



VISITATION REPORT

To the School of Veterinary Medicine of Rakuno Gakuen University, Ebetsu, Japan

On 23 – 27 October 2023

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Introduction

The Rakuno Gakuen University (RGU), with its Faculty of Dairy Science and Department of Veterinary Medicine, was established in 1964 and located in Ebetsu, Hokkaido.

Graduate School of Veterinary Medicine and Veterinary Medicine Master and Doctoral Courses were established in 1975 and 1981, respectively.

Today, RGU consists of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment Sciences, the School of Veterinary Medicine (called the Veterinary Education Establishment (VEE) in this report) and two graduate schools (veterinary medicine and dairy sciences).

RGU's mission is to train students to become leaders in their communities by developing character based on the concept of San-ai motto, which is rooted in Christianity, and an educational philosophy of practical education founded on the idea that a healthy earth ensures human health and by mastering advanced learning and technologies.

The VEE had an ESEVT Consultative Visitation in October 2019 and has not yet completed a Full Visitation.

The main challenge is that a completely new curriculum started recently, i.e. in 2021.

The ESEVT SOP 2019, as amended in September 2021, is 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 bases its educational concept on an inspiring Motto and most of the mission and objective are related to a holistic approach to One Health (even if OH is not directly mentioned). The promotion of a circular agriculture and a general respect for life and nature are recognized as main contributions to the welfare of human and animal life. The VEE aims to prepare professionals able to solve complex problems related to agriculture paying particular attention to the ethical aspects and capable of promoting cutting-edge research in animal welfare and life science.

The VEE runs a new curriculum (started in 2021) and declares that this can undergo evolution in response to feedback from stakeholders.

D1Cs are acquired and recorded using booklets and logbooks. Course Syllabi indicate which D1Cs they contribute to.

The SER doesn't explain how training is related to research activity.

1.1.2. Comments

The VEE has a clear vision of the role of the veterinarian within the society and the ethical aspects are deeply considered. The introduction of measures to encourage the use of English by teaching staff and students and the use of scientific publications for teaching, confirmed during the interview, can ensure a research-based educational approach. The importance of lifelong learning is not recognized in this standard but is well described elsewhere in the SER.

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 School of Veterinary Medicine is part of the Rakuno Gakuen University and is composed of two Departments, the visited VEE is the Department of Veterinary Medicine, responsible for the Veterinary surgeon degree.

The Educational Reform Promotion Office (vetERP Office) verifies and promotes educational reform plans in collaboration with other bodies, including the Student Association for Veterinary Education of RGU (SAVER) applying the PDCA cycle.

The Steering Committee of the School is responsible for the School's administration, budgeting policies, recruitment criteria and the basic policies for the School's education programme adjustments.

The School Advisory Panel is an external body that provides input from veterinary experts on educational aspects.

The VEE has formal collaboration with other institutions, including Universities with credit transfer programmes.

The responsible person for the veterinary curriculum is the Department Chair, Professor Hiroki Teraoka, DVM, MS, PhD.

1.2.2. Comments

The governance system and the relationship among the different bodies are quite clear. Students and stakeholders are sufficiently involved in the process of QA of the VEE. The School Advisory Panel is a good practice.

1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested, if possible, that the organisational scheme be revised to simplify it and to ensure that the University, Faculty and Department committees and policies are fully aligned.

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 presents a complete SWOT analysis and its updated version aligned with the University 2020-2025 Medium-term Plan. The faculty members are informed of the planned actions at the beginning of every academic year. The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine has a plan for the next six years (2020-2025) listing all the Initiatives planned, considering the received recommendations.

1.3.2. Comments

The VEE is to be commended for the detailed operational plan related to enhancements of education, facilities and procedures based on the CV report as well as for the approved plans for further enhancements in the near future.

The SWOT analysis is well detailed, but timeframes and indicators are not always present. The University's yearly interim revision of the status of advancement of the actions (that is the basis of the formulation of the next year's budget) is not reflected in a similar analysis of the progress of

the VEE operational plan.

1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to include in the operational plans more SMART objectives, which are easily monitored annually.

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 their 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 Quality Assurance Policy was developed based on the ESG Standards 2015 and approved in April 2023. Standard Operating Procedures are present. The PDCA cycle is monitored by the vetERP office which reports monthly to the Faculty Council.

A system for collecting information regarding the performance in education, research and clinical services is in place and results are analysed every year by the School of Veterinary Medicine that reports to the Faculty Council.

Students produce anonymous feedback for all teaching activities at the end of each semester and the QA Policy obliges faculty members to explain to the next year's students the improvements in teaching based on the comments received.

The team received the documentation showing the PDCA cycle applied to the request of SAVER to introduce a comment field in the Logbook.

1.4.2. Comments

The PDCA cycle is closed by presenting the results of student opinions the following year along with the measures taken by the teacher to solve any problems that have arisen. This good practice makes students aware of the effectiveness of their feedback and empowers them.

The recent introduction of SAVER formally recognized the role of the students in the continuous enhancement of quality.

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 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.

1.5.1. Findings

The website (in Japanese) is considered the first information provider, in addition, annual meetings are organised by the RGU Faculty Development (FD) Committee to exchange views between students and faculty. In addition, Parent-Faculty Meetings are held in October and individual meetings are available on request. The Career Centre holds joint job fairs in which general knowledge is provided to stakeholders and social sessions for faculty members, students and recruitment officers from companies are concurrently held.

The EAEVE/ESEVET-related documents are reachable by the link reported in the SER with a partial translation including a list of potential major deficiencies, plans to overcome them, and critical situations.

1.5.2. Comments

The VEE is to be commended for its efficient collaboration with stakeholders. Interviewing stakeholders during the visit confirmed VEE's close relationship with the local area and society as a whole. The website is in Japanese and a short English version is available.

1.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to extend the English version of the website.

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

All plans and policies are discussed and decided by all faculty members of the School of Veterinary Medicine. Plans decided by the School Steering Committee meetings and/or Faculty Councils are reported to the University councils by the Dean of the School of Veterinary Medicine. Decisions are finalised by the University Council at the University level. The decisions of the Faculty Council are communicated to stakeholders and opinions are exchanged through the faculty member in charge of the School Advisory Panel by the Dean and vetERP Office Director.

Every sub-committee of the vetERP Office, which includes at least one veterinary student, holds monthly meetings and periodically reviews the ESEVET indicators utilising a dashboard.

1.6.2. Comments

The monitoring activity performed by the VEE is mainly related to the ESEVET indicators table, but the University collects and publishes many other quantitative and qualitative indicators related to the set objectives. Even if the specific role of each committee is not completely clear, students and staff are partially informed about the results obtained. In particular, there was limited knowledge of the results collected at the University level.

1.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that a single dashboard be created that includes all the indicators related to the veterinary degree, collected at any level, to monitor the different aspects of the curriculum (e.g. number of repeating students, number of dropout students, % of satisfied students) including the ESEVET indicators.

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

Twenty-four major suggestions (summarised in 19 items) were reported as potential major deficiencies in the 2019 Consultative Visitation.

The governance bodies were reformed. All faculty and students jointly examine and review new curriculums, logbooks, facility renovations, and applying the PDCA process.

The President approved a medium- to long-term plan to solve the principal issues (e.g. number of staff). All educational facilities were reviewed.

A logbook system and a booklet to register skills have been implemented.

Simulators and skills lab were implemented to achieve the 3R's objectives.

CCT has increased from 3 to 18 credits.

The animal hospital was renovated to establish an equine medical centre.

An EPT system was organised. The EPT teachers take some training programmes and these are managed using the logbook system.

The new curriculum is in place from 2021 so only by 2025 all students will undertake practical training in FSQ by off-campus meat inspection, field training, comprehensive pathology training, poultry inspection training and virtual reality.

The "24/7" system is not yet in place due to local legislation limitations, but all students participate in night and holiday clinical training for the purpose of managing hospitalised animals and responding to emergency cases with residents and clinical teachers.

1.7.2. Comments

The VEE has deeply considered all the suggestions received, working to resolve all the potential major deficiencies. A part of the implementation of these activities is not yet in place due to the

introduction of the new curriculum only in 2021 but plans for correction have already been developed.

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

VEE has a balanced budget. The primary source of income is annual tuition and admission fees. A significant financial source is income from clinical services, other services, and research grants. Another primary source of income is the state contribution, which has increased significantly in 2022 compared to the previous years, 2020 and 2021.

Annual tuition (approx. EUR 2,142) and admission fees (EUR 15,642) were revised in 2020. Yearly tuition was reduced compared to 2021 to roughly the level of previous years. The amount of annual tuition is the same for domestic and international students. VEE has several systems for financial assistance to students (social and benefit scholarships, scholarship benefits for poor students). The primary Annual expenditures represent personnel and operating, maintenance, and depreciation costs.

The share of student fees of VEE (the primary source of income) is slightly lower than at other institutions. However, this lower income is compensated by payment from own farms, an animal hospital, and two student dormitories. Compared to other institutions, VEE has a higher state contribution, which may represent a slightly lower degree of independence.

2.1.2. Comments

VEE has a balanced budget. The main source of revenues is generated from tuition fees, clinical services, and public funding. The financial plan is well-balanced and has adequate funds to support future development.

2.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

2.1.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 2.1.

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

Every year around October, requests for the next year's budget are submitted, with the prioritisation of individual requests. After assessment by the Director, Deputy - Director, and Administration Manager of Anima Medical Centre, the requirements are submitted in November to the Financial Affairs Division and then to the president and the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. The final budget is decided by the Board of Trustees and the Board of Council the following year in March. The budget is divided into the ordinary and extraordinary budget. The ordinary budget is categorised into Companion Animal, Farm Animal, Pathology, and Common. The extraordinary budget covers expensive equipment (priced at over one million yen). The main renovation of the facilities was in 2021 - 2022.

2.2.2. Comments

VEE has a high degree of financial autonomy; the incomes from various sources (farms, VTH, and dormitories) compensate for low student fee income.

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 budgeting policies and all budgeting matters are approved by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees. Funding policies are prepared under the Executive Trustee, the University President, and the High School Principal. The way budget decisions are made and budget policies are communicated at an all-university briefing session. All documents are publicly accessible on the VEE website.

In 2017, the University formulated the "Rakuno Gakuen New Facility Establishment Plan", which divided the 12 years from 2018 to 2029 into four phases. Based on this plan, a multi-purpose sports facility was constructed in March 2020. Due to the coronavirus infection, the implementation of ICT-based classes was necessary, and from 2021, funds were allocated to renovation and maintenance to obtain EAEVE certification. The funds for the renovation came from internal funds. VEE has prepared a new "Campus Master Plan" with the aim of building facilities for teaching and facilities for extracurricular activities ("Uenae campus").

In the coming years, the goal is to maintain the number of students and reduce running costs by introducing new technologies and energy-saving models.

2.3.2. Comments

The annual balance of expenditures and revenues is positive. VEE has sufficient resources for further development and investment. VEE has a well-developed plan for expected income and expenditure for the next three years. The "Campus Master Plan" for the medium term is focused on 2033, which marks the University's 100th anniversary. The main objective of this plan is to renovate the existing facilities, upgrade the University's internal network, and build the Uenae campus.

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

The academic year is 30 weeks long, 15 weeks in semester 1 and 15 weeks in semester 2. The Japanese academic year begins in April with semester 1 running from the second week of April to the last week of July. Marks for semester 1 are posted in late September. Semester 2 runs from the last week of September to the last week of January. Marks for semester 2 are posted in early March. A new curriculum was introduced in April 2021 following an ESEVT Consultative Visitation in October 2019. It will be 2026 before the first graduates are produced under this new curriculum. The VEE has designed the new curriculum such that it will satisfy both ESEVT requirements for Day One Competences (D1C) as well as the Japanese Veterinary Medicine Model Core Curriculum (VMMCC). The VMMCC is considered the minimum requirement in Japan for training veterinary surgeons. The main improvements in the new curriculum include small group core clinical training, pre-clinical training using simulators, recording learning using a log-book system, and animal handling using healthy animals. The University has authorisation from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) to admit 120 students with an upper limit of 138 (115%).

There is a long list of D1C (see Tables 2a and 2b in the Appendices) – based on the requirements of the Japanese Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (JAEVE) and the ESEVT SOP (2019) broken down into 105 clinical skills (acquired through preclinical training using a 'simulator') and 76 preventive medicine tasks. There are two soft-skill and five hard-skill courses to teach the 105 clinical skills. A student must be competent in these clinical skills before entering

Core Clinical Training (CCT) in the fifth year and working with live patients. In order to acquire the 76 skills set described under “preventive medicine”, a VR system is used to simulate slaughterhouse practice, as well as an on-site farm quarantine management simulation (assuming an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease), carried out at the Field Education and Research Centre (FEDREC), which has 2 stations – Dairy Production Station and Meat Production Station. Animal handling occurs in the first year and is managed by the FEDREC. Preclinical practical skills are taught in the skills lab by one academic staff member to up to 10 students. For practical clinical skills training, one academic will train up to four students. Logbooks are used throughout the course for students to record their skills acquisition.

Research projects start in year 4 and are completed in year 6 with a graduate dissertation. Each student selects a research unit and takes one of five specialised educational courses (basic, biology and pathology, preventive veterinary medicine, farm animal medicine and companion animal medicine).

With regard to feedback and curriculum improvement, students are requested to assess and provide comments for all subjects. Teachers report improvements, based on these comments, to the Academic Affairs Division and inform students of the same. Feedback from students on the curriculum occurs through a course questionnaire (carried out by the Educational Affairs Division) as well as a questionnaire administered at graduation covering the education received by students throughout their six-year career at the University (carried out by the Academic Affairs Division). The Curriculum Working Group surveys and reviews the curriculum in each department. Thereafter the curriculum is routinely reviewed by the Faculty Council following discussion by the Academic Affairs Committee.

The Student Association for Veterinary Education (SAVER) participates in meetings with the Educational Reform Promotion Office for improvement in education, and the review of curriculum, facilities, and teaching.

3.1.1.1. Findings

ESEVT lists 36 D1C and 12 areas of ‘underpinning knowledge and understanding’. In contrast, the VEE list of skills and tasks (Tables C2a and C2b in the Appendices) is very specific and prescriptive. They do not list any D1C that could be described as soft skills e.g.

1.4 Communicate effectively with clients, the public, professional colleagues and responsible authorities, using language appropriate to the audience concerned and in full respect for confidentiality and privacy.

1.6 Work effectively as a member of a multidisciplinary team in the delivery of services.

1.12 Demonstrate that they recognise personal and professional limits, and know how to seek professional advice, assistance and support when necessary.

In addition, certain D1C are not mentioned e.g.

1.33 Perform a systematic gross post-mortem examination, record observations, sample tissues, store and transport them.

In the new curriculum [beginning April 2021 with the first intake of students entering core clinical training (CCT) in 2025] there are 22 credits of CCT. This is made up of 22 weeks comprising 5 x 3-week blocks of companion animals (covering CCT A to E), plus one block of farm animal as well as 2 weeks of Comprehensive Diagnostic Pathology Practice (CDPP), 1-week virtual poultry inspection practice and 1-week off-campus Meat Hygiene Inspection practical training.

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The 2021 curriculum hours are very large, see Table 3.1.1 (only in years 5 and 6 is didactic teaching reduced to any significant extent in order to allow time for clinical training and completion of a research project, thus allowing some time for independent learning/thinking/investigation). There are 399 to 549 lectures in years 1 to 4 (highest in year 3), fifth year is lecture free with 120 lectures in year 6. The largest component in terms of hours is supervised self-learning, 960 to 1080 in years 1 to 4. Typically there is a 1:2 ratio of lectures to supervised self-learning.

The process of syllabus development and assessment is decided by the University Academic Affairs Committee while the process of syllabus preparation is announced to faculty by the Academic Affairs Division. There is also a third-party review of syllabi by the Deputy Director, division heads and persons in charge of the Education Centre. They report to the Director of the Education Centre who liaises with the course leader to revise the syllabus.

3.1.1.2. Comments

The VEE has made excellent progress in combining the requirements of the Japanese Veterinary Core Curriculum with those of EU Directive 2005/36/EC (as amended by directive 2013/55/EU) and its Annex V.4.1. In order to avoid overloading the student teaching load, a number of general information courses have been removed from Stage 1 to permit the inclusion of additional course material concerning the teaching of the ESEVT D1C. However, there is no clear overview/summary map or GANTT chart, of where the teaching and acquisition of each D1C occurs within the curriculum.

3.1.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that a schematic should be produced showing the sequencing of the courses and the timing of major learning objectives plus D1C within the courses. This would clearly illustrate the sequencing of the teaching and acquisition of each D1C within the curriculum. In addition, it would allow students to gauge their progress in terms of completing their learning and subsequent demonstration of the successful acquisition of each specified D1C.

3.1.1.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.1.

3.1.2. Basic Sciences

3.1.2.1. Findings

The hours in basic sciences are very high e.g. Anatomy, histology and embryology = 450 hours; Microbiology = 405 hours – a lot of it is supervised self-learning e.g. Anatomy 240 hours; Microbiology 24 hours. The laboratory (practical, non-clinical) hours are suboptimal in comparison e.g. Anatomy (Laboratory 45 hours; non-clinical animal work 45 hours); Microbiology (Laboratory 45 hours). This is borne out in the ESEVT indicators where the VEE has declared 660,000 hours of practical (non-clinical) training which is below the recommended minimal values of 700,59 hours.

By 2024 all preclinical teaching involving live animals (except for animal handling and anatomy practice, as well as rodents and frogs for basic vet training) will be done using simulators.

However, the SER also states that “In addition to participating in primary care and advanced

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medical care for dogs, cats, equines and farm animals, all students have an opportunity to undertake shelter dog and/or cat care, management and nutritional operations, calf castration, and equine management including vaccination.”

The numbers of necropsies for all the animal species specified in the ESEVT SOP (2019), with the exception of equine necropsies, are below the recommended minimal values. The VEE has acknowledged it has particular difficulties in getting sufficient dogs and cats for post-mortem examination because of Japanese cultural and Buddhist beliefs, namely that the souls of their pets reside in their corpses. The VEE will use as a substitute racoons (an alien species introduced from North America) which are exterminated by the Hokkaido Department of Environmental Sciences.

3.1.2.2. Comments

The content and teaching of the basic sciences are comprehensively described and mandated in the Japanese Veterinary Core Curriculum. The learning objectives are very clear and accessible. The teaching staff are highly motivated and committed to providing an excellent learning experience for the students.

3.1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that students could greatly benefit from additional opportunities to actively carry out dissections in the Anatomy course. In order for students to better appreciate the anatomy of veterinary species it is suggested that both additional cadavers and time be allocated to dissection such that each student actively participates in the dissection.

3.1.2.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.2.

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

3.1.3.1. Findings

Subjects related to clinical science in companion animal are taught during preclinical years (3-4) and clinical years (years 5-6) Lectures, covering core subjects, occurs in pre-clinical years and these consist of a large number of teaching hours (e.g. 275h of Medicine and surgery including anaesthesiology); basic practical skills relevant to Clinical Sciences are taught in years 3-4 years dividing students into small groups. In the 2021 curriculum groups of students are taught a range of clinical elements using simulators, at the skills lab building. RGU has set 105 minimum veterinary “clinical” skills (including those relevant to companion animals) that need to be acquired prior to progressing to the 5th year and accessing core clinical training (CCT). However, due to the transition phase, 4th-year students (enrolled in the 2015 curriculum) have had no access to the skills lab for practising DIC.

Student competences are ultimately assessed via VCAT examination (comprising vetCBT and vetOSCE); only those passing the VCAT can access CCT, and therefore progress to the 5th year becoming “student doctor”. Students achieving the “Student Doctor” qualification can participate in “hands-on” clinical training on companion animals CCT, electives and non-compulsory training. CCT is performed mainly at the VTH (referral cases) and off campus, at alumni-managed veterinary centres (for experience of primary care cases). However, the 2021 curriculum CCT

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structure will have its first influx of students in 2025. With the 2021 curriculum CCT credits will overall increase from 3 to 22 (18 for clinical practice); CCT A-E are relevant to clinical science in companion animals (table 3.1.3). Students completing Curriculum 2015, select two options from the 6 transition programmes above mentioned (CCT A-E) and attend the selected CCT in the 2nd semester of the 5th year.

Currently, equine advanced medical care cases are seen extramurally at the Shadai Horse Clinic, which is not part of CCT (50% of students currently attending); however, the latter has established a second hospital in the VEE in July 2023, not yet operational.

Electives in the field of companion animal clinical sciences are distributed through years 4 to 6 and comprise Companion Veterinary Medicine Seminar I-IV and Companion Animal Medicine Advanced Course. Access to electives is based on availability of the course and priority is assigned depending on marks (GPA).

The number of companion animals (referring in particular to equine and exotic pets) seen intramurally and extramurally for CCT remains below the minimum.

3.1.3.2. Comments

With curriculum 2021 the VEE has aligned the curriculum with the 2005/36/EC and 2013/55/EU directives on Veterinary Medicine courses as requested by the SOP 2019 (amended 2021). However, clinical hands-on training is insufficient in all companion animals, particularly in equine and exotic pets due to a low caseload and the fact that students currently undergoing CCT are not exposed to all relevant areas of training.

Zoo and aquarium rotations do not compensate for the absence of clinical training in exotic pet species.

3.1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

Increasing the companion animal caseload represents a key step for offering more opportunities for hands-on training. Recruiting specialists may help in increasing the caseload. Similarly, the enhancement of the 24/7 emergency service is necessary to offer more hands-on opportunities.

Equine clinical training will benefit from the opening of the newly built horse clinic on the RGU campus and the fact that the clinical rotation at the Shadai Horse Clinic will be compulsory for all students, which will also make this rotation part of CCT. While on equine rotations, students require more “hands-on” clinical cases.

Staff members with training in exotic pets could be recruited or a partnership with private clinics, with a large exotic pet caseload, could be established.

3.1.3.4 Decision

The VEE is not compliant with Standard 3.1.3. because of insufficient hands-on clinical training for all students in companion animals, including equine and exotic pets.

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

3.1.4.1. Findings

Basic skills relevant to Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals are taught 1st, 3rd and 4th years, especially using the skills lab activities (3 rooms devoted to Food-producing animals, Room Farm Animals A, B and Theriogenology). In the 1st year, students have the opportunity to learn some basic skills in animal handling and livestock behaviour at the FEDREC's stations. In the 3rd and 4th years, groups of around 10 students learn a range of clinical elements using simulators and other activities in the skill labs (e.g. hoof trimming, rectal palpation, making knots with ropes, injections...).

Following the last consulting visitation, RGU has set 105 minimum veterinary "clinical" skills that must be learned to access CCT in 5th year. For ethical and animal welfare reasons, RGU decided to end the use of living animals for that purpose. Therefore, 3rd (2nd trimester) and 4th year (all trimesters) students must take all simulator-based skills training conducted in the skills lab building, and record teacher and self-evaluation in a logbook. Skills are acquired over two soft-skill and five hard-skill courses. The assessment of the 105 clinical skills is based on a structured system at 3 levels, with repeated evaluation of a given group of skills (2 assessments of all skills and a third one with random assessment). The training in herd health management in the 3rd and 4th years relies only on lectures and self-learning.

The validation of these 105 minimum veterinary skills occurred through the VCAT examination which is mandatory to access the Core Clinical Training (CCT) according to the Japanese rules. The VCAT is based on a combination of VetCBT and VetOSCE evaluations.

CCT (with groups of 4-5 students) for producing animals will rely on the new curriculum for 3 weeks (for all livestock species) over the 22 weeks described in Table 3.1.3. They will participate in 3 rotations of 1 week each: general examination and clinical practice for cattle at the FEDREC station (mainly healthy animals); on-site examination requiring hospitalisation and surgery for farm animals in the VTH (dairy cattle, beef cattle pigs, small ruminants); herd health management (mainly cattle). A maximum of 1 week will be devoted to pigs and poultry, in the research farms (located close by the small ruminant one). At the moment, the students spend one day in a poultry farm, one day in a pig farm (both research farms) and the rest of the week with cattle. In the current curriculum, the teaching regarding small ruminants is elective.

Students have the opportunity to practise themselves castration, disbudding, injection and hoof trimming especially in the research farm associated with the VEE. The FEDREC station also provides an opportunity to teach the basics regarding herd health management in cattle.

Herd health management practical teaching relies mainly on calf management and reproductive checks. No mandatory external practical training is in place for Food-producing animals.

3.1.4.2. Comments

The VEE is to be commended for the following aspects:

- The research farms associated with the VEE give the opportunity to the students to learn and practise basic and clinical skills in many different livestock species (poultry, pigs, cattle both dairy and beef and small ruminants as well).
- In cattle farms the existence of routine procedures such as dehorning, castration, and vaccination programmes will give all students the opportunity to practise their practical skills
- The quality of the biosafety procedures in place deserves special mention, particularly the fact that they are identical (in terms of both quality and organisation), which undoubtedly makes it easier for students to adopt them.

3.1.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

More structured collaboration between basic science staff and clinical academic staff could help to build more integrated teaching (e.g. prudent use of antimicrobials, and infection control).

The existence of an experimental farm for small ruminants could make it possible to provide systematic teaching in this species rather than electives as it is at the moment.

It is suggested to have a more structured and developed teaching regarding herd health management (together with epidemiology staff and nutrition staff).

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 new curriculum was adopted in 2021 and VEE is transitioning towards the new curriculum.

VPH including Food Safety and Quality (VPH) is taught mainly at the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences at the Department of Food Science and Human Wellness. The VPH curriculum (195 teaching hours) includes:

- Lectures
- Supervised self-learning.
- Non-clinical animal work
- Forty-five hours of practical work in places for slaughtering and food processing plants.

In the new curriculum, VPH including Food Safety and Quality (VPH) training in small groups of students was extended. Education VPH curriculum will begin in the 4th year (from 2024) when students complete courses related to food and safety. In the 5th year, small groups of students will participate in post-mortem examination training (cattle and pigs) within 45 hours. At VEE, the practical training on animal product utilisation is implemented at the Department of Food Science and Human Wellness. During intra-mural training on food hygiene, the students will receive hands-on training in the production of milk and meat products, as well as receiving training on food poisoning microorganisms, microbiological testing, and chemical analysis.

Due to COVID-19, entry to the slaughterhouse was restricted (from 2020 to 2022). In light of this fact, meat inspection was compensated for all students on campus using virtual reality programs (only for post-mortem examination of cattle). Students submit a report explaining the outline of the disease, autopsy findings, and criteria for post-mortem examination. The post-mortem inspection of pigs and poultry was not compensated for all students.

In 2022, VEE conducted 13 practical training sessions regarding cattle and 15 sessions regarding swine at five slaughterhouses. Practical training for post-mortem examination (cattle and pigs) will be for all students available from 2025 (off-campus) at the Meat Hygiene Inspection Centre.

Poultry inspection will be carried out on campus using purchased waste chicken. All students will receive one week of hands-on practical training on sanitary inspection of poultry (autopsy inspection on campus using purchased waste chickens, microbiological inspection, etc.) within the poultry inspection practice.

VEE plans to include inspection of fish and seafood in the course as part of cooperation with a seafood processing company. The main topics of the courses VPH focused on Food hygiene, Food microbiology, and Food technology are the nature and control methods of pathogenic microorganisms, especially of food poisoning microorganisms, and regarding analytical chemistry,

food technology related to the analysis of pesticide residues and veterinary drugs, including HACCP system. The list of D1Cs in VPH is sufficient.

The Extra-mural Practical Training (EPT) is conducted at a Meat Hygiene Inspection centre in Hokkaido Prefecture and the other slaughterhouses in six prefectures and regions approved by health authorities under the guidance of non-academic teaching staff (veterinarian inspectors).

Currently, seven prefectures and a city have approved the acceptance of students.

3.1.5.2. Comments

The curriculum of VPH is in the transition period and will be fully implemented for VPH in 2025. The new curriculum will significantly increase the level of VPH teaching (small group of students at slaughterhouses in the Meat Hygiene Inspection Centre).

Post-mortem inspection of poultry as well as inspection of fish and seafood will be introduced.

A virtual reality programme was developed to compensate for students needing more hands-on VPH training opportunities.

The fish and seafood examination and inadequate post-mortem examination of poultry will be compensated.

During the COVID-19 epidemic situation, teaching post-mortem inspection was compensated only for cattle (by virtual reality program). Post-mortem inspection for pigs and poultry was suboptimal for all students.

3.1.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to:

-) increase the number of bovine slaughterhouses that accept students;
-) develop real or virtual visits of pig and poultry slaughterhouses;
-) include visits to food processing plants where students can observe the production of meat and dairy products.

3.1.5.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.5. because of suboptimal FSQ practical training in pigs and poultry for all students.

3.1.6. Professional Knowledge

3.1.6.1. Findings

In the 1st year sociology and psychology are taught, while in the 3rd year, students are educated in ethics and welfare. In the 4th year research presentation is a topic in the curriculum.

Veterinary legislation, forensic medicine, communication skills, practice/business management and certification are taught in the 4th year. The total number of hours for professional knowledge is 402 hours in the curriculum.

3.1.6.2. Comments

All professional knowledge is covered by the subjects taught in 4th year. Both students and alumni are satisfied that all necessary information for graduates is taught in the curriculum.

3.1.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

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

To ensure that the study programmes meet the objectives the VEE rely on the results obtained by students at the exams and on a pilot booklet system for preclinical training and in CCT. The logbook system was introduced in 2022 and will be completed in 2025.

The VEE has many small and large self-learning spaces with Wi-Fi access in all areas that can be used freely without restrictions.

Large and small meeting rooms used for lectures, practical training, self-learning, clinical rotations, conferences, research discussions, and pre-clinical practice are available.

Equine Hospital was renewed in 2022.

The skills lab and mock animal hospital are used to conduct a proactive learning environment through repetition with or without an instructor.

The logbook of 105 skills is electronic. The student logs the skill as completed, and then the teacher will evaluate the skill a total of 3 times. First on the week when the skill is taught in the skills lab. Second time at the beginning of the next chapter of skills. And lastly, students are assessed on a number of random skills at the end of the pre-clinical training. Teachers log the assessment (including comments) in the electronic logbook.

The e-learning system provides opportunities for self-learning and lifelong learning.

3.2.2. Comments

The VEE may be commended for the development of a pedagogical approach at CSL that ensures proper verification of skill acquisition and allows less knowledgeable students to retrace their steps and become more self-confident.

The structural environment is well-organised and able to induce learning and self-learning.

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 new curriculum is divided into four categories: core education, specialised basic education, specialised education, and training education. Specialised courses are divided into five fields, each of which has clear goals and educational units with clearly delineated lines of responsibility.

For graduation, students must also choose one of five specialised elective courses and receive research guidance from academics.

The new curriculum is planned to incorporate the goals for Japanese core curriculums and the ESEVT-D1Cs.

The syllabus of each course includes clear Learning Outcomes and assessment methodology. In the details of the course syllabi are indicated the D1Cs that each course contributes to acquiring.

The teacher assesses student performance. Grades are disclosed to students and their parents. The information regarding grade distributions is not provided to students and stakeholders but is discussed by the Academic Affairs Committees.

The vetERP Office checks and reviews the learning outcomes and the overall curriculum goals.

3.3.2. Comments

The objectives and the intended learning outcomes are clearly described in the syllabi and aligned with the assessment methodologies.

3.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that a simple skills map be made through a matrix to quickly assess which courses contribute to the acquisition of which D1Cs.

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 design of the new curriculum was drafted in 2020 by the Education Committee of the vetERP Office then the Curriculum Committee revised it then it was discussed by the Department Council and finally discussed and adopted by the Academic Affairs Committee in March 2021. The curriculum underwent a third-party evaluation by the Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA).

The students are made aware of the curriculum content by the Academic Handbook. Further, the Chair of the Department of Veterinary Medicine Academic Affairs Committee introduces the content of the current curriculum to students' parents during the Parent-Faculty Meeting held every October. The students did not take part in the curriculum reform.

3.4.2. Comments

The vetERP Office includes student representatives but not during the elaboration of the new curriculum. The involvement of students in the QA system began recently, their greater contribution may further facilitate the promotion of a proper learning environment and continuous improvement of the curriculum.

3.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the number of students involved in SAVER be increased to enable them to actively participate in all committees without affecting their academic achievement and progression.

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

Mandatory EPT (which should be considered as CCT-E) is provided for companion animals (3 weeks) and the slaughterhouse (1 week). The EPT of companion animals must consist of at least 1-week off-campus clinical training in private companion animal hospitals in the region. The other 2 weeks are on campus: 1 week filled with performing duties, animal handling, diagnostic imaging

and surgeries in the animal shelter. Due to the insufficient number of dogs and cats, some training might be swapped by castration of a calf (at the moment 500 calf castrations per year for all students). The other week of CCT-E consists of 2-night duties and a weekend duty at the companion animal VTH.

It is also mandatory to do at least one week of advanced education in companion animals, production animals, wildlife (aquarium or zoo) or food hygiene. However this minimal one week in the 4th or 5th year is not monitored by the VEE, nor any feedback on this advanced education is received.

3.5.2. Comments

EPT in shelter medicine in the on-campus shelter and the night- and weekend duties in the companion animal VTH are on-campus under the direct supervision of the regular academic staff, and do not qualify for EPT. The external EPT (CCT-E) is not followed by all students at the moment, 50 students completed the companion animal EPT, and 30-40 students completed the slaughterhouse EPT.

3.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that advanced education should include a mandatory EPT, in order for students to get a good impression of first-line animal care and the possibilities in the veterinary profession. This EPT should cover all areas; companion animals, food-producing animals, FSQ, exotics and wildlife medicine.

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

EPT training is provided to the hospital owners where students do their CCT-E. For this EPT no formal agreement is in place. In preparation for EPT, students participate in a guidance session or an interview with the Dean of the School of Veterinary Medicine. For complaints or feedback, the hospital owner contacts the teaching staff who is responsible for the extra-mural training.

3.6.2. Comments

Remarks during companion animal EPT are written in the form of comments on the case reports but do not cover an overall evaluation of the student.

3.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to standardise the evaluation of students during their EPT and have a full agreement in place with the EPT providers. All teaching staff involved with extramural clinical training should receive full training to teach and assess (see standard 9.1).

3.6.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.6. because of suboptimal evaluation of students during EPT.

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 students have a personal logbook, but this is not used for EPT. During placement, students write a case report consisting of a discussion of one case per day. Students can complain about EPT issues to the Career Centre and Academic Affairs Division at the VEE.

3.7.2. Comments

There is no transparent system of systematic student evaluation of their experience with/during EPT. The students have a personal logbook, where self-evaluation and EPT faculty evaluation are recorded. There is no transparent system of systematic student evaluation of their experience with/during EPT.

3.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that an evaluation of the EPT should be standardised and through the EPT coordinator looped back to the EPT.

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

RGU VEE campus is located in Bunkyo-dai-Midorimachi, Ebetsu, Hokkaido, Japan. Since 2005 only VEE buildings that are compliant with seismic regulations can be used by staff/students; those that did not satisfy the required standards have been either demolished or upgraded. It is declared that existing buildings are regularly maintained according to law and new buildings have all required certifications, provided by third-party bodies. Elevators are available in some of the buildings. Internet connection is available on campus, allowing students and staff to access learning resources; moreover, the campus is equipped with 3 PC rooms adequately furnished. Teaching

material is distributed via Moodle, an online teaching platform available to students and staff since 2009. There is a virtual and onsite library facility with access to learning resources, such as electronic journals.

RGU campus guarantees access and offers aid to people with physical disabilities. RGU complies with legislations including health, safety, biosecurity, and animal welfare and care standards.

4.1.2. Comments

RGU is overall a well-maintained campus and there has been great effort in enhancing facilities over the last four years. Facilities provide an environment conducive to learning, with a strategy and plan in place for maintaining and upgrading buildings and equipment regularly. VEE facilities comply with all relevant legislations.

4.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

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

Facilities and equipment described in SER chapter 4.3.2 (premises for clinical activities and diagnostic services including necropsy), 4.3.3 (equipment used for clinical services), 4.3.4 (Description of the premises [both intra-mural and extra-mural] used for the practical teaching of FSQ & VPH, are sufficient in terms of space and equipment for the number of students declared. Facilities and equipment are overall routinely maintained. Students have access to lockers, sanitary facilities and 2 canteens with alternating opening hours. Lockers are placed in the VTH, libraries and in the lecture hall building. There are sufficient sanitary facilities. There is a sufficient number of seats in the library and self-study areas. The 3 large lecture rooms have around 280 seats, with 1 monitor per 3 students.

4.2.2. Comments

Teaching and clinical facilities are adequate for the number of students, for instructional purposes and are overall well maintained. The skills building with its skills laboratory and mock hospital are excellent. Students have ready access to adequate and sufficient study, self-learning, recreation, locker, sanitary and food service facilities. Offices, teaching preparation and research laboratories are adequate for the needs of the VEE staff.

There is no freezer for storing and preserving the cadavers of large animals for post-mortem purposes, preventing the VEE from accepting cadavers for those to be stored for teaching purposes.

4.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to acquire the possibility of storing large animal cadavers to compensate for the deficiency listed in Standard 5.1.

4.2.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.2.

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 bio-containment**
- **be designed to enhance learning.**

4.3.1. Findings

The VTH consists of (1) Clinical Specialty Services for Companion Animals, (2) Clinical Specialty Services for Large Animals, (3) Clinical Support Services and (4) Veterinary Nursing Services. The VTH provides a variety of referral services, it is equipped with advanced imaging machines (e.g. CT and MRI) and provides a laboratory medicine service and radiation therapy on site. The VTH has medical care facilities for small and large animals on the first floor. The Small Animal Area has eight consulting rooms and a common treatment room, the radiation therapy suite, the ultrasound room, the chemotherapy ward, and the treatment dispensing room, among others. The Large Animal Area has a treatment room, an examination room, surgery theatres, an anaesthesia induction and recovery room, and a pharmacy, among others. The second floor comprises an ICU, four surgery theatres, in-patient wards dedicated to small animals (dogs and cats) and the in-patient control room of the Companion Animals Department. VTH is equipped with a conference room. On the third floor, there are night-duty rooms, graduate students' room and the tissue specimen preparation room, inorganic and organic analysis rooms and the infectious disease pathological diagnosis room of the Environmental Pollutants and Infectious Agents Analysis and Monitoring Centre, among other facilities.

The Veterinary Medical Education & Research Building is equally divided in multiple floors presenting clinical areas on the first floor and laboratory and conference rooms on the second floor. The third floor consists of the OSCE room and two conference rooms.

The Clinical Training Building/Farm Animal Hospital Facility/Infected Animal Control Building is equipped with four cattle-cushioned wards and stalls for 8 animals. The Farm Animal Hospital Facility has wards for cattle or horses as well as observation lanes and can be accessed from the Large Animal Area of the Main Building. The separate Infected Animal Control Building contains the Large Animal Isolation Area, the Small Animal Isolation Area, and the Companion Animal post-mortem room (equipped with a freezer for the storage of cadavers).

The Clinical Lecture Building/Shelter Medicine Service Centre/Practical Building for Veterinary Pathology is a two-storey building. On the first floor, there is the clinical lecture room and on the second floor, the communication lounge for Clinical Rotation (CR). The Shelter Medicine Service

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Centre provides areas for physical examination and neutering of shelter animals dedicated to CR. The Practical Building for Veterinary Pathology is a post-mortem room for large animals (unequipped with a freezer for the storing of cadavers), which also includes an incinerator. The Equine Hospital has a conference room, examination room, diagnosis room, surgery room (to be implemented in 2025), anaesthetic induction and recovery room.

The newly established Shadai Horse Clinic in the RGU campus, the Shadai Horse Clinic is equipped with a CT system.

The campus also consists of a Clinical Lab Test Department, which offers intra-mural practice on food hygiene. The EPT for meat hygiene is conducted in prefectural Meat Inspection centres in Hokkaido Prefecture, Tohoku (east North) Region and Shimane Prefecture in the Chugoku Region. All the slaughterhouses operating in Japan are approved by the prefectural or municipal health authorities in accordance with the Slaughterhouse Act. The Clinical Lab Test Department does not provide a laboratory service for the VTH, which is instead guaranteed thanks to a partnership with Fujifilm Monolith; the clinical pathology laboratory is equipped with laboratory equipment for clinical teaching purposes under the supervision of clinical pathologists.

There are changing rooms for students in the large and small animal areas of the VTH. The changing rooms have lockers for storage of clothes. Shoe-changing area with storage of boots and shoes is present when entering a clinical area (either dedicated to large or small animals). Similar changing stations are found at small animal VTH, pathology room and isolation unit.

In addition, the isolation and pathology necroscopy units have a second changing station where additional PPE are provided (gloves, mask, hat, gown, boots). For the necroscopy, an additional cotton suit is provided to wear underneath the disposable gown.

4.3.2. Comments

The clinical and non-clinical areas are well equipped and provide a variety of teaching opportunities for students; however, the flooring of the farm animal facility needs replacement.

4.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to renovate the flooring of some parts of the food-producing animal clinical facilities.

4.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.3.

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 exceeding 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 is open Mon-Friday 9 am-11.30 am. It is equipped for core clinical teaching and has 24/7 emergency service with students participating in night and holiday rotations for the purpose of managing hospitalised animals and responding to emergency cases under supervision. However, there is an insufficient number of cases coming through the 24/7 emergency services for companion animals.

4.4.2. Comments

Core clinical teaching facilities are provided in the VTH and compliant with standards. 24h/7-emergency services for companion animals are present but not underused. For ruminants, on-call service is available. The VEE complies with standards available in the private sector. The VTH and facilities (including EPT) involved with the curriculum meet the relevant national Practice Standards.

4.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to enhance the 24/7 services for companion animals (see also Standard 5.1.).

4.4.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.4.

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

Students have access to a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic facilities Concerning companion animals, students have access to Internal Medicine, Orthopaedic Surgery, Cardiology, Neurology and Neurosurgery, Oncology (including radiotherapy) and Soft Tissue Surgery, Physical Rehabilitation. Concerning large animals, students have access to internal medicine, surgery, reproductive medicine, and herd health. Concerning clinical support services, students have access to Anaesthesiology and Pain Management, Emergency and Critical Care, Diagnostic Imaging (including CT and MRI), Clinical Laboratory, Pathology Laboratory, Pharmacy, and Animal Blood Bank.

4.5.2. Comments

Students have access to state-of-the-art facilities.

4.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

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

VTH small animal: isolation facilities admit only dogs and cats with contagious diseases (class 4) including MRSA. These are separated from clinical practice spaces and have an anteroom for staff to wear PPEs and are equipped with external access. The facility has one treatment room, cages and tables for examination or treatment. SOPs for handling animals with infectious diseases are in place.

Livestock-admissible animals are cattle, horses, pigs, and small ruminants with contagious diseases (class 4). One large animal or up to three small animals can be housed. SOPs are in place for the management of the facility and of the patients. The farm animal isolation unit can house a horse with an infectious disease. In case of death of an infectious large animal, necropsies are carried out within the premises.

4.6.2. Comments

Isolation facilities are available and meet the Standard.

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 has an ambulatory clinic for livestock.

4.7.2. Comments

The VEE meets the standards.

4.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

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

Transportation of students to extra-mural facilities is undertaken using rental cars. Dogs and cats are transported to the VEE (VTH) by their owners; if patients need overnight hospitalization, there is a private service managed by the Sapporo Night-time Emergency Animal Hospital, which operates 24/7.

Horses that require treatments are taken to the VTH by their owners, but cattle are transported by livestock transporters upon request by the owners.

Cadavers are not transported outside the RGU campus as they are incinerated on-site after post-mortem examination. Ashes from the incinerated animals are picked up by a company from outside the university. The cadaver/necroscopy waste (blood, faeces, etc.) that goes into the drains, is processed together with other waste from the VTH.

4.8.2. Comments

The VEE provides transportation for students to extra-mural facilities.

4.8.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

4.8.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.8.

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

Biosafety and biosecurity are posted on the students' RINES front page and RGU e-learning system and must be reviewed by students prior to starting the practical course. Faculty members have also the duty to explain the biosafety and biosecurity SOPs to students at the start of each practical course. Students must evaluate all lectures and practical subjects, and faculty members must report their responses to the evaluation results by students to the university.

4.9.2. Comments

There is a systematic implementation of rigorous biosecurity procedures by both staff and students. The VEE must be commended for it.

4.9.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

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

Regarding ethical considerations and for animal welfare purposes, the faculty has replaced all preclinical training with simulators instead of living animals from 2024 onwards. An Animal experiment committee has been created to provide guidance on animal experiments and education on animal welfare and ethics.

The students in the new curriculum have the opportunity to be in contact with farm animals in the 1st year in the FEDREC's stations. In addition to participating in primary care and advanced medical care for dogs, cats, equine and farm animals, all the students have the opportunity to undertake shelter dog/cat care, management and feeding operations, calf castration and equine management including vaccination. Healthy dogs and cats have not been used for preclinical training since 2023. An agreement with pharmaceutical companies is in place to receive healthy dogs for anatomy teaching instead.

The validation of preclinical training is mandatory (VCAT) before entering in the Core Clinical Training (CCT).

Despite efforts following the prior visitation to take into account deficiencies, when looking at the data provided (ESVET indicators page 107 and the new table for 2023 sent on the 16th of October 2023), the following items are still below the minimal threshold considering the number and variety of cases/training opportunities per student enrolled:

- number of companion animal necropsies/number of students graduating annually
- number of ruminant and pig necropsies/number of students graduating annually
- number of companion animal patients seen intramurally and extramurally / number of students graduating annually
- number of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic seen intramurally and extramurally/ number of students graduating annually

Recording systems are in place for monitoring these numbers. The number of animals for preclinical practice and CCD is reviewed by the QA committee and student association using the PDCA process.

5.1.2. Comments

The VEE can be commended for their research farms, notably FEDREC's, that enable the students to work with all the livestock species (poultry, pigs, cattle both dairy and beef, small ruminants,

fish).

The VEE can be commended too for the outstanding skills lab building.

Regarding necropsy, due to social and cultural reasons, it is difficult to expect an increase for dogs and cats for pathology practical teaching. As a consequence, a system based on raccoon necropsy has been put in place (not enough raccoon at this moment). For necropsy for large animals, in case of the absence of necropsy, lectures and self-learning are available to the students and more material will be developed for the new curriculum. These 2 adaptations can be considered as partial compensation leading to a minor deficiency for the number of companion animals (excluding equines) and ruminants and pigs for necropsy.

Regarding the caseload for companion animals (including equine and exotics), the compulsory EPT in place with the Alumni network allows for an increase in the caseload in addition to the cases seen in the VTH for dogs and cats. However, despite this system, the values still remain under the minimal ESEVT requirement, including emergency cases that remain too low.

Regarding the caseload for equine, at the moment, only 50% of the students have access to the Shadai horse clinic. No compensation is in place for the other 50% of students. The new onsite equine clinic has been open recently and should be fully equipped next year.

Regarding the caseload for exotics, until 2022 the Wild Animal Medical Centre could have been considered as partial compensation to provide the students with some exotics. However, since the Wild Animal Centre has been closed, no compensation system is in place besides the use and handling of rats in basic sciences. Altogether, this leads to the absence of sufficient compensation leading to a major deficiency. It is planned to establish a new department of exotic medicine at the VTH in 2024.

5.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

The introduction of refrigerated storage for large animal cadavers could increase the number of cases or anatomical peaks available to students for teaching purposes.

The purchase of slaughter pieces (as done for dissection in anatomy) could enhance the number of pieces offered to the students during necropsy.

It is suggested to develop more online learning on small animals and food-producing animal necropsies.

The number of cases seen intramurally and extramurally (including emergency cases) for small animals (including exotics and equine) needs to be enhanced.

5.1.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 5.1. because of suboptimal number of necropsies for companion animals (excluding equine).

The VEE is not compliant with Standard 5.1. because of insufficient number of companion animal patients (including equine and exotic pets) and insufficient number of food-producing animals necropsies in relation to the number of students enrolled.

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

For the students the practical training at external sites falls into 2 categories: mandatory (CCT) and elective (EPT):

- One practical of 3 weeks in 10 partner practices/hospitals (for companion animals) to allow the students to face first opinion cases. These practices are owned by the Alumni. The 3 weeks are divided into one week of these practices and 2 weeks of shelter medicine. The veterinarians supervising the students during the EPT do not receive formal and systematic education on how to teach and assess the students. The students have to create a case report of one case per day. The veterinarians finally assess the students through their logbooks. The number of partner practices is planned to increase from 20 to 30 by 2025. The QA committee requests the host practices to receive quality control. The partner veterinarians assigned to the students signed an informed consent form for the training provided.
- One practical of 1 week dealing with Meat hygiene inspection carried out at the slaughterhouse. For this external week, the supervision is done by faculty members of the Division of Preventive Veterinary Medicine.

Besides these 2 mandatory EPT, the report stipulates that the students are encouraged to make additional and elective EPT.

5.2.2. Comments

For several years now, the strong links between the faculty and former students (Alumni) have enabled and encouraged and increased the number of work placements outside the VEE.

It is also worth highlighting the VEE's efforts, in a competitive environment, to find ways of sending all students to slaughterhouses.

5.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

More incentives could be implemented to stimulate work placements outside the VEE among students to allow them to face a diversity of professional contexts and a diversity of clinical cases in various species.

The compensation for visiting slaughterhouses using VR could be developed for other species (poultry, pigs for example)

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

Two comprehensive practice programmes are offered during the 1st year of the curriculum ("Veterinary introductory practice" and "Animal handling practice").

For Cattle, Pigs, sheep and poultry, the teaching is organised within the FEDREC's dairy production station and meat production station. For small animals, handling techniques are taught during ethology and behaviour teaching. The SER indicates that students are given the opportunity

to observe the behaviours of healthy livestock and their reactions to humans under the supervision and guidance of faculty members (academic and technician).

In Japan under Article 17 of the Veterinarians Act, only veterinarians are allowed to provide veterinary care to domestic animals. Therefore, to justify and allow the participation of the students to the Core Clinical Training (CCT), students need to sit and pass the Veterinary Common Achievement Test (VCAT), meaning that before this they can't practise on animals (only on mannikins or simulators). The skills lab building contributes to the training in nursing care.

For clinical training, the size of the student group is 7-8 for the 2015 curriculum and 4-5 students for the 2021 curriculum. The students participate (for all species) in case reporting and discussion sessions. Students have access to books, a library, conference room to work and prepare discussions with the academic staff. Regular and systematic discussions between students and clinical staff (intern, residents, professor) are in place to discuss clinical findings and hypotheses allowing to teach problem-based oriented approaches.

5.3.2. Comments

The VEE can be commended for their research farms and the FEDREC's allowing to train the students for the various livestock species and the outstanding skills lab building.

The willingness and dynamism of the faculty's staff should be highlighted with regard to the changes made to develop the clinical training of students.

5.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to enhance the teaching regarding the handling of exotic pets.

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

A patient information system does exist for small animals (1hmics Version 4 Advanced). If the students can occasionally enter some data, the recording of the clinically relevant information is done by the veterinarians and the staff. At the moment, students can have easy access to the patient record system and the RGU is considering the introduction of another patient record. The system allows the students to look for data for their final-year research project.

Similar record systems are in place for farm animals and equines using the same system.

Due to the Japanese regulations and the software, access to the patient record system is limited for the students especially offline.

In addition to the patient record system, a booklet and a logbook system are in place to follow the students in their skills acquisition. This was implemented recently.

5.4.2. Comments

The elaboration and the implementation of the logbook for the students must be commended.

5.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to develop regular and frequent follow-ups of the number and diversity of clinical cases seen in the VTH and extramurally using the electronic recording system for helping to detect deficiencies early and to implement control measures to increase these figures.

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 VEE offers four different learning resource platforms:

1. UNIPA, a portal site managing personal and academic student performance.
2. Moodle, a learning management system storing teaching materials.
3. E-portfolio, a system to manage students' handwritten reports and submissions.
4. The operating room video recording and delivery system. A system to allow students and staff to observe surgery in real-time or as play-back.

Students have access to a library on campus with both printed and electronic books and journals. Bibliographical online searches can be made via databases. All new students are provided with “new student guidance” on how to find relevant material. This is offered for 3 weeks in each of the first and second half of the academic year.

Access to learning resources is given to each student upon enrolment and is based on student ID. The online learning resources are accessible at all times. When on campus, students and staff can access after connecting through campus Wi-Fi, while an SSL-VPN is used to access learning resources when off-campus.

6.1.2. Comments

The VEE is commended on the e-learning resources which are used widely.

6.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that improving the knowledge and use of the English language will give both students and staff access to a wider array of publications and e-journals.

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

Staff and students have full access on-site to an academic library administered by a qualified librarian, as well as an e-learning platform. An Information Technology (IT) unit managed by an IT expert is present on campus, and also via phone calls and email. Daily support of PC rooms and IT facilities is handled by staff members from the Academic Affairs Division and Information Systems Affairs Division.

When on campus, students and staff can access electronic databases and learning resources after connecting through campus Wi-Fi, while an SSL-VPN is used to access learning resources when off-campus.

6.2.2. Comments

Students and staff are both satisfied with the IT and other tools like CLOVER (VPN). Students have no complaints about the e-learning environment and are able to find all lectures and study material they need for their courses.

6.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to increase the number of e-journals to support research activities and student learning.

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

Students have access to WIFI while on campus, through their personal university ID, daily support of PC rooms and IT facilities is handled by staff members from the Academic Affairs Division and Information Systems Affairs Division. While on campus, access to library resources is granted automatically. While working remotely, access to library resources is granted through a VPN. The

Skills lab is available for 3rd and 4th-year students who have already had an introductory course to the use of the skills lab. Self-study is available from 08.00 to 18.00 and access is granted with the student ID card.

A PDCA cycle is in place to ensure the quality of all electronic learning materials. When on campus, students and staff can access electronic databases and learning resources after connecting through campus Wi-Fi, while an SSL-VPN is used to access learning resources when off-campus.

6.3.2. Comments

The VEE is commended with a state-of-the-art skills lab for practice of D1C.

6.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

6.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 6.3.

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 advertisements for prospective national and international students.

Formal cooperation with other VEEs must also be clearly advertised.

7.1.1. Findings

The VEE informs national and foreign students about all the phases of their life cycle through specifically published materials and its website. The Academic Guide includes additional information.

Information about the VEE status is available on the website.

7.1.2. Comments

The website is in Japanese (so not easy to navigate without knowledge of Japanese).

7.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

See Standard 1.5.

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 University is authorised by the Ministry to admit 120 students each year (against an upper limit of 138 [115%]) on the basis of faculty members, facilities, equipment, and other educational factors. The number of students admitted in the last 3 years spanned from 124 to 180 (mean 148).

7.2.2. Comments

The number of admitted students is consistent over the years (and always above 120). The number of admitted students is consistent with available facilities that could accommodate even more students. The recent increase in teaching staff, also makes this fully adequate. However, the number of admitted students is not consistent with the actual number of cases available, as evidenced by many negative indicators. (See comments in 3.1.3 and 5.1)

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 consider 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 selection process is carried out internally. The selection criteria are based on the merit obtained at high school with a recommendation entrance examination (27 places) with a final selection made on the basis of an interview and an essay or in the academic ability entrance examination (93 places) offered at the same time nationwide and based on their score.

Primary (Department Council), secondary (Admission Committee), and tertiary (Faculty Council) admission committees exist. Each of these entities consists of faculty members who undergo training in how to interview applicants and how to score them. Final decisions are made by the President. All students are required to pay the tuition fee in full.

7.3.2. Comments

The selection and progression criteria are well-defined and free of discrimination or bias.

The staff involved in the selection process are adequately trained.

Transparency in the process of admission is limited, even if general criteria are quite clear, because the VEE does not publicly announce criteria when announcing results, but entrance examination results for all successful applicants, including highest, lower and average scores are made available in the next year Entrance Examination Guide.

The publication of the previous year's results can help a lot of students.

7.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested, if possible, to review the procedure to increase the transparency on the criteria and results allowing enrolment to the VEE.

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

Students with disabilities or illnesses including attention-deficit hyperactivity disorders can ask for specific accommodation for the admission process and attending classes via a “Request for Special Accommodation” and this is advertised in the Entrance Examination Guidelines. This programme does not extend to attendance, grading, or assessment standards. Students can decide to take a leave of absence for personal reasons.

The Academic Guide that students receive upon enrolment, and which is posted on the website shows all this information.

7.4.2. Comments

The VEE pays attention to the disabilities and illnesses with reasonable accommodation programmes, but the programme does not extend to assessment creating a certain inequality situation even if this assures that all the students enrolled are capable of meeting the ESEVT D1C when graduate.

7.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the reasonable accommodation program be extended to the assessment stage as well, while still maintaining the requirement that all students must be able to meet the ESEVT D1Cs upon graduation.

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

Students who have not earned a sufficient number of credits have to repeat the same year. After the second repetition of the same year, they will be recommended to withdraw from the University. Underperforming students receive guidance and advice, if this happens for three consecutive semesters, students receive a recommendation to withdraw from the University with the possibility to apply for re-enrolment.

These criteria are reported in the Academic Guide printed and available on the University's website.

The attrition rate is 0.38% on average over the past 3 years.

7.5.2. Comments

The rules for academic progression are explicit and readily available to the students. The VEE gives support to underperforming students.

The attrition rate is low, but an increasing trend can be detected particularly between 2021 and 2022.

7.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the rate of delayed study (through analysis of the number of repeat students) be monitored as well as the attrition rate by comparing the results between the new and old curriculum for each grade in order to take prompt action before the graduation of the 2021 cohort.

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

The exclusion process after enrolment is possible and the final decision is made by the President based on criteria that are clearly defined: failure to remit their tuition, after three years spent in the same year of study because of a limited acquisition of credits by year, if they are unable to study following a period of leave (maximum four years total), or when the VEE has not heard from them for more than a year. The exclusion decisions are not subject to appeal even if the appeal is processed according to University Regulations.

The information about the exclusion process is included in the Academic Guide.

7.6.2. Comments

Mechanisms for the exclusion after enrolment are clearly defined. The role of students' appeals against decisions is limited but a procedure to present appeal exists.

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, 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

Counselling and support structures, staffed by two full-time clinical psychologists, are in place to offer counselling to students on the subject of physical and emotional health. One part-time clinical psychologist leads group counselling sessions. Once a month, a child psychiatrist offers student consultations, including the referrals to medical institutions and other resources. In addition, the VEE conducts interviews with students prior to enrolment related to the physical, emotional, and psychological aspects of attendance.

A Medical Office, staffed by two public health nurses (one of them part-time) and one nurse for first aid, provides regular check-ups and health counselling. A school physician offers consultations upon request from students.

1st, 5th, and 6th-year students receive guidance in particular in relation to their post-graduation plans, moreover, a faculty member is appointed as an intake coordinator in each department to whom students can come to seek advice.

The VEE has a Disabled Student Support Committee, specific rules to counter harassment and a scholarship programme for those experiencing economic problems.

The VEE contacts students who exhibit evidence of potential health issues and encourages them to undergo health counselling or to see a physician. A medical mutual-aid programme to encourage students to participate in health consultations is also active.

In 2022 the Counselling service was used by 47 students belonging to the VEE.

The Harassment Prevention and Resolution Committee addresses complaints on a campus-wide basis. The RGU Harassment Prevention Guidelines contain the procedure and are distributed to students at the time of enrolment. In the event of a complaint, an investigation team is elected and, after the investigation, informs both the complainant and the complaine, and notifies the Committee of the results of its investigation. The Committee makes the final decision.

7.7.2. Comments

The VEE has a lot of experience in student counselling. A wide set of opportunities are offered to the students covering most of the potential problems during student life. Specific mechanisms for the resolution of student grievances are present and the number of staff dedicated to health and wellbeing aspects ensures safe management.

7.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

Sometimes students may struggle to go directly to a Counselling service, an intermediate step of facilitation to bring out problems could be provided by a peer support system through the various functions that SAVER could provide if included in the Harassment Prevention and Resolution Committee (or similar at VEE level).

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

The Faculty Development (FD) Committee facilitates the exchange of views between faculty members and students. It also accepts requests from students along with complaints, and other feedback through dialogues with students, comment boxes, and mailboxes.

The feedback form on the courses available to students at the end of the semester includes an open field in which anonymous suggestions, comments and complaints can be provided.

7.8.2. Comments

Many different mechanisms are in place to facilitate the communication between faculty members and students.

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

Regular examinations take place twice per year at the end of each teaching semester over approx. one week, i.e. late July to early August (semester 1) and from late January to early February (semester 2). Ordinary examinations may also be carried out for some courses during time set aside from normal instruction, as deemed necessary by the faculty member responsible for the course.

In order to be eligible to sit an exam the students must have attended at least two-thirds of lectures and at least four-fifths of practical's, experimental courses, seminars and physical education training. Attendance is captured through the use of a student's ID card, a card reader and the UNIPA IT system.

Methods of assessment are determined by the faculty member responsible for each course.

Marks for semester 1 are posted in late September. Marks for semester 2 are posted in early March.

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A grade of 60% is required to pass a course (mainly based on exam results but attendance and other factors may be considered).

A few courses are pass/fail e.g. practice in ‘Healthy Earth Ensures Human Health’ and Veterinary Science, fieldwork in Dairy Farming.

Students must achieve a stated number of credits before progressing to the next year. The number of credits needed increases year on year – 29 credits (Year 1), 51 credits (Year 2), 91 credits (Year 3), 136 credits (Year 4), 158 credits (year 5). Students are given two years to earn the necessary credits, if still failing they will be recommended to withdraw.

In the 4th year, students take the common veterinary examination, common to all veterinary universities nationwide. Also called the Veterinary Common Achievement test (VCAT), provided by the Veterinary Education Support Organisation (vetESO) – students need to pass this test to become certified Student Doctors before moving on to core clinical training (CCT, i.e. hands-on, small group training with live animals) in year 5 (this is a legally enshrined prerequisite in Japan). It is composed of 1) computer-based testing (vetCBT) that assesses basic and theoretical knowledge of veterinary medicine; 2) Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) to evaluate basic clinical skills. The OSCE also helps in assessing certain soft skills. The VCAT was officially implemented in 2017.

Final year students take the National Examination for the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree which is administered by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF). The exam is held over two days in mid-February every year at three locations in Hokkaido, Tokyo and Fukuoka prefectures.

8.1.2. Comments

Responsibility for carrying out the various assessments within the VEE is clearly detailed in the SER. Course leaders are responsible for the assessment of their own courses while vetESO is responsible for the VCAT and MAFF is responsible for the National Veterinary Examination. In addition, a logbook management system has been established to allow students to record D1C acquisition.

8.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

8.1.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 8.1.

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.

8.2.1. Findings

The methods of assessment are determined by the Faculty member responsible for each course. These methods are described in the IT system, Universal Passport (UNIPA).

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Students may request feedback on grades from the course leader teacher.

A student may lodge an appeal within one week of the marks being posted. They must fill in a designated form and submit it to the Academic Affairs Division. There are two grounds for appeal:

1. The grader has made an error e.g. by noting the wrong grade
2. There is a clear question about the assessment method described in the syllabus or course materials.

8.2.2. Comments

Students are made aware of the assessment details and grading criteria for each course. The mechanism for appeal against an assessment outcome is clear and straightforward.

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

Syllabus development, including assessment, is decided by the University Academic Affairs Committee every year, while the process of syllabus preparation is announced to faculty by the Academic Affairs Division. There is also a third-party review of syllabi by the Deputy Director, division heads and persons in charge of the Education Centre. They report to the Director of the Education Centre who liaises with the course leader to revise the syllabus.

The Curriculum Working Group surveys and reviews the curriculum in each department. Thereafter the curriculum is routinely reviewed by the Faculty Council following discussion by the Academic Affairs Committee.

8.3.2. Comments

Consistent with best practice, a range of assessment types are used to assess outcomes. The Academic Affairs Committee is responsible for confirming the evaluation methods for all courses.

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

The university calculates the grade point average (GPA). This calculation includes not only courses that the student has passed but also failed courses and courses for which the student was ineligible to take the examination. This system has the effect of requiring students to undertake their studies (including registration for their courses) in a responsible manner.

The Student Association for Veterinary Education (SAVER) participates in meetings with the Educational Reform Promotion Office for improvement in education, and the review of curriculum, facilities, and teaching.

8.4.2. Comments

Students are actively involved in the learning process through student-peer assessment, dissertation research, exchange programmes, and course and curriculum evaluation.

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 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.

8.5.1. Findings

The VEE D1C booklet and logbook have just been established and implemented. These evaluation frameworks are planned to be implemented in full in 2025.

Logbooks are to be used throughout the course for students to record their skills, both preclinical and clinical, acquisition. Academic staff members check whether the student has acquired the skills. For external practical training (EPT) and meat inspection, the host veterinarians in the veterinary practice or meat inspection centre sign off the students' (case) reports and evaluate performance.

8.5.2. Comments

The VEE is to be commended on their skills lab. The size of the skills lab (which stretches over several floors and rooms) and the variety of learning materials available to students are very impressive. Consistent with a policy of 'never the first time on a live animal' the skills lab provides

a superb resource for training students to accomplish a wide variety of clinical skills and D1C. In terms of assessment of the skills acquired in the skills lab, the teacher evaluates each skill a total of 3 times. First during the week when the skill is taught in the skills lab. A second time at the beginning of the next session of skills. Finally, students are randomly assessed on skills at the end of the pre-clinical training.

8.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

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

At the RGU faculty, more than 85% of the instruction and teaching are delivered by veterinarians. For hiring staff there are 2 patterns: VTH framework for recruiting temporary veterinary nurses, research staff, and part-time staff while the University framework is applied for the recruitment of temporary research assistants, engineers and FTE.

Recruitment is carried out by announcements on the website, posting on job sites, and advertising vocational schools. The requirements and expectations (for instance publication and author position required) are clearly described and disseminated and detailed for each kind of position for teaching staff.

Training workshops for newly recruited staff are provided twice a year. In addition, other workshops are provided on several topics: study abroad regulation, and new teaching staff members seminars. These workshops are not compulsory at the moment.

The VEE has a set of criteria (public and transparent) for the promotion process (including documents to fill in). Staff members have been instructed to receive guidance from professors in their units. The promotion decision process, as described in the SER, is very structured and well explained.

For supporting staff, workshops and CPD are organised by the association of private universities of Hokkaido. They are not compulsory.

Regarding the teaching staff involved with extramural clinical training (i.e. veterinarians for EPT), there is no formal training on student teaching and assessment which is partly compensated by a DVD on appropriate behaviour with students during the placement.

9.1.2. Comments

The VEE can be commended because the promotion decision process, as described in the SER, is very structured and well explained which could help the academic staff in their progression.

Regarding the training of academic staff and non-academic staff at the VEE, training and workshops are in place, although they are not compulsory. For teaching staff involved with extramural clinical training (i.e. the veterinarians welcoming the students during EPT), there is no formal, systematic and complete training to deal with teaching and assessment of the students. However, there is a DVD explaining how to behave with students and the veterinarian has to fill out the logbook and discuss with the students the daily case report. Altogether, this can be seen as a partial compensation leading to the decision of a minor deficiency in this area.

9.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

Workshops and CPD for improving the skills (for both academic and non-academic staff) could be more structured and be compulsory.

It is suggested to take into account as many criteria as possible (e.g. teaching, clinical duties, research, gender, ...) to ensure that the programme is as inclusive as possible, so as not to exclude anyone from possible promotions.

9.1.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 9.1. because of suboptimal training to teach and to assess for teaching staff involved with extramural clinical training.

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

There is a formal system in place to assess the teachers (by the students) : class questionnaires, a suggestion box. At the moment, the opinions of the students are not taken into account when assessing teaching performance. Faculty development workshops have been created and implemented.

The qualification in terms of specialists used in the report has to be seen as “clinician” instead of classical use of specialist (i.e., Asian, American or European board certified).

Taking into account a putative insufficient number of FTE involved in the students’ training, a plan has been decided with the government and the faculty to increase the number of staff by 2025.

Annual appraisals (format depending on the status) are in place and well-known by the staff.

9.2.2. Comments

The staff (both academic and not academic) are very devoted and work very hard to enhance teaching and research qualities in the VEE. The momentum created several years ago by staff is welcomed and appreciated by the Alumni.

9.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

The involvement of the academic staff of the VEE in the veterinary specialisation process (under the umbrella of the AIBVS or EBVS or ABVS) could enable staff to increase their skills and enhance the faculty's reputation and visibility. More communication and knowledge about specialisation could be developed.

9.2.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 9.2.

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

Training workshops on education are provided to the staff and especially newly recruited ones. Some other workshops are provided up to a certain age depending on the topic. However, these workshops are not compulsory.

The teachers have to perform both teaching and research (proportion not indicated) and from the discussion on site, there are difficulties, especially for clinicians, to have enough time to do research as well as time for modifying in depth their teaching.

The criteria are defined for the different patterns of recruitment regarding research (number, type of publication, author's position). However, for teaching and clinical activities, quantitative and qualitative criteria are not defined.

The possibility to participate in scholarly works relies on the possibility to participate in several committees in place.

Some positions are permanent while others are temporary. When a permanent position is open, there is a clear process of recruitment.

Besides career progression, there is a reward for teaching excellence in operation every 2 years.

9.3.2. Comments

The VEE can be commended for establishing and communicating several processes to help the staff in their progression and personal development. The newly recruited staff can benefit from supervision if needed to guide them in their career.

9.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

The VEE could pay attention to the balanced workload especially for clinicians to ensure and enhance research activities (see Standard 10.1)

The practice of English could be encouraged and emphasised to facilitate a study abroad period for staff (including residents and PhD) and increase faculty visibility.

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

Formal appraisal and informal mentoring procedures are in place for the teaching staff. The appraisal process for interns or residents is different from those used for teachers and permanent staff but it does exist.

Many committees (both formal and informal) are in place and open to volunteers, including student representatives that give to the staff theoretical opportunities to contribute to the VEE's decision-making processes.

Promotion criteria for academic and support staff are clear and explicit and rely on different criteria (quantitative and qualitative) for research. The criteria for research are clearer and more quantified than those for teaching and clinical activities.

The discussion on-site with different staff (academics, interns, residents, supporting staff) reveals difficulties in having enough time to ensure all the activities (teaching, supervision of residents and PhD, research, clinical activities), especially for clinicians.

9.4.2. Comments

The staff are to be commended for their commitment, dedication and dynamism.

9.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

Increasing the staff, especially in the clinics, could be helpful to provide enough time to develop a transversal approach between basic and clinical teaching and to enhance the clinical caseload.

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The definition of clear (both qualitative and quantitative criteria) objectives for teaching for annual appraisal of staff is to be encouraged.

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 assessment of the teachers and teaching are based on class questionnaires and suggestion boxes. Students can give or express their opinions directly to their supervisors and teachers, or anonymously through a bi-annual survey (one per course at the end of each semester) or via suggestion boxes.

The teachers have to produce a report on how they handled the remarks for the lecture and teaching. Feedback is not in place to the students on how the remarks were (or not) taken into account.

The questionnaires are anonymous, and the results are available.

9.5.2. Comments

The VEE can be commended for the implementation of changes in evaluation methods and, in particular the fact that students' opinions have been taken into account since the last consultative visit.

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

VEE shows excellent results in science and research. Academic staff are involved in a large number of national and international projects. Academic staff who are involved in teaching undergraduate students are evaluated in the area of research and publications. Faculty members received more than 1,500,000 Euros from extramural funds in 2020-2022 and published 223 scientific papers in international peer-reviewed journals as first or corresponding authors. VEE is evidenced by a large number of publications in high-ranking peer-reviewed journals.

FINAL REPORT AS ISSUED BY ECOVE ON 11 DECEMBER 2023

Research is financed from its budget and funds obtained from extramural-funded research programmes. In the academic year 2020-2022, 468,000 Euros were allocated in the budget, and in addition, over 1,500,000 Euros were obtained from external research programmes.

10.1.2. Comments

All fields of veterinary sciences are covered in the research activities of faculty members. However, publication activity is not evenly distributed between departments. The number of funded scientific projects and collaborative works with national and international scientific journals is high.

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 methods and research techniques relevant to evidence-based veterinary medicine and must have opportunities to participate in research programmes.

10.2.1. Findings

Research findings are integrated into the teaching by researchers involved in education. At VEE, students are already involved in research during their undergraduate studies. Evidence-based medicine is included in the curriculum in the 2nd year, and other theoretical and practical knowledge is part of the subjects in the 4th year. In the 4th year, students choose a specialisation in one of five fields (biosciences, pathobiology, preventive veterinary medicine, farm and companion animal clinical sciences). Research of pre-graduate students is carried out in a Specialised Education Course. All students complete the research programme in the second half of the 5th to the 6th year. In the 6th year, students present a thesis on their topic. Students are evaluated by the faculty members based on oral presentation of the graduation thesis (grades S, A, B, C, D).

10.2.2. Comments

All undergraduate students are integrated into the research activities of the VEE.

VEE produces a substantial number of scientific publications annually, and although most are published in local Japanese journals, many are published in well-recognised international peer-reviewed journals.

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

VEE offers postgraduate education in the form of a PhD or Master's degree (research) and clinical training organised by the VTH as part of continuing education for practising veterinarians. However, it does not offer clinical training organised by VTH after postgraduate education.

VEE Graduate School consists of the Graduate School of Dairy Science, which promotes research in dairy science and related fields, and the Graduate School of Veterinary Medicine, which supports research and development in veterinary medicine and related fields. Both graduate schools have doctoral and master's programmes.

The Graduate School of Veterinary Medicine offers a four-year doctoral programme in veterinary medicine and a two-year master's programme in veterinary science. The requirements for completing the master's programme are to have attended a graduate school for at least two years, earned at least 30 credits, passed the examination, received the necessary research publication, and completed a master's thesis or a specific project conducted by our graduate school depending on the purpose.

Completing the doctoral programme requires attending graduate school for at least four years, earning at least 30 credits, receiving necessary research publications, and passing the doctoral thesis review and examination conducted by the graduate school. The University President will confer the degrees of master's degree (veterinary health nursing) and doctorate (veterinary medicine) to those who meet the prescribed requirements for completion of this graduate school and who are approved for completion after discussion by the Graduate School Committee.

The VEE Graduate School of Dairy Science offers 14 doctoral and 30 master's programmes. The Graduate School of Veterinary Medicine offers 28 doctoral programmes and 16 master's programmes. From 2017 to 2019, 7 to 8 students enrolled in PhD programmes every year, of which 19 students graduated by March 2023. From 2018 to 2021, 0 to 2 students enrolled in master's programmes every year, of which four students graduated by March 2023.

Number of residents and interns is very low.

10.3.2. Comments

VEE offers doctoral and master's programmes and advanced postgraduate education.

Veterinarians engaged in clinical practice must undertake continuing education. VEE is an approved facility by the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries to provide continuing education.

The number of veterinary specialisations in the VEE is low.

10.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to develop specialisation residencies in most important clinical disciplines.

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

Research and postgraduate education is planned by the members of the faculties of the School of Veterinary Medicine and deliberated by the Faculty Council or Graduate School Committee, headed by the president, who decides on the acceptance of programmes. Accepted programmes are implemented with the support of other centres: Extension Centre, VTH, and World Organization for Animal Health.

The Extension centre formulates the basic directions of activity and reports on their implementation for the following year and the following year. The centre organises lectures and seminars for long-life education and postgraduate education.

The VTH organises clinical postgraduate training.

The Department of Veterinary Medicine, School of Veterinary Medicine RGU, and other centres were designated as the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH). The mission of WOAH is to train personnel from WOAH member countries in the Asia Pacific Region and organise collaborative research on zoonoses and food safety.

The research and publication activities of academic staff involved in postgraduate education are evaluated every five years at the Graduate School of Veterinary Medicine. The graduate school professors must have a doctoral degree and are required to have published at least 30 scientific papers in international peer-reviewed journals. In addition, professors must publish at least five scientific articles every five years.

10.4.2. Comments

VEE has an established quality system for evaluating publication activity. Publication activity is regularly evaluated.

The Department of Veterinary Medicine, School of Veterinary Medicine RGU was designated as a training centre by the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH).

10.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

10.4.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.4.

ESEVT Indicators



ESEVT Indicators

Name of the Establishment:		School of Veterinary Medicine, Rakuno Gakuen University				
Name & mail of the Head:		Professor Dr. Yasukazu MURAMATSU, DVM., PhD., y-mrmt@rakuno.ac.jp				
Date of the form filling:		1st, July 2023				
Raw data from the last 3 full academic years		2020	2021	2022	Mean	
1	n° of FTE academic staff involved in veterinary training	62,5	65,5	76	68,0	
2	n° of undergraduate students	833	870	846	849,7	
3	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training	50,75	55,75	66,25	57,6	
4	n° of students graduating annually	135	142	137	138,0	
5	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training	86	90	90	88,7	
6	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	450	765	765	660,0	
7	n° of hours of clinical training	135	900	900	645,0	
8	n° of hours of FSQ & VPH training	135	225	225	195,0	
9	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in FSQ & VPH	0	45	45	30,0	
10	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally	3603	3578	3454	3545,0	
11	n° of ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally	98	53	332	161,0	
12	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally	17	9	563	196,3	
13	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen intra-murally	0	0	70	23,3	
14	n° of companion animal patients seen extra-murally	0	0	210	70,0	
15	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extra-murally	968	1077	911	985,3	
16	n° of equine patients seen extra-murally	28	39	60	42,3	
17	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds	121	122	141	128,0	
18	n° of visits of poultry and farmed rabbit units	0	0	16	5,3	
19	n° of companion animal necropsies	2	2	15	6,3	
20	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies	81	83	62	75,3	
21	n° of equine necropsies	172	204	177	184,3	
22	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies	28	52	58	46,0	
23	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training	11	11	11	11,0	
24	n° of PhD graduating annually	7	8	8	7,7	



ESEVT Indicators

Name of the VEE:		School of Veterinary Medicine, Rakuno Gakuen University			
Date of the form filling:		5th August 2023			
Calculated Indicators from raw data		VEE values	Median values ¹	Minimal values ²	Balance ³
11	n° of FTE teaching staff involved in veterinary training / n° of undergraduate students	0,080	0,15	0,13	-0,046
12	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,417	0,84	0,63	-0,213
13	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,643	0,88	0,54	0,103
14	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	660,000	953,50	700,59	-40,590
15	n° of hours of Core Clinical Training (CCT)	645,000	941,58	704,80	-59,800
16	n° of hours of VPH (including FSQ) training	195,000	293,50	191,80	3,200
17	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in VPH (including FSQ)	30,000	75,00	31,80	-1,800
18	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	26,196	67,37	44,01	-17,814
19	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	8,307	18,75	9,74	-1,433
110	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	1,729	5,96	2,15	-0,421
111	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	0,188	3,11	1,16	-0,972
112	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds / n° of students graduating annually	0,928	1,29	0,54	0,388
113	n° of visits of poultry and farmed rabbit units / n° of students graduating annually	0,039	0,11	0,04	-0,006
114	n° of companion animal necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0,046	2,11	1,40	-1,354
115	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0,546	1,36	0,90	-0,354
116	n° of equine necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	1,336	0,18	0,10	1,236
117	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0,333	2,65	0,88	-0,547
118	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,080	0,27	0,06	0,020
119	n° of PhD graduating annually / n° of students graduating annually	0,056	0,15	0,07	-0,014

¹ Median values defined by data from VEEs with Accreditation/Approval status in May 2019
² Recommended minimal values calculated as the 20th percentile of data from VEEs 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

Indicators calculated on the basis of the first year following COVID-19-linked restrictions



ESEVT Indicators

Name of the VEE:		School of Veterinary Medicine, Rakuno Gakuen University			
Date of the form filling:		16th Oct 2023			
Calculated Indicators from raw data					
		VEE values	Median values¹	Minimal values²	Balance³
I1	n° of FTE teaching staff involved in veterinary training / n° of undergraduate students	0,099	0,15	0,13	-0,027
I2	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,550	0,84	0,63	-0,080
I3	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,684	0,88	0,54	0,144
I4	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	765,000	953,50	700,59	64,410
I5	n° of hours of Core Clinical Training (CCT)	900,000	941,58	704,80	195,200
I6	n° of hours of VPH (including FSQ) training	225,000	293,50	191,80	33,200
I7	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in VPH (including FSQ)	45,000	75,00	31,80	13,200
I8	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	32,387	67,37	44,01	-11,623
I9	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	16,000	18,75	9,74	6,260
I10	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	4,782	5,96	2,15	2,632
I11	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	0,666	3,11	1,16	-0,494
I12	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds / n° of students graduating annually	0,919	1,29	0,54	0,379
I13	n° of visits of poultry and farmed rabbit units / n° of students graduating annually	0,137	0,11	0,04	0,092
I14	n° of companion animal necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0,159	2,11	1,40	-1,241
I15	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0,565	1,36	0,90	-0,335
I16	n° of equine necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	1,132	0,18	0,10	1,032
I17	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	1,051	2,65	0,88	0,171
I18	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,084	0,27	0,06	0,024
I19	n° of PhD graduating annually / n° of students graduating annually	0,061	0,15	0,07	-0,009
¹	Median values defined by data from VEEs with Accreditation/Approval status in May 2019				
²	Recommended minimal values calculated as the 20th percentile of data from VEEs 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				

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 their 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

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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		
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The VEE must also describe how it encourages and prepares students for self-learning and lifelong learning.</p>	X		
<p>Standard 3.3: Programme learning outcomes must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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		
<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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		
<p>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).</p> <p>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.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p> <p>There must be a member of the academic staff responsible for the overall supervision of the EPT, including liaison with EPT providers.</p>		X	
<p>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.</p>	X		
Area 4. Facilities and equipment			
<p>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.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p>	X		
<p>Standard 4.3: The livestock facilities, animal housing, core clinical teaching facilities and equipment used by the VEE for teaching purposes must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be sufficient in capacity and adapted for the number of students enrolled in order to allow safe hands-on training for all students 	X		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 			
<p>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.</p> <p>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 exceeding the best available in the private sector.</p> <p>The VTH and any hospitals, practices and facilities (including EPT) which are involved with the curriculum must meet the relevant national Practice Standards.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p>	X		
Area 5. Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin			
<p>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.</p> <p>Evidence must be provided that these data are regularly recorded and that procedures are in place for correcting any deficiencies.</p>		X	X
<p>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.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p>	X		
Area 6. Learning resources			
<p>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.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p> <p>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).</p>	X		
<p>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.</p>	X		
Area 7. Student admission, progression and welfare			
<p>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.</p>	X		

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In relation to enrolment, the VEE must provide accurate and complete information regarding all aspects of the educational programme in all advertisements 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	

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<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p>	X		
Area 10. Research programmes, continuing and postgraduate education			
<p>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.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p>	X		
<p>C: (total or substantial) compliance; PC: partial compliance (Minor Deficiency); NC: non-compliance (Major Deficiency)</p>			

Executive Summary

The Rakuno Gakuen University (RGU), with its Faculty of Dairy Science and Department of Veterinary Medicine, was established in 1964 and located in Ebetsu, Hokkaido.

The Graduate School of Veterinary Medicine and Veterinary Medicine Master and Doctoral Courses were established in 1975 and 1981, respectively.

Today, the RGU consists of:

-) the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment Sciences,
-) the School of Veterinary Medicine (called the VEE in this report),
-) the Graduate School of Veterinary Medicine,
-) the Graduate School of Dairy Sciences.

The VEE had an ESEVT Consultative Visitation in October 2019 and has not yet completed a Full Visitation.

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

The SER was provided on time and written in agreement with the SOP 2019 as amended in 2021, although some data had to be corrected or added during the visitation process. Replies to the pre-visit questions from the experts were provided before the start of the Visitation. One visitor was not allowed to travel because of a COVID-19 infection and completed the Visitation remotely.

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

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

-) Significant enhancements in education, facilities and procedures completed during the last 4 years and approved plans for further enhancements in the near future
-) Commitment of teaching staff to be compliant with ESEVT Standards
-) Efficient collaboration with stakeholders
-) Well-defined learning objectives
-) Well-developed and well-equipped skill lab and mock clinic
-) Well-equipped VTH for companion animals
-) Excellent physical facilities for students self-learning and wellbeing
-) Systematic implementation of rigorous biosecurity procedures by both staff and students
-) Excellent teaching/research farm with all common food-producing animals
-) Well-structured formal support for students' welfare.

Additional commendations are described in the Visitation Report.

The VEE is compliant with most ESEVT Standards. However, some areas of concern have been identified.

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

-) Partial compliance with Standard 3.1.5. because of suboptimal FSQ practical training in pigs and poultry for all students.

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-) Partial compliance with Standard 3.6. because of suboptimal evaluation of students during EPT.
-) Partial compliance with Standard 5.1. because of suboptimal number of necropsies for companion animals (excluding equine).
-) Partial compliance with Standard 9.1. because of suboptimal training to teach and to assess for teaching staff involved with extramural clinical training.

Items of non-compliance with the ESEVT Standards:

-) Non-compliance with Standard 3.1.3. because of insufficient hands-on clinical training for all students in companion animals, including equine and exotic pets.
-) Non-compliance with Standard 5.1. because of insufficient number of companion animal patients (including equine and exotic pets) and insufficient number of food-producing animals necropsies in relation to the number of students enrolled.

Additional suggestions for improvement are described in this Visitation Report.

Glossary

CCT: Core Clinical Training

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

OSCE: Objective Structured Clinical Examination

PDCA: Plan Do Check Adjust

QA: Quality Assurance

RGU: Rakuno Gakuen University

SER: Self Evaluation Report

SOP: Standard Operating Procedure

VEE: Veterinary Education Establishment

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 3.1.3. because of insufficient hands-on clinical training for all students in companion animals, including equine and exotic pets.
2. Non-compliance with Standard 5.1. because of insufficient number of companion animal patients (including equine and exotic pets) and insufficient number of food-producing animals necropsies in relation to the number of students enrolled.

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