Student Competence Acquisition Assessment Policies and Guidelines for Exam Procedures
Student Assessment Policy

Table of Contents

Purpose and Reference Context

This document establishes the policies and guidelines for conducting assessments and exams for the Veterinary Medicine course at the University of Sassari. The purpose is to make more consistent the design and implementation of the assessment of students' acquisition of competencies, rationalizing and complementing the strategies of the educational path. In relation to the assessment phase, this document outlines: the roles and prerogatives of teachers and students, regulatory references and definitions, as well as the methods for designing and implementing exam procedures.

These guidelines are drafted in accordance with the University's Educational Regulations (RDA), Student Career Regulations, and Regulations for Academic Exams (REP) of the University of Sassari[1]; the Educational Regulations of the Master's Degree in Veterinary Medicine (RDMV)[2]; and the EAEVE

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[1] University of Sassari Regolamento did attico, Regolamento carriere studenti 2023-24 e Guida carriere studenti 24-25, Regolamento degli esami di profitto
[2] Regolamento didattico del Corso di Laurea Magistrale in Medicina Veterinaria

requirements[3], as specified in the ESEVT SOPs (standard 8.1)[4]. The guidelines do not replace the referenced norms and regulations.

The document is prepared by the Quality Assurance Group (AQ) of the Veterinary Medicine Degree Program (CdLMV), approved by the CdLMV Council in the meeting on 25/11/2024, and ratified by the Department of Veterinary Medicine of Sassari in the meeting on 28/11/2024.

Recipients of the Procedure
• All teaching units (modules and integrated courses) of the Veterinary Medicine Master's Degree Program (CdLMV);
• Students attending these teaching units;
• University professors and other staff responsible for the design and delivery of the didactics and any other educational activities of the CdLMV.

2. Definitions

Exam - the procedure by which the examiners assess the student's ability to answer specific questions, discuss a particular topic, and/or demonstrate the competencies acquired. The procedure should highlight the adequacy of the student's learning and the relevant technical language in line with the teaching unit and the program's learning objectives, as outlined in the syllabus of the student's final year.

Competence - the ability to apply knowledge and skills in order to solve problems and address relevant issues within the field of study.

Competence Matrix - a regularly updated document that lists the competencies and skills the student must acquire during their educational path.

Exam Committee - the committee responsible for overseeing the organization and management of the exams, as well as assessing the students.

Monitoring and Review - the CdLMV, the AQ group, and the Student-Staff Joint Teaching Committee monitor and promote the review of assessment procedures and how learning outcomes are measured. The review process includes monitoring exams to ensure the corresponding grades are valid, fair, and reliable, and that they are conducted in accordance with these guidelines. The process also includes monitoring students' performance in each year of study and in each semester to identify any distortions in the evaluation processes.

Student Educational Path
The student's educational path includes:

● The alignment of all contents, teaching, learning, and assessment activities of the CdLMV, in order to define a coherent framework;

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[3]The current revision of the policy represents a corrective action in response to the minor deficiency identified during the EAEVE accreditation visit for "partial compliance because of a suboptimal strategy to ensure coherence of the overall assessment regime" (EAEVE Visitation Report).
[4] ESEVT Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) rev. 2019 as amended in September 2021

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DI SASSARI

DIPARTIMENTO DI
MEDICINA VETERINARIA

- The development of a competence portfolio as required by EU[5] and National Regulations[6], EAEVE accreditation standards[7], the syllabus of the CdLM teaching units, and the syllabus for the Practical Evaluation Internship[8];
- The explicit definition of the objectives and learning outcomes for each study unit.

The student's educational path is defined by the Veterinary Medicine Degree Council and communicated to the staff and students. The PDCA cycle is implemented by the Degree Program and the GAQ, taking into account the proposals and observations from the stakeholders, in order to revise, update, and ensure the implementation of student training activities in line with the needs of the profession.

The official documents referencing the educational path of the Veterinary Medicine Degree Program at the University of Sassari are updated annually and are represented by the RDMV and the Annual Course Information Sheet (SUA)[9]. The strategy for assigning learning outcomes to teaching units is summarized in the competence matrix[10].

Stakeholders: Individuals and other relevant entities (professional organizations, economic operators or their associations, public or private bodies) that add value to the organization, have some interest in it, or are directly involved in the organization's activities (students, teaching staff, technical-administrative staff).

3. Objectives of Student Assessment

Assessment should:
a) Be based on procedures that are as repeatable as possible;
b) Provide an indication of the student's level of learning relative to the expected outcomes, which the Professor has previously communicated;
c) Be transparent, honest, and fair for all students;
d) Include a combination of at least two forms of assessment, in line with the evaluation of competencies for the courses, as indicated in the Competence Portfolio. In particular, the learning outcomes will be directly tested, possibly with the aid of practical cases or simulations using case studies;
e) Cover competencies that are acquired separately from the official courses (e.g., during internship periods);
f) Be regularly reviewed by both teachers and students, including feedback from other stakeholders;
g) When applicable, include digital tools as opportunities to improve procedures (e.g., the Moodle platform);
h) Include, when requested by the student or indicated by the disability and inclusion coordinator, any compensatory or dispensatory measures for specific learning disabilities (DSA) and other learning disabilities.

The design of exams by the teacher follows these guidelines:

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[5] Direttiva 2005/36/CE, relativa al riconoscimento delle qualifiche professionali e s.m.i.

[6] Decreto legislativo 9 novembre 2007, n. 206, recante attuazione della direttiva 2005/36/CE e s.m.i.

[7] ESEVT Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) rev. 2019 as amended in September 2021

[8] Syllabus per la Prova Pratica Valutativa (PPV) della Laurea abilitante in Medicina Veterinaria (in applicazione del Decreto 652 del 5 luglio 2022)

[9] Scheda Unica Annuale del Corso di laurea in Medicina Veterinaria (sito MUR e sito Dipartimento MV Sassari)

[10] Matrice di tuning

- The assessment of the student's learning is developed in alignment with the educational path and the "Dublin Descriptors";
- It is in line with the learning objectives of the Degree Program and the individual teaching units, as outlined in the respective syllabi;
- It is capable of assessing whether the student has acquired the expected competencies and skills based on the competence portfolio, to be developed in relation to the learning outcomes and in accordance with national and EU regulations.

4. Procedures

a) *Profit Exams*

The Veterinary Medicine course provides the following forms of assessment:

- Individual oral presentation;
- Group oral presentation;
- Individual oral exam;
- Assessment of practical and non-practical activities (e.g., internships, continuous assessment);
- Practical exam;
- Written report (with/without discussion in the presence of the Professor);
- Individual written exam (includes multiple-choice questions, both closed and open-ended).

No closed-number exams or individual exam sessions may be scheduled.
Oral exams are public and, therefore, the presence of an audience is required during the exam sessions.
Profit exam The procedures for conducting exams and the evaluation criteria adopted are communicated in the syllabus of each teaching unit and during the introductory lecture of the course. The procedures for assigning exam grades are defined by the specific operational procedure for verifying learning and assigning grades on a scale of thirty.
For exams and progress assessments, reference is made to the RDA Title VIII, Article 35.

b) *Access to Exams*

Only students who have attended the course (33% of theoretical lessons and 100% of practical lessons, unless exceptions for illness with appropriate certification as specified in the CdLMV regulations) and are up to date with enrollment and payment of university fees at the time of the exam (RCS Title II, Art. 2.2.5) can access assessments.
Attendance will be monitored by Professors using a dedicated register; if students do not meet the required attendance threshold, they will be reported to the degree course President and the Teaching Manager for appropriate corrective actions.
Students, when registering for an exam, must comply with any prerequisites required by the degree program.
Students, via the Uniss Self Student Portal, after logging in with their credentials, can:

- Register for exam sessions of the courses listed in their online academic record;
- Check the results of exams published by the Professor;
- refuse the exam grade within the date specified by the instructor.

c) *Organization and Period of Ordinary Exam Sessions*

During the academic year, three ordinary exam sessions are scheduled for undergraduate and master's degree programs. The specific periods for these sessions are determined by the CdLMV.

Ordinary exam sessions must be scheduled during academic breaks and must not coincide with curricular theoretical-practical activities (RDA Title VIII, Art. 34, Point 1).

The calendar for all ordinary exam sessions throughout the academic year is published on the Department's website and communicated through other channels identified by the Department Council and the Degree Program Council. The publication and dissemination of the exam calendar are the responsibility of the Degree Course President and must be ensured by the end of the third exam session of the previous academic year.

d) Organization of Extraordinary Exam Sessions

Extraordinary exam sessions may take place during the two academic semesters, except for the first semester of the first year of the program. A maximum of ten afternoons will be allocated to the extraordinary exam sessions in the academic calendar, during which no theoretical or practical teaching activities will be scheduled.

The decision to hold extraordinary exams is at the Professor's discretion, and they communicate this decision to students at the beginning of the course. If practical exams need to take place in the morning for organizational reasons, the Professor must notify the Degree Course President for authorization.

e) Partial Exams and Exams In Progress (in itinere)

Partial Exams – At the end of a teaching module and before the official exam sessions, the Professor can schedule partial exams. A "partial exam" refers to an exam covering a part of the course material. Passing a partial exam, once the student accepts the obtained grade, means passing the corresponding section of the overall exam. However, students who pass partial exams do not acquire ECTS.

The results of partial exams, the weight of which in the final grade is specified in the course syllabus under assessment methods, will be considered by the Exam Committee when determining the final grade. A negative result in a partial exam does not prevent admission to the final exam.

Assessments In Progress (*in itinere*) – During the teaching module, the Professor may schedule assessments in progress (*in itinere*), usually in written form. An assessment in progress is an assessment of the teaching activities carried out up to that point, covering a portion of the syllabus already completed during the lecture period.

Assessments in progress (*in itinere*) can only be held during the lecture period, within the time slots allocated for that course's lessons in the academic calendar. If scheduled outside these periods, they must not overlap with other scheduled activities. Passing an assessment in progress (*in itinere*) means passing the corresponding section of the syllabus covered in the exam.

The results of assessments in progress, the weight of which in the final grade is specified in the course syllabus under assessment methods, will be considered by the Exam Committee when determining the final grade. A negative result in an assessment in progress does not prevent admission to the final exam. The grade obtained in the assessment in progress remains valid for 12 months from the date of passing for all courses.

f) Conclusion of the Exam

The Teaching Regulations of the University of Sassari (Title VIII, Art. 34, Point 3) state that:

"The final grade announcement is public, and the outcome of the written test is also public, while respecting current regulations on personal data privacy."

Under no circumstances may a student retake an exam that has already been passed and registered, even if the syllabus has been modified. The exam result recording process is managed by the President of the Exam Committee in agreement with the other Committee members, who will determine the final grade. For all other provisions regarding exam recording procedures and the responsibilities of the Director, the

Academic Coordinator, and other relevant parties, please refer to REP Articles 2 and 5. Students with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD), as certified under Law 170/2010, are granted appropriate assessment and evaluation support, including dispensatory and compensatory measures for educational flexibility, in accordance with the guidelines attached to Ministerial Decree of July 12, 2011.

g) Notification of Exam Requirements to Students

At the beginning of each course, students must be provided with clear information regarding exam procedures and evaluation criteria. These details are also published on the course webpage and in the syllabus. Any changes to the published procedures (e.g., adopting different exam formats) must be approved by the Degree Course President or their delegate, in consultation with the Exam Committee. Students will be promptly informed of any modifications by the Course Coordinator.

h) Exam Committees

Exam committees are composed of the President and members of the Exam Committee (at least one for each module). The Committee is appointed by the Department Director, who has the authority to preside over the committee in cases of absences, disputes, or to appoint a delegate. Exam Committees must consist of at least two members.
For further details, reference is made to RDA Article 34, Points 19, 20, 21, and 22.

i) Final Exams and Degree Awarding

Regulations regarding final exams and degree conferral are outlined in RDA Title VIII, Article 35, as well as in the degree awarding rules approved by the CdLMV on March 25, 2024.

l) Quality Management and Assurance

All stages of the evaluation process are managed according to "Quality Assurance" standards, which apply at the program level, individual course level, and module level.
Ensuring compliance with procedures for exam design, scheduling, and administration, as well as monitoring and verifying students' achievement of expected competencies, is the responsibility of the Degree Course President and the Degree Council. The Degree Council requires all teaching staff of the course to participate in training initiatives on the design, implementation, and review of evaluation methods.
Student evaluation quality assurance procedures involve the Degree Council (for reporting organizational or management anomalies in exams), the Quality Assurance Group (GAQ) for the Veterinary Medicine Master's Program, and the Student-Staff Joint Teaching Committee of the Department, which considers student evaluations and complaints. Additional student feedback is collected through the SISValDidat digital platform (Statistical Information System for Teaching Evaluation) concerning the management of partial and intermediate exams (Criterion D.4) and the proper communication of exam procedures (Criterion D.5).

m) Reporting and Resolving Exam Procedure Anomalies Perceived by Students

Any concerns raised by individual students regarding an exam result will be handled in accordance with Annex 1 of this document. The resolution of anomalies is the responsibility of the course professors, the Degree Course President, and the Student-Staff Joint Teaching Committee.

n) Complaints and Reports

If corrective actions are not taken or if perceived issues persist, students or their representatives may, after initiating the resolution procedures outlined in Annex 1, submit formal complaints or anonymous reports, which will be handled by the Department Administration.

Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for actively engaging in their learning process by reviewing the published evaluation procedures and meeting the required criteria. A summary of student responsibilities is provided in **Annex 2** of this document.

Teacher Responsibilities

Teaching Staff is responsible for designing, planning, organizing, and administering exams, including implementing procedures following grade assignment, in compliance with applicable rules and regulations. This includes all provisions outlined in this document, as summarized in **Annex 3**.

Annexes:

- **Annex 1** – Reporting of Exam Procedure Anomalies Perceived by Students
- **Annex 2** – Student Responsibilities

Related Operational Instructions:

- **IO_01** – Assignment of Exam Grades
- **IO_02** – Evaluation Methods and Scoring for Final Degree Examinations

Annex 1 - Reporting of Exam Procedure Anomalies Perceived by Students

This annex defines the procedures that students must follow to report:

A) Non-compliance perceived during their exams:

1. The student must first directly contact the relevant instructor for clarification regarding the exam procedures and grading before taking any further reporting actions.
2. If the student finds the explanations unsatisfactory, they may submit a formal request via email to the **Degree Course President**, with a copy sent to the **Department Director**. The Degree Course President will then ask for an opinion from the **Exam Committee** regarding the matter.

Procedure for submitting a request to the Degree Course President (CdL):

- The request must be submitted **within 15 working days** from the publication of the exam results.
- It must strictly concern **deviations from the announced evaluation procedures** (e.g., discrepancies in exam execution or grading).
- The report must be sent via **email** to the Department Director, the **Degree Course President** and the Exam Committee, and must include the following information:
    - **Date and name of the exam**
    - **Description of the issue**

    o   **Any supporting documentation**

Reports **will not be considered** if they pertain to:

- Specific **academic evaluations** made by the Exam Committee (e.g., the professor's assessment of essential topics required to achieve the exam objectives).
- **Lack of understanding** by the student regarding exam regulations and procedures.

Outcome of the request review:

- **Request not accepted:** The student will receive a reasoned response via email, and the request will be archived.
  - **Request accepted:** If there is sufficient evidence of irregularities or inconsistencies with the established exam procedures, the **Degree Course President** , with the **binding opinion** of the President of the Exam Committee, will take the necessary measures, which may include **Grade review, Exam retake, Corrective actions.**

B) System Anomalies in Exam Procedures

Any additional perceived generalized anomalies related to exam procedures can be reported through the following channels:

- By Degree Program Representatives, via direct communication to the President of the Degree Program.
- By Student Representatives within the Student-Staff Jopint Teaching Committee

If persistent non-compliance or unresolved anomalies remain despite following the resolution procedures outlined in Sections A and B of this annex, students may proceed with formal complaints or anonymous reports (as described in Section n, Point 5 of this document).

For further observations, critiques, or suggestions regarding general aspects of the evaluation process and the exam procedures set by professors, students are encouraged to:

- Communicate directly with the Degree Course President (CdL).
- Use the available student feedback and evaluation tools.

Annex 2 – Student Responsibilities

Reference to the Stage of the Educational Path	Required Actions
At the Beginning of the Course Attendance and Study Period	- The student is required to consult the educational materials provided by the teacher and available on the Moodle platform (e.g., syllabus) and gather information on: **Learning objectives** and the **skills to be acquired**; **Methods of assessing learning** and **exam regulations**. - Students with disabilities or Specific Learning Disabilities (DSA) are required to contact the **Department's Disability and DSA Coordinator** as soon as possible and follow the procedures published online by the **University's Student Secretariat** for <u>Disability and DSA services</u>.

At the Beginning of the Study Period and Before the Assessment	- The student ensures they attend the minimum required number of theoretical lessons and all practical sessions as outlined in the course regulations.
	- The student regularly checks the **Moodle page** of the course or any other repositories (e.g., Drive, Cloud) provided by the teacher for educational materials, as well as their university email inbox.
	- The student contacts the relevant teacher(s) directly via email or in person in case of any doubts regarding the course/module.
	- The student ensures they meet all the prerequisites and requirements described on the course page (e.g., paid university fees, required exams, and any attendance signatures) before enrolling in an exam.
	- The student takes exams with diligence and honesty to demonstrate that the learning objectives have been achieved.
	- The student submits reports, tests, papers, and other materials for evaluation in the format and within the deadlines specified by the teacher.
	- The student keeps copies of documents and any materials that are being evaluated.
	- Students with disabilities or Specific Learning Disabilities (DSA) request the use of **exemptions or compensatory tools** if they have certified learning disabilities under **Law 170/10**. They must follow the deadlines for submitting any relevant materials or requests for compensatory measures to the instructor.
After the exam	- The student, for clarification or anomalies regarding the exam or the received evaluation, should request a meeting with the Professor as soon as possible (in any case, within 2 weeks of the publication of the grades) and then follow the procedures outlined (see Appendix 1).
	- If the anomalies/non-conformities regarding the exam are not resolved, the student should follow the procedures for submitting complaints and reports (Appendix 1).

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Annex 3 – Responsibilities of the Professor

Reference to the Stage of the Educational Path	Required Actions
Student Assessment Design and Definition of Exam Procedures	The Professor designs the evaluation methods and the conduct of the exam with reference to: - The goals and requirements outlined in the applicable rules and regulations for student assessment, including the guidelines in this document; - The objectives and specific learning outcomes expected in the teaching unit within the integrated course and the training pathway outlined by the Study Program; - The competencies the student must acquire within the teaching unit; - The difficulty of the exams should be consistent and proportional to the expected learning outcomes and competencies, considering the achievement of DOC; - The criteria for assigning grades are based on the guidelines provided in the Operational Procedure for the assessment method and the assignment of grades in thirtieths; - The duration of oral and practical exams should be reasonable and balanced, avoiding excessive prolongation of the exam session, respecting both the professors' and students' commitments, and ensuring no overlap with any other scheduled exams.
Before the start of the course	- The instructor prepares the course syllabus, ensuring that it is made available online or on the Moodle platform. The information provided to students regarding the assessment of acquired competencies includes: - Requirements, methods, and criteria applicable to exams (or intermediate and partial tests) for access, conduct, and evaluation of the student, including results and grading procedures; - Guidelines for the submission of any reports, written documentation, tests, or individual and group presentations; - Information related to the monitoring of requirements for exam access (e.g., student attendance at courses).
Exam Planning	- Professors ensure that, for integrated courses, the schedule of exam sessions allows for joint exam administration, with the participation of all involved teachers. - Professors design and organize exam tests in alignment with the learning objectives and competencies to be acquired as outlined in the syllabus. - Teachers design and organize exam tests ensuring proportionality and coherence in the execution of assessments, considering the scope of each teaching unit (credits assigned) and the relevance of the competencies. - The suggested exam dates must take into account prerequisite courses conducted in the same academic year and should facilitate, as much as

	possible, the progression of the student's academic career.

Before the exam	- The Professor provides clarifications requested by the student regarding the objectives and methods of the exam, referring to the office hours communicated to the students. - The Professor promptly manages the procedures related to the opening of exam sessions on the self-student platform, promptly communicating any changes in the exam location and schedule.
During the exams	- The Professor, during the exams, is responsible for: - Ensuring an approach and interaction, where applicable, that promotes the student's opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge/competencies, including providing appropriate conditions for the execution of the exams; - Providing the student with feedback during the exam that enhances the student's awareness of the level of competency acquisition expected; - Adopting reasonable measures to highlight and discourage any behavior not in line with principles of fairness during the exam; - Reporting to the President of the Degree Program any violations of principles or improper conduct during the exam by either a student or exam committee members.
Student evaluation and subsequent activities	- The evaluation of the student and the assignment of the final grade is the collective and exclusive responsibility of the exam commission. - The grades assigned by all members of the exam commission are based on the principles of transparency, consistency, and fairness. - In the case of mid-term or partial exams, the Professor provides feedback to the students promptly, within two weeks from the completion of the exam (e.g., a report). - The Professor checks the student's acceptance of the grade assigned, immediately in the case of an oral exam and within 7 days after the written exam. - The President of the Commission, upon the student's acceptance of the grade, ensures that the grades are correctly and promptly uploaded online. - If exceptional circumstances require modifications to the evaluation criteria established prior to the course and published, the Professor seeks approval from the Director and the Degree Course President and provides prompt communication to the students. - The Professor, during the exams, adopts compensatory or dispensatory measures as required for students with disabilities or specific learning disabilities (DSA).