOVE.
The VEE was also accredited by the Italian Agency for the Evaluation of the University and Research System (ANVUR) in 2018.

The main developments since the last ESEVT Visitation have been a new strategic plan, enhanced financial autonomy, a revised curriculum, renovation of some buildings, revised biosecurity manual and welfare rules, enhanced communication tools with students and stakeholders, new agreements with public institutions for enhancing extra-mural students' training, new training courses for staff, and additional positions for graduate students.

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

Area 1. Objectives, Organisation and QA Policy

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

1.1.1. Findings
The VEE has a clear Mission and Vision, specified in its Strategic Plan for 2020-2022. Its strategic vision is to "promote creative experience in learning and research activities, staying connected with an open mind to the challenge of continuous improvement and the demands of the constantly changing context of Veterinary Medicine and science".
The strategic objectives are focused on teaching (e.g. to provide students with the tools to practise the basic scientific, theoretical, and practical skills for carrying out the profession - Day One Competences); research (e.g. a multidisciplinary approach in the context of the One World, One Health concept) and "third mission" (e.g. the role of the VEE in relation to stakeholders and society, dealing with animal and human health).
The VEE has a QA process and procedures to develop and follow its mission statement, embracing the ESEVT Standards.

1.1.2. Comments
The VEE strategic plan clearly specifies its mission statement and the measures for its development and implementation. The VEE "Regolamento di Dipartimento" clearly specifies the functions and bodies to support this.

1.1.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

1.1.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.1.

Standard 1.2: The VEE must be part of a university or a higher education institution providing training recognised as being of an equivalent level and formally recognised as such in the respective country.
The person responsible for the veterinary curriculum and the person(s) responsible for the professional, ethical, and academic affairs of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) must hold a veterinary degree.
The decision-making process, organisation and management of the VEE must allow implementation of its strategic plan and of a cohesive study programme, in compliance with the ESEVT Standards.

1.2.1. Findings
The VEE (DVMSS - Department of Veterinary Medicine of Sassari) is part of the public University

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of Sassari (UNISS), operating under the Italian Ministry of University and Research (MUR). It is the only VEE in Sardinia and one of 13 EAEVE-approved veterinary schools in Italy.

The VEE organisation is largely dictated by national legislation. The UNISS Statute determines the organisation, function and composition of Departments, Schools and teaching councils. All other bodies, boards, committees, and services are outlined in departmental regulations and approved by the Department Board and the VEE Council.

The VEE Head, the VEE Course Coordinator and the director of the VTH all hold a veterinary degree.

The functions, compositions, and methods of action of the various statutory and regulatory bodies of the VEE are specified in the DMVSS regulation available on the VEE and UNISS websites. The SER includes an organisation chart and an overview of the composition and functions of VEE statutory and regulatory bodies charged with the implementation of the strategic plan. For special relevance to the study program are:

-) VEE council: Deliberates on the use of resources, structures and equipment, and approves the planning and reporting documents.

-) Department Joint Teachers-Students Committee (JTSC): Identification of criteria monitoring and evaluating teaching and student service activities; propose initiatives to the VEE Council to improve the organisation and the teaching contents.

-) Teaching Committee: coordination activities for teaching initiatives; teaching development plans; teaching innovation and dissemination of good practices; annual reporting on teaching activities.

-) EAEVE Committee: promoting, coordinating and monitoring activities related to quality, with particular reference to the EAEVE parameters.

-) Quality Assurance Commission: supports the VEE Management in implementing the quality assurance policy; promotes the concept of quality throughout the VEE; preparation of forms and templates for the drafting of procedures.

1.2.2. Comments
The mandates, roles, compositions, and interactions of the VEE bodies with various statutory and regulatory bodies are well-defined and accessible on the VEE website.

The decision-making process, organisation and management structure of the VEE are defined by and fully integrated with those of UNISS.

1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

1.2.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.2.

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

1.3.1. Findings
The VEE strategic plan ("Integrated Strategic Plan – ISP") is updated every three years and is available on the VEE's website. The present Strategic Plan is for 2020-2022; the plan for 2023–

2025 will be available in May 2023 and will incorporate and relate to input from the present ESEVT visitation report. The plan includes Objectives, Strategic Orientations, a SWOT analysis and specifications for the roles and mandates of institutional units and committees.

The strategic plan is integrated with the triennial "Development plan" (DP 2021 - 2024 "Piano di Sviluppo"): this is the operating plan that specifies the operative objectives, actions, timeframes, indicators, targets, monitoring, responsibilities, QA and verification criteria.

Furthermore, the triennial Recruitment Plan (RP 2023 - 2025) specifies the criteria and resource attribution for teaching, research, technical and support positions for the different scientific areas. The plans are approved by the VEE Council and rely on input from nominated VEE committees.

The SWOT analysis included in the SER addresses the strategic orientations of teaching, research, and "third mission". Mentioned as a strength in teaching is the attention to the quality of teaching provided, concerning practical activities in small groups. A weakness mentioned is the difficulty in reducing the teaching load to meet the skills required by the international guidelines and the EAEVE system. An opportunity exists to adapt the quality policy within the VEE for the redefinition of processes. Threats include the change in the management processes of the UNISS, which do not align with the VEE's need for flexibility and speed, and the requirements for compliance with the EAEVE parameters of teaching staff.

In 2022, new legal requirements for drawing up planning documents in public organisations with more than 50 employees were enforced, and so UNISS started to develop a new Integrated University Plan. The plan for 2023-2025 has been fully updated and approved in March 2023. The VEE is accordingly updating its current strategy and planning documents so that they will all adhere to the period 2023-2025 and be fully aligned with the UNISS planning schedule.

1.3.2. Comments
The Strategy Plan and the Operating Plan are well integrated, and procedures, timeframes and indicators for its implementation are in place and aligned with the UNISS planning system.

1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

1.3.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.3.

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

1.4.1. Findings
The VEE is part of the UNISS internal QA system that includes all departments: the UNISS Quality Independent Evaluation Committee is in charge of the review and assessment of the UNISS departments, including the VEE, related to teaching activities and student satisfaction. The UNISS/VEE comply with the requirements of the national mandatory Self-assessment,

Assessment, and Accreditation system – ANVUR (under ENQA). The VEE received a full EAEVE accreditation in 2013.

The report from the 2018 ANVUR accreditation commented positively on clear communication and guidelines as well as the well-organised self-assessment of programmes and departments by the key actors of the internal QA. Areas pointed out as needing improvement was: the definition of the roles and tasks of the individual QA actors, effective presence of students in governing bodies, and unclear information flows between the QA structures. Following up on this, the VEE established the QA Commission (QAC) and a working group to define procedures regulating the activities of the VEE and the processes of verification and correction of the same.

The QAC is coordinated by the Deputy President and includes the Didactic Manager, one student and another two persons from the teaching team. QAC is responsible for managing the review process and drafting the annual monitoring form (SMA) and the cyclic report, according to the ANVUR model, and provides support to the QA process of study courses throughout the year.

Central in the QA process is also the Joint Teachers-Students Committee (JTSC), with 6 teachers (assigned from different degree courses within the Department) and 6 elected student representatives. The main task of the JTSC is to draw up the annual report to feed into the QA process; through this, the committee is responsible for monitoring the programme and the quality of teaching in the programme.

Formal stakeholders' meetings are organised at least annually and provide feedback and input to the strategy process. Further, stakeholders are consulted on an ad-hoc basis and the VEE "Third Mission Commission" is charged with developing, implementing and monitoring activities focussed on external partners.

Following the 2013 EAEVE accreditation, the VEE "EAEVE Committee" was charged with monitoring SOPs and suggesting measures to comply with the ESEVT standards.

The different VEE Committees contribute to contents, documents and decisions that are discussed or made by the JTSC and formally approved by the VEE Council. Finalised documents are sent to the UNISS Rector and the General Director and submitted to stakeholders during the annual meeting for criticisms and suggestions.

1.4.2. Comments

The VEE has established a policy and associated written procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of its programmes. The QA system and procedures – and the implementation hereof - have been gradually developed and improved in the last decade, responding to the outcome of the EAEVE accreditation in 2013, the ANVUR accreditation in 2018 and the ongoing work in committees at VEE and UNISS level.

The structures and flows are well-elaborated and systematic, following the phases of the PDCA cycle.

Annex 4 to the SER provides a comprehensive overview of the VEE Quality Policy.

Management is highly dedicated to the continuous development of a quality culture which recognises the importance of quality, and quality assurance.

The involvement of students and stakeholders in the process is well-developed and integrated into the development and follow-up of the strategy.

1.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

1.4.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.4.

Standard 1.5: The VEE must provide evidence that it interacts with its stakeholders and wider society. Such public information must be clear, objective and readily accessible; the information must include up-to-date information about the study programme, views and employment destinations of past students as well as the profile of the current student population.
The VEE's website must mention the ESEVT VEE's status and its last Self Evaluation Report and Visitation Report must be easily available to the public.

1.5.1. Findings
The VEE has procedures for meetings with stakeholders and for feedback to the QA system from such meetings. Apart from teaching and research, the VEE strategy focuses on "Third Mission" objectives, developing opportunities for public engagement, dissemination, guidance, and provision of services to stakeholder and other interested parties.
Stakeholder interaction includes annual meetings with stakeholders (e.g. representatives of Veterinary Associations and areas, industry and practitioners) and new graduates. Minutes of the meetings are available on the VEE website. Furthermore, every year there are formal and non-formal meetings, e.g. study days, round tables, update days and contacts with external public and private actors. The results of the feedback from consultations with the social partners are monitored annually by the Department's QA Commission and by the VDMC (Council) coordinator.
In the 2022 stakeholder meeting, it was agreed, for example, to include a course on "Management of veterinary facilities and communication with the client" in the coming curriculum and to move the teaching of Agricultural Economics and Business Organisation from the first to the third year, to foster a greater awareness of economics.
The VEE communicates information about the study programme, e.g. on teaching staff, committee representatives, prerequisite knowledge required for access, and course descriptions, using the SUA-CdS, the Degree Course Single Annual Report.
The SMA-CdS (Degree Course Annual Monitoring Report) is a synthesis report about indicators related to student career and satisfaction, course attractiveness, occupation, and international exchange.
The EAEVE status and other related information (SER, certificate of approval, interim report) are displayed on the VEE webpage.

1.5.2. Comments
Stakeholder interaction is recognised by the VEE to be incremental for the continuous development of the programme, and strategies and activities have been designated for this purpose.
The VEE communication platform is informative, accessible and with interfaces that reach out to a broader community.

1.5.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

1.5.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.5.

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

Any action planned or taken as a result of this data analysis must be communicated to all those concerned.

1.6.1. Findings

The VEE has elaborated a system for monitoring and periodically reviewing its activities, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The current Strategic Programme (2020-22) was approved in July 2020 by the Council and the plan for 2023-2025 is underway. Input to the strategy process comes from various sources as specified in the QA policy and procedures. This includes the Plan of Operation (2021-2024) – addressing objectives, actions, indicators, targets, monitoring, responsibilities, and ex-post effectiveness verification criteria.

Every 5 years the Veterinary Medicine Degree Council (VMDC) is required to perform a Cycle Review Report (CRR) of the whole course to analyse and identify critical points and suggest corrective action that could be adopted for the subsequent DVMSS course cycle. The last report was completed in 2018 and a new CRR is expected to be completed in 2023.

The annual SUA-CdS/Degree Course Single Annual Report includes yearly updates and changes made to the structures and content of the study programme.

1.6.2. Comments

The monitoring and reviewing system is coherent and applied systematically.

Results hereof are communicated to and discussed with students and stakeholders on a regular and defined basis.

1.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

1.6.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.6.

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

1.7.1. Findings

The last EAEVE visit took place in 2013. The current EAEVE status and the SER are displayed on the VEE's webpage.

Since then, the VEE "EAEVE Committee" has had the task of promoting, coordinating and monitoring the activities related to quality, with particular reference to the EAEVE parameters.

1.7.2. Comments

Apart from the ESEVT review, the VEE undergoes regular review from the national accreditation

agency, ANVUR. The latest ANVUR review in 2018 included recommendations for the UNISS and the VEE QA process, which subsequently have been implemented.

1.7.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

1.7.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.7.

Area 2. Finances

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

2.1.1. Findings
The University of Sassari is a Public University that consists of 10 Departments and is funded by the Italian Ministry of Education, which provides the majority of resources for financial maintenance. Thus, the main resource for VEE's financial maintenance is money obtained from the government and from student fees (which cannot exceed 20% of all revenues). Other income sources are revenues from clinical and diagnostic services, private funds and from research contracts.
The annual balance between expenditures and revenues in the last three years was positive.
According to national law (legge 160/2019, art. 1, paragraphs 590-602) the UNISS (and the DVMSS) the spending limit for the purchase of goods and services cannot exceed the average value incurred for the same purposes in the 2016-2018 period. Expenditure incurred for the implementation of specific research projects and activities, or provided by institutional agreement funded by the EU or other public or private entities are excluded from this expenditure limit.

2.1.2. Comments
The VEE depends mainly on public funding, which is not sufficient to cover all expenses. Due to the limited number of students that can be enrolled, and considering the cost of the practical activities, the veterinary medicine course is one of UNISS's most expensive degree courses and it needs much money to assure the proper quality of teaching.

2.1.3. Suggestions for improvement
It is suggested to rethink the way of distributing funding, paying more emphasis on staff costs.

2.1.4. Decision
The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 2.1. because of suboptimal distribution of funding resulting in inadequate staffing.

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

2.2.1. Findings
The financial management of departmental funds is entirely run by the VEE. Revenues derived from clinical and diagnostic services are managed through the department cost centre. Clinical services may also sign commercial contracts that are approved by the Department Council and are managed by the person in charge of the contract. Revenues for clinical research activity are managed by the academic staff in charge of the project.
The VEE has financial, administrative, and negotiating autonomy, in the terms and within the limits provided for by the Administration, Finance, and Accounting Regulations and the General Regulations of the University, and in compliance with accounting principles. However, according to national law, starting from the year 2020, Universities cannot make purchases of goods and services for amounts greater than the average value entered in the approved balance for the financial years 2016, 2017 and 2018.

2.2.2. Comments
The VEE is not 100 per cent independent in spending money as it wants but it still has a lot of independence in the distribution of revenues.

2.2.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

2.2.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 2.2.

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

2.3.1. Findings
The administrative, accounting, and financial management of the VEE is set by University of Sassari regulations and national legislation. The Department Council approves the Integrated Strategic Plan, a three-year planning document that defines the objectives and goals of the planning of teaching, research and third mission activities. This three-year plan is subject to periodic checks and reviews, normally on an annual basis. The Department Council also deliberates on the resource, facilities, and equipment allocation, the need for investments, and clinical and teaching staff, and, upon the proposal of the Director, approves the planning and reporting documents. The VTH does not have administrative autonomy and its management relies on the VEE's establishment and academic board but represents a cost centre to which costs and revenues from both transfers and income from contracts, agreements and paid services are allocated. The allocation of the resources is done according to the planned costs and a specific allocation plan, which is discussed and approved by the Veterinary Hospital Council and the VEE's board. Income distribution and allocation procedures are governed by the internal regulations of the VEE.

2.3.2. Comments
Resources allocations are reviewed regularly and the VEE has enough independence in making financial decisions.

2.3.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

2.3.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 2.3.

Area 3. Curriculum

Standard 3.1: The curriculum must be designed, resourced and managed to ensure all graduates have achieved the graduate attributes expected to be fully compliant with the EU Directive 2005/36/EC (as amended by directive 2013/55/EU) and its Annex V.4.1. The curriculum must include the subjects (input) and must allow the acquisition of the Day One Competences (output) listed in Annex 2. This concerns Basic Sciences, Clinical Sciences in companion animals (including equine and exotic pets), Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals (including Animal Production and Herd Health Management), Food Safety and Quality, and Professional Knowledge.

3.1.1. General findings

3.1.1.1. Findings
The VEE Council adopts the VEE's curriculum based on input from the Teaching Committee (assessment of teaching quality and student services), Quality Assurance Management Committee (identifies deficiencies of the ESEVT D1Cand proposes corrective actions), Department-Territory Committee (reflects on the needs of the labour market, defining the needs of stakeholders and evaluates the effectiveness of employment). All mentioned committees consist of both student and staff representatives. The follow-up is done every year and every five years, adhering to the VEE/UNISS QA procedures.

The present VEE curriculum has been officially imposed, based on various decrees and laws from 2000 to 2004. It is a 5-year programme divided into 10 semesters allowing the acquisition of 300 ECTS credits in total (1 ECTS credit corresponding to 25h). The course is divided into three phases: the first is focused on the acquisition of basic scientific knowledge; the second includes animal production, clinical science, food safety and quality (FSQ), and veterinary public health (VPH); and the last phase of practical training named Tirocínio (apprenticeship), which can be undertaken outside the VEE in national or foreign affiliated external establishments. This last professional training period is designed to provide additional practical knowledge under appropriate supervision.

Additional 10 ECTS must be awarded by the completion of a graduation thesis which the students submit towards the end of their course. The duration and type of thesis differ from student to student, as they can start their thesis project from the 3rd year of the course onwards, on subjects

agreed upon with the professor of their choice. The final thesis (experimental thesis or compilation thesis) is presented orally for assessment in front of a commission.

The total number of teaching hours in the curriculum is 3,506 (SER Table 3.1.1), including elective subjects. The ten ECTS needed for preparing the graduation thesis are not included in the Table. Another subject not included in Table 3.1.1 is a 33h English Language compulsory course.

A 16h training course on safety and biosecurity in working spaces, also not included in Table 3.1.1 and excluded from the total ECTS, is compulsory for the 1st year students and is evaluated by a final multiple-choice test. Before engaging in any activity in laboratories, clinics, livestock farms, or abattoirs, each teacher provides additional specific relevant information on safety and biosecurity issues to be taken into consideration. In all places where practical activities take place, there are QR codes on display to access the Biosafety Manual using their registration in the UNISS system.

The VEE's website contains information accessible to students including, for many teaching modules, the syllabuses, learning outcomes, Day One Competences (D1C) to be acquired and evaluation criteria**.** However, this information is not fully available for all subjects of the curriculum.

In SER Table 3.1.2 curriculum hours of the various subjects leading to the evidence of formal qualifications in veterinary medicine taken by each student are indicated (ESEVT SOP 2019). There are some subjects on the ESEVT SOP list with no allocated hours such as Information literacy and data management and Animal Welfare. The first subject is addressed in many disciplines, including statistics.

Animal Welfare is currently being addressed both in a dedicated elective course and as a horizontal and vertical topic in various disciplines, making it difficult to quantify the number of hours. A new curriculum to be implemented in 2023/24 provides a course specifically dedicated to this topic.

For Basic Sciences, the ratio between Theoretical and Practical training, calculated by adding laboratory and desk-based work and clinical and non-clinical animal work, is 3/1. This ratio is 1.3/1 in the Clinical Sciences.

Apart from the normal hours of practical teaching provided by various subjects, students also undergo what the VEE designates as "Clinical Rounds", intended to provide practical hands-on activities in each teaching module. These activities range from basic animal management in the first year, to equine, ruminant and exotic animal medicine and mobile clinics in the 4th and 5th years, all taking place before Tirocínio.

As far as the core curriculum is concerned, a high number of hours are allocated to the Tirocínio.

The Tirocínio consists of compulsory training activities taking place within the VEE or externally in the second semester of the 5th year. When Tirocínio takes place outside the VEE, they are directly supervised by a non-academic person named Tutor (e.g. a practitioner). The Tirocínio must be accomplished in four areas: (i) Internal Medicine and Avian Pathology; (ii) Surgery and Obstetrics; (iii) Food Inspection and (iv) Zootechnics.

The Tirocínio can be performed in Italy or abroad as, for example, within the frame of the Erasmus programme. A list of external establishments and Tutors is available for the students to choose from, although proposals for new establishments can also be submitted. Following confirmation that the new establishment is in agreement with the VEE regulations, a formal agreement is signed and the new opportunity for Tirocínio is added to the list.

The VEE guarantees that trainees are covered by an insurance policy for accidents during the performance of the activities, as well as for civil liability and for any damages to people and/or property that may inadvertently occur during the same activities.

Each Tutor must have had a minimum of 5 years of clinical experience and attend a short self-learning dedicated education course provided by the VEE, with a final exam.

At the end of each area of the Tirocínio, the Tutor assesses the work of the trainee by filling in a Trainee evaluation form. Each student must complete his/hers Tirocínio activity in a personal physical booklet (Libretto Diario) which requires sign-off by the Tutor, and in a short descriptive essay. At the end of the EPT period, the external Tutor provides an evaluation of the student's initial preparation, performance and commitment. Following this, the academic tutors for each of the four areas, formulate an overall judgement of the personal booklet. If in one of the four areas the training objectives have not been achieved, the deficient part of the Tirocínio has to be repeated. The entire Tirocínio must be concluded within one year.

In SER Table 3.1.4 several curriculum hours are taken as Electives by each student in the four subject areas of the curriculum: Basic Science, Clinical Science, Animal Production Food Safety and Quality, and Veterinary Public Health and One Health Concept. Students must acquire eight Elective ECTS credits during the five years of the programme. They may choose from a range of subjects proposed by the VEE's teachers. Moreover, students can achieve part of the ECTS credits of the Elective by attending professional seminars or courses under a teacher's supervision, providing they have a duration equal to or greater than eight certified hours, but only after the presentation of a report on the activities carried out. A list of electives is provided in Appendix 2. Some of the subjects indicated consist of a more in-depth study of subjects covered in the core curriculum, such as Veterinary Mycology and Viral Zoonoses.

The teaching process includes formal lectures and practicals, but also other activities performed outside the classrooms and laboratories, mainly in animal accommodation and in the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH), named Clinical Rounds, although they may not directly involve practical clinical activities.

A complete revision of the Curriculum started in 2021 and departmental procedural steps are now completed. Currently, the revision is waiting to be approved by the University of Sassari and its enforcement is expected for the academic year 2023-24. New subjects will be included such as Animal Welfare and Biosafety. Others will be addressing the communication and management of veterinary structures. A re-organisation of practical and clinical training to improve functional management of the veterinary clinics and the revision of the Logbook are also being considered.

3.1.1.2. Comments
In general, the present curriculum includes all subjects indicated in the ESEVT SOP 2019.

However, the information inserted in the SER is not clear regarding the activities that are considered core curriculum as followed by all the students and supervised by both academic and non-academic teaching staff, versus the elective curriculum, followed only by some of the students. This type of inaccurate information is particularly important for the disciplines considered "optional" involving subjects that should be considered "core", such as Veterinary Mycology and Viral Zoonoses.

3.1.1.3. Suggestions for improvement
It is suggested that in the new curriculum, to be implemented in 2023/24, optional disciplines to be offered to the students should be accurately designated and not include subjects that should be core and, therefore, compulsory for all students.

3.1.1.4. Decision
The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.1. because of the suboptimal distinction between core, elective and optional activities in the curriculum.

3.1.2. Basic Sciences

3.1.2.1. Findings
The teaching of most Basic Sciences is included in Table 3.1.2., with the exception of Information literacy and data management and Animal Welfare.

Basic Sciences represent 33% of the curriculum when analysing the total number of hours included in Table 3.5.1.

The number of hours allocated to the various subjects is very variable, some are much smaller than others, such as 23h of lectures and 10h of laboratory work for Microbiology, in contrast with 84 hours of lectures and 39 hours of laboratory work in Parasitology.

For Basic Sciences, the ratio between Theoretical and Practical training, calculated by adding laboratory and desk-based work and clinical and non-clinical animal work, is 3/1.

Practical laboratory activities usually have to be repeated three times for groups of 8 to 16 students. In Anatomy practicals with organs brought from the slaughterhouse, the students are organised into two groups of six per dissection table (the same model is used in human autopsies). For self-study in the Anatomy of bones and joints, students use a large room equipped with whole skeletons and collections of bones and anatomy models. This room is accessible to students outside of lectures.

In Histology, the laboratory is equipped with sixteen binocular microscopes, providing one for each student, and sets of glass slides of tissues or organs are provided.

In Pathology, part of the practicals involves the recognition of macroscopic lesions in several organs obtained from the slaughterhouse. During these practicals, twelve 3rd year students are divided into four dissection tables in the necropsy room, provided also with a low table with wheels for the necropsy of cadavers of large animals.

Before starting clinical activities, all students carry out preparatory activities, organised in groups

and consisting of practicals planned in all years of the curriculum, including non-clinical animal work, laboratory and desk-based work, and simulations on anatomical preparations and animal models (dummies). Additionally, some teachers of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd years use part of the practical training hours of their courses at the VTH, associating some clinical activities with the specific objectives of their course that are then carried out by students in so-called "Orientamento" (translated in the SER by "Clinical Rounds"), consisting of hands-on activities, beyond the normal hours of clinical practice provided in the course of clinical teaching.

3.1.2.2. Comments
In general, Basic Sciences teaching is well covered in the VEE, with good opportunities for good quality training, considering the low number of students and consequent advantageous staff/student ratio. However, there is a large variation in the number of contact hours, and distribution between theoretical and practical teaching. A good example of equilibrium between lectures and laboratory work, considering the large amount of information that has to be delivered to veterinary students, is Parasitology. There will certainly be other subjects equivalent to Parasitology in this aspect, but a good example helps convey the idea more clearly.

3.1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement
It is suggested that the VEE should pay attention to the objectives and syllabus of the various Basic Sciences, particularly in the new curriculum, to assure that essential basic knowledge is acquired by all students in an equilibrated manner in subjects so important as those dealing with infectious agents.

3.1.2.4. Decision
The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.2. because of suboptimal teaching of some essential basic subjects.

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

3.1.3.1. Findings
Students develop and are assessed on their attainment of all D1Cs in relevant years, especially through compulsory intra- and extra-mural PPT (core clinical training) in Year 5.
Before starting PPT or EPT, students must carry out preparatory activities, e.g. non-clinical animal work, laboratory and desk-based work, and simulations on anatomical preparations and animal models. Thus, PPT and EPT follow the teaching and examination in Year 4 of clinical subjects relevant to the diagnosis and treatment of companion animal, equine and exotic pet conditions, namely Infectious Diseases, Semiotics, Laboratory Diagnostics, Medical and Surgical Pathology, Obstetrics, Radiology, Surgery and Internal Medicine, including legislation, professional ethics, safety, animal welfare and zoo-anthropology. Students must also obtain eight ECTS in elective courses: those directly relevant to companion animals include genetics, abdominal ultrasound, behavioural pathology, and pet nutrition.

In Year 5, students who have passed the preparatory exams can start PPT (clinical rotations) and EPT.

For PPT, all students participate in supervised activities with companion animals on a defined rota,

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but can also attend animals voluntarily:

In Year 2 (4th semester only), these compulsory and voluntary activities involve pairs of students working in the VTH with companion animals on a rota for morning, evening and weekend shifts under the supervision of academic staff and supported by 5th year students.

In Year 3, students undertake shifts in the VTH, the Municipal Kennels, and an exotic pets practice. Activities involve the management of animals and animal housing, and the treatment of patients.

In Year 4, students participate in "Clinical Rounds" on both livestock, equids and companion animals. Activities include consultations and hospitalisations, Surgery, Anaesthesia and Obstetrics, Internal Medicine, Mobile clinics for equids, and Exotic Pets and Wildlife. An out-of-hours emergency service is not currently in operation.

During the 5th year, students participate in PPT in the VTH in the areas of reproduction, surgery (including anaesthesiology and radiology) and internal medicine in companion animals, equids, and exotic pets (including avian pathology). Students undertake these activities in groups of no greater than three persons. All students are supervised in the performance of at least one companion animal neutering, but typically perform 3-5 such surgeries; students are involved in the anaesthesia of the patient and also scrub-in as second surgeons or act as the theatre assistant. In the 9th semester only, students undertake weekend shifts in the VTH, the Municipal Kennels, an exotic pets practice, equine and donkey facilities including a stud, and in a wildlife centre. Extramural PPT takes place in the Municipal Kennels, Horse clinics and breeding centre, and a Wildlife Centre. In the Municipal Kennels, students perform examinations of stray dogs that are being admitted and administer vaccinations and anti-parasiticides, treat any ill dog and perform minor procedures such as dentals. Dogs requiring surgery, including neutering, are transferred by the Kennels to the VTH.

In year 5, students must undertake a minimum of four weeks of EPT with companion animals. EPT can be intramural, i.e. in the VTH or self-selected external placements including international placements through mobility schemes such as the Erasmus programme.

3.1.3.2. Comments

There is good supervision of students in the VTH when they attend cases and students are clearly involved in the diagnosis and treatment of patients. However, the number of cases is inadequate. The VTH is not open on a 24/7 basis and consequently has a very low caseload. This is a result of inadequate clinical and technical staffing precluding 24/7 care and so patients are not hospitalised overnight. This impacts the students' exposure to sufficient case numbers. Furthermore, there is no companion animal emergency service in PPT. Students may attend a local veterinary practice out of hours, but they are not supervised by trained staff and therefore this is not extra-mural PPT and cannot be considered as compensation for the low caseload in the VTH. There is, however, partial compensation by students attending the Municipal Dog Kennels where hands-on training is supervised by teaching staff. In addition to that, the absence of 24/7 emergency services is partially compensated by the fact that students are involved in emergency cases in the VTH during the day.

3.1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the recruitment of new clinical and technical staff (or reassignment of technical staff within the VEE) is prioritised in order to allow a 24/7 service in the VTH to operate and thereby increase the caseload. The appointment of a professional practice manager may help the development of a larger caseload.

3.1.3.4 Decision
The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.3. because of suboptimal clinical training in companion animals.

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

3.1.4.1. Findings
Compulsory training in Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals is included in the clinical rounds, starting with daily management activities on livestock animals present at the VEE and pre-clinical animal training during years 1 and 2 of the Degree program. Theoretical and practical aspects of education in clinical sciences in food-producing animals are concentrated in the final years. In the SER, all PPT activities in Animal Production are incorrectly identified as EPT (Table 3.1.3.).

Regarding animal production and herd health management, each student has to take 258 curriculum course hours, mainly as lectures, including 62 hours of non-clinical animal work. In addition to the core curriculum, 24 hours of elective courses on animal production are offered (with 20 hours of lectures and seminars and 4 hours of non-clinical animal work).

Due to the low number of animals present at the VEE, hands-on training on bovines, ruminants and pigs takes place mostly as extramural clinical activities, including in clinical rounds outside the VTH and in ambulatory clinics. The VEE has a Herd Health Management Service, run by academic staff, giving opportunities to students to visit local farms in small groups, as part of the training in the mobile clinic. Students have opportunities to gain more experience with farm animals by doing voluntary work at the Teaching Farm.

3.1.4.2. Comments
It is commendable that students have access to non-clinical work on food-producing animals, such as farm management practice from the first curricular years.
The low number of food-producing animals present in the VEE is fully compensated by the extramural training.
A considerable amount of clinical training on food-producing animals is also included as EPT.

3.1.4.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

3.1.4.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.4.

3.1.5. Food Safety and Quality

3.1.5.1. Findings
The main concept of the VEE for training the students in the area of FSQ is dealing with both

animal and human health from a One Health perspective.

Training on FSQ is provided through two integrated courses, scheduled in the 7th and 8th semesters of the curriculum, respectively: "Food Industries and quality control of foods" (9 ECTS) and "Inspection, control and certification of Foods of animal origin" (9 ECTS). "Food industries and quality control of Foods" is divided into 4 teaching modules: Food Industries and inspection of products of animal origins (6 ECTS); Food Legislation (1 ECTS); Food safety and hygienic management of food production (2 ECTS). It also includes practical activities focused on the HACCP work project (9 hours).

"Inspection, control and certification of foods of animal origin" (9 ECTS) is divided into 4 teaching modules: Inspection and control of fish products (2 ECTS); Inspection of meat products, eggs and honey (2 ECTS); Inspection and control of fresh meat (2 ECTS); Practical work in slaughterhouses (2 ECTS) and Career guidance activity (Orientamento- 1 ECTS)–- this activity is related to Food Inspection, which corresponds to 25 hours of practice without any theoretical activity, it is held in rabbit and poultry slaughterhouses and supervised by a teacher.

Additionally, students can choose FSQ electives (40 hours, including 8 hours of non-clinical animal work). However, during the academic year 2022-23, there were not any electives related to FSQ that could be chosen by students.

The DVMSS is equipped with its own teaching processing dairy and meat processing unit that allows the students to acquire the main techniques for the production of cheese and fermented sausages. Students have a total of 8 hours of practical training there. However, the main part of the practical activities is carried out in external slaughterhouses and food processing establishments. There is a formal agreement with the local sanitary authority allowing students to visit slaughterhouses and food processing establishments during practical training.

Practical activities related to the regular classes (about 6-8 students per group) are supervised by the teacher and supported by the VPH veterinarians. The extramural practical training (at least 42 hours dedicated to FSQ) takes place in slaughterhouses, food processing plants and official veterinary inspections supervised by official VPH inspectors and is verified by the academic staff.

The VEE also has a virtual slaughterhouse (bespoke computer software) which is used before the real visit to the slaughterhouse, to familiarise the students theoretically with all activities related to the slaughtering process and veterinarian activities in slaughterhouses.

3.1.5.2. Comments
The virtual slaughterhouse is a very good idea for preparing students for practical visits to such establishments.
During the FSQ subjects, students get enough practical experiences. Official veterinary inspectors who assist teachers during practical classes are very helpful, well-qualified and very eager to explain to students all matters related to their work.

3.1.5.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

3.1.5.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.5.

3.1.6. Professional Knowledge

3.1.6.1. Findings
Subject matter linked to professional knowledge is to be found in SER Table 3.1.2 and is incorporated into lectures, seminars, electives and optional courses. These topics include, inter alia, informatics technology (50h), professional ethics and communication (36h), animal health economics and practice management (30h), clinical practical training in common animal species (125h), herd health management (118h) and veterinary legislation (36h). The competences relating to the development of skills, knowledge and attributes are delivered throughout years 1-5.

3.1.6.2. Comments
The skills, knowledge and attitudes required of the graduate to be competent are well assimilated in an environment with small numbers of students. The attributes professionals acquire or have like resilience, adaptability, self-efficiency and indeed optimism are more difficult outcomes to anticipate or predict. Subjects given no specific curriculum hours in Table 3.1.3, for example, animal welfare, are covered as horizontal and vertical topics embedded in various disciplines and there is the opportunity to embed them in the new curriculum being developed for 2023-2024.

3.1.6.3. Suggestions for improvement
It is suggested that further training in communication skills be part of the new curriculum.

3.1.6.4 Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.6.

Standard 3.2: Each study programme provided by the VEE must be competency-based and designed so that it meets the objectives set for it, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme must be clearly specified and communicated and must refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.
The VEE must provide proof of a QA system that promotes and monitors the presence of an academic environment highly conducive to learning including self-learning. Details of the type, provision and updating of appropriate learning opportunities for the students must be clearly described, as well as the involvement of students.
The VEE must also describe how it encourages and prepares students for self-learning and lifelong learning.

3.2.1. Findings
The study programme provided by the VEE – available on the VEE's website – summarises the study programme's goals, its expected learning outcomes, and the qualification to be achieved. The programme's qualification complies with European and Italian laws, following the training standards of the European accreditation system. Following the introduction of the 2019 SOP, the

Internal EAEVE Committee started a revision process which led to the updating of all the Syllabi of the teaching modules to specify the D1Cs to be achieved.

The QAC and the JTSC are key in the QA of the study programme and are specifically charged with identifying and proposing corrective actions for curricular overlaps, redundancies, omissions and lack of consistency. The QAC is responsible for managing the review process and drafting the annual monitoring form (SMA) and the cyclic report, according to the ANVUR model, and provides support to the QA process of study courses throughout the year. The Degree Course President (DCP) is responsible for organising the QA of the study programme itself and carries out functions related to QA and is part of the QAC, together with the Deputy President, the Didactic Manager, one student and two teachers.

The JTSC - composed of 6 assigned teachers and 6 students elected among the representatives – is responsible for monitoring the programme and the quality of teaching. The main task of the JTSC is to draw up the annual report, and to carry out continuous monitoring of the training and the quality of teaching; monitor student service activities from teachers and technical-administrative staff; identify indicators for evaluating the results of the training offer; make proposals for improving the quality of the degree course.

Based on regular input from the QAC and JTSC, the VEE Council and VMDC are responsible for the continuous improvement of the training, activities and services offered. In the context of QA, the VEE Council is responsible for the design and management of the programme and the VDMC decides on the educational organisation of the study program and ensures the quality of the educational activities, makes proposals for the organisation and teaching assignments, considering the requirements necessary for the sustainability of the programme.

Quality of learning is focused on 'problem-solving' competences that allow the student to acquire specific 'evidence-based' knowledge and skills. The educational objectives of the course are aimed at providing students with the cultural background, basic knowledge and practical skills necessary to carry out the profession of a veterinarian in all relevant sectors. As part of the QA policy, these objectives are constantly updated to meet the needs of stakeholders, and to ensure the constant learning and development of scientific knowledge.
Teaching methods are characterised by a balanced teaching load, to allow students to constantly learn to acquire competences by applying knowledge, making independent judgements, and using professional communication. For this purpose, practical activities are carried out in small groups (5-6 students for lab and clinical activities and 10-12 for non-clinical activities), promoting close contact between students and teachers, and an environment conducive to learning. A self-learning web area for students and staff (3 courses for each group) is available and is expected to be developed further. A special physical "Nutrition Corner" allows students an innovative opportunity to explore and experience a series of aspects related to feed and nutrition. The curricular process is found to provide a basis for lifelong learning, making the new graduates ready to attend postgraduate training courses.

The VEE has received funds from the regional government for an "integrated development project for accreditation of the training of veterinary medicine in Sardinia according to European standards". The aim is "to take actions in the short term to increase the Course's level of compliance with European standards (EAEVE) and lay the basis for implementing best practices and innovative

solutions in the organisational and educational processes". The project includes a 3-year contract for a quality assurance manager.

3.2.2. Comments

The dedicated efforts to develop a QA culture are to be praised, and staff and students are aware and appreciative of the efforts related hereto.

The proposed appointment of a dedicated QA manager will support the rooting of the initiatives to strengthen the QA processes and should relieve academic staff from some of the time-consuming activities related to documentation and formal processes.

3.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.2.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.2.

Standard 3.3: Programme learning outcomes must:
- **ensure the effective alignment of all content, teaching, learning and assessment activities of the degree programme to form a cohesive framework**
- **include a description of Day One Competences**
- **form the basis for explicit statements of the objectives and learning outcomes of individual units of study**
- **be communicated to staff and students**
- **be regularly reviewed, managed and updated to ensure they remain relevant, adequate and are effectively achieved.**

3.3.1. Findings

The course catalogue with specified programme learning outcomes is included in the "Degree Course Single Annual Report"/ "SUA-CdS" (2021-2022), which is updated annually.

It defines the objectives, learning outcomes, and the obtained qualification. The annual management of this document provides for regular reviewing and assessment of the learning outcomes and update of objectives. The SUA-CdS is stated as a crucial document that allows verification, assessment and review of the training objectives, teaching pathway and quality, learning outcomes, and roles and responsibilities associated with the management of the QA system.

For each course in the programme, a description of how the learning outcomes relate to the Day One Competences is included. Appendix 2 of the SER and the elaborated matrix shows the match between the D1Cs and the subjects covered in the curriculum.

3.3.2. Comments

The VEE is renewing the programme to better integrate and include the needs of the current work market by covering topics such as aquaculture, beekeeping and One Health.

The Day One Competences are well known to students and are referred to in the course descriptions, the logbooks, video tutorials and wall posters with QR codes.

3.3.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

3.3.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.3.

Standard 3.4: The VEE must have a formally constituted committee structure (which includes effective student representation), with clear and empowered reporting lines, to oversee and manage the curriculum and its delivery. The committee(s) must:
- **determine the pedagogical basis, design, delivery methods and assessment methods of the curriculum**
- **oversee QA of the curriculum, particularly gathering, evaluating, making change and responding to feedback from stakeholders, peer reviewers and external assessors, and data from examination/assessment outcomes**
- **perform ongoing and periodic review of the curriculum at least every seven years by involving staff, students and stakeholders; these reviews must lead to continuous improvement. Any action taken or planned as a result of such a review must be communicated to all those concerned**
- **identify and meet training needs for all types of staff, maintaining and enhancing their competence for the ongoing curriculum development.**

3.4.1. Findings
The QA policy of the VEE - under the umbrella of UNISS - supports a formally constituted committee structure (which includes student representation), with defined reporting lines, to oversee and manage the curriculum and its delivery. The outcome of the review process feeds into the annual reporting and is subsequently presented and communicated in the SUA-CdS.
The main entities in the curriculum QA process include:
JTSC collects, discusses, evaluates suggestions, and drafts proposals for the improvement of the curriculum quality and is responsible for monitoring the programme and the quality of teaching.
Minor adjustments are addressed directly in the short term; for example, in case of overlapping of programs reported by students in the quality questionnaires, they are directly implemented through the communication of the students' findings to the teachers concerned.
The EAEVE Committee proposes adjustments to constantly adapt the course to current needs. These proposals are discussed in the VEE Council and, in case, give the start to the needed adjustments.
QAC deals with all aspects of quality assurance within the programme, through acquiring the students' and neo-graduates' opinions, analysing weaknesses and strengths of the programme and proposing possible corrections, necessary for the Annual and Cyclic Report drafting.
Minutes from the committee meetings are available on the VEE intranet.

3.4.2. Comments
The VEE has a well-established committee structure with representatives of staff and students, who take an active part in meetings.
The JTSC is well known and acknowledged by students and staff as a forum where a broad variety of programme-related issues are addressed, discussed and followed up on.

3.4.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

3.4.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.4.

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

3.5.1. Findings
Information regarding EPT is available at the interactive link, aptly named 'LINK', covering locations outside the university, the rules, the documents and the forms required. For clinical areas, at least two weeks (10 working days) have to be spent in one or more facilities and documented in two booklets, a paper format (diary) to be signed by the external tutor and an online form. The external structures can be national universities, foreign universities (Erasmus programmes), private clinics by agreement and public structures with clinical activities. This EPT is subdivided into three areas; 1) Internal Medicine 2) Surgery and 3) Obstetrics and Gynaecology. Practical Training in Animal Production takes up to 200 hours within 48 consecutive days and may be carried out internally under the supervision of the academic teachers but is usually performed as EPT. Zootechnical EPT can be carried out at a number of external structures, for example, Area C of the Local Health Company for veterinary assistance (ASL Area C), the IZS (Agris Sardegna, Laore, Forestry Authority, Wildlife Recovery and Breeding Centres). For this, students are encouraged to train at two distinct external structures and with different external tutors to enhance their experience.

Practical training in FSQ consists of EPT activities, 175h divided over 42 days, of which 36h is mandatory training in food hygiene mentored by an official veterinarian at the veterinary service of the official control authority (ASL area Band C). The rest of the EPT, 139h over 32 days, can be spent at a veterinary service of the students' choice or other public or private structures (e.g. food establishment or public or private laboratory). Official control veterinarians are qualified tutors. At the end of EPT, the achievement of the student's objectives is certified by the tutor signing the Annex 4 form for mandatory activities and the daily activity booklet. D1Cs are reported in each individual training project, both for clinical and non-clinical topics with the external tutor giving an evaluation of the student's preparation and commitment and making suggestions. Following the evaluation of these reports, the teacher responsible for the area of competence gives an overall assessment to be reported in the personal booklet.

3.5.2. Comments
Students can choose the location and content of their EPT and sufficient time needs to be spent preferably in more than one location and with different approved tutors to enhance professional

knowledge, acquire D1Cs and become familiar with the structure and function of the relevant business environment. An appreciation of the distinction of Practical Training being core clinical training (PPT) which one hundred per cent of the student body receives, delivered under academic supervision and EPT which is elective but still mandatory and supervised by approved tutors is essential.

3.5.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

3.5.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.5.

Standard 3.6: The EPT providers must have an agreement with the VEE and the student (in order to state their respective rights and duties, including insurance matters), provide a standardised evaluation of the performance of the student during their EPT and be allowed to provide feedback to the VEE on the EPT programme.
There must be a member of the academic staff responsible for the overall supervision of the EPT, including liaison with EPT providers.

3.6.1. Findings
A formal procedure with EPT providers assesses all aspects of the EPT. The teacher responsible for her/his area of competence evaluates the reports received by the student from the external tutor and formulates an overall judgement for the area of competence. If the defined educational objectives, or part of them, have not been achieved and acquired, the ECTS are not granted and the EPT period relative to that area must be repeated. The EPT of the 4 areas must be concluded within 365 days from its start. The VEE provides an insurance policy and civil liability coverage for the students during their activities at the EPT. This policy is renewed every five years. Conventions with the EPT providers are constantly renewed and updated by the VEE.

3.6.2. Comments
The formal procedures in place with the VEE assure the students that placements will be safeguarded for the provision of the contracted services. Insurance covering civil liability for the students is an essential component of the arrangements to facilitate the tutor's ability to avoid potential financial loss in the event of unforeseen mishaps or perhaps worse.

3.6.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

3.6.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.6.

Standard 3.7: Students must take responsibility for their own learning during EPT. This includes preparing properly before each placement, keeping a proper record of their experience during EPT by using a logbook provided by the VEE and evaluating the EPT. Students must be allowed to complain officially and/or anonymously about issues occurring

during EPT. The VEE must have a system of QA to monitor the implementation, progress and then feedback within the EPT activities.

3.7.1. Findings

The student is in charge of making arrangements for their EPT with advice from the teacher of each area and their external tutor according to the acquisition of the needed competences. The students document the learned competences in their logbook and daily diary or written report. In this, they note their daily activities, feedback and verification from the external tutor. The students can make complaints, either anonymously or officially, at any time through forms available on the VEEs website. The VEE's PPT committee organises annual monitoring of each EPT to check for non-conformities, of which it makes a report. This report is evaluated by the QAC of the VEE.

3.7.2. Comments

The student has to plan in advance and make arrangements following a definite procedure but makes a choice of what and where the learning during the EPT takes place. The system of feedback and verifications evaluated by the QAC system of the VEE is efficient.

3.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.7.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.7.

Area 4. Facilities and equipment

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

4.1.1. Findings

The VEE is situated on the via Vienna campus at the southern periphery of Sassari with the Departments of Chemistry and Pharmacy, Mathematics, Physics and Natural Sciences. All teaching is undertaken on the via Vienna campus except for an ambulatory service and in the Municipal Dog Kennels and during extra-mural EPT.

The campus has good road links with the main University campus in Sassari and to the south of Sardinia. Bicycle and pedestrian paths and public bus routes link the two campuses, and students receive discounts on bus travel to the campus. The campus borders are secured by fencing with controlled access points. The campus is within walking distance of a government-funded Zooprophylactic Institute and a commercial Horse Race Centre. Wi-fi is available across the whole campus.

There is no student accommodation nor any catering or recreational facilities on the via Vienna

campus: only snacks and drinks are available from machines and one microwave oven is available to students. The nearest student accommodation and catering facilities are 15-20 minutes' walk away where some accommodation is prioritised for students with reduced mobility. The Library is adjacent to the Main Building.

The four-storey Main Building of the DVMSS (construction completed by 1982) consists of a central hub with two wings. It houses the departmental administration offices, lecture theatres, classrooms, a library, teaching and research laboratories (including a Comparative Surgery Research Centre), a Pet Behaviour service, a zoological museum, staff offices and student self-study areas. There is a dedicated student space and study area within the main building and also sheltered tables with seats for quiet study in external green spaces. All levels of the Main Building are wheelchair accessible via lifts.

A purpose-built necropsy facility is housed adjacent to pens for the teaching farm. It is very well equipped with five negatively ventilated necropsy tables with monitoring of atmospheric formalin concentrations and well-maintained PPE for students.

The VTH for small and large animals is adjacent to the Main Building with a small teaching farm and isolation facilities also on the via Vienna campus. The public entrance to the VTH leads to reception and a large waiting room. Corridors lead to a large consultation/treatment room for student-led consultations, other rooms are for consultations of first opinion cases and specialities including cardiology, exotics and nutrition, a locked pharmacy, kitchen, and patient, quarantine and isolation cages facilities. A student study room is present as well as typical service rooms including a patient kitchen. In an adjacent building are areas for preparation, anaesthesia induction and operating theatres for companion animal and equid surgery, and for radiology and flexible endoscopy. Two boxes are available to accommodate horses as well as places on the teaching farm. Finally, in part of a third building, an open MR machine, suitable for both companion animals and equids, and a 64-slice CT are present but are not in use.

The VEE also uses external veterinary clinics, farms, an equine breeding centre, a donkey sanctuary, a wildlife centre, a municipal dog kennel, a fish market, slaughterhouses and food processing facilities for core clinical teaching. There are plans to upgrade the teaching farm whilst the development of a Mediterranean Centre for Disease Control is already underway.

Small animal isolation facilities are present in the VTH, but large animal isolation facilities are temporarily unavailable during the construction of the Mediterranean Centre for Disease Control. As compensation, the VEE has adapted a pen to act as a temporary isolation facility that will facilitate the performance of all expected biosecurity protocols.

There is a pilot plant for the practical teaching of meat and dairy processing in FSQ.

The University has strategies for the maintenance and upgrades of facilities whilst operational policies for digital infrastructure, H&S compliance and biosecurity are implemented by the VEE. A comprehensive Biosecurity Manual is required reading for all students and is accessible by QR codes placed at the entrance to laboratories and animal facilities. Animal facilities meet expected animal welfare and care standards.

4.1.2. Comments
The campus provides a pleasant, leafy environment conducive to teaching and study although there are no social spaces for staff-student interactions.

4.1.3. Suggestions for improvement
It is suggested that UNISS is lobbied for the establishment of communal space(s) for staff and students on campus.

4.1.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.1.

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

4.2.1. Findings
There are eight lecture theatres, of which four can accommodate > 100 students but three have too few seats (i.e. < 45), for a whole-year student cohort as intake numbers increase to 50+. There are two pre-clinical teaching laboratories, a necropsy suite and a multimedia room for informatics, microscopy, dissection and necropsy. The necropsy room can accommodate 32 students. None of the other practical rooms nor the multimedia room exceeds a capacity of 25 seats, but this is compensated by each student cohort being taught in 3 groups per year.

There are approximately 100 seats for student self-study and group work in the Main Building, plus a student study room in the VTH. A further 185 seats in the library were reduced to 76 bookable seats due to COVID-19 restrictions. Students are provided with lockers although there are not enough for the whole student body, and they only have access to a microwave and coffee and vending machines on campus.

Student study spaces are available in the Main Building, Library and VTH, with additional, attractive outdoor spaces with seating, tables and shading. The combined library for the Departments of Chemistry, Pharmacy and Veterinary Medicine provides a large space conducive to study, with a broad selection of veterinary texts in addition to online access to many e-books.

Low-fidelity, clinical skills models are available, but are held within individual units as there is no centralised Clinical Skills Laboratory.

There are sufficient numbers of offices and laboratories for staff, but some research laboratories may require modification to permit newer research methods. There are a relatively small number of lockers for students.

4.2.2. Comments

The VEE is sited on a pleasant and leafy campus. The Main Building has adequate circulation space for student traffic and disabled access and is maintained in good order. There is adequate and up-to-date signage about biosecurity rules for the practical labs, necropsy suite and animal facilities, and rules were strictly enforced during the visitation.

The lecture theatres are of sufficient number and size to accommodate whole-year cohorts, but the provision of power sockets to charge laptops is absent or inadequate, and one large theatre has uncomfortable wooden seating.

The practical teaching laboratories (anatomy, histology, histopathology, microbiology. etc.) are small and can only accommodate between 12 and 24 students per session, with currently three groups of 12-24 students each year. A small food processing facility is used for teaching food safety and food hygiene of meat and dairy production, with a practical session on the production of Sardinian sausages.

There are insufficient numbers of lockers to accommodate one per student and no catering facilities beyond snack and drink machines.

There is no centralised Clinical Skills Lab where students can practice techniques, but an innovative "Nutrition Corner" self-study area is commended.

4.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that one of the large lecture theatres is refurbished and that adequate power points are available in all teaching spaces.
It is suggested that UNISS is lobbied for the establishment of catering service for staff and students on campus.

4.2.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.2. because of suboptimal onsite food services and insufficient numbers of lockers for students.

Standard 4.3: The livestock facilities, animal housing, core clinical teaching facilities and equipment used by the VEE for teaching purposes must:
- **be sufficient in capacity and adapted for the number of students enrolled in order to allow safe hands-on training for all students**
- **be of a high standard, well maintained and fit for the purpose**
- **promote best husbandry, welfare and management practices**
- **ensure relevant biosecurity and biocontainment**
- **be designed to enhance learning.**

4.3.1. Findings

The VTH for investigation, hospitalisation and treatment of small and large animals comprises the equivalent of four sub-buildings and sheds and contains classrooms for clinical teaching. There is a Laboratory Animal facility housing rats and aquatics.

The small animal facility within the VTH provides medical, surgical and obstetric care, primarily for dogs and cats. A blood and plasma transfusion service has been suspended since the pandemic. There is accommodation for ten dogs, five cats, and five critical care dogs/cats but there is no physical separation between dog and cat facilities. There is a quarantine ward and separate isolation room with clear rules for maintaining biosecurity.

The large animal facility in the VTH houses a small number of healthy animals (horses, cattle, small ruminants, and poultry) with housing and adjacent paddocks and pasture and separate isolation facilities. There are nine boxes for large animal hospitalisations and a separate isolation block.

As well as its own processing units for dairy and meat products, the VEE uses local slaughterhouses and food processing facilities for teaching FSQ and VPH teaching. Students are also transported to study/work in: the Municipal dog kennel (Canile Comunale Località Acchettas "Funtana Sa Figu"), at a stud (AGRIS-DIRIP Horse centre); at a horse training centre (AGRIS-DIRIP Tanca Regia); at a donkey sanctuary (Ortueri Donkey Sanctuary "Mui Muscas"); and at sheep and cattle units (AGRIS-Bonassai "Istituto Zootecnico-Caseario") and wildlife (Wildlife Rescue Centre of Bonassai [FORESTAS]) facilities. The Donkey sanctuary was not visited, but several donkeys are held at the VTH, and the species no longer has a role in the island's agricultural industry.

4.3.2. Comments
In the VTH, there is no ability to hospitalise dogs or cats nor separate these species as expected in a 'cat-friendly' practice. There is also no provision for the hospitalisation of exotic pets or wildlife nor for the separation of prey and predator species.

4.3.3. Suggestions for improvement
It is suggested that the hospitalisation of patients is undertaken as soon as sufficient clinical and academic staff have been recruited.

4.3.4. Decision
The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.3. because of suboptimal organisation of the hospitalisation spaces for companion animals.

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

4.4.1. Findings

The VTH meets the national Practice Standards but was closed during the COVID-19 pandemic and has only re-opened from 09.00 to 14.00 Monday-Friday. It can no longer hospitalise patients overnight nor offer a 24/7 emergency service because of insufficient numbers of clinical and technical staff to provide adequate patient care. Out-of-hours emergencies are referred to a local 24/7 practice which students can attend. However, there is no academic oversight, and this experience cannot be classified as PPT.

4.4.2. Comments

The absence of a 24/7 service by the VTH is a major issue which may affect the acquisition of some D1Cs. It is linked to insufficient clinical and support staff in the VTH (see also Standard 9.2).

4.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that 24/7 emergency services are reopened as soon as staffing allows.

4.4.4. Decision

The VEE is not compliant with Standard 4.4. because of the absence of 24/7 emergency services.

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

4.5.1. Findings

The VTH offers a range of clinical services: Internal Medicine, Surgery & Anaesthesia, Gynaecology & Obstetrics, and Diagnostic Imaging as well as possessing intensive care facilities, an in-house Clinical Laboratory with essential equipment as well as ancillary facilities such as a pharmacy and necropsy room. There is an ambulatory service for large animals. However, an MR scanner and CT machine are currently mothballed because there are too few technical staff to operate and maintain them.

4.5.2. Comments

The VTH is well equipped but inadequate numbers of technical and clinical staff prevent the VTH from maximising its potential and providing students with the experiences necessary to achieve D1Cs.

4.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the recruitment of clinical and technical staff to the VTH is made a priority as soon as funding is available.

4.5.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.5.

Standard 4.6: Appropriate isolation facilities must be provided to meet the need for the isolation and containment of animals with communicable diseases. Such isolation facilities

must be properly constructed, ventilated, maintained and operated to provide for animal care and for prevention of spread of infectious agents. They must be adapted to all animal species commonly handled in the VTH.

4.6.1. Findings
Within the VTH, there is a quarantine ward for up to four small animal patients suspected to be infectious and a separate isolation room for up to ten dogs/cats.

An isolation block for large animals is separated from the VTH with rooms for one horse, two large ruminants, two small ruminants and one exotic animal. The Mediterranean Centre for Disease Control, currently under construction, will include new isolation facilities. However, this makes the LA isolation facilities currently unavailable and they could not be inspected. Compensation has been fulfilled by the temporary conversion of a large animal hospitalisation facility as an isolation pen with largely adequate biosecurity measures. However, due to government-imposed movement restriction orders, the facility is only likely to be required for teaching animals already within the VTH.

Signage, PPE and patient flow in the isolation facilities are considered best practices.

4.6.2. Comments
There are good small animal isolation facilities and satisfactory compensation for the large animal isolation facilities.

4.6.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

4.6.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.6.

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

4.7.1. Findings
The VEE operates an ambulatory service teaching herd health management and field veterinary medicine for cattle, sheep, pigs and some goats. The VEE does not have vehicles suitable to transport animals to the VTH except for one horse trailer.

4.7.2. Comments
There is no VEE-funded transport for students participating in the ambulatory service; staff vehicles are used. The VEE plans to use regional funding to rent vehicles for the next three years.

4.7.3. Suggestions for improvement
It is suggested that the rental of vehicles for the ambulatory service be expedited.

4.7.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.7.

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

4.8.1. Findings
The VEE owned one minibus for 8 students plus 1 driver but it is not currently usable. Therefore, students are either transported in clinicians' cars or use their own vehicles to reach extra-mural placements.
There are no vehicles to transport whole live or dead food animals to the VEE from farms except for one horse trailer. This is partially compensated by farmers bringing animals to the VEE. However, current Ministry-imposed movement restrictions currently make this problem irrelevant. Sealed containers are available for the transport of carcase material from slaughterhouses.

4.8.2. Comments
There is no VEE-funded transport for students attending extra-mural activities. The VEE plans to use regional funding to rent vehicles for the next three years.

4.8.3. Suggestions for improvement
It is suggested that the rental of vehicles for the transport of students to placements is expedited.

4.8.4. Decision
The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.8. because of suboptimal transportation of students to extra-mural facilities.

Standard 4.9: Operational policies and procedures (including e.g. biosecurity, good laboratory practice and good clinical practice) must be taught and posted for students, staff and visitors and a Biosafety manual must be available. The VEE must demonstrate a clear commitment for the delivery of biosafety and biosecurity, e.g. by a specific committee structure. The VEE must have a system of QA to monitor and assure clinical, laboratory and farm services, including a regular monitoring of the feedback from students, staff and clients.

4.9.1. Findings
A Biosecurity Manual *(SER Appendix 8)* covers safe and biosecure practices in the VEE and a hard copy is provided for all students from Year 1 and for staff.
Management of controlled drugs followed legal and best practice guidelines.
Some multi-dose injectable drug bottles were not always marked with the date they were broached.

4.9.2. Comments
There was extensive evidence of excellent biosecurity measures, which is commended.
Having only one key holder for the main controlled drug safe could compromise patient welfare out-of-hours if they are unavailable.
The management of the use of multi-dose injectable drug bottles did not always comply with the

Medicine Regulations.

4.9.3. Suggestions for improvement
It is suggested that the number of key holders for the controlled drugs safe available out of hours be increased.
Consideration should be given to the sustainability of the use of disposable PPE.
Dating when multi-dose injectable drug bottles are breached should be strictly enforced.

4.9.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.9.

Area 5. Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin

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

5.1.1. Findings
Practical training takes place in the fields of Clinical Sciences, Pathology, Animal Production and Public health, and Food Safety and Quality. Animals for practical training can be found at the VTH, VEE teaching farm and the Municipal Kennel of Sassari. In addition to this, the VEE has agreements with other public and private institutions, such as the Zooprophylactic Institute and private farms around the area, where students can have access to other species and clinical cases. From January 2023, the VEE has secured contracts with practitioners for practical training: three for equids, one for ruminants and pigs, one for exotic animals and one for necropsy support.
As part of the core clinical training, students have practical activities as part of their courses, as well as 'Clinical rounds'. 'Clinical rounds' include hands-on training with animals at the VTH, Municipal Kennel, wildlife rescue centre, and Mobile Clinic. These start in the first academic year with 141h in total and progressively increase in the number of hours and level of responsibilities over the years. During these practical activities, younger students work together with 5th-year students and post-graduates.

Despite the end of the pandemic last year, the number and variety of healthy animals used for pre-clinical training have not changed for the last three academic years; remaining low in the case of swine, exotic and companion animals. However, the number of food-producing animals (cattle, small ruminants, pigs) and equine patients seen in the mobile clinics has increased in the last academic year compared to previous years. Since 2022, the number of patients in exotic pets has increased, due to the presence of a specialist in exotic pets medicine once a week, who is appointed to the VTH.
Nevertheless, the case load in the VTH and the number of necropsies performed by the students is still insufficient to ensure adequate training: the percentage of first-opinion patients used for clinical training varies in different species, being 20% for horses, 80% in companion animals and 90% in farm animals such as ruminants and pigs.

The data on the number of patients, cadavers and material of animal origin show a negative balance on the following ESEVT indicators:

-) I8 - n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually

-) I9 - n° of ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually

-) I10 - n° of equine   patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually

-) I11 - n° of rabbits, rodents, birds and exotic patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually

-) I17 - n° of companion animal necropsies / n° of students graduating annually

-) I18 - n° of ruminant and pig necropsies /   n° of students graduating annually

-) I20 - n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies / n° of students graduating annually.

Animal materials for practical training are provided through third-party abattoirs and private farms. The number of cadavers for practising anatomical training in ruminants, pigs, companion animals, horses and exotic pets was very low in the past three academic years; the teaching mostly relies on organs of these species. It is expected that the number of necropsies will increase in the near future, thanks to a new agreement with the Zooprophylactic Institute.

Most anatomical training and all necropsies have been halted in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 due to COVID-19 and resumed in 2021-2022. Similarly, the number of visits in herds/units for training in animal production and visits in slaughterhouses did not take place due to the COVID-19 pandemic but have started again this year. For this period, alternative teaching methods such as videos and virtual simulations have been used as compensation.

The VEE has a procedure in place to guarantee the animal welfare of the healthy animals kept at the VEE for educational purposes. Non-invasive procedures are practised on educational animals and the use of each animal has to be registered before class. The responsibility of managing and monitoring the welfare of the animals lies with the teacher organising the practical training (See appendix 9). The number of animals for each species in the VEE is low (1-2 horses, 9 hens, 1 sow and 7 cows are used). An animal welfare delegate provides the VEE with an annual report with suggestions for improvement.

A project for a Skill Lab is currently under development. In the meantime, a compensation procedure for practising invasive procedures on animal models has been   put   in   place   (See appendix 10).

To review the adequacy of the materials, personnel responsible for a specific indicator regularly provide a detailed report, including suggestions for improvement, in accordance with the ESEVT indicators to the academic staff.

5.1.2. Comments

The variety of animals used for practical training covers all species of domestic animals. Efforts are being made to increase the number of necropsies after the pandemic. It is worth mentioning the VEE's efforts to reduce the number of live animals used by implementing the use of animal models as compensatory methods until the final development of a Clinical Skills Lab, and the use of virtual resources in Public Health and Food Safety. The low number of animal patients and cadavers available can be compensated by increasing teaching activity at external sites through the new agreements with the kennel, slaughterhouses, farms and other institutions, such as the

Zooprophylactic Institute.

5.1.3. Suggestions for improvement
The Agreement with Zooprophylactic Institute for letting students do necropsies extra-murally will help to compensate for the low number of necropsies at the VEE.
Through increasing the caseload of the VTH, the number of necropsies at the VEE will also increase.
The increase of didactic, fixed models and other resources for anatomical teaching is advisable.

5.1.4. Decision
The VEE is not compliant with Standard 5.1. because of an insufficient caseload of companion animal patients in the VTH and an insufficient number of necropsies in companion and food-producing animals.

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

5.2.1. Findings
The VEE has several agreements with external sites for practical training under supervision of academic staff, integrated into different stages of the degree. Teaching at external sites includes education in genetics, husbandry, animal breeding, animal welfare, nutrition and hygiene. These sites are:
-) the Municipal Kennel (with an average of 200 dogs): used for clinical and preventative healthcare management activities.
-) Agris Su Padru & Tanca Regia farms (25-30 stallions, 10-20 mares and foals): for activities related to animal nutrition, reproduction and breeding, conditioning and training of sport horses.
-) Donkey Sanctuary of Ortueri (70 donkeys): for activities related to animal nutrition and clinical animal health care
-) Bonassai-Forestas (farm with 70 pairs of partridges, varying numbers of terrestrial mammals, marine animals and wild birds): to practise handling of exotic species, avian pathology and participate in research in the context of the graduation thesis.
-) AGRIS-Bonassai (experimental farm with 200 sheep and goats, 15-20 cattle): for clinical practice in ruminants.

5.2.2. Comments
The VEE provides practical training at various external sites under the supervision of academic staff to improve the diversity of species students get exposed to, and to increase the number of patients in clinical practice. These sites are also used for EPT.

5.2.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

5.2.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 5.2.

Standard 5.3: The VTH must provide nursing care skills and instruction in nursing procedures. Under all situations, students must be active participants in the clinical workup of patients, including problem-oriented diagnostic approach together with diagnostic decision-making.

5.3.1. Findings

Throughout the different years students are taught nursing skills in theory during courses in physiology, ethology, animal nutrition and animal welfare. The nursing skills are practised together with animal handling by visiting different external sites with food producing animals, companion animals and exotic animals in groups of about 10 students during 'Clinical rotations'. During the 4th and 5th years, students participate in all regular VTH activities and complete core clinical training. At the VTH, students are involved in all the procedures to which each patient is subjected, even in the emergency room, and they also have the opportunity to increase the number of hours through voluntary training, under the supervision of junior staff and PhD students.

Teachers encourage active participation by students by questioning them during practicals and by prompting them to stimulate their understanding through literature research.

5.3.2. Comments

A considerable part of the core clinical training is performed extramurally, and this allows the diversification of the species seen by students as well as increasing the number of animals for students to practise with. It is expected that the number of species and animals will further increase in the future through several new contracts with external sites.

5.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

5.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 5.3.

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

5.4.1. Findings

In 2021, the VEE bought the licence of a commercial clinical management software (Dr. Veto by Alcyon) to record information on the clinical cases seen inside and outside of the VTH. Necropsy data can also be included in these records. Both students and staff can make use of this software both at the VTH and at home. Students are trained to work with this software from the first academic year: they can access records through a personal account, create new records and enter medical data of patients. These records must be validated by a veterinarian at the VTH before being uploaded.

Clinical activities carried out outside the VTH are recorded in a cloud database and accessed by email (Google Sheets).

5.4.2. Comments
Commendable is the efficient retrieval of information from the VTH patient management software with easy online access for all students and staff.
From 2023 on out, a new version of the software will include the automatic calculation of ESEVT indicators.

5.4.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

5.4.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 5.4.

Area 6. Learning resources

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

6.1.1. Findings
The UNISS has 1,700 seats available and hundreds of cables and wireless connections. The Library of Chemistry, Pharmacy and Veterinary Medicine is part of the University Library System (ULS). The aims of the ULS are to promote and spread technical and scientific knowledge while supporting teaching and research activities. The ambition of ULS is to optimise the selection, acquisition, organisation and prompt availability of technical and scientific information in different formats while promoting the use of online resources aided by fully qualified staff in a user-friendly and technically up-to-date environment. Access to all ULS resources and services is through UniSSearch, a single and secure digital portal that can be accessed either from or outside the Uniss facilities. UniSSearch can be used to search bibliography, including print and online books/periodicals as well as to loan books. First year students are offered training on the operation of the ULS procedures as part of the informatics course.

6.1.2. Comments
First-year students receive training to gain competence on the ULS however many other students join the VEE at different stages or come to do postgraduate studies who could benefit from the availability of more regular offers of training on the systems.

6.1.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

6.1.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 6.1.

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

6.2.1. Findings
The libraries of Chemistry, Pharmacy and Veterinary Medicine were merged and opened in 2018 and the building is 2 minutes' walk from the DVMSS. The joint library occupies an area of 783.19 m2. Before COVID-19 the library offered 185 seats but now has 76 and places have to be booked. Wireless coverage exists throughout the entire campus. The library has 7 computers for users, a multi-function printer, an enlarger for the visually impaired and 28 sockets for laptops. Seven tables, each with two sockets and a canopy, are outside and widely used. The library is open from Monday to Friday from 8.30 am to 7.50 pm (except for holiday periods). The library is staffed by a Director and two full-time staff members, all fully qualified librarians. Students work part-time at reception duties. IT assistance is provided by UNISS, when required. The Library Services Coordination Office manages the budget of all the UNISS library services. An additional annual budget is made available to the Library of Chemistry, Pharmacy and Veterinary Medicine mainly spent to purchase hardcover books (10,500 euros 2019/2020 AY, 23,987 euros 2020/2021 AY and 22,500 euros 2021/2022 AY). Costs of online subscriptions to periodicals and e-books, staff and premises maintenance are covered by UNISS. Subsidiary libraries are present in the DVMSS and hold collections of historical books and non-recent journals in printed form. The DVMSS offers spaces where students can discuss, interact and conduct group assignments. The student room has 40 seats and 19 sockets. A computer room in the DVMSS has 20 computers. Wi-Fi is available across the entire campus and any device can be connected to UNISS-mobile by accessing the net through individual UNISS credentials. Visiting students and staff have internet access via Eduroam. Until 2021 the main learning platform was Moodle but in the 2022/2023 AY a new platform, E-uniss has been created for the whole UNISS community. Information on the academic calendars (lectures and exams), study programs and course regulations are available to all viewers but detailed contents only after secure logging in, thus providing a safe learning tool for both lecturers and students. Microsoft Teams was widely used during COVID-19 and free Office and Microsoft licences are available for UNISS students and staff.

6.2.2. Comments
The capacity of the library is back up to 146 seats and the availability of a shaded, canopied outdoor space with seven tables with sockets is an added pleasant feature. The opportunity for students to work part-time and be paid is a bonus. All books in the library are also available as e-books and any device can be connected to UNISS-mobile by accessing the net through individual UNISS credentials.

6.2.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

6.2.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 6.2.

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

6.3.1. Findings
The ULS offers 60,000 online periodicals, among which are 20 veterinary-specific e-journals and since 2021 has subscribed to the EDRA digital platform with access to more than 80 ebooks in Italian on medical, veterinary, agricultural and pharmaceutical topics. The library collection has 11,976 hard-copy books and 8 printed journals. Textbooks recommended by lecturers for exam preparation are available in several copies (3-15) and the number of books in their original language has been increased. Books can be booked online and loans are available. The main software for bibliographic research is UniSSearch but other resources like NCBI Pubmed, Scopus and Web of Science are available.

Since 2021, UNISS has subscribed to the Journal of Visualised Experiments, JoVE. This is a multidisciplinary video resource that offers videos for both teaching and research. Other software, such as Kahoot and Wooclap, are used during classes and self-learning to test knowledge and stimulate interaction. Scientific data repositories of clinical cases such as histological and macroscopic pathological materials are also available. A "Virtual slaughterhouse simulator" is used to train undergraduates on correct slaughtering procedures and food inspection.

The DVMSS official Social Accounts (Facebook, Instagram and YouTube) are aimed at reaching students at all levels. To enhance communication among students and staff, the Communication Committee opened an official WhatsApp group called MEDVET. An Institutional Research Information System (IRIS) with an open catalogue of all research products published by UNISS is available to students with user guides and tutorials.

The DVMSS has several areas where students can study autonomously with access in specific hours or upon request. These areas contain a wide selection of anatomical models of skeletons of domestic and wild animals as well as more than 40 anatomical models of entire animals and systems (i.e. respiratory, gastrointestinal, reproductive, urinary tract etc.). Histological and cytological slides of non-pathological tissues and organs are also available for self-learning.

In 2022, a commercial veterinary practice management software system was purchased to record clinical cases and student clinical activity at the VTH and archive patient records. The software has been customised to allow student access to complete datasets, similar to staff. The system (Dr.Veto) allows students to track the complete medical history of the patients, create a clinical case repository for research and continuing education and improve the running of the VTH. The DVMSS personnel are aware of the "never for the first time on a live animal" strategy and use alternative models and procedures to train students on invasive procedures (Appendix 10). Currently, a project to fund a Clinical Skills Lab is underway.

6.3.2. Comments

The VEE must be commended for the development of 'The nutrition corner' which efficiently complements the training in this discipline and is freely available for students.

The library has a large amount (over 60,000) of online periodicals, journals and books. The use of JoVE, a multidisciplinary video resource offers videos for teaching and research. Internal study resources allow students to access a wide collection of skeletons, bones and teeth. An innovative self-learning corner for animal nutrition and body condition scoring coupled with a QR coded display of multiple feedstuffs, plus actual forages is available. Models to train students on invasive procedures are available but are in various departments around the VEE, where free access is not continually available, should students wish to practise techniques at times of their choosing.

6.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to provide a well-equipped Clinical Skills Lab in one specific location, which would be freely open for students.

6.3.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 6.3. because of suboptimal access of students to equipment for the development of procedural skills.

Area 7. Student admission, progression and welfare

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

7.1.1. Findings

All information on education for current and future students of the VEE can be found on the VEE's website. Information on orientation, enrolment, selection criteria for the State exam and entrance exam process are published annually on the MUR, UNISS and DVMSS websites. Alongside this, didactic objectives, structure, campus equipment and facilities and quality assurance issues at the VEE are annually collected in a document which is made available to prospective students. Additionally, the VEE provides YouTube videos introducing the courses offered to share this info.

The VEE partakes in UNISS orientation events to share information and answer questions from prospective students on-site. Information shared with potential students here are test criteria, class timetables, career perspectives and guided tours of the campus facilities. UNISS has a separate webpage for information on these events. Students can also request an autonomous visit to the facilities. For prospective students, an information desk managed by VEE is available for questions and info on admission criteria etc. For the entrance exam, preparation courses are provided through the UNISCO project for students of classes III, IV and V of secondary schools.

At the start of the academic year, students new at the VEE are given an introduction day (called 'reception day') at which they receive practical information for studying, as well as suggestions on how to deal with difficulties at the start of their course. All students and alumni, as well as important stakeholders in Italian veterinary medicine, are invited to participate to discuss perspectives on the future of veterinary medicine.

Information on course programs for current students can be accessed through a login portal. The VEEs class timetables are communicated in advance and available online. Progression and graduation exam criteria are published every academic year. International mobility programs for students and staff are presented on the VEE website.

The VEE takes part in the Erasmus+ Student Mobility for Studies (SMS) and for Traineeships (SMT) and in the Ulisse programme and is also involved in the Erasmus+ Staff Mobility for Teaching program and in the International Credit Mobility program with the Université de la Manouba (Tunisia).

7.1.2. Comments
Commendations are in place for innovative and informative digital communication with the students, public and stakeholders by the VEE.

7.1.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

7.1.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.1.

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

7.2.1. Findings
The number of students at the VEE is limited by quotas (EU/non-EU) set by the Italian Ministry of Education (MUR). For this, the VEE proposes a maximum number of students admissible considering the size of the staff and facilities on a yearly basis. This is then reviewed by the MUR before they set the limit to the number of students admissible in the first year of the degree program. For the academic year 2022-2023, 56 students were admitted (50 EU / 6 non-EU).
The number of students graduating decreased in 2019-2020 and 2021-2022, but the percentage of 'Off-course' students graduating remained stable (Table 7.2.4). The number of postgraduate students remained stable over the past three years (see Table 7.2.5).
Alongside this, the QAC annually follows indicators for the ratio between staff and student numbers. A procedure to determine the number of students admitted compared to the available resources is organised by the Quality Assurance Management Commission (QAMC).
The introduction of the numerical programming of student quotas on a national basis has extended the conclusion of student enrolment procedures at the VEE. As a consequence, some students are matriculated at the end of their first curricular semester. Delayed enrolments may result in incomplete participation in programmed practical lessons.

7.2.2. Comments

The ratio between staff and students for the most part is optimal, reflecting the low number of students. In parts of the VEE, the amounts of staff and live animals are suboptimal, as explained in Standards 4.4, 5.1 and 9.2.

The late enrolment of students caused by the national quota system causes delays in the study programme for those students enrolled at the end of the semester and is a general hindrance to the optimal planning of the programme.

The facilities of the VEE would allow for a larger uptake of students; however, the number of students enrolled and the admission procedures are regulated by the Ministry.

7.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

7.2.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.2

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

7.3.1. Findings

The VEE is not involved in the selection process, as it is executed by the MUR. To be admitted to the VEE, students must have a secondary school diploma (or equivalent obtained abroad) and be selected based on the national selection process for all Italian VEEs. These requirements and the procedure of the entrance test are published on the MUR, UNISS and VEE websites.

The MUR annually sets the time and contents for the national entrance test for DVMSS courses; the entrance test currently consists of a written test with 60 multiple choice questions (5 options) of General Culture and Logic, Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Physics. Students must pre-register online for the test before all taking the test at the same date and time, at the location of a VEE. The test duration is 100 minutes. Based on the test results, candidates are ranked and enrolled. After being ranked, the following may apply to a student:
-) Non-EU students must additionally pass the proof of knowledge of the Italian language before being ranked.
-) Students who passed with a score of less than 50% in questions in Biology and/or Chemistry and/or Physics and/or Mathematics can be admitted with an 'educational debt' and must compensate for shortcomings through supplementary training courses at UNISS before starting the first year of their degree course.
-) Students with disability certificates or Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) are eligible for special admission measures, compensatory tools and dispensatory measures. This information is available on the website.

The VEE has a committee in place to provide feedback to the MUR on the functioning and outcomes of the selection process.

7.3.2. Comments
Though their influence on the admissions process is limited, the VEE does try to bring the issue of part of the 1st year students only enrolling in the 2nd semester of the 1st year due to 'educational debt' to the attention of the MUR. This causes preventable delays and a disadvantage to the 1st year students starting later in the year.

7.3.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

7.3.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.3.

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

7.4.1. Findings
Support for students with disabilities is organised through UNISS by a specific UNISS Commission in charge of integration, raising awareness about and finding solutions for students with disabilities or Specific Learning Disorders (SLD) defined as Dyslexia, Dysorthography and Dysgraphia, and Dyscalculia. Students with a handicap or SLD can receive study support, compensation and dispensation without modifying their learning objectives in accordance with Italian Law 170/2010 and Ministerial Decree no. 5669/2011. The SLD certificate must be issued by the National Health Service or by a private accredited healthcare structure and not older than three years or issued after the age of 18 years. Financial support for students with a high degree of motor, sensory and/or mental disability is available; total exemption of tuition fees is provided if the disability is equal to or greater than 66% (under L.104 art.3 co.1, see appendix 19- tuition fees). At the VEE, a delegate is specifically charged with arranging the type of support requested by a student with a handicap or SLD through a standardised procedure. The VEE has a section on its website targeted at students to inform them of their rights and options when faced with a handicap or SLD.

7.4.2. Comments
Through the open interaction between the students and teachers of the VEE, most wellness and well-being issues can be resolved adequately within the VEE.

7.4.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

7.4.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.4.

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

7.5.1. Findings
Requirements for progression are set by the VEE Council and made available to students through the VEE's website. Full-time students (named 'on-course students') are required to obtain 60 ECTS points in a year. Attendance at lessons is tracked through an attendance register; students are required to attend at least 70% of the course before taking the final assessment.
All students who do not obtain the necessary ECTS to complete the course in its normal duration are labelled 'Off-course students'. They have no attendance obligation to courses they already followed but did not complete assessment for, and are enrolled in the 5th + n year. As assessment mostly relies on oral assessments, students can be assessed individually by the course professor at any moment after completing the course. Students graduate when all subjects in their study plan are completed.

Because of the delay in enrolment of some students in the 1st year and variability in assessment moments, there is a relatively high percentage of 'Off-course students' (See SER Table 7.2.2.).
In accordance with the UNISS regulation, students lose their 'student status' when they are enrolled starting from the 2013/2014 academic year if they do not acquire any ECTS in their course of study by the end of the 5th academic year of enrolment as an 'off-course' student. Students can still switch courses within the university before this point is reached to maintain their status with the approval of the Competent study course council. The only exception for this is students who have passed all exams but have yet to defend their thesis. Dropout rates fluctuate between academic years (6 in 2019/2020 and 15 in 2020/2021) and are mainly due to personal reasons, and the need of some students to return to their region of residence for economic reasons or to the choice to study human medicine; the tendency to approach home for economic reasons has significantly increased after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The VEE cannot amend the admission selection criteria (See Standard 7.3). The VEE admission criteria can be set for students transferring into later years of the course. Available places are announced annually based on the number of dropouts; after which transfer students can take an admission test to be ranked for transfer.

Any support needed can be requested of individual teachers by the students directly or through their personal tutor. Peer support takes place as well. The Student Administration Office supports students in administrative tasks throughout their course. Information on the student portal of the VEEs website includes but is not limited to: educational offers, switching courses of study, issuing of certifications, degree applications, postgraduate programs, fees, transfers to other universities, international mobility programs, recreational activities, internships and interruption of studies.

7.5.2. Comments
Due to the use of mainly oral assessments, students can complete a course when they feel ready. An explanation for the high number of 'Off-course' students is given in Standard 7.2.

7.5.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

7.5.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.5.

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

7.6.1. Findings
In accordance with the UNISS teaching regulation, students are excluded from a) taking (degree) exams; b) transferring to another University or degree course; c) obtaining certifications; d) applying for student collaboration activities or international mobility projects; e) applying for scholarships or awards; f) submitting other applications related to the position of the student; g) exercise representation in collegiate bodies if their tuition fee payment for all registered years is not up to date.

UNISS students enrolled until the 2012/2013 AY are automatically excluded if they have not taken exams or have not acquired ECTS for 8 consecutive academic years in the year of the last exam or the year of the last enrolment active and ongoing, if more favourable.

Students enrolled or transferred to the VEE starting from the 2013/2014 academic year forfeit the status of the student if they do not acquire any ECTS among those provided for by the course of study by the end of the 5th academic year of enrolment as an 'off-course' student. The exclusion involves the closure of the university career. ECTS, on request, can still be certified for any subsequent consideration. The appeal process is further described under Area 8.

7.6.2. Comments
Conditions are all set centrally by the university, the VEE has little autonomy in this.

7.6.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

7.6.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.6.

Standard 7.7: Provisions must be made by the VEE to support the physical, emotional and welfare needs of students. This includes, but is not limited to, learning support and counselling services, career advice, and fair and transparent mechanisms for dealing with student illness,

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impairment and disability during the programme. This shall include provision of reasonable adjustments for disabled students, consistent with all relevant equality and/or human rights legislation.
There must be effective mechanisms for resolution of student grievances (e.g. interpersonal conflict or harassment).

7.7.1. Findings
Support services for students are both provided by the UNISS and the VEE. Information on class schedule, exams calendar and room occupation can be found in the student's Web Agenda. A Student Orientation Service made by students for students provides practical support and tips for students during the course of their study. At the VEE, a delegate is specifically charged with arranging the type of support requested by a student with a handicap or SLD through a standardised procedure (see section 7.4).

The UNISS Guarantee Committee ensures that anyone at the university has an equal opportunity to promote their own development. The Counselling and Psychological Support Service provides consultancy and supports actions aimed at improving student welfare. The Gender Equality Plan (G.E.P.) Group detects gender differences and discrimination within the academic institution and develops rules, actions and practices to include a gender perspective in research and academia and reduce discrimination. The Victimology and Prevention of Violence Clinic is both a psychiatric and psychological support to students. Staff and students can use the University Sport Centre facilities for free. The University Recreation Club (CRUS) organises cultural, recreational, artistic and sporting activities for staff and students to partake in and increase the sense of 'institutional belonging.

The Regional Agency for the Right to University Study of Sardinia (ERSU) provides a student residence system with housing in different parts of the city. Housing is assigned based on students meeting merit and income requirements for scholarships. Accommodation is available for eleven months a year, with closure in August during the interruption of university activity. Part of the accommodations in the University residence system is reserved for Erasmus and for disabled students. Moreover, thanks to an agreement between the UNISS and the Municipality of Sassari, students can rent accommodation in the city, with a regular lease, at a very advantageous price. ERSU also provides a catering service in the city centre for staff and students who are in the city for study purposes.

UNISS has several student associations, among which is IVSA Sassari, a local member organisation of IVSA Italy. Student grievances are primarily received by the Didactic Manager and the Department Management through an online form (either by name or anonymously) and are then forwarded to the responsible bodies. The management of student grievances is dependent on severity and context and is treated according to the UNISS public service charter. Further actions at UNISS level may be decided and implemented if necessary. Complaints are confidential and are tracked and processed to allow a better resolution of the grievance.

7.7.2. Comments
The VEE has many different groups to improve diversity, equality and inclusivity within their institution; most students are well aware of the work of these groups.

7.7.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

7.7.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.7.

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

7.8.1. Findings
Students communicate their opinions, feedback and requests to the DVMSS mainly through their student representatives. Complaints, comments, and suggestions can be submitted by students - also anonymously via an online form - at any time (see section 7.7).

For quality assurance of the complete curriculum, students annually fill out an anonymous questionnaire (Education Evaluation Questionnaire) through their personal online portal about the lessons of their degree course. Each student must evaluate each individual course before registering before the final examination and the evaluation can be filled out when approximately 2/3 of the lessons of the course have been completed. The summarised results of the evaluations are presented to the VEE council to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the corresponding didactic semester and to discuss possible improvement strategies. These results are returned to the students through their representatives.

7.8.2. Comments
The VEE has a strong student representation body which allows students to easily communicate their opinions and suggestions to the VEE's staff.
Doing the course evaluation before the final exam, the student does not have the full picture of the course at this time and has to give feedback on the final assessment separately.

7.8.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

7.8.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.8.

Area 8. Student assessment

Standard 8.1: The VEE must ensure that there is a clearly identified structure within the VEE showing lines of responsibility for the assessment strategy to ensure coherence of the overall assessment regime and to allow the demonstration of progressive development across the programme towards entry-level competence.

8.1.1. Findings

Each course within the program has its own syllabus, developed by the responsible professor, which outlines the assessment procedures and relevant prerequisites. These syllabi are annually reviewed by the VMDC and JTSC of the VEE, as well as through audits from the University Quality Assurance Committee and the Evaluation Nucleus (QAC, EN).

Exam schedules are established by the SCT together with the student representatives, then forwarded to the department teaching manager, considered and reviewed by the JTSC, and eventually approved by the VMDC before being published on the VEE website. The exam schedule consists of 3 ordinary exam periods (6 exam sessions) that do not overlap with classes and ensure the completion of theoretical and practical topics, as well as 2 special exam periods (1 exam session during each class, December and April). Exam sessions must be at least 14 days apart for each exam period. Lecturers can modify exam dates with a reasonable explanation.

According to Italian law, each teacher adopts their own exam procedures, consistent with the University teaching regulation, provided that they allow students to achieve ordinary outcomes defined by the Dublin descriptors. Theoretical knowledge is evaluated mostly orally, with extensive discussion (20-60 minutes) allowing evaluation of their theoretical knowledge, critical thinking and associative abilities. In some cases, teachers may opt for a written MCQ test or a combination of the two.

The popularity of oral exams among teachers and students appears cultural. The students, in general, do not feel that they may be subject to a less equal and fair judgement. In fact, they believe that in an oral exam, they may better demonstrate their knowledge. On the other hand, the teachers believe that their proximity to the students helps them to assess more accurately and only rarely look for other options to the prevalent system of oral assessment. There is no limit on the number of times a student may take an exam. However, after the exam has been officially registered, students are not allowed to retake it.

Practical pre-clinical skills are evaluated through supervised work, written reports, and seminars which are reported on in the student's personal Logbook and signed by the supervising teacher. Additionally, they may be evaluated in a final practical exam, particularly on subjects of the first three years, the decision to have them or not depending on the professor in charge of the subject. The Logbook also reports day-one competences and registers the premises (VTH and others) where activities were carried out under the supervision of the academic staff.

8.1.2. Comments

Although it is difficult to identify a strategy on what types of assessment should be given on what subjects, the system in place, favouring oral exams, seems to please the whole community, assuring a degree of fairness that is clearly accepted by all.

8.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

Discussion within the VEE of the various types of assessment possible could be promoted, eventually with the help of acknowledged specialists in the subject. The main goal should be ensuring fairness in all circumstances.

8.1.4. Decision
The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 8.1. because of a suboptimal strategy to ensure coherence of the overall assessment regime.

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

8.2.1. Findings
Assessment criteria and procedures of each module/course are detailed in the syllabus of (most) disciplines in the course. These syllabi are published on the VEE website after annual review but before the start of the academic year. Assessment criteria and procedures are explained again by the teacher to the student at the start of the course. Assessment criteria and procedures are verified by the exam committee containing at least two subject matter experts.

For each exam, a total score of 30 is given. To pass, students must get 18 out of 30. In the case of multiple tests (e.g., ongoing tests, the final test), the average value is used to calculate the final grade. Students may decline a grade to retake an exam and improve their grades. After communicating the exam results, the teacher provides the student with feedback. Teachers are generally available during office hours for any clarifications and suggestions for improvements.

A student who finds incongruences or disagrees with board assessment and exam criteria/procedures may make an appeal to the JTSC and/or the DCP. Subsequently, DCP investigates the issue and opens a discussion with the relevant exam board. If the issue cannot be addressed, the DCP will convene a new examination board with additional expert members.

8.2.2. Comments
The assessment system for most disciplines is well known by the students and published on the website together with other important information regarding each subject (syllabus, objectives, etc.). The requirements to pass are explicit.
The results of the exams are properly explicit, and students can appeal to the professor or their delegates or to the Student-Staff Joint Teaching Committee. Students may ask for a repetition of the exam at his/her convenience, and have it done in agreement with the professors.

8.2.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

8.2.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 8.2.

Standard 8.3: The VEE must have a process in place to review assessment outcomes, to change assessment strategies and to ensure the accuracy of the procedures when required.

Programme learning outcomes covering the full range of professional knowledge, skills, competences and attributes must form the basis for assessment design and underpin decisions on progression.

8.3.1. Findings
Teachers are responsible for updating procedures in light of any amendments suggested by stakeholders. Implementation, assessment, and revision activities can be suggested by students or teachers to the lecturer responsible for the specific semester and finally to the JTSC, which reports to the VMDC for final approval.

8.3.2. Comments
Systems are in place to review assessment outcomes and take action in case of deviation from what is considered the normal approval rate. An inquiry is launched by appointment of the Dean and measures are adopted according to the results obtained.

8.3.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

8.3.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 8.3.

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

8.4.1. Findings
At the end of their course, the lecturer puts the grades obtained by students in the student management system (ESSE3 system) and signs the student'' logbooks once their requirements are met. Approximately 90% of the final grade for a degree is determined by exam scores. To obtain the degree certificate, all course exams must be passed, the logbook activities all signed and the written thesis evaluated. Following the thesis presentation and discussion, the final assessment ensures that the learning outcomes have been achieved.

Students have the opportunity to participate actively in their own learning process by choosing the elective subjects they prefer, choosing the graduation thesis subject and which professor will supervise it and by adding credits to their grades through participation in research and clinical activities. Finally, they take a very important part in the choice of the institutions where their Tirocínio will take place.

8.4.2. Comments
The VEE is well organised in what concerns the register of the students' tasks and achievements in the individual Logbooks, in the Libretto diario during the Tirocínio and in the evaluation of the short reports the students produce in their various activities.
Students play a significant role in the learning process in what concerns elective subjects, research

involvement and finally the choices for the accomplishment of the Tirocínio.

8.4.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

8.4.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 8.4.

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

8.5.1. Findings
At the beginning of the first year, students receive a personal Logbook that is available in the SER annexes as Appendix 7. The Logbook identifies the competences that are addressed in each subchapter. However, the number of times each student performs a specific task that contributes to any competence acquisition is not clear. ESEVT D1Cs are assessed daily during lessons and exams through oral discussions, multiple-choice/open-ended questions, and practical assessments.
No student is accepted to the state exam without having completed all Logbook entries. The ESEVT docs are also evaluated on the occasion of a state exam certifying qualification for the veterinary profession.

8.5.2. Comments
No student is accepted to the state exam without having completed all Logbook entries, each of which is certified by the professor responsible for that specific knowledge of skill acquisition.

8.5.3. Suggestions for improvement
The Logbook structure should be revised to allow a clearer assessment of the competences gained by the students and the way they were achieved (e.g., the numbers and species necropsied should be included to allow for a clear idea of how that particular competence was achieved.

8.5.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 8.5.

Area 9. Academic and support staff

Standard 9.1: The VEE must ensure that all staff are appropriately qualified and prepared for their roles, in agreement with national and EU regulations and must apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of staff.
A formal training (including good teaching and evaluation practices, learning and e-learning resources, biosecurity and QA procedures) must be in place for all staff involved with

teaching.

Most academic staff (calculated as FTE) involved in veterinary training must be veterinarians. It is expected that more than 2/3 of the instruction that the students receive, as determined by student teaching hours, is delivered by qualified veterinarians.

9.1.1. Findings

The requirements and qualifications for the recruitment and promotion of academic staff are determined by national regulations. The VEE establishes its policy for the recruitment and promotion of academic staff by identifying the needs of different areas and allocating positions that have to be approved by the Department Council. This is laid down in the Recruitment Plan, as part of the Departmental Strategic Plan. The number of students has increased in the last year and is expected to continue to grow in the near future, which marks the need to increase the staff of the EEV, which is composed, in the last year in average, of 67 FTE of which 53 are permanent, all academic staff holding a veterinary degree. Non-academic staff practitioners are selected through a public call, in accordance with the University regulations. The qualifications of the teaching staff are guaranteed access to an academic career only through a very competitive selection process. Four staff members hold a European Diploma (ECVCN, ECVP and 2 dual EVPC/ECDHRM).

The Department Council promotes the participation of teaching staff in educational programs and other initiatives for professional training. Various courses on materials such as Communication and motivation, QA in teaching and e-learning tools have been organised at the VEE in recent years, although participation in such courses is not mandatory for academic or non-academic teaching staff and it is not taken into account during the promotion process. Other self-learning and teaching training platforms are available, but not mandatory, to all staff, both intra-mural and extra-mural, such as podcasts and tutorials on the VEE's YouTube channel, and an assessment is undertaken at the end of each course. Through UNISS, the VEE has a Microsoft licence for all teaching platforms that both students and teachers benefit from.

9.1.2. Comments

Both academic and non-academic staff are highly motivated. Non-academic staff such as PhD students, researchers and residents play a significant role in teaching activities. The low number of students in each class allows the teaching and support staff to be more aware of the students' needs, creating a very beneficial environment of mutual trust and interaction for the students.

The VEE is making remarkable efforts towards transparency, visibility and engagement in social media with students, staff and the public.

The recruitment of external practitioners and professional veterinarians that take part in both intramural and extramural teaching has improved the opportunities for students to obtain D1Cs. This is especially the case in exotics, equine and farm animal clinical practice. These external professionals receive self-study training in teaching and assessment skills through tutorials and podcasts and are expected to follow an assessment upon completion of the training.

9.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

Formal training with assessment should be in place for all staff involved with teaching.

9.1.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 9.1. because of non-compulsory training in teaching and assessment for all teaching staff.

Standard 9.2: The total number, qualifications and skills of all staff involved with the programme, including teaching staff, 'adjunct' staff, technical, administrative and support staff, must be sufficient and appropriate to deliver the educational programme and fulfil the VEE's mission.

A procedure must be in place to assess if the staff involved with teaching display competence and effective teaching skills in all relevant aspects of the curriculum that they teach, regardless of whether they are full or part-time, residents, interns or other postgraduate students, adjuncts or off-campus contracted teachers.

9.2.1. Findings

The majority of the academic staff of the VEE occupies permanent positions (53 out of a maximum of 67), while the remaining teaching staff are fixed-term researchers and non-academic staff. Non-academic staff are intended to support practical teaching.

Support staff involved in teaching may also work as research or laboratory technicians alongside administrative tasks. Recruitment procedures for both teaching and technical-administrative staff are carried out directly by the UNISS through competitive public calls for applications. The number of support staff has a negative trend. In recent years, there has been a large decrease in the number of available positions.

The number of support staff in the VEE is 27, with only 1 support staff member assigned to the VTH. For intramural clinical training, the number of teaching staff has been considerably reduced in the last 10 years, especially for non-academic (junior) staff. The number of research support staff has also decreased in recent years. As compensation, several contracts with external practitioners have been made and it is expected that more practitioners will be hired in the near future to increase the clinical activity at the VTH.

The teaching competence of teaching staff is monitored by UNISS, together with the quality of research and other administrative and technical activities. All students evaluate their teachers before the end of a course alongside an annual evaluation on the quality of teaching.

9.2.2. Comments

All faculty members work collaboratively, incorporating innovative activities and promoting the training of young teachers. The working atmosphere is friendly and the fact that the groups of students are very small allows teachers to tutor students on an individual basis. The expected increase in the number of students will have to be considered in the recruitment process.

There is an inadequate number of staff assigned to the VTH, and the degree of specialisation of technicians is low, due to restrictions in the selection process and low salaries.

The number of teachers and support staff assigned to teaching at the VTH is insufficient for the number of students present, and this situation could worsen if the number of students enrolled were to be further increased.

9.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that whilst recognising recruitment for some specific disciplines is constrained, the number of teaching and support staff must be improved in the VTH, to ensure 24/7 activity with an adequate caseload sufficient to train students in clinical sciences and fulfil their attainment of relevant D1Cs.

9.2.4. Decision
The VEE is not compliant with Standard 9.2. because of the insufficient number of teaching and support staff in the VTH.

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

9.3.1. Findings
The number of hours committed to teaching by academic staff is established by Italian law at a maximum of 250h/year and a minimum of 120h/year, depending on the position, tenure and involvement in other institutional activities. In practice, all staff exceed these hours due to the high workload. UNISS has a system in place to monitor the well-being of employees and academic staff are aware of the risks of work-related stress problems.

Several opportunities are available to the staff to develop and expand their teaching skills as mentioned in 9.1. Economic progression of academic staff is, by Italian law, only related to the year of recruitment and based on scientific research output; this evaluation is carried out every two years. The VEE monitors the scientific achievements of the academic staff, and the VEE applies a research production quality index for the promotion of each staff member.

9.3.2. Comments
The workload of academic staff is high, but due to their high motivation most still strive for excellence in teaching through education in teaching methods. If possible, not only research output but also excellence in teaching, as well as clinical and academic activities should be monitored and rewarded.

Achievements and opportunities for the advance of clinical/translational research have been found in the area of Animal Health and animal production, especially related to small ruminants. The intense livestock activity in the surrounding area provides interesting opportunities for teaching and research, especially in small ruminants.

9.3.3. Suggestions for improvement
It is suggested that not only research output but also excellence in teaching, as well as clinical and academic activities, should be monitored and rewarded.

9.3.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 9.3.

Standard 9.4: The VEE must provide evidence that it utilises a well-defined, comprehensive

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

9.4.1. Findings
The criteria and processes for promotion are set by UNISS (See Standard 9.3), clearly defined and known by all academic and non-academic staff. Vertical promotion is accessible through public calls, followed by evaluation by an officially appointed committee. Evaluation of staff is performed annually, and horizontal promotion takes place every two years, as established by specific regulations to comply with national laws.

9.4.2. Comments
Academic and support staff work in collaboration with other colleagues in teaching groups and under the supervision of senior members of the VEE.
Experienced teachers mentor and help young people to guide their professional careers.

9.4.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

9.4.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 9.4.

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

9.5.1. Findings
The VEE has an online teaching evaluation system (see Standard 9.1) that includes the participation of students, in an anonymous way. Based on these evaluations, an annual report on the quality of teaching is prepared. The University is part of the web-based SISVALDIDAT project (Statistical Information System for the analysis of information collected through the Student Opinion Survey on academic institutions), which provides transparency to the process. Information on this evaluation system is also easily accessible online.

The JTSC, as part of the QA system, is responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching, creating indicators to interpret the results and proposing corrective measures to the VEE Council, which is ultimately in charge of identifying teaching needs and suggesting the recruitment and progression of its staff.

The Council's high level of representation of academic and support staff ensures the effectiveness of the process and facilitates staff participation in decision-making on the strategic objectives. The

documents produced by the VEE Council, after being reviewed by the UNISS authorities, are published on the website.

9.5.2. Comments
The involvement of students in the evaluation of teaching is recognised by the VEE as an effective measure to implement the process of continuous enhancement of quality. The functions and participation of the JTSC and VEE Council are clearly defined, and the process is transparent.

9.5.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

9.5.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 9.5.

Area 10. Research programmes, continuing and postgraduate education

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

10.1.1. Findings
Student participation in research is mandatory and takes place during a special training (Internato), during which students prepare their final graduation thesis. Through this period, students also develop D1Cs related to scientific research. The Internato is carried out within the facilities of the University of Sassari or at public or private bodies with agreements under the guidance of a VEE supervisor and with the possible support of a supervisor and/or an external tutor. This period can also be carried out within foreign institutions through international mobility programmes. The preparation of the final thesis has a minimum compulsory duration of 250 hours of which 100 hours is for practical activities and 150 hours is for individual study. The final exam encompasses the discussion of a final dissertation in front of a commission. In the final dissertation, students present original results obtained during their research work.

10.1.2. Comments
The Parasitology unit is especially very active in this area having interns and participating in European specialisation.

10.1.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

10.1.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.1.

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

10.2.1. Findings

All students are trained in scientific methods during the period in which they prepare their thesis (Internato). Case studies providing examples of how the scientific method is applied for the advancement of knowledge in veterinary practice are shown during lectures in many subjects. Students can participate in research-oriented events, such as the Researchers' Night, workshops, seminars and conferences. They are obliged to write scientific abstracts and/or papers related to their graduation thesis. They also have the opportunity to attend an optional course entitled Scientific Communication and Public Speaking.

10.2.2. Comments

During the period of preparation of their thesis, all students are familiar with the preparation of scientific papers, they get knowledge on how to use bibliography and databases. Students have free online access to the most popular bibliographical databases.

10.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

10.2.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.2.

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

10.3.1. Findings

Veterinary Continuing Medical Education (VCME) is mandatory in Italy. The postgraduate practical continuing education is offered by external institutions (private and state scientific institutions). Veterinary schools mainly deal with undergraduate courses and postgraduate research programs, including scholarships for young researchers (veterinarians under 29 years of age who graduated less than 2 years earlier), doctoral programs (structured 3-year research programs leading to a doctoral degree- PhD), internships (in rotation on small animals and specialised veterinary pathology) and National Schools of Specialisation. The VEE also organises seminars, workshops, and short courses.

At the VEE, there are two schools of specialisation:
-) School of specialisation in Animal Health Breeding and Livestock Production. The course has a duration of 3 years, for a total of 180 credits. At the end of the training, the title of Specialist in Animal Health Breeding and Zootechnical Productions is acquired.
-) School of specialisation in Food Inspection.
The course lasts 3 years, for a total of 180 credits. At the end of the training, the title of Specialist in the Inspection of Food of Animal Origin is acquired.

The VEE also offers a PhD course in Veterinary Sciences. The course is organised in two curricula: "Animal reproduction, pathology, production and well-being" and "Production, quality and safety of food of animal origin". The PhD course provides students with teachings, seminars, workshops,

and coaching that enable them to obtain a PhD degree. The PhD training program is formulaic and expressed in research credits. At the end of the three-year course, PhD students must acquire 180 credits for the acquisition of the doctoral title in Veterinary Sciences. Activities are carried out in laboratories, clinics, and all facilities available at the VEE. All PhD students are followed and guided by a tutor. The doctoral program promotes internationalisation through research periods abroad, and the preparation of co-tutoring agreements with foreign researchers.

The VEE may also offer a Master in Emergency Medicine and Intensive Care of Small Animals (MUTIPA). The last edition was held in 2019/2020.
Among the VEE's staff, there are 4 EBVS specialists from 3 different European Colleges.

10.3.2. Comments
Achievements and opportunities for the advance of clinical/translational research have been found in the area of Animal Health and animal production, especially related to small ruminants.

10.3.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

10.3.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.3.

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

10.4.1. Findings
The VEE research programme evaluation takes place on 3 levels: national level defined by the ANVUR (the National Agency for Evaluation of University and Research) quality assurance programme- this organisation assesses the quality of academic research and other public bodies through the bibliometric parameters (from SCOPUS and Web of Science) on selected publications of the research/department staff. The assessment concerns a period of 4 years (the last one in 2015-2019) and takes place every 4 years. The University level is coordinated by the Vice-Rector for Research and the internal level is coordinated by the DVM Research Committee (RC). The RC meets every 3 months and promotes research through annual funding allocations of research staff to the department following the evaluation of research projects, coordination of actions aimed at the continuous updating of institutional (personal website of the MIUR database) and online (ORCID, SCOPUS, Web of Science) repositories containing all the staff's research products, identification of actions in favour of inactive staff members (low number/quality publications).

10.4.2. Comments
The QA system related to this area is efficient and reviewed regularly.

10.4.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

10.4.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.4.

11. ESEVT Indicators

	Name of the Establishment:	Dipartimento di Medicina Veterinaria - Università degli Studi di Sassari, Italy					
	Name & mail of the Head:	Prof. Enrico Pietro Luigi De Santis - vetpres@uniss.it					
	Date of the form filling:	20 December 2022					
	Raw data from the last 3 full academic years		2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	Mean	
1	n° of FTE academic staff involved in veterinary training		67	64.5	69.5	67.0	
2	n° of undergraduate students		233	244	233	236.7	
3	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training		52	50.5	51.5	51.3	
4	n° of students graduating annually		23	35	12	23.3	
5	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training		33	32	30	31.7	
6	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training		995	986	995	992.0	
7	n° of hours of clinical training		659	633	941	744.3	
8	n° of hours of FSQ & VPH training		454	465	454	457.7	
9	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in FSQ & VPH		74.5	0	56	43.5	
10	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally		356	483	689	509.3	
11	n° of ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally		1	4	7	4.0	
12	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally		14	16	23	17.7	
13	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen intra-murally		4	3	30	12.3	
14	n° of companion animal patients seen extra-murally		0	29	68	32.3	
15	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extra-murally		528	350	756	544.7	
16	n° of equine patients seen extra-murally		54	29	157	80.0	
17	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds		21	2	35	19.3	
18	n° of visits of poultry and farmed rabbit units		4	2	5	3.7	
19	n° of companion animal necropsies		0	0	42	14.0	
20	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies		0	0	16	5.3	
21	n° of equine necropsies		0	0	10	3.3	
22	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies		0	0	39	13.0	
23	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training		2	3	3	2.7	
24	n° of PhD graduating annually		8	10	12	10.0	

The boxes within the red frames must be filled in by the Establishment (the other values will be automatically calculated)

Name of the Establishment:	Dipartimento di Medicina Veterinaria - Università degli Studi di Sassari, Italy				
Date of the form filling:	20 December 2022				
Calculated Indicators from raw data		Establishment values	Median values[1]	Minimal values[2]	Balance[3]
I1	n° of FTE academic staff involved in veterinary training / n° of undergraduate students	0.283	0.15	0.13	0.157
I2	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	2.200	0.84	0.63	1.570
I3	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	1.357	0.88	0.54	0.817
I4	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	992.000	953.50	700.59	291.410
I5	n° of hours of clinical training	744.333	941.58	704.80	39.533
I6	n° of hours of FSQ & VPH training	457.667	293.50	191.80	265.867
I7	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in FSQ & VPH	43.500	75.00	31.80	11.700
I8	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	21.829	62.31	43.58	-21.751
I9	n° of ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	0.171	2.49	0.89	-0.719
I10	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	0.757	4.16	1.53	-0.773
I11	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	0.529	3.11	1.16	-0.631
I12	n° of companion animal patients seen extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	1.386	5.06	0.43	0.956
I13	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	23.343	16.26	8.85	14.493
I14	n° of equine patients seen extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	3.429	1.80	0.62	2.809
I15	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds / n° of students graduating annually	0.829	1.29	0.54	0.289
I16	n° of visits of poultry and farmed rabbit units / n° of students graduating annually	0.157	0.11	0.04	0.112
I17	n° of companion animal necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0.600	2.11	1.40	-0.800
I18	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0.229	1.36	0.90	-0.671
I19	n° of equine necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0.143	0.18	0.10	0.043
I20	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0.557	2.65	0.88	-0.323
I21*	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0.114	0.27	0.06	0.054
I22*	n° of PhD graduating annually / n° of students graduating annually	0.429	0.15	0.07	0.359
1	Median values defined by data from Establishments with Accreditation/Approval status in May 2019				
2	Recommended minimal values calculated as the 20th percentile of data from Establishments with Accreditation/Approval status in May 2019				
3	A negative balance indicates that the Indicator is below the recommended minimal value				
*	Indicators used only for statistical purpose				

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

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

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

• be of a high standard, well maintained and fit for the purpose • promote best husbandry, welfare and management practices • ensure relevant biosecurity and bio-containment • be designed to enhance learning.			
Standard 4.4: Core clinical teaching facilities must be provided in a veterinary teaching hospital (VTH) with 24/7 emergency services at least for companion animals and equines. Within the VTH, the VEE must unequivocally demonstrate that standard of education and clinical research are compliant with all ESEVT Standards, e.g. research-based and evidence-based clinical training supervised by academic staff trained to teach and to assess, availability for staff and students of facilities and patients for performing clinical research and relevant QA procedures. For ruminants, on-call service must be available if emergency services do not exist for those species in a VTH. The VEE must ensure state-of-the-art standards of teaching clinics which remain comparable with or exceed the best available in the private sector. The VTH and any hospitals, practices and facilities (including EPT) which are involved with the curriculum must meet the relevant national Practice Standards.			x
Standard 4.5: The VEE must ensure that students have access to a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic facilities, including but not limited to: diagnostic imaging, anaesthesia, clinical pathology, intensive/critical care, surgeries and treatment facilities, ambulatory services, pharmacy and necropsy facilities.	x		
Standard 4.6: Appropriate isolation facilities must be provided to meet the need for the isolation and containment of animals with communicable diseases. Such isolation facilities must be properly constructed, ventilated, maintained and operated to provide for animal care and for prevention of spread of infectious agents. They must be adapted to all animal species commonly handled in the VtH.	x		
Standard 4.7: The VEE must have an ambulatory clinic for production animals or equivalent facilities so that students can practise field veterinary medicine and Herd Health Management under academic supervision.	x		
Standard 4.8: The transport of students, live animals, cadavers, materials from animal origin and other teaching materials must be done in agreement with national and EU standards, to ensure the safety of students and staff and to prevent the spread of infectious agents.		x	
Standard 4.9: Operational policies and procedures (including e.g. biosecurity, good laboratory practice and good clinical practice) must be taught and posted for students, staff and visitors and a Biosafety manual must be available. The VEE must demonstrate a clear commitment for the delivery of biosafety and biosecurity, e.g. by a specific committee structure. The VEE must have a system of QA to monitor and assure clinical, laboratory and farm services, including a regular monitoring of the feedback from students, staff and clients.	x		
Area 5. Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin			
Standard 5.1: The number and variety of healthy and diseased animals, cadavers, and material of animal origin must be adequate for providing the practical and safe hands-on training (in the areas of Basic Sciences, Clinical Sciences, Pathology, Animal Production, Food Safety and Quality) and adapted to the number of students enrolled. Evidence must be provided that these data are regularly recorded and that procedures are in place for correcting any deficiencies.			x
Standard 5.2: In addition to the training provided in the VEE, experience can include practical training at external sites, provided this training is organised under direct academic supervision and following the same standards as those applied in the VeE.	x		
Standard 5.3: The VTH must provide nursing care skills and instruction in nursing procedures. Under all situations students must be active participants in the clinical workup of patients, including problem-oriented diagnostic approach together with diagnostic decision-making.	x		
Standard 5.4: Medical records must be comprehensive and maintained in an effective retrieval system (preferably an electronic patient record system) to efficiently support the teaching, research, and service programmes of the VeE.	x		
Area 6. Learning resources			
Standard 6.1: State-of-the-art learning resources must be adequate and available to support veterinary education, research, services and continuing education. When the study programme is provided in several tracks/languages, the learning resources must be available in all used languages. Timely access to learning resources, whether through print, electronic media or other means, must be available to students and staff and, when appropriate, to stakeholders. State-of-the-art procedures for bibliographical search and for access to databases and learning resources must be taught to undergraduate students.	x		
Standard 6.2: Staff and students must have full access on site to an academic library administered by a qualified librarian, an Information Technology (IT) unit managed by an IT expert, an e-learning platform, and all the relevant human and physical resources necessary for the development of instructional materials by the staff and their use by the students. The relevant electronic information, database and other intranet resources must be easily available for students and staff both in the VEE's core facilities via wireless connection (Wi-Fi) and from outside the VEE through a hosted secured connection, e.g. Virtual Private Network (VPn).	x		
Standard 6.3: The VEE must provide students with unimpeded access to learning resources, internet and internal study resources, and equipment for the development of procedural skills (e.g. models). The use of these resources must be aligned with the pedagogical environment and learning outcomes within the programme and have mechanisms in place to evaluate the teaching value of changes in learning resources.		x	
Area 7. Student admission, progression and welfare			
Standard 7.1: The VEE must consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e.g. student admission, progression and certification.	x		

In relation to enrolment, the VEE must provide accurate and complete information regarding all aspects of the educational programme in all advertisings for prospective national and international students. Formal cooperations with other VEEs must also be clearly advertised.			
Standard 7.2: The number of students admitted must be consistent with the resources available at the VEE for staff, buildings, equipment, healthy and diseased animals, and materials of animal origin.	x		
Standard 7.3: The selection and progression criteria must be clearly defined, consistent, and defensible, be free of discrimination or bias, and take into account the fact that students are admitted with a view to their entry to the veterinary profession in due course. The VEE must regularly review and reflect on the selection processes to ensure they are appropriate for students to complete the programme successfully. If the selection processes are decided by another authority, the latter must regularly receive feedback from the VEE. Adequate training (including periodic refresher training) must be provided for those involved in the selection process to ensure applicants are evaluated fairly and consistently.	x		
Standard 7.4: There must be clear policies and procedures on how applicants with disabilities or illnesses are considered and, if appropriate, accommodated in the programme, taking into account the requirement that all students must be capable of meeting the ESEVT Day One Competences by the time they graduate.	x		
Standard 7.5: The basis for decisions on progression (including academic progression and professional fitness to practise) must be explicit and readily available to the students. The VEE must provide evidence that it has mechanisms in place to identify and provide remediation and appropriate support (including termination) for students who are not performing adequately. The VEE must have mechanisms in place to monitor attrition and progression and be able to respond and amend admission selection criteria (if permitted by national or university law) and student support if required.	x		
Standard 7.6: Mechanisms for the exclusion of students from the programme for any reason must be explicit. The VEE's policies for managing appeals against decisions, including admissions, academic and progression decisions and exclusion, must be transparent and publicly available.	x		
Standard 7.7: Provisions must be made by the VEE to support the physical, emotional and welfare needs of students. This includes, but is not limited to, learning support and counselling services, career advice, and fair and transparent mechanisms for dealing with student illness, impairment and disability during the programme. This shall include provision of reasonable adjustments for disabled students, consistent with all relevant equality and/or human rights legislation. There must be effective mechanisms for resolution of student grievances (e.g. interpersonal conflict or harassment).	x		
Standard 7.8: Mechanisms must be in place by which students can convey their needs and wants to the VEE. The VEE must provide students with a mechanism, anonymously if they wish, to offer suggestions, comments and complaints regarding compliance of the VEE with national and international legislation and the ESEVT Standards.	x		
Area 8. Student assessment			
Standard 8.1: The VEE must ensure that there is a clearly identified structure within the VEE showing lines of responsibility for the assessment strategy to ensure coherence of the overall assessment regime and to allow the demonstration of progressive development across the programme towards entry-level competence.		x	
Standard 8.2: The assessment tasks and grading criteria for each unit of study in the programme must be published, applied consistently, clearly identified and available to students in a timely manner well in advance of the assessment. Requirements to pass must be explicit. The VEE must properly document the results of assessment and provide the students with timely feedback on their assessments. Mechanisms for students to appeal against assessment outcomes must be explicit.	x		
Standard 8.3: The VEE must have a process in place to review assessment outcomes, to change assessment strategies and to ensure the accuracy of the procedures when required. Programme learning outcomes covering the full range of professional knowledge, skills, competences and attributes must form the basis for assessment design and underpin decisions on progression.	x		
Standard 8.4: Assessment strategies must allow the VEE to certify student achievement of learning objectives at the level of the programme and individual units of study. The VEE must ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.	x		
Standard 8.5: Methods of formative and summative assessment must be valid and reliable and comprise a variety of approaches. Direct assessment of clinical skills and Day One Competences (some of which may be on simulated patients), must form a significant component of the overall process of assessment. It must also include the quality control of the student logbooks in order to ensure that all clinical procedures, practical and hands-on training planned in the study programme have been fully completed by each individual student.	x		
Area 9. Academic and support staff			
Standard 9.1: The VEE must ensure that all staff are appropriately qualified and prepared for their roles, in agreement with national and EU regulations and must apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of staff. A formal training (including good teaching and evaluation practices, learning and e-learning resources, biosecurity and QA procedures) must be in place for all staff involved with teaching. Most academic staff (calculated as FTE) involved in veterinary training must be veterinarians. It is expected that more than 2/3 of the instruction that the students receive, as determined by student teaching hours, is delivered by qualified veterinarians.		x	

Standard 9.2: The total number, qualifications and skills of all staff involved with the programme, including teaching staff, 'adjunct' staff, technical, administrative and support staff, must be sufficient and appropriate to deliver the educational programme and fulfil the VEE's mission. A procedure must be in place to assess if they display competence and effective teaching skills in all relevant aspects of the curriculum that they teach, regardless of whether they are full or part time, residents, interns or other postgraduate students, adjuncts or off-campus contracted teachers.			x
Standard 9.3: Staff must be given opportunities to develop and extend their teaching and assessment knowledge and must be encouraged to improve their skills. Opportunities for didactic and pedagogic training and specialisation must be available. The VEE must clearly define systems of reward for teaching excellence in operation. Academic positions must offer the security and benefits necessary to maintain stability, continuity, and competence of the academic staff. Academic staff must have a balanced workload of teaching, research and service depending on their role. They must have reasonable opportunities and resources for participation in scholarly activities.	x		
Standard 9.4: The VEE must provide evidence that it utilises a well-defined, comprehensive and publicised programme for the professional growth and development of academic and support staff, including formal appraisal and informal mentoring procedures. Staff must have the opportunity to contribute to the VEE's direction and decision-making processes. Promotion criteria for academic and support staff must be clear and explicit. Promotions for teaching staff must recognise excellence in, and (if permitted by the national or university law) place equal emphasis on all aspects of teaching (including clinical teaching), research, service and other scholarly activities.	x		
Standard 9.5: A system for assessment of teaching staff must be in operation and must include student participation. Results must be available to those undertaking external reviews and commented upon in reports.	x		
Area 10. Research programmes, continuing and postgraduate education			
Standard 10.1: The VEE must demonstrate significant and broad research activities of staff that integrate with and strengthen the veterinary degree programme through research-based teaching.	x		
Standard 10.2: All students must be trained in scientific method and research techniques relevant to evidence-based veterinary medicine and must have opportunities to participate in research programmes.	x		
Standard 10.3: The VEE must provide advanced postgraduate degree programmes, e.g. PhD, internships, residencies and continuing education programmes that complement and strengthen the veterinary degree programme and are relevant to the needs of the profession and society.	x		
Standard 10.4: The VEE must have a system of QA to evaluate how research activities provide opportunities for student training and staff promotion, and how research approaches, methods and results are integrated into the veterinary teaching programmes.	x		
C: (total or substantial) compliance; PC: partial compliance (Minor Deficiency); NC: non-compliance (Major Deficiency)			

Executive Summary

The Royal Institute of Veterinary Medicine was first established in 1928 and proclaimed the first graduates in 1932. In 1934, it became the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Sassari (UNISS). Since 1987, it has been called the Department of Veterinary Medicine (called the Veterinary Education Establishment (VEE) in this report), which is one of the 10 departments of UNISS.
The VEE was originally located in the city centre but moved to its actual location in the 'ity's outskirts in 1982.

The VEE's last ESEVT full Visitation was completed in May 2013, resulting in the Approval status granted by ECOVE. The VEE was also accredited by the Italian Agency for the Evaluation of the University and Research System (ANVUR) in 2019.

The SER was provided on time and written in agreement with the SOP 2019 as amended in September 2021, although some data had to be corrected onsite. Replies to the pre-Visitation questions from the experts were provided before the start of the Visitation. An addendum was also provided on time for explaining how the COVID-19 outbreak has affected the VEE and what actions have been taken to alleviate the impact of the lockdown.

The Liaison Officer did an excellent job to adapt the schedule of the Visitation, searching for the requested information, organising relevant meetings and ensuring the health and safety of the visitors.

Areas worthy of praise (i.e. Commendations), e.g.:
-) Highly committed staff
-) Excellent open interactions between students and staff
-) Innovative and informative digital communication with the students, public and stakeholders
-) Excellent working environment
-) High level of biosecurity in the intra-mural facilities
-) Advanced opportunities for students to learn about wildlife
-) Excellent staff-to-student ratio during practical and clinical training
-) High number of e-books available for staff and students
-) Innovative self-learning space for animal nutrition
-) Efficient retrieval of information from the VTH patient management software with easy online access for all students.
-) Dedicated efforts to develop a QA culture.

Additional commendations are described in the Visitation Report.

Areas of concern (i.e. Minor Deficiencies):
-) Partial compliance with Standard 2.1. because of suboptimal distribution of funding resulting in inadequate staffing.
-) Partial compliance with Standard 3.1.1. because of suboptimal distinction between core, elective and optional activities in the curriculum.
-) Partial compliance with Standard 3.1.2. because of suboptimal teaching of some essential basic subjects.

-) The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.3. because of suboptimal clinical training in companion animals.
-) The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.2. because of insufficient number of lockers for students and suboptimal onsite food services.
-) The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.3. because of suboptimal organisation of the hospitalisation spaces for companion animals.
-) The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.8. because of suboptimal transportation of students to extra-mural facilities.
-) The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 6.3. because of suboptimal access of students to equipment for the development of procedural skills.
-) The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 8.1. because of suboptimal strategy to ensure coherence of the overall assessment regime.
-) The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 9.1. because of non-compulsory training in teaching and assessment for all teaching staff.

Items of non-compliance with the ESEVT Standards:
-) Non-compliance with Standard 4.4. because of the absence of 24/7 emergency services.
-) Non-compliance with Standard 5.1. because of insufficient caseload of companion animal patients in the VTH and insufficient number of necropsies in companion and food-producing animals.
-) Non-compliance with Standard 9.2. because of insufficient number of teaching and support staff in the VTH.

Additional suggestions for improvement are described in this Visitation Report.

Glossary

AY: Academic year
D1C: ESEVT Day One Competences
EAEVE: European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education
EBVS: European Board of Veterinary Specialisation
ECOVE: European Committee on Veterinary Education
EPT: Elective 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
JTSC: Department Joint Teachers-Students Committee
OSCE: Objective Structured Clinical Examination
PDCA: Plan Do Check Adjust
QA: Quality Assurance
SER: Self-Evaluation Report
SOP: Standard Operating Procedure
UNISS: University of Sassari
VEE: Veterinary Education Establishment (department of veterinary medicine)
VMDC: Veterinary Medicine Degree Council
VPH: Veterinary Public Health
VTH: Veterinary Teaching Hospital

Decision of ECOVE

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

1. Non-compliance with Standard 4.4 because of the absence of 24/7 emergency services.

2. Non-compliance with Standard 5.1 because of insufficient caseload of companion animal patients in the VTH and insufficient number of necropsies in companion and food-producing animals.

3. Non-compliance with Standard 9.2 because of insufficient number of teaching and support staff in the VTH.

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