



VISITATION REPORT

**To the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences,
Kaunas, Lithuania**

On 28 February – 04 March 2022

By the Visitation Team:

Bryan Markey, Dublin, Ireland: Visitor in Basic Sciences

Agnès Leblond, Lyon, France: Visitor in Clinical Sciences in Companion Animals

Delia Lacasta, Zaragoza, Spain: Visitor in Clinical Sciences in Food-Producing Animals

Kurt Houf, Ghent, Belgium: Visitor in Food Safety and Quality

Massimo Castagnaro (Chairperson), Legnaro, Italy: Visitor in Quality Assurance

Pavol Valašek, Bratislava, Slovakia: Practitioner

Olivia Goodwin, Bristol, United Kingdom: Student

Pierre Lekeux, Liège, Belgium: ESEVT Coordinator

Contents of the Visitation Report

Introduction

1. Objectives, Organisation and QA Policy
2. Finances
3. Curriculum
4. Facilities and equipment
5. Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin
6. Learning resources
7. Student admission, progression and welfare
8. Student assessment
9. Academic and support staff
10. Research programmes, continuing and postgraduate education
11. ESEVT Indicators
12. ESEVT Rubrics

Executive Summary

Glossary

Introduction

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (called the Veterinary Education Establishment (VEE) in this Report) was created 85 years ago, is the only VEE in the country and is part of the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences since 2010, together with six other faculties.

The VEE was first visited by EAEVE/ESEVT in 2012 and was eventually granted the Accreditation status in 2019. The VEE was also accredited by the Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC which is a member of ENQA) in 2011.

Since the last ESEVT Visitation, the VEE has implemented several changes, e.g.:

-) A new student-centred integrated curriculum, based on ESEVT Day One Competences (D1C) and learning outcomes;
-) A digital Clinical Rotation Logbook;
-) An OSCE exam;
-) A better use of the Moodle platform;
-) The inclusion of student representatives in the Biosecurity and Biosafety Committee;
-) A mandatory Biosecurity and Biosafety training for the academic and support staff;
-) A new modern diagnostic equipment for the Veterinary Teaching Hospitals (VTH);
-) New large and small animal isolation facilities;
-) The relocation of the Veterinary Medicine Simulation Centre (VMSC) to new premises equipped with digital technology to provide self-learning opportunities.

A current challenge for the VEE is the renovation of its VTH, which has been initiated and should be completed soon.

The Visitation has followed the SOP 2019 as amended in September 2021 and the ‘Exceptional Rules for ESEVT Visitations linked to the COVID-19 outbreak’, as adopted by EAEVE Executive Committee in December 2021. Adjustments made in the learning and study processes due to the exceptional situation of COVID-19 were explained in an addendum to the Self-Evaluation Report (SER).

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

In line with the general mission of Lithuanian University of Health Sciences (LSMU), the main objective of the VEE is to train veterinary specialists in the field of veterinary medicine, food science and food safety. The educational pathway is research- and evidence-based, and practice- and innovation-oriented.

Continuing education is intended to meet and promote professional competences of academic staff and veterinarians.

The Veterinary training, developed within a six-year study programme, is organised and delivered according to the requirements of the ESEVT SOP, Annex 2, and enables new vets to enter different veterinary profession fields (see SER Annex II).

1.1.2. Comments

The veterinary training offered by the VEE is adequate, ethical and evidence-based.

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

Kaunas Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, the only VEE in the country, is part of LSMU which is supervised by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport.

LSMU is organised into Medical and Veterinary Academies, both headed by a Chancellor. The primary purpose of the Veterinary Academy is to unite and ensure the integration of studies, science, and business in the fields of veterinary sciences and animal sciences.

The Veterinary Academy consists of two faculties – the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (VEE) and the Faculty of Animal Sciences.

The main purpose of the VEE is to organise the studies and research. The VEE consists of study departments, animal clinics, institute, and other units.

All VEE activities and decisions are supervised by the Council of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine.

According with LSMU Statute and VEE regulations, the Dean, a qualified veterinarian, is responsible to manage the VEE, to implement the resolutions approved by the LSMU Council and Senate and Rector orders, and to provide information to the VEE units and students. The Dean is assisted by two vice-deans (qualified veterinarians), an international student coordinator (qualified veterinarian) and two representatives of the Dean's Office.

VEE is organised into seven heterogeneous units (3 departments, 2 veterinary teaching clinics, 1 Centre, 1 Institute). The two separate Veterinary teaching clinics (Small and Large Animals) function as VTH.

All the core vet curriculum activities are organised by Departments, Clinics and centres while the Institute is mainly involved in teaching electives and research (SER Annex 5). Some core subjects and electives are also taught within Departments, Institutes and Clinics not belonging to the VEE units (Faculties of Animal Sciences, Medicine, Public Health and Nursing).

The person responsible for the veterinary curriculum and the heads of VTHs and VMSC hold a degree in veterinary sciences.

The decision-making process of the VEE, from the strategy topics to the management of relevant specific issues, relies also on an organisation of councils, committees and working groups where faculties and students are well represented. External stakeholders are represented in the VEE Council and the Study programme Committee. During the COVID-19 lockdown decided by the Lithuanian Government, all relevant management issues were taken on through online meetings and discussions. Decisions and information were communicated to all internal stakeholders by e-mail and synchronous online meetings.

1.2.2. Comments

The VEE is part of a University, and all the responsible persons hold a veterinary degree.

The organisation and the management of the VEE is compliant with the ESEVT standards and adequate to implement the strategic objectives and tasks.

1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

1.2.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.2.

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

1.3.1. Findings

Under its mission statement – the development of a healthy and sustainable environment for animals and humans through educated specialists in the veterinary medicine, food science, and food safety fields, orientated to research, practice, and innovations – the VEE has set the strategic development guidelines (SDGs) (SER Annex 1) which included five strategic objectives, embracing educational, research and technology, human and animal health enhancement, in an international perspective.

SDGs have been drafted by a Working Group composed by the Dean, 6 representatives of the 6 VEE units and 3 student representatives. External stakeholders are not present in this working group. SDGs (2017-2021) have been approved by the VEE council in 2017 and amended in 2020. New SDGs (2022-2026) are underway.

A complete SWOT analysis (updated in 2020), embedded into the SDGs, presents numerous strengths, several opportunities and threats, and a few weaknesses.

VEE has identified several necessary conditions to achieve the intended strategic developmental goals.

In the implementation Plan, each strategic direction and objective is further subdivided into specific tasks, measures, evaluation indices, prospected measures, outcomes, realisation terms, responsibilities and executive actions. Implementation and monitoring of tasks are based on quantitative indicators (baseline and KPI).

The Plan identifies the persons responsible for the implementation of the planned matter (Dean, Vice-Dean, VA Chancellor, Heads of the VEE Units, etc.), who, by preparing and submitting the annual VEE Report at the end of the year, report to the Quality Assurance Working Group on the achieved results.

1.3.2. Comments

The VEE has a strategic plan with SWOT analysis, objectives and tasks. The operating plan has a timeframe, qualitative and quantitative indicators and identification of the responsible person.

1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE increase the degree of matching between SWOT analysis and the identification of specific related tasks.

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's approach to quality is based on the PDCA cycle.

The VEE's QA policy, compliant with the LSMU internal QA system, is approved by the LSMU. According to the Regulations of study Programme Committees of LSMU, the Study Programme Committee (SPC) holds the main responsibility for the quality of the study programme of Veterinary Medicine. SPC is the first body which gets all the data related to study process quality. On the other hand, it is the central body that ensures the curriculum quality and implementation by teaching. This covers both external national and EAEVE evaluations and internal institutional quality assurance. In order to ensure the quality of programme and according to several established quality criteria, SPC has the annual task to monitor the programme, to approve the description of each single subject, to analyse a number of survey data (graduates and employers' opinions, teacher survey, ...) and to organise students' opinions survey. A publicly available written report on performance is presented annually to the VEE Dean and the Vice-Rector for Studies and is published in LSMU webpage.

Internal (faculties and students' representatives) and external stakeholders are present within VEE governing bodies and SPC.

1.4.2. Comments

The VEE has in place a QA system, with all related procedures and responsibilities, which allow the process of continuous enhancement of quality. Students are adequately represented in the process of development and implementation of the strategic plan.

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

Systematic interactions with external stakeholders and the wider society of the VEE relies on an intensive system of regular formal and informal networking as well as on the information available in the website content (Dean annual reports, name and positions of Faculties, other VEE activities).

The ECOVE Final Decision (2019), the EAEVE final Quality Assurance Visitation Report (2019), the final Re-Visitation Report (2019) and the full SER (2012) are clearly mentioned on the VEE's website.

1.5.2. Comments

The extent and quality of external stakeholders' involvement at all levels in the activity of the VEE is remarkable and noteworthy.

1.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

1.5.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.5.

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

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

1.6.1. Findings

Within the framework set by LSMU, the VEE's strategic objectives and directions are drafted by a specific Working Group and then approved by the VEE Council.

The Dean monitors the implementation of consequent activities. The implementation of the tasks in strategic planning is monitored by performance indications (both quantitative and qualitative). The data mainly comes from the academic units and other bodies such as SPC and the Career Centre that operate following their annual plans in line with the main strategic plan and using the same performance indicators. Data processing, when required, is performed by some simple statistical analysis tools (trends, analysing the distribution of grades). If necessary, the root-cause analysis may be initiated in case some specific problems arise.

The planned responsible persons communicate to the QA Working Group relevant data about the expected performances of the VEE Units.

The QA WG produces the Annual Report which is then presented by the Dean in a meeting of the VEE open session to all faculties and students. The Annual Report is available also on the VEE Website.

The QA WG is also responsible for monitoring to what extent VEE activities are in line with the Guidelines and the Operational Plan and to assess the results obtained.

1.6.2. Comments

Together with dedicated central LSMU committees, the VEE ensures the achievement of its objectives and tasks by monitoring and reviewing its activities.

1.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

1.6.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.6.

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

1.7.1. Findings

The VEE has overcome all the major deficiencies originally set by the Visitation team in 2012. The VEE has also taken action to address the ESEVT expert suggestions and indicated minor deficiencies (15).

1.7.2. Comments

The VEE shows a continuous progression of the quality of its activities, has overcome all minor deficiencies and met the suggestions of the ESEVT experts.

1.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

1.7.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.7.

Area 2. Finances

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

2.1.1. Findings

The estimates for the LSMU's financial year are prepared by December 31 of the current year, and performed according to internal and legal procedures. After the LSMU Council's approval, the Rector reports on the estimates of the LSMU's income and expenditures and the course of their implementation. The financial activities of the LSMU are made public and are part of the annual report of the LSMU activities.

The LSMU budget is composed of 3 financial streams: direct financing from the national budget, services including tuition fees, research and economic activities, and finances from projects, financial supplements and "others". The budget allocation is within the competence of the LSMU economic and planning service and director of Administration and Finance and is discussed in the senate and approved by the council 1 year in advance. In 2020, the national budget represented

37.28% of the total LSMU budget and has to be spent on study-related and non-study-related activities. The latter includes research administration and economic activities. This division has to be maintained at the level of the faculties. The national budget for study-related activities has been increased, while the budget for non-study-related activities decreased.

In accordance with the strategic development plan, the LSMU strives for sustainable financing, and an attempt to increase the budget by increasing revenues seems to be successful in recent years. To implement the LSMU strategic projects (e.g. the development of the large and small animal VTHs), a build-up of reserve funds from services is in place, with an accumulated 3.5% of the revenues by provided services in 2021.

The VEE operates the revenues earned from the services and the research grants following the LSMU's law and uses about 80% for the VEE main activities. The other 20% is used for general and reserve funds. About 16.5% goes to the LSMU Open Fund, and 3.5% is for the other strategic remodelling and/or renovation of the infrastructure.

The yearly VEE allocated budget is spent in the categories' personnel, operation, equipment and maintenance costs. A 3-year overview with annual expenditures and revenues is included in the SER, showing a positive yearly balance (ranging from 222.000 to 450.000 euro) for the past 3 years. Main increasing costs for the VEE are personnel and operating costs.

The VEE is successfully attracting additional incomes from clinical and other services, research grants, continuing education, and donations, though, with the exception of the latter, those incomes decreased in 2019-2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tuition fees are received by the LSMU, and in 3 different categories: standard tuition fee for state funded students, a higher tuition fee for non-state funded students, and tuition fee for international students.

2.1.2. Comments

The budget and the planned investments are clearly presented.

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

The VEE has autonomy to use the budget provided by the LSMU. The Dean decides the allocation of the funds for purchase and services related to the organisation of the studies, following the procedure, though in alignment with the VEE strategic goals and needs.

The VTHs estimate their revenues from the provided services, and based on this, the units plan

their expenses, and is recorded in an annual expenditure plan, that has to be submitted to the dean before 01/10 of the current year. The VEE has a reserve fund for unexpected costs.

When the cost for development or infrastructure, equipment and other purchases exceeds the VEE financial capacity, the dean submits a request to the LSMU administration for consideration after prior consultation with the VA chancellor. The decision on support for crucial high-cost objects are made by the LSMU council after prior discussion in the rectorate and Senate.

2.2.2. Comments

The VEE demonstrates clear autonomy on the revenues, and service activities contribute to the training of students.

2.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

Since one of the strategic goals of the VEE is to increase the incomes by attracting as many patients as possible in the VTHs, it is suggested that care should be taken that this does not come into conflict with the appropriate training time per clinical case of students.

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

At LSMU level, the budget implementation is based on the national control and internal and external audit systems at different levels. The LSMU Internal Audit Office is ensured with organisational independence and freedom of action. Conclusions of the internal audits and the recommendations on the potential risks and improvement of the internal control procedures are submitted to the Rector. The internal auditors also monitor the implementation of the recommendations. The external audit checks the financial reports. The national auditors express their independent opinion about the correctness of the LSMU's financial and budget implementation reports. The LSMU takes appropriate actions to make positive changes in setting new internal control procedures.

At VEE level, based on the strategic goals, all investments are planned and compiled in an annual plan for investment in facilities and equipment. Furthermore, a VEE annual procurement plan is prepared, including funds assigned by the LSMU from the national budget and incomes generated from the projects. The latter has to be approved by the Rector. The VEE prepares a 3-yearly annual projection of revenues and expenditures, for which a positive balance is set. An evaluation to decide if the allocated resources were indeed sufficient is currently not performed.

2.3.2. Comments

Resources allocations are reviewed both at the level of the LSMU and at the VEE level.

2.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

A retrospective review at VEE level of the allocated resources is suggested.

2.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Substandard 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 curriculum is overseen by the VM Study Programme Committee (SPC). The programme is conducted in parallel in both Lithuanian and English since 2011. Up to 2017 the programme consisted of 336 ECTS credits and lasted 11 semesters or 5.5 years. The last graduates from this Programme will be graduated by February 2022. A large number of changes to the curriculum were instituted in 2017. Some further changes were implemented in 2020 following the publication of an additional report in 2019 by EAEVE experts that focused on Quality Assurance.

Since 2017 the Vet Medicine study programme has been a six-year programme, comprising 360 ECTS credits worth of teaching spread over 12 semesters. Students must prepare a Master thesis. Graduates are awarded a Master degree in Veterinary Sciences and the qualification of a veterinary doctor (Qualification Level VII). The required licence to practice is granted by SFVS (State Food and Veterinary Service of Lithuania). Some of the planned infrastructural changes (new vet training hospital and renovation of the Large Animal Clinic) have been delayed due to funding uncertainties caused by the pandemic.

Mitigation steps taken due to the pandemic included:

From 30/03/2020 to 30/06/2020, all teaching was delivered remotely using Teams, Moodle and Big Blue Button teaching platforms. A large bank of video and other visual material has been accumulated and continues to be updated. Feedback was significantly increased.

From 01/09/2020 to 14/12/2020, students were allowed back on campus but numbers per group were reduced to 10-12 or in the case of clinical studies to 5-6 students and social distancing rules were implemented. Hybrid teaching was used with practical training occurring face to face while lectures continued online.

Spring semester 2021 – Clinical rotations were able to recommence as usual. Hybrid teaching was used with practical training occurring face to face while lectures continued online.

Autumn semester 2021 – Lecturers and students have all been vaccinated. Regular checking of vaccination passes and testing were instituted.

3.1.1.1. Findings

Recent curriculum changes in 2017 and 2020 have resulted in:

- additional hours allocated to graduation thesis preparation, Clinical Rotations and Clinical and Food Hygiene Practices
- change from classical to competency-based teaching - as a result some subjects have been integrated
- two new practices (Preclinical Production Animal Practice and Practice of Companion Animal Nursing) introduced
- introduction of innovative, student-centred teaching/learning methods
- basic subjects and sciences, previously taught in a traditional manner, are now being taught in an integrated way according to animal organ systems and areas

As a result, the hours of the VM Programme have increased substantially, particularly in the later years, e.g. in final year 6 from 876 hours (old 5.5-year programme) to 1253 hours (2017) and then to 1658 hours (2020). The total hours of the six-year programme have increased from 8182 hours (5.5 years) to 9074 hours (2017) and then to 9168 hours (2020). The main increases in hours are in Clinical Sciences (2890 to 3690). At least 30% of the time is supervised student self-learning, as indicated in Tables 3.1.1 and 3.1.2. A student can expect to attend several supervised ambulatory visits over the course of their studies.

A large range of Electives are on offer for students to take – students must do 15 ECTS credits worth of elective courses.

Extra-curriculum training is not compulsory. However, there are 5 types (Production animals, Companion animals, Vet Public Health, Food Safety and Quality, Clinical Practice) of compulsory external practical training (comprising 24.2 weeks in the new 2020 programme). This EPT can take place abroad (this is usual in the case of students enrolled on the International i.e. English speaking, course).

3.1.1.2. Comments

There have been significant changes to the curriculum in 2017 and in 2020 in order to implement a modern forward-looking programme (SER Annex 13) designed to deliver competency-based outcomes. There is evidence of successful efforts to increase vertical integration through the use of case based and problem-based learning. These changes are to be commended.

3.1.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

Greater efforts are required to improve integration both horizontally and vertically.

Collaborations between departments, clinics and institutions, both formal and informal, should be encouraged and facilitated to the greatest possible extent. Regular, timetabled case rounds could be organised that include all relevant staff and students to discuss cases. In addition, sessions that bring together pathologists, clinicians and students could be scheduled which would facilitate discussion of cases and the confirmation or otherwise of clinical diagnoses. It is vital for students to see multidisciplinary teams working together to both enhance treatment regimens and diagnostic proficiency. Such sessions will improve their understanding of the role of different specialists in diagnosing disease and confirming aetiology.

Given the large number of formal teaching hours, it is desirable that the reduction in teaching hours that has taken place in some subjects should continue and be extended to other subjects. This can be achieved by eliminating repetition, identifying common topics and improving cooperation

between different specialists and disciplines.

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 teaching of subjects in the 1st-4th semesters of the new curriculum, implemented in 2020, is predicated on horizontal and partial vertical integration and sequencing.

In terms of changes from the old (pre-2017) curriculum to the latest (2020) curriculum, it is noteworthy that there is:

- Large reduction in teaching hours of Pharmacology/Pharmacy from 218 to 133.
- Large reduction in Parasitology teaching hours (from 213 to 87 hours)
- Moderate decreases in teaching hours of Pathology, Micro, Immunology.
- Increase in teaching hours of information literacy/data management from 494 to 875 hours.

3.1.2.2. Comments

The reductions in hours of teaching listed under both parasitology and pharmacology/pharmacy are substantial and reflect a re-organisation of the teaching of these subjects to permit a more applied approach to the subjects. In the case of parasitology, overlap with Zoology has been eliminated while hours have been transferred to the Clinical Rotation of Infectious Diseases. In the case of Pharmacology/Pharmacy some topics have now been integrated into the subjects of internal medicine, surgery and anaesthesiology. The large increase in hours listed under information literacy/data management reflect the inclusion of the hours involved in the Master's thesis.

3.1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

Further efforts are required to improve both horizontal and vertical integration, in particular to link preclinical and clinical disciplines and teachers. The aim should be to reduce the number of student contact hours by innovative and creative teaching practices that aim to support the acquisition of Day One Competences by removing unnecessary repetition and overlap, emphasising common concepts and approaches, reinforcing problem solving and independent critical thinking.

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

Total number of hours in clinical sciences comprises 364h lectures, 56h seminars, 962 supervised self-training, 42h laboratory work, 161h nonclinical animal work, 1816h clinical animal work. They include the subjects: obstetrics, diagnostic pathology, medicine, surgery, anaesthesiology, clinical practice in companion animals, preventive medicine, imaging, therapy and propaedeutics.

Clinical animal rotations, including propaedeutics and clinical pathology, begins in the 3rd year and takes 127h, 617h, 579h, 536h respectively in the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th year. Clinical rotation is done at the VTHs, PMBC, ambulatory clinic and VMSC. Total number of intra-mural VTH rotations from 3rd to 5th year is 9,6 weeks, including 1-week propaedeutics in the 3rd year, small and large animal medicine in the 4th year (2.4 weeks), surgery and obstetrics in the 5th year of study (6.2 weeks). 1.4 week is spent in ambulatory clinics Herd Health management including horses.

Clinical rotations are organised in small groups of 4–8 students, in weekly periods, during the day and at night. The procedure for conducting and assessing clinical rotation and the competences to be acquired are described in the Procedure of Clinical Rotation. The D1Cs obtained during clinical rotation have to be registered in the Clinical Rotation Logbook. The student-acquired competences are assessed by a responsible lecturer. Some interesting clinical cases are discussed and analysed at the end of the rotation. The students write reflections on the most notable cases.

Supervised self-learning hours are spent for case-analysis discussions, lab-work analysis, diagnostic imaging analysis and training in the vet skills centre (VMSC).

During the 6th year, 24 ECTS (16.2 weeks) are dedicated to external clinical practice, including Large and Small animal clinics, Pathobiology and Practice bases. In the clinical practice, students register their patients in a patient's registration journal. At the end of the practice, the supervisor assesses the student's logbook and report and writes a review on the student's acquired competences.

Clinical sciences are proposed as elective among the 15 ECTS that must be taken by each student during their studies.

I8 and I10 and I11 are above minimal values. I17 and I20 are above median value, I19 is above minimal value.

3.1.3.2. Comments

The curriculum offers all relevant topics for clinical sciences. The learning outcomes are prepared and published in the various subjects on the Moodle platform. Propaedeutic practical training is adequate. Clinical rotations in small and large animals are adequate. An emergency service is offered. The SOPs describing communication with patients' owners, animal examination and others are all in LT and EN.

3.1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.1.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.3.

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

3.1.4.1. Findings

Pre-clinical subjects regarding food-producing animals (Animal husbandry, Breeding and Practice in Production Animals) are taught in 3rd and 4th semester. Pre-clinical subjects related to food-producing animals are:

- Animal production and breeding (8 ECTS credits in the 3rd semester)

FINAL REPORT AS ISSUED BY ECOVE ON 8 JUNE 2022

- Agronomy and feed analysis (5 ECTS credits in the 3rd semester)
- Animal nutrition (4 ECTS credits in the 4th semester)
- Agricultural economics and management (3 ECTS credits in the 4th semester)

In these subjects the undergraduates study animal husbandry, breeding, agronomy, and feed analysis and the peculiarities of feeding the common animal species. They learn to create feed rations adjusting them to veterinary hygiene and animal welfare requirements, acquire practical competences during laboratory work in laboratories and PMBC (student groups of 10–12), and the trips to the external practical sites/farms that house other animal species.

There is practical training in Pisciculture that is performed at the LSMU Laboratory of Aquaculture and the fishery Šilavotas. The undergraduates go to the fish farms during the studies of the subject Animal Rearing, Breeding, and Practice Management, Module I Animal Rearing. During the visit, the students study fish farming methods in ponds, closed recirculation systems, water basins, fish farming technology and participate in transferring fish to wintering ponds, etc.

At the end of the 4th semester, pre-clinical Production Animal Practice (done individually) takes place on external animal farms. This practice provides the general practical knowledge of animal care related to clinical practice, animal welfare, and professional ethics.

The clinical studies start with Propaedeutics, 13 ECTS credits, in the 5th–6th semesters (divided in large and small animals). This continues in the 7th –10th semesters with Large Animal Internal Medicine (12 ECTS credits in 7th and 8th semesters), that have: 0.5 ECTS credits for Herd Health Management, 4.4 for Ruminants internal medicine and dietetics, 0.4 ECTS credits for swine internal medicine, 0.2 ECTS for poultry internal medicine and 3 ECTS for clinical rotation in large animals (including horses). During the practical work of Internal Medicine, they collect a medical history, perform special examinations (endoscopy, ultrasound examination of internal organs, etc.), interpret the blood test and other biological fluid results, set a dosage, etc. They also study Special pathology with 9 ECTS. In the 9th and 10th semester the students take Large animal surgery (10 ECTS credits): 0.8 ECTS in Anaesthesiology, 2 in clinical rotation in Large animal surgery, 2.5 in General Surgery, 2 ECTS in Clinical surgery, dentistry and Ophthalmology and 2.7 in Large Animals Orthopaedics. During the practice of Surgery, the techniques of suturing and bandaging, performing limb diagnostics, bandaging and treatment of open wounds are taught.

The VM students participate in surgeries, assist the veterinary surgeon in performing assigned tasks, monitor animal sedation and anaesthesia. The practical skills in providing animal care in an emergency, patient fixation, and assisting the veterinarian in performing emergency first aid diagnostic and/or treatment procedures are successfully acquired and developed. In these semesters, the students also take the subject: Animal obstetric, Reproductive disorders and Clinical rotation (12 ECTS), in which they dedicate 5 ECTS credits to Large Animals Obstetric and Reproductive disorders and 4 to Large Animals andrology. Finally, the students have the Clinical Practice with 30 ECTS credits in the 11th and 12th semesters, that also includes large animals. A total of 336 hours is allocated for contact clinical practical training with production animals: cattle - 221 h, small ruminants - 78 h, pigs - 33 h, poultry - 4 h. Students are in small groups of 4–8 students, which ensures that each student has the opportunity to complete each task hands-on, acquire the required mandatory competences and receive an individual assessment. Clinical rotation runs in weekly periods, during the day and at night. Hence, the students can monitor the course of healing of hospitalised patients from check-in to recovery, provide intensive care and

first aid. During the rotation, the student participates in the process of collecting the patient's medical history, appropriate recording, evaluating the general health condition of a patient, animal sedation, performing and interpreting clinical case trials, appointing treatment and care.

Surgical procedures, the monitoring and treatment of patients in intensive care, further follow-up check-ups, and simple surgeries such as castration, sterilisation, Caesarean section, diagnosing of lameness, first aid and intensive care are parts of the clinical rotation. On each mobile ambulatory clinic trip with one lecturer to cattle, horse, and sheep farms, there are 2–4 students.

Pig farms are visited in groups of 10–12 students (under the requirement of farm owners). The students spend eight hours on the farm. They perform castrations, vaccinations, insemination, assistance in the delivery, injections, herd management cycles, and more tasks under the supervision of a lecturer. These farms house up to 10,000–12,000 pigs. Therefore, the required hands-on training is sufficient for all students.

The D1Cs obtained during clinical rotation have to be registered in the Clinical Rotation Logbook. The student-acquired competences are assessed by a responsible lecturer. The most interesting clinical cases are discussed and analysed at the end of the rotation. The students write reflections on the most notable cases.

3.1.4.2. Comments

Among the EU-listed subjects (Annex V.4.1 of EU Directive 2005/36/EC as amended by EU Directive 2013/55/EU) the curriculum provides all subjects related to Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals.

Preclinical training in food producing animals is carried out in the farm that belongs to the LSMU. Clinical classes are implemented from 5th to 10th semester in the clinical rotation. The students have the opportunity to visit a significant number of cattle farms in the clinical rotations fulfilling the one-day competences that they must acquire. In addition, they also have specialist teachers in small ruminants and visit sheep and goat farms in their clinical rotation and in the same way, and despite the threat of African swine fever (ASF), they currently carry out clinical training in pig and poultry farms, where they acquire the basic notions for these species.

3.1.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.1.4.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.4.

3.1.5. Food Safety and Quality

3.1.5.1. Findings

3.1.5.1.1 Brief description of the theoretical and practical education in FSQ

Concerning the theoretical education, basic knowledge in FSQ, needed for the Day One Competences as well as to fulfil the EU legal requirements for official veterinarians are included in the packages of FSQ, VPH and One health. They include lectures and practicals in legislation,

(food)control, zoonoses, hygiene, microbiology and technology. Other relevant topics, such as epidemiology and animal welfare are scheduled in the basic sciences.

Requirements for official veterinarians are mainly taught in the 5th year in two modules: food control and safety (including food toxicology, HACCP, zoonoses, food microbiology) and food hygiene and technology (including meat, milk and fish hygiene and technology, as well as hygiene of food of vegetative origin). The most significant requirements for an official veterinarian are taught in the meat hygiene and technology subject (4 ECTS). Intramural lectures and practicals in FSQ are scheduled in the 9th and 10th semester, and lectures on public health in semester 11. Total number of hours of FSQ are 1015 (including lectures, seminars, supervised self-learning (main part of the hours), practical courses, and non-clinical training).

There are 8 electives in FSQ, which students can take up in different semesters and study at their own time. Topics covered include infectious and non-infectious fish diseases and the principles of pond fishery, public catering and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point System (HACCP) in Food Enterprises.

Practical education: the VEE does not have its own slaughterhouse, and all practical training is organised extramurally. The VM students perform practical work in slaughterhouses during the Meat Hygiene and Technology study course (see below, 3.1.5.1.2.). This training can take place in three private slaughterhouses (cattle, swine, horse) and a poultry slaughterhouse. All plants operate according to international standards. Furthermore, the VM students have the mandatory food hygiene practice (1week of 40 h) in one of the 12 slaughterhouses recommended by SFVS. Tripartite practical training agreements and other documents provided for in the SFVS quality programme are signed.

Concerning dairy and dairy products, practical training is provided in a private company that provides students with practical training on the routine milk quality assessment. For the practical training at retail, during the subject course of hygiene of products of plant origin, each student visits Kaunas city supermarkets and farmers markets for analysing labelling information and the compliance of selected fruits, vegetables, or berries with the General Marketing Standard or Special Standard.

3.1.5.1.2. Description of the teaching in slaughterhouses and in premises for the production, processing, distribution/sale or consumption of food of animal origin
Intra-mural training in Food Hygiene and Technology.

Extramural training in slaughterhouses is scheduled in the 5th year of the curriculum and takes place in one of the three animal slaughterhouses. Each group has a maximum of 10 students and is supervised by a 1 lecturer. The veterinary meat inspectors present in the plants contribute to the practical training as well. Students spend 2 times at least 4h (8h in total) in 2 different slaughterhouses. Practical training includes monitoring of the slaughter process and the work of veterinarians, performing ante-mortem and post-mortem inspection, evaluation of assuring animal welfare and the hygiene during a technological slaughter process, labelling of carcasses, traceability, handling of by-products, identification of dangerous substances, and sampling procedures. On each visit, students have the opportunity to observe a sufficient amount of slaughtering (at least 100 pigs, 50 cattle, and/or 20 horses slaughtered).

Additionally, students have the mandatory Food Hygiene practice (1week, 40 h) in one of the 12

FINAL REPORT AS ISSUED BY ECOVE ON 8 JUNE 2022

slaughterhouses recommended by SFVS, that they perform at the time of their choice, usually during summer break. Evaluation of this training is by writing, presenting and discussion reports.

The volume of extra-mural practical training (formalised by contract, mandatory for all students) in the slaughterhouses is 2 ECTS credits (since 2021/2022 – 3 ECTS credits).

Evaluation of the knowledge and practical skills is assessed by a colloquium (making reports, and presentations of the findings during the Food Hygiene practice).

Teaching in the processing plant (extra-mural, 8h, 1 group of max 10 students per time): students studying dairy hygiene and technology accompanied by a lecturer.

3.1.5.2. Comments

The FSQ topics lectured cover all EAEVE and specific EU regulation requirements.

The VEE is to be commended for the exemplary training in FSQ, especially the large effort in hands-on intra-mural practical training in the different topics.

3.1.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.1.5.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.5.

3.1.6. Professional Knowledge

3.1.6.1. Findings

The subjects belonging to Professional Knowledge teaching have undergone slight changes like most of other subjects according to Curriculum changes in 2017 and 2020, respectively, mentioned above. Recent list of compulsory subjects includes:

First course: Education of General Professional, Information and Communication Competences, a module which consist of three units, 323 workload hours, 12 ECTS, cumulative grade formula:

- 1) Introduction to Veterinary Medicine Study; Training of study abilities; General Competences in Professional Context (Distance Course),
- 2) Data Management
- 3) Professional Language (Latin Language; Foreign Language for Specific Purposes, Speciality Language)

Second course: Veterinary Professional Ethics and Communication, 3 ECTS, 40 workload hours, exam

Second course: Animal practice management with Animal health economics - 0,5 ECTS, 10 contact hours, Practice management- 1ECTS, 20 contact hours, exam

Second course: Veterinary Hygiene and Animal Welfare with Animal health Economics - 1ECTS, 18 contact hours, exam

Sixth course: Veterinary Management as a part of Veterinary Law, Management and Public Health subject - 0,5 ECTS, exam and Leadership as a part of Veterinary Law, Management and Public Health subject - 0,5 ECTS, exam

There is also a wide range of elective subjects related to Professional knowledge like Design

thinking - 54 contact hours, 2 ECTS in first course or Organisation of Veterinary Business - 80 contact hours - 3 ECTS in fifth course etc. (SER Annex 17)

3.1.6.2. Comments

The curriculum covers all the required subjects of Professional knowledge. The list of electives in this field is honourable and it is obviously taking advantage of LSMU interdisciplinary cooperation. The so-called “soft skills” are widely covered in learning outcomes of these subjects.

3.1.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to encourage the VEE to incorporate the “soft skills” oriented subjects widely proposed as electives into mandatory curriculum.

3.1.6.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.6.

Standard 3.2: Each study programme provided by the VEE must be competency-based and designed so that it meets the objectives set for it, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme must be clearly specified and communicated and must refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

The VEE must provide proof of a QA system that promotes and monitors the presence of an academic environment highly conducive to learning including self-learning. Details of the type, provision and updating of appropriate learning opportunities for the students must be clearly described, as well as the involvement of students.

The VEE must also describe how it encourages and prepares students for self-learning and lifelong learning.

3.2.1. Findings

As stated in the SER, the Curriculum covers all subject groups listed in Annex 2 of the ESEVT SOP and it focused on practical, research-based training to ensure that the students achieve the programme's objectives by acquiring all the intended learning outcomes and D1Cs for work with all major animal species.

Intended Learning Outcomes of each subject are available on the VEE’s website.

The qualification resulting from the VM programme is a master degree in Veterinary Sciences (Level VII of the European Qualifications Framework) which is generally recognised at the home country of international students.

The VEE is promoting student learning activities by clearly defined intended learning outcomes and fair assessment of students learning results, by teamwork activities and creative tasks, and by assisting and advising students (mentoring).

Students’ self-learning and self-evaluation opportunities are well represented in theoretical and practical training.

A detailed list of appropriate learning opportunities, subdivided by subject, is provided in Annex 18 to the SER.

SPC reviews and monitors the description of Intended Learning Outcomes and the methods for their assessment for each subject and module.

3.2.2. Comments

Both study programmes provided by the VEE are competency-based, designed to meet the ILOs and they allow the qualification of Veterinary Doctor (Veterinarian).

The VEE provides a QA system fostering an excellent learning environment.

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

“Area”-specific intended learning outcomes (ILOs) and Day-One Competences (D1Cs) are detailed in Annex 10 to the SER.

In SER Annex 19, the VEE has clearly identified the relationships between the IOLs, D1Cs, subjects’ content and methods for subjects delivery and assessment.

Both ILOs and DOCs have been revised according to the recommendations given by the SKVC and the ESEVT visiting team.

SPC is in charge of periodically revising, updating and complementing ILOs by considering the surveys of alumni (after 6 to 12 months, 3 and 5 years post-graduation) and employers (performed every three years), by analysing the needs of the labour market and addressing the suggestions of employers. The data for the analyses of the labour market are taken from state and governmental systems and registers, and from the LSMU Career Centre. The VEE also conducts the career monitoring of the international graduates working abroad, by surveying these graduates. Based on those data, SPC identifies and discusses with relevant VEE Units areas that need to be improved. Results of discussion are submitted to the VEE Council.

The VM programme ILOs are publicly available on the LSMU website.

3.3.2. Comments

The learning outcomes of the programme include D1Cs and are adequately delivered and communicated to teaching staff and students. Under the supervision of SPC, learning outcomes are regularly reviewed, managed and updated.

3.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.3.

Standard 3.4: The VEE must have a formally constituted committee structure (which includes effective student representation), with clear and empowered reporting lines, to oversee and manage the curriculum and its delivery. The committee(s) must:

- **determine the pedagogical basis, design, delivery methods and assessment methods of the curriculum**
- **oversee QA of the curriculum, particularly gathering, evaluating, making change and responding to feedback from stakeholders, peer reviewers and external assessors, and data from examination/assessment outcomes**
- **perform ongoing and periodic review of the curriculum at least every seven years by involving staff, students and stakeholders; these reviews must lead to continuous improvement. Any action taken or planned as a result of such a review must be communicated to all those concerned**
- **identify and meet training needs for all types of staff, maintaining and enhancing their competence for the ongoing curriculum development.**

3.4.1. Findings

SPC is in charge of overseeing and managing the VM programme.

Upon the organisation of numerous meetings and surveys with selected internal and external stakeholders, SPC draws up a Curriculum improvement plan encompassing the changes and improvement needed and submits it annually by SPC to the Dean. Every semester, SPC reports about the results of the improvement plan to the Dean and Vice Rector for Studies (CMSQA).

Curriculum improvement plan is uploaded on the LSMU website.

SPC monitors if the requested changes in the curriculum have been actually implemented by the responsible person.

After approval by the VEE Council and Senate, the updated curriculum is publicly visible on the LSMU website. Curriculum is also presented in dedicated meetings to the State Food and Veterinary Service (SFVS) and the Association of Veterinarians of Lithuania (LVGA) representatives.

Training needs for all types of staff are identified and met by SPC which cooperates with the central LSMU personnel training system.

3.4.2. Comments

Although SPC monitors the description of the content of each subject taught in the Veterinary curriculum, there is a suboptimal identification of potential critical aspects of curriculum delivery such as those related to overlap and integration between related subjects.

3.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the study programme committee completes a more in-depth evaluation of the curriculum on a regular basis.

3.4.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Substandard 3.4 because of the suboptimal function of the study programme committee with regard to the detection of overlapping and redundant areas of the

curriculum and the fostering of horizontal and vertical integration between several curriculum subjects.

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

The recent curriculum of the 6-year course commencing in 2020 consists of EPT structured in the following manner:

- After the 4th semester - two weeks in Production Animals (preclinical), 3 ECTS
- After the 6th semester - two weeks in Companion animals/Nursing, 3 ECTS
- During 6th year (both 11th and 12th semester):
 - two weeks in VPH practice (which replaces Practice in Veterinary Laboratories, from the previous curriculum), 3 ECTS
 - two weeks in FSQ practice, 3 ECTS
 - 16.2 weeks in Clinical Practice, 24 ECTS

EPT is organised with the aim of acquiring a set of competences as described in the Procedures section.

Following their EPT, students submit information about their experience, such as a logbook and a report, to the platform Moodle.

3.5.2. Comments

The VEE has very positive and well-structured relationships with Stakeholders, who provide a variety of EPT opportunities for students such that they may achieve the aims set out in the curriculum.

3.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

Although the Visitation Team understands the difficulties in arranging EPT in a greater variety of species of food producing animals (especially swine and poultry, due to the current issue of African swine fever and of biosecurity protocols on poultry farms), the team members think it important that the VEE encourages students to seek experience with these species, wherever it is indeed possible.

3.5.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Substandard 3.5.

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

There must be a member of the academic staff responsible for the overall supervision of the EPT, including liaison with EPT providers.

3.6.1. Findings

A coordinator, who is a qualified veterinary surgeon and VEE employee appointed by FVM dean's decree, oversees the logistical organisation of EPT and subsequent communication with students, as well as overseeing feedback and evaluation of EPT.

Tripartite agreements (SER Annex 20) are in place between the VEE, EPT provider and student. To act as an EPT supervisor, a vet must have at least 3 years of experience and they may request a salary from the VEE. The supervisor assesses the student's post-EPT logbook and reports and provides feedback (SER Annex 21). EPT bases are visited by VEE staff for compliance and feedback purposes - each EPT discipline has a responsible staff member.

3.6.2. Comments

The VEE has in place stringent and clear rules and guidance regarding supervision of practical training. This may partially explain why the VEE has not received any complaints or negative feedback about EPT from students. It is clear that EPT meets the requirements defined in the SOP.

3.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.6.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.6.

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

3.7.1. Findings

Students are advised on how to fill in appropriate EPT documentation by the co-ordinator. Students may choose to do their EPT at one of the VEE's recommended practices, or at a practice of their own preference. All EPT providers, including those abroad, are subject to the same quality criteria.

Students are able to complain about an EPT anonymously and directly, however it is noted that none have been received in the last 4 years. Any such feedback would be discussed by relevant VEE staff (including a QA team) and suggestions for improvement would be made.

3.7.2. Comments

The logbook that students present after completing the EPT has a detailed structure and shows readiness of students after training received at the VEE. It also underlines the function of EPT in strengthening the entire training programme.

3.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.7.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.7.

Area 4. Facilities and equipment

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

4.1.1. Findings

The VEE is located in Kaunas, in the centre of Lithuania. The campus occupies an area of 5.95ha, close to the city centre and served by public transport.

The campus has all the infrastructures necessary for the training of veterinary students in the different disciplines: buildings for anatomy, pathology, microbiology, virology, departments of animal nutrition and animal breeding, small and large animal clinics, laboratories, library, simulation learning centre, isolation buildings, public health and food safety faculty.

The Institutes of Animal Husbandry Technology, and Biology Systems and Genetic Research, the Vivarium and the LSMU Biological research centre are also located on the campus.

The Centre of Practice and Experimentation has two farms located 8 km and 20 km from the VA student campus. The extramural practical sites/bases (partner farms and companies) are within an 8–120 km radius from the VEE.

On the VEE campus there is the state-of-the-art Sports Centre available for students, with basketball/handball/indoor soccer halls, an aerobics room, and indoor and outdoor fitness gyms for students and lecturers.

All buildings have internet access, Wi-Fi and sanitary facilities. In historical buildings, there is some equipment (individual elevators) allowing the adaptation to the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Strategic needs of the VEE for the buildings and the equipment are planned annually, following the LSMU's strategic development guidelines and are regulated at the level of the LSMU Council. A renovation of the infrastructure of the VEE Large and Small Animal VTHs was one of the strategic development priorities for LSMU in 2017–2021. The new Small Animal VTH and the buildings of the equine disease diagnostics and equine orthopaedics sections should be fully implemented in 2024–2026. Another ongoing strategic project is the modernisation of the Centre of Practice and Experimentation (PMBC practical training base).

All study and work premises and work environments comply with the LR Law on Occupational

Safety and Health and the Lithuanian Hygiene Norms. The inspection of the premises is performed according to the Methodological Guidelines for The Evaluation of Ergonomic Risk Factors.

4.1.2. Comments

The VEE is commended for the state of cleanliness and maintenance of all buildings.

The VEE is commended for the sports centre.

Historical buildings are difficult to adapt to the needs of persons with disabilities.

4.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

Suggestion is made to put more efforts in the adaptation of historical buildings to the needs of people with disabilities.

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

The VEE has all the necessary infrastructure for the VM studies with a sufficient number of auditoriums, seminars, computer rooms/classes, and laboratories of various sizes. Seven main auditoriums and seven smaller (up to 46 seats) auditoriums are used for the veterinary programme. All auditoriums and classrooms are equipped with modern audio-visual equipment and devices.

The Veterinary Medicine Simulation Centre is located in the central building and is open for students from 9 am to 5 pm on workdays. The four rooms are dedicated to Large Animals and Ultrasound, Internal Medicine and Surgery, Propaedeutics and Microscopy, and a room is for the completion of the OSCE tasks. QR codes allow the students to get access to video tutorials via smartphones or tablets.

The VM students use the LSMU Library and Information Centre (BIC) and the VA Library for self-study. The study Units make the schedules for students' additional self-study in the laboratories.

There is a café in Building No. 5. Dining rooms are available in the clinics and the research laboratories for the students.

Lockers, cabinets and toilets are available for students in all VEE units. In VTHs there are rooms for students on duty which are all equipped.

All lecturers and support staff have offices, with the necessary equipment and internet. The laboratories have appropriate equipment for the activities performed. Biosafety and biosecurity requirements in the laboratories are ensured according to the Biosecurity and Biosafety SOP.

4.2.2. Comments

Teaching spaces are adequate in number and well maintained. Offices, teaching preparation and

research laboratories are adequate.
The facilities for the skill lab are adequate.

4.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to continue the increase in the number of stations in the skill lab.

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 biocontainment**
- **be designed to enhance learning.**

4.3.1. Findings

Healthy animals are housed in the PMBC with 450 dairy cattle and in the LSMU Animal Science Institute farms with cattle, pigs and sheep. PMBC ensures good clinical practice, biosecurity and animal welfare requirements and provides suitable conditions for studies. The Giraitė farm of PMBC has a calving room, a space where sick animals are separated, and a treatment room. The Muniškiai farm has a space for sick animals.

The VM studies are also conducted on the external equine, small ruminant, pig, and cattle farms. The cooperation with these farms is confirmed by the signed contracts. All farms comply with the SFVS requirements for animal housing, animal welfare, good veterinary clinical practice, and responsible use of antimicrobial materials.

The laboratory animals for research are housed and bred in the LSMU VA Vivarium according to the SFVS Director's Order No. B1-866, 2012-10-31, the "Provision for the Approval of Requirements for Keeping, Care and Usage of Animals Used for Scientific and Educational Purposes." In the Vivarium, the different laboratory animal species are housed separately. The Vivarium premises are equipped with a recuperative ventilation system, air conditioning/ heating system. The use of animals for studies and research is regulated by the SFVS Director's Order No. B1-310, 2021-04-09, prepared following the European Commission Decision 2020/569/EU and the Directive 2010/63/EU. The Vivarium animals are used for studies in Physiology, Pharmacology, Ethology, and during the Animal Welfare practice.

The small animal clinic has 6 examination rooms and 3 operating rooms. The Small Animal VTH has six separate inpatient sections for dogs, cats, and exotic animals with a hospitalisation capacity of 69 inpatients at the same time including an isolation unit. The Intensive Therapy Section holds 13 cages. The Section of Exotic Animals has seven cages equipped with warming and bactericidal/germicidal lamps. The Cat Section has five cages of two different sizes. The Dog Section is equipped with eight large cages.

The Large Animal VTH comprises a Cattle Section equipped with four loose-type stalls and eight tie-type stalls. The Small Ruminant Section is equipped with two closed-type stalls, up to four animals can be housed at one time. The Horse Section is equipped with 14 stalls. All hospitalised

animals are provided with appropriate housing conditions, feeding and care, and animal welfare in compliance with biosecurity requirements.

At the pathology centre there are two autopsy halls with 5 autopsy tables, two microscopy laboratories, a refrigerator-room, a freezer-room (−10° C) and a −20° C freezer. Up to 20–25 students can work here simultaneously. The autopsy hall has all the equipment for ensuring biosecurity and biosafety measures. Students are provided with lockers, footwear, medical uniform and lab coats.

The Food Research and Food Technology Laboratories can seat 30 students. The laboratory works on the Hygiene and Technology of Meat, Milk, and Fish, and the Hygiene of Products of Plant Origin. The Sensory Laboratory is equipped following the requirements for testing laboratories specified in the international standard (ISO / IEC 17025:2017 general requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories).

Practical teaching in animal slaughterhouses take place in three slaughterhouses operating according to the international standards of QA for FSQ & VPH. In the slaughterhouse UAB Utenos mesa, on average, 203 cattle and 581 pigs are slaughtered per day. In UAB Krekenavos agrofirma, daily 100–200 cattle and 300-400 pigs are slaughtered. In the slaughterhouse UAB Samsonas, 150 pigs and 20 cattle are slaughtered per day and 20 horses – per month.

The company UAB Pieno tyrimai provides students with practical training on the routine milk quality assessment. The company is accredited for quality management systems according to the LST EN ISO / IEC 17025 standard.

Practical teaching process on the sale sites: during the subject course of Hygiene of Products of Plant Origin, each student visits 3 Kaunas city supermarkets and farmers markets.

4.3.2. Comments

Livestock facilities, animal housing and core clinical teaching facilities are sufficient in capacity and adapted for the number of students, well maintained and promote best husbandry, welfare and management practices.

In one visited farm, there was no system for boot disinfection.

4.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to provide all the teaching farms with a boot disinfection system.

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 to companion animals and horses all year-round (24/7). Emergencies are run by veterinarians and nurses from VTH, with 4th and 5th-study year students. Any intervention carried out by the students is overseen by the hospital's professionals and teachers.

Emergency care for production animals is provided on-call.

In the Small Animal VTH, there are sections for dermatology, cardiology, ophthalmology, dialysis, vaccinations, rehabilitation and exotic animals. There is an examination-consultation room where only patients with suspected infectious diseases are admitted.

The Large Animal VTH comprises a reception, staff rooms/offices, and laboratories for Diagnostics. The VTH has a riding hall, a surgery room for horses, cattle, and small ruminants. The Section of Cattle, Small Ruminants, and Camelids has two treatment rooms.

Both VEE VTHs are in the list of State Veterinary Control Entities published on the State Food and Veterinary Services (SFVS) website and fill in the mandatory registers of Registered Animals, Veterinary Medicines Accounting, and Biocidal Products Accounting. The VEE Veterinary Pharmacy has the licence for operating; SFVS controls its activities. The LR Radiation Protection Centre performs the annual inspection of ionising devices and refillable logs. All VTHs' veterinarians hold a veterinary practice licence.

Clinical cases are used for teaching during clinical rotations and supervised self-training, rounds and journal clubs. During the clinical rotations students are supervised by academic staff. These staff have been trained for clinical teaching and assessment.

4.4.2. Comments

Emergency services are implemented in small and large animal clinics and students are involved in it under the supervision of veterinarians and nurses. There is an on-call service for ruminants.

In the Small Animal clinic, there is no separate room nor any separation for cats and dogs in the waiting room.

In the small animal clinic, the "Infectious room" path crosses the path for other non-infectious rooms.

4.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to:

-) improve the waiting room for dogs and cats with a separation;
-) change the location for the temporary "infectious room" so that the path does not cross the path of non-infectious animals.

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

In the Small Animal VTH, rooms are well furnished. A veterinary pharmacy, a clinic laboratory and an MRI Section are also available and fully equipped.

The large animal clinic has one examination room for horses and one surgery room. The VTH has the standard equipment for routine diagnostic procedures, including X-ray, ultrasonography, and endoscopy.

During clinical rotations, the students have full access to the clinics, departments, institutes, laboratories, and the Pathology Centre.

The Animal Information System enables the students to use patients' anamnesis, diagnostic and laboratory test data, and images via internet for Large animal VTH patients, and for Small animal VTH patients from local network in the hospital.

4.5.2. Comments

Commendation for the Neurology sector.

The use of pharmacies and medicines is done according to the state of the art.

The surgery table in the large animal clinic is an old version.

The equipment and facilities for X-ray in large animals are not optimal for a VTH.

4.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to improve:

-) the facilities and equipment in the equine part of the large animal clinic (i.e. intensive care unit, winch and harness in the hospital, up-to-date surgery table for large animals, ultrasonography for abdominal and cardiac examination, ...).

-) the X-ray facilities and equipment in the large animal clinic.

4.5.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.5 because of suboptimal X-ray facilities and equipment for the equine species.

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

The VEE has isolation facilities for small and large animals. The isolation facilities in the VTH comprise five rooms for small animals with 31 cages and two separate stalls for large animals. One of the isolation stalls is equipped with a winch to lift a lying animal. These facilities are operated and managed under strict biosecurity guidelines and protocols. The isolation treatment rooms have the tools and medicines necessary for veterinary care and protective equipment.

4.6.2. Comments

The VEE must be commended for its isolation facilities for both small and large animals.

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 Large Animal VTH provides herd management services on a contract basis and a call basis. The students are involved in this practical activity. Herd Health Management is taught during the 7th and 8th semesters and is integrated into the study subjects of Internal Medicine and Preventive Veterinary Medicine. The practical training for herd management is done on 5–6 different Lithuanian farms, housing from 200 to 3000 dairy cows. Groups of 5–6 students travel to the farms with a lecturer. There they analyse cattle herd housing/keeping, feeding, disease diagnoses at the herd level.

I13, I15 are above median value. I16 (visits of poultry and farmed rabbit units) is just above the minimum value.

4.7.2. Comments

The VEE has well-equipped vehicles and contracts with enough farms of different species to allow students to practise veterinary medicine and Herd health Management under academic supervision.

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

At the direct disposition of the VEE, for clinical and study activities there are 4 minibuses, one bus and five cars available for ambulatory practice. The vehicles are equipped according to the visits programmed during the day. During mobile clinic visits, surgeries such as castration, caesarean section, abomasum dislocation, dentistry procedures, and wound treatment are performed.

The Large Animal VTH also has two trailers: one for the transportation of horses and another for cattle.

The carcasses from the VTHs to the Pathology Centre are transported using hand carts, trailers, plastic boxes, and bags of various capacities. Animal carcasses intended for study from the outside clinics and farms and carcasses and organs from slaughterhouses are delivered by suppliers

following the veterinary legislation in force in Lithuania.

4.8.2. Comments

The number of vehicles and their equipment allows the transport of students and animals, ensures the safety of students and is compliant with biosecurity rules.

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

The requirements for biosecurity and biosafety followed at the VEE are described in the Biosecurity and Biosafety SOP. The Committee sets the main requirements at the VEE level and collaborates with each VEE unit. There are 11 members of the Committee, including two student representatives and two representatives of administrative units. Every VEE unit has a person responsible for the coordination of the requirements in the unit. The Committee regularly organises biosecurity seminars and training compulsory for the VEE staff.

The Committee for Biosecurity and Biosafety conducts audits in the units once per year. The Committee submits the audit conclusions to the VEE Dean, who takes into consideration the conclusions and plans a relevant budget for procurement of tools. When there is an urgent need for an investment in biosecurity and biosafety, the necessary funding can be allocated from the VEE reserve funds. The LSMU SHSD is responsible for the safety of the personnel, students, and visitors/guests. This Service manages annual plans for the staff's health examination.

The students are introduced to the principles of Biosecurity and Biosafety SOPs in the first months of their studies in Introduction to the Studies of VM. Next, they are instructed on biosecurity measures when they do laboratory work and carry out research activities and sign the letters of consent. There is a mandatory dress code for students' workwear and free laundry service is provided at VEE campus. Shoe disinfection equipment is installed in both VTHs and the Pathology Centre for drying and disinfecting the work footwear.

The students sign the letters of conversance on the possibilities to get vaccines (stored in the Dean's office) against rabies and tetanus. During the rotations and laboratory work, the students get acquainted with the laboratories' work procedures and work organisation.

The VEE VTHs have implemented a Smiley count programme for rating customer satisfaction with the Clinics' services. The Study Centre, in cooperation with SPC, conducts student surveys to get feedback. Also, public lectures to school students are given regularly.

4.9.2. Comments

A Biosafety manual is available, and procedures are taught and posted for students, staff and visitors. The Committee for Biosecurity and Biosafety conducts audits in the units once per year. The VEE has 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.

Some teaching documents available for students for practical teaching were not available in English.

4.9.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to have all teaching documents and learning materials available in English.

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

The VEE procures animals, cadavers and materials of animal origin according to the cohort size. Material of animal origin (including cadavers) are obtained from abattoirs, the teaching hospital, the LSMU biological research centre, private clinics and farms. This is kept in refrigerators or freezers prior to use and after use until disposal. The disposal adheres to Lithuanian biosecurity law.

Owners of animals admitted to the teaching hospitals are required to sign a consent form accepting student involvement in the animal's care. Farmers who bring animals to the hospital sign a consent form permitting their animals to undergo necropsies in the case of the animal's death. A variety of teaching materials (from live healthy laboratory animals to veterinary simulation models, to carcasses) are used for teaching purposes. Detailed data is recorded annually regarding the number of each live animal by species seen at the teaching hospitals/clinics and the numbers of each cadaver/organ type acquired by the VEE for teaching purposes.

To ensure all students in all disciplines meet relevant core training outcomes, students must register their competences and cases seen in a rotation logbook. Collaboration with external farms as well as the VEE's teaching hospitals ensures student participation in both first opinion and referral; and acute and chronic cases.

Procedures involving live animals comply with EU and Lithuania-specific animal welfare legislation, including licensing for the breeding and study of laboratory animals. Any VEE member intending to conduct research on laboratory animals is required to undergo mandatory training and must receive an ethical study approval number, as well as implementing the 3Rs.

FINAL REPORT AS ISSUED BY ECOVE ON 8 JUNE 2022

A self-adjustment process is in place to evaluate annual reports regarding the sufficiency of animal resources and to implement appropriate improvement measures.

The number and diversity of cadavers and material of animal origin used in anatomy, necropsy, and FSQ in 2020-21 are as follows:

Anatomy: They use animals from all species: Cattle (1), Pigs (4), Small ruminants (11), Companion animals (11), Equine (4), Poultry (11) and organs from different species.

Necropsy: Cadavers are used from all species: Cattle (27), Small ruminants (32), Pigs (59), Companion animals (213), Equine (16), Poultry and Rabbits (379), Exotic pets (10), aquatic animals (12) and 370 macerated and fresh organs with gross lesions.

FSQ: students perform two supervised visits to a pig, poultry or cattle slaughterhouse and an additional training of 1 week in another, preselected slaughterhouse. Students observe the slaughter process of at least 100 pigs, 50 cattle, and/or 20 horses. In addition, the VE students perform one visit to learn about premises for production, processing, distribution or consumption of food animal origin.

The students use healthy live animals of all species for pre-clinical training except for pigs, due to epizootic African swine fever; all pig farms were closed for all visitors from 2015 until autumn of 2021. These restrictions have now been lifted. In 2020-21 they used: 296 cattle, 110 small ruminants, 61 companion animals, 37 equines, 102 poultry, 22 rabbits, 25 exotic pets, 15 alpacas, 10 aquatic animals and 10 lab animals.

Students visited herds/flocks/units of 364 cattle farms, 109 small ruminant flocks, 349 equine units, 1 for poultry and rabbits, 14 aquatic animals and 1 for exotic pets. No pig farms were visited due to ASF restrictions.

Clinical cases: The number of animals seen intramurally in 2020-21 is: 85 Cattle, 82 small ruminants, 10420 companion animals, 221 equines, 147 poultry and rabbits, 385 exotic pets and 5 from other species. They have a large animal clinic where they receive horses, cattle, small ruminants and camelids. The LSMU has their own means of transport that is not charged to the farmer. Most of the clinical activity in food producing animals is performed on the farms, but they bring animals to the clinic for teaching purposes. The number of patients seen extramurally in 2020-21 is: 5212 cattle, 1560 small ruminants, 52 companion animals, 709 equines, 10 poultry and rabbits and 6 exotic pets and 20 wild animals. No pigs are examined/treated intra or extramurally in the last years due to ASF restrictions. The percentage of first opinion cases is variable among species: 14% in cattle, 20% in small ruminants, 58% in companion animals, 34% in equine and 56% in rabbits and poultry.

5.1.2. Comments

The number and diversity of cadavers and material of animal origin is appropriate according to the cohort size. Students must register their competences and cases seen in a rotation logbook in order to ensure the acquisition of Day One Competences. Collaboration with external farms and the VEE's teaching hospitals ensures student participation in both first opinion and referral; and acute and chronic cases. Procedures involving live animals comply with EU and Lithuania-specific animal welfare legislation.

5.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to systematically implement a record of the individual animals used for practical activities, for example rectal palpation, in order to avoid the repeated use of the same animal by too many students and thus ensure correct welfare measures.

A strategic plan should be implemented in order to increase the indicators of healthy and diseased animals, cadavers, and material of animal origin for student learning, especially the number of large animal necropsies.

A collaboration between meat hygiene and pathology for the development of learning material concerning post-mortem inspection, such as pictures or demonstration of organ lesions, especially for rare diseases, is suggested.

5.1.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 5.1 because of a non-systematic recording of the use of teaching animals during practical training.

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

5.2.1. Findings

The VEE has agreements with multiple farms where students develop skills in veterinary hygiene, animal welfare, production and breeding. Clinical experience on these farms allows learning in the areas of internal disease, surgery and reproduction. In the PMBC, the LSMU's research and experimentation centre, there is a cattle farm with 450 dairy cattle where students undergo dairy cattle herd health training including on the topics of housing, milking, feeding, hygiene and milking technology. In the Baisogala centre, the VEE keeps local breeds of pig, sheep, goats, cattle, birds and horses; and students acquire knowledge on animal nutrition, organic animal husbandry, welfare research technologies, and perform embryo transplantation. In addition, the LSMU has agreements with 5 dairy cattle farms, housing a total of 7000 cattle. These are high production farms with modern facilities and devices for collection of medical information. Students analyse data collected on farms (e.g. from milking robots and noseband sensors) to understand activity levels and identify oestrus. At the farms, the students gain practical knowledge of different herd management systems and acquire and develop practical skills in using the data obtained. They have a local sheep farm where the students learn practical skills in sheep breeding, husbandry, feeding, reproduction, treatment, etc.

The VEE works alongside 3 abattoirs to provide food hygiene teaching and where the students acquire many specific competences in reproduction diseases: performing rectal palpations of uterus and ovaries, diagnosing the diseases of reproductive organs of female and male cattle and pigs. Healthy and pathological organs are compared in situ using rectal palpation and ultrasound examination.

Since 2021, the LSMU has renewed its contracts with several full-cycle pig farms providing students with both husbandry and clinical experience in a variety of species areas and biosecurity measures.

5.2.2. Comments

The VEE has multiple agreements with cattle and sheep farms and horse studs where the students perform pre-clinical and clinical training. In addition, the LSMU owns the PMBC, the LSMU's research and experimentation centre, where they have a cattle farm with 450 dairy cattle where students undergo dairy cattle herd health training. The VEE works alongside 3 abattoirs to provide food hygiene teaching for the students and to acquire specific competences in reproduction diseases using the reproductive organs.

5.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

5.2.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 5.2.

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

5.3.1. Findings

In the 3rd and 4th semester, students acquire fundamental nursing skills during compulsory preclinical practice with production animals, under the supervision of an experienced veterinarian in veterinary hygiene and animal welfare. These skills include recognition of deviation in normal behaviour as a potential sign of disease or poor welfare. Students also learn how animals' feeding requirements vary depending upon their stage of production/reproduction. This includes assessment of housing conditions and implementation of changes for improvement.

General veterinary nursing skills are acquired in the 5th–6th semesters by studying propaedeutics and in their 6th semester, students undergo nursing-specific training at external small animal clinics and must subsequently demonstrate their skills in OSCE assessments at the VEE.

For clinical training, the standard group size is 10-12 students. However, this is reduced to 5-6 students per patient. Concerning the ambulatory clinic, there are 2-4 students per vehicle. External practical studies (EPT) are completed individually. The maximum ratio of students to lecture staff for clinical training is 6:1, but most commonly is 1-2:1.

Students preliminarily learn practical skills such as SC/IM/IV injection, IV catheter placement etc., at the veterinary medicine simulation centre; they later put these skills into practice at the teaching hospitals. Students additionally participate in client communication, history-taking and clinical note reporting, clinical examination and the making of plans for patients. Imaging, emergency and infectious case management, laboratory procedures, administration of anaesthetic agents, suturing techniques, soft tissue surgery, orthopaedic procedures, and rectal examinations are also covered during students' rotations at teaching hospitals and during external practical training. Undergraduates are responsible for providing nursing care for hospitalised patients and observing their treatment and clinical progress.

The LSMU designates 30% of studies for (predominantly supervised) self-learning. Students discuss and read up on cases and develop critical thinking skills from early on in the course. They prepare presentations on assigned topic areas, such as making a management plan for specific cases seen at the teaching hospital. Students learn about professional ethics prior to the commencement

of clinical studies. E-learning tools such as Moodle, Teams, Kahoot etc. are utilised to support all of these learning outcomes.

5.3.2. Comments

The undergraduates gain preliminary nursing care skills in the 3rd and 4th semester at the veterinary medicine simulation centre. Later, they develop sufficient nursing care skills and instruction in nursing procedures during the 5th and 6th semesters, in the subject of propaedeutics and Practice of Companion Animal Nursing (6th semester).

The number of students per group in the practical training and ambulatory clinic is appropriate.

5.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

5.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 5.3.

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

5.4.1. Findings

Radiographic images are stored on a Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS). The teaching hospital uses GYKIS and JAKOVO electronic patient record systems. The large and small animal VTHs use two different computer systems. The students have access to the large animal system upon request and they receive personal access for their master's thesis if required. They can access the large animal computer system from anywhere. Students have no access to the personal data of owners. In the case of the companion animal system, the students can only access the data while in the clinic.

Information regarding clinical history, presenting signs, diagnosis, prescribed treatment, procedures performed etc. can be accessed by students on campus at all times for learning purposes. Students can also view and analyse radiographic images. In addition to this, virtual cases are available for students to access on OneDrive.

Surgery is video-recorded live and transmitted to study rooms to enable in-depth analysis of the process by students under staff guidance.

A new online animal registration and information system is in progress (installation expected in Spring 2022) to allow students to register their involvement with specific clinical cases. This will allow improved access to data for studies/teaching/research, as well as better calculations of clinical caseload.

5.4.2. Comments

The VEE has a different electronic patient record system for large and companion animals. The students can consult and follow the clinical cases from anywhere in the case of large animals and in the clinic for companion animals.

5.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

5.4.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 5.4.

Area 6. Learning resources

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

6.1.1. Findings

Students and staff of the VEE have constant access to library and IT systems from both work and personal computers, via free Wi-Fi on campus and in LSMU accommodation. All academic employees and students have access to an MS Office 365 account. All LSMU online systems (e.g. Office 265, Moodle, the ‘Study information system’) are available in both English and Lithuanian. They are accompanied by instructive videos and text regarding their use. Students experiencing difficulties with any of these systems are able to report faults and receive online help.

First-year students have an induction to all relevant learning platforms. Students can contact the Academic Information Department to address administrative difficulties via telephone or email. There is also a library induction for first-year students, in which students are taught how to search PubMed and Medline, and how to use RefWorks for references. This information remains available to students on the LSMU library website. There is also an Innovative Education department (InoEdu), a unit of LSMU Study Centre, which plans, develops and implements e-studies and e-administration of study process. They are responsible for improving the educational competences of all lecturers at VEE- beginners and experienced as well.

Technical equipment and IT software is organised and allocated centrally; the ‘ITC director’ co-ordinates the acquisition of learning resources (e.g. e-learning platforms). IT resources are updated throughout the year. The BIC director co-ordinates purchasing of learning resources (e.g. databases) and library information systems. Recent relevant scientific publications, latest book editions and periodicals are routinely procured. The Lithuanian government provides financial support to academic libraries to provide textbooks, e-databases etc.

A list of required learning resources is drawn up annually by lecturers and according to students’ feedback, as well as recommendations by the quality assurance and study programme committees. This list is approved centrally. Students are made aware of newly acquired databases and printed materials via emails from the library director.

6.1.2. Comments

All of the learning resources meet the high standards necessary to support veterinary education, research and continuous education.

6.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

6.1.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 6.1.

Standard 6.2: Staff and students must have full access on site to an academic library administered by a qualified librarian, an Information Technology (IT) unit managed by an IT expert, an e-learning platform, and all the relevant human and physical resources necessary for the development of instructional materials by the staff and their use by the students.

The relevant electronic information, database and other intranet resources must be easily available for students and staff both in the VEE's core facilities via wireless connection (Wi-Fi) and from outside the VEE through a hosted secured connection, e.g. Virtual Private Network (VPN).

6.2.1. Findings

The LSMU's general library (LSMU BIC) in central Kaunas is open 24/7; the veterinary-specific library (VA Library) is open 8am-8pm weekdays and 10am-6pm on Saturdays. All staff at both libraries are appropriately qualified for their positions.

The Lithuanian government and LSMU itself both fund library acquisition of learning resources. Veterinary students represent a quarter of LSMU students therefore a corresponding portion of the LSMU's library budget is allocated for VEE-specific resources.

The veterinary-specific library is on the VEE campus, with 138 workplaces with sockets for plugging in laptops. There are 24 computers on-site at the library. Students can use printers, scanners, wired and wireless internet connections. Additional equipment is provided for students with special needs; and the building is accessible for those with disabilities.

There are rooms for group study and workshops at this library and the central LSMU library.

The library service platform is cloud-based and enables searching of print, electronic and digital resources held both locally and externally. This can be used for loaning learning resources as well as requesting the acquisition of specific texts etc. Students can also access reading lists for each module. The platform is available on LSMU computers and remotely.

Theses and dissertations are submitted via a central information system and are checked via *Oxsico* plagiarism detection.

Students have access to computers with SPSS and Physiology Simulators installed. Two qualified members of IT staff are responsible for VEE campus IT specifically.

The VPN and Eduroam services are provided at the entire LSMU, including VEE and the remote access is possible using Remote Access DB Service.

Alongside the Moodle platform and Microsoft Teams, the LSMU has its own 'Study Information

System'. This contains study materials and feedback for students. Members of the VEE receive training in all relevant computer programmes and instructions are permanently available in text and video form online.

6.2.2. Comments

The students and academic staff have personalised access to the academic library both on the library computers and remotely from their personal computers. There are printers and copy machines available for the students at the library.

6.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None

6.2.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 6.2.

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

6.3.1. Findings

The veterinary library provides over 11,000 books and 25,000 printed documents. Students can read these on-site or reserve them for borrowing. The VEE has subscriptions to *VetStream* and two *CABI* database collections, as well as 63 other databases. 70 licences are also held for 3D software modelling the anatomy of a variety of species. Users can view specific tissues and organs on this software, which can be accessed from the library, anatomy department and teaching hospitals. Physical 3D anatomy models can also be found in the library.

Students in the teaching hospital use tablet computers. There is an e-stethoscope enabling students to play back recordings with a corresponding database of cases. Laboratory work is complemented by interactive whiteboards to demonstrate anatomy and histology. Physiology simulators are also available.

Anatomical autopsies, and surgeries in the teaching hospital are recorded and uploaded to Moodle for students to watch on demand.

A veterinary medicine simulation centre (VMSC) is open weekdays 9am-5pm for students to undertake self-learning under staff supervision. A total of 46 stations spans the areas of ultrasound, 'large animals', internal medicine and surgery, microscopy and OSCE preparation. Student access is monitored via a registration form - slots are booked for 1hr per station (1.5hrs for OSCEs). Manuals for each station are provided in both English and Lithuanian. They contain QR codes linking to additional video tutorials, as well as a self-assessment for students to evaluate their skills before and after visiting the station. Lecturers can book out the rooms or individual models for teaching classes.

A list of required learning resources is drawn up annually by lecturers and according to students' feedback, as well as recommendations by the quality assurance and study programme committees.

6.3.2. Comments

During the quarantine period from March to June 2020, both LSMU BIC and the VA Library were closed and did not provide all services. However, they continued to work remotely and communicated with students via phone and email. Other measures were also implemented, such as online borrowing and the option to do self-checkout; late fees for delayed book returns were also waived. To adequately prepare staff and students for increased online working, the InoEdu hosted an intensive two-week training course on the subject of Moodle and MS Teams. In spring 2021 InoEdu developed a procedure for self-evaluation and evaluation of distance learning.

VMSC provides an extensive variety of skills training options developed in cooperation with clinicians to meet clinical training needs.

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 advertisings for prospective national and international students.

Formal cooperations with other VEEs must also be clearly advertised.

7.1.1. Findings

Information regarding admissions procedures, tuition fees, calendars, inter-institutional collaboration, quality assurance, study results and content of veterinary programmes can be found in both English and Lithuanian on the VEE website as well as at the career centre and Dean's office. There are also frequent faculty visits to the schools, open days for prospective students, and projects to publicise the programme e.g. Study Fairs/Career Days. Student success stories are posted on Facebook and Instagram. The course is advertised to international prospective students via search agencies, the 'study in Lithuania' website and on social media, and also at the international study centre and within the veterinary faculty during international student-specific open days.

Students and their parents can sign up to be ambassadors to present information about the course, admissions etc to prospective students and their families.

7.1.2. Comments

The VEE clearly communicates all relevant information regarding all phases of the student life cycle.

7.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

7.1.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.1.

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

7.2.1. Findings

156 new students were admitted to the VEE in 2020-21 with an increase of 10 units as compared to the previous Academic Year. In 2021, 91% of Lithuanian students (and all foreign students) graduated in their target graduation year or earlier. A further 6.5% graduated requiring one additional year; fewer than 1% required an additional 3 years. As of 2021 the VEE has 30 residents and 28 PhD candidates.

The Dean proposes a number of students to be admitted that year and submits this to the LSMU Council for approval. More information regarding student/staff ratio, and the records of materials of animal origin supplied, is found in Area 9 and Standard 5.1 respectively.

In 2020-21, an additional 36% of state-funded places (compared to previous years) were made available due to a shortage of vets in Lithuania. No further increase is planned; the intention is to admit 120 Lithuanian-speaking and 30 English-speaking VM students per year for the next 3 years.

7.2.2. Comments

Apart from what is reported under standard 9.3, the number of students admitted is consistent with the available resources.

7.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

7.2.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.2.

Standard 7.3: The selection and progression criteria must be clearly defined, consistent, and defensible, be free of discrimination or bias, and take into account the fact that students are admitted with a view to their entry to the veterinary profession in due course.

The VEE must regularly review and reflect on the selection processes to ensure they are appropriate for students to complete the programme successfully. If the selection processes are decided by another authority, the latter must regularly receive feedback from the VEE.

Adequate training (including periodic refresher training) must be provided for those involved in the selection process to ensure applicants are evaluated fairly and consistently.

7.3.1. Findings

The admissions criteria is based upon Lithuanian Higher Education law, the 'LR MESS', and LSMU rules of admission. Admission is via a centralised Lithuanian admissions website (LAMA-BPO). Anyone with documented secondary education (or equivalent) may apply. The main criteria is competitive scoring determined by the applicant's grades in biology, Lithuanian language and literature, chemistry or mathematics, and another optional subject. Additional points are gained by applicants who have won international/national Olympiads/competitions, or for those who have undergone military training or service. The applicants with the highest scores are invited to study. Lithuanian national and international students are assessed under the same criteria. The lowest-scoring student admitted to the VEE in 2020 had 6.90 points, up from 6.03 and 4.58 in 2019 and 2018 respectively. The minimum competitive score for application is 6.0 points.

There is an application fee of 150 euros.

Applicants are not required to declare their health status; anyone may apply regardless of health or disability. Applicants submitting documentation proving their disability are exempt from admission fees and may apply for financial support on the LSMU website. Applicants with health problems likely to affect examination should inform the VEE during the admissions process. Those who go on to be admitted to the VEE are entitled to extended examination times or other provisions.

The admissions board is composed of important VEE academics and a student representative. The board members attend training provided by a Lithuanian admission governing body 6-8 times per year. A separate international student admissions board conducts selection of international students. The members of this board are qualified and experienced in assessing qualifications gained in a variety of countries.

Unsuccessful applicants (national or international) are entitled to appeal their verdict. The appeals commission comprises 3 VEE faculty members and a lawyer. No appeals in the last 4 years have been successful.

Admission results are discussed annually and the criteria (e.g. the required score for admission) are adjusted as necessary.

Once general admission is complete, additional LSMU admission for full-fee students is undertaken. This consists of a motivational interview as well as the standard scoring admissions process undergone by all applicants. These interviews are conducted by the Motivation Commission formed by an order of the Rector, chaired by the Dean of VEE, and are assessed based upon the description of the standardised motivation interview evaluation procedure. An average of 0-5 students are admitted per year by these means.

International students must prove their ability to communicate in English, as well as the other scored components of the interview.

The VEE observes principles of non-discrimination on the grounds of

gender/race/language/religion/national or social origin/any non-academic reason.

7.3.2. Comments

The VEE acknowledge in their own ‘suggestions for improvement’ that they hope to include a motivational interview for all entrants in future.

7.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

7.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.3.

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

7.4.1. Findings

The LSMU has procedures in place for supporting students with special learning needs, such as allowing submission of tasks in alternative ways, or various compensatory techniques for exams (e.g. extension of the assessment period).

The LSMU has a Commission specifically for students with disabilities; they consult with students to ascertain their learning needs and also manage financial aid.

The LSMU participated in a Lithuania-wide EU project named ‘Increasing the Availability of Studies’; this included purchasing some equipment, and training staff in its use.

In terms of physical accessibility, lifts, ramps and elevators are provided. There are facilities enabling emergency services to be called if necessary. Personally adapted dormitories are offered to students with disabilities.

Auxiliary equipment is provided in the veterinary library for students with special needs, and the building is fully accessible. Each year equipment is acquired to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Lithuanian students with disabilities may receive benefits and partial reimbursement of study expenses and are entitled to the necessary study equipment as well as a social scholarship.

7.4.2. Comments

The VEE have detailed how students with disabilities or illness on the VM programme are supported so that they can meet the ESEVT D1Cs.

7.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

7.4.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.4.

Standard 7.5: The basis for decisions on progression (including academic progression and professional fitness to practise) must be explicit and readily available to the students. The VEE must provide evidence that it has mechanisms in place to identify and provide remediation and appropriate support (including termination) for students who are not performing adequately.

The VEE must have mechanisms in place to monitor attrition and progression and be able to respond and amend admission selection criteria (if permitted by national or university law) and student support if required.

7.5.1. Findings

The VEE monitors numbers of students passing, failing and leaving studies; academic debt; and the distribution curve of exam results. These are compared with the previous 3 years and progress is evaluated alongside implementation of measures to eliminate any identified issues. Lecturers in modules where students perform exceptionally highly or poorly on average discuss these outcomes with the VEE and are required to review the assessment strategy. Students requiring additional help are identified and supported.

There are 3 levels of study achievement: excellent, typical and threshold. ‘Threshold’ is reached by a student completing all required assessments and tasks but below the typical level of achievement.

If a student fails a subject exam, they must repeat the subject course. Throughout the course, students may take one period of academic leave for personal reasons, and two for other reasons (illness, childbirth, childcare).

For students performing inadequately, extra classes and consultations in each study subject are available. Students may attend teaching again, listen to audio lectures, retake interim assessments and sit previously failed exams twice.

Students have a mentor who advises them on academic matters. The Dean presents information on studies, assessment and support to all students. The LSMU publishes assessment schedules at least a month prior to the start of the semester and examination session. The information is also available at any time on Moodle and the LSMU website.

96% of state-funded students complete their studies on time, whereas this is only the case for 51% of non-state-funded students. Since the minimum application score for admission was increased, the proportion of students discontinuing their studies entirely has halved from 7.1% to 3.6%. For international students specifically this figure is 6.7%. Often students do not disclose a reason for discontinuing, but the most commonly declared reasons are tuition fee difficulties and the challenging nature of study. Financial support has been offered to counteract this, as well as the option to retake subject courses and examinations.

The admissions criteria are based on competitive scoring (see 7.3 for more detail).

The VEE has in place procedures for detecting causes of attrition and to implement mechanisms to reduce them.

7.5.2. Comments

All processes regarding student progression, remediation, support and termination to non-well performing students are clear and readily available for all students.

7.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

7.5.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.5.

Standard 7.6: Mechanisms for the exclusion of students from the programme for any reason must be explicit.

The VEE's policies for managing appeals against decisions, including admissions, academic and progression decisions and exclusion, must be transparent and publicly available.

7.6.1. Findings

The LSMU determines mechanisms for student expulsion. This information is publicly available. The grounds may be violation of LSMU policy or ethical principles (e.g. plagiarism), or failure to pass exams after a final attempt. At this point, students may continue studies after a year has passed, but are no longer funded by the state. Reports of dishonest academic behaviour are examined by a commission containing students, lectures and representatives of the administration. Students have the right to appeal their expulsion.

The LSMU defines its own policy on the management of appeals against expulsion. An appeal may be launched within 10 days of the decision. A vote is taken by the appeals commission/commission of dispute settlement of the LSMU within 15 days of the appeal being made. The final decision lies with the Rector and is formalised in an Order.

7.6.2. Comments

Mechanisms for exclusion and appealing are transparent and publicly available.

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

Students are registered annually at the LSMU. There is an introductory week for first-year students and they have access to an e-guide on the admissions website. Trained senior student volunteers are assigned to new students (both national and international). First-year students may attend camps to help with social and academic integration. Students also are assigned a mentor. Enrolled students have a LSMU email account and can access the LSMU website for study information and materials. Administrative information is provided by the Student Information Department. There is an international department assisting with Erasmus applications and services for foreign language students.

There are grants and loans available from the state for eligible students. There are other grounds for reduced tuition fees, such as parenting or being an orphan. A member of LSMU staff is appointed for managing student support and the requirements of students with special needs.

Incentive scholarships are for students achieving the best study results; social scholarships are given in the event of childbirth or a natural disaster.

Students have access to LSMU accommodation near to the VEE. They can apply to transfer away from a group of students or a specific lecturer. Transport and PPE including footwear is provided for clinical teaching.

The LSMU careers centre provides employment guidance and counselling. They promote internships and job adverts; they also advise on CV-writing (amongst other documentation), and monitor careers of alumni.

Free professional psychological assistance is available in both English and Lithuanian for all students. Students are also signposted to a Lithuanian suicide help programme in case of concern for themselves or friends.

Accident insurance is provided for students; they also have the right to free healthcare. Personal health insurance is mandatory for international students; and the international office monitors health insurance status and registration to ensure this is sustained. Students sign to confirm they are aware they can be vaccinated against rabies and tetanus if they choose to be; they are reminded of this opportunity twice annually.

There is a students' union advocating for the needs of students; it is supported by the LSMU. The VEE financially supports its IVSA and VASA chapters. The VEE has a sports complex and gym. The LSMU hosts several arts groups - choir, dance, bands etc. Engagement with student activities is encouraged.

Where students have grievances, they are to contact the SU, the Dean or the administrative office. There are procedures in place at the LSMU for the resolution of disputes. More serious ethical violations are investigated by a separate commission. If the issue is not resolved at the level of the LSMU, the government body is consulted.

Students of the international curriculum report the need for an increase in social activities designed to help integration with Lithuanian students.

7.7.2. Comments

The VEE supports the physical, emotional and welfare needs of students by several means. The easily accessible psychological counselling service for students experiencing difficulties is noteworthy.

7.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

The VEE should seek to improve the integration in social activities between international and Lithuanian vet students.

7.7.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.7.

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

7.8.1. Findings

Students are introduced early on to their rights within the LSMU. Student representatives are a part of governance, working commissions, working groups, conflict resolution and all decision-making. This assists students in understanding how the LSMU functions. Each semester, students meet with the Dean and lecturers to informally discuss issues and make suggestions. Students are made aware that they may complain anonymously or discuss issues with staff, via various sources. Feedback on course content and individual lecturers is anonymously submitted online and evaluated by the Dean and study programme committee. From this, recommendations are given for improvement.

7.8.2. Comments

Students can convey their needs, wants and suggestions for improvement to the VEE via several mechanisms. The rapid implementation of solutions to problems identified from student feedback is noteworthy.

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

The student assessment strategy is competences-based and carried out using both midterm tests and examinations in all subjects. An initial assessment of a student's knowledge and skills is sometimes carried out. Marks acquired through continuous assessment make up at least 50% of the final marks for the subject. Although formative assessment is used, most assessments are summative. Resit examinations are scheduled for the last week of August.

The PDCA (Plan Do, Check, Adjust) cycle loop is used to ensure quality assurance.

The VEE moved to online exams due to the COVID-19 pandemic – see Addendum for details. The amount of time allowed to each student to complete each exam was restricted and the order of questions was randomised. In addition, it was not possible for students to go back to questions already attempted. The students' computer cameras had to be turned on during the examinations. Monitoring of academic integrity was assigned to individual staff members. The OSCE and thesis defence were carried out online in 2021. Online examination results were lower than for examinations carried out in the usual way.

8.1.2. Comments

The implementation of OSCEs for assessment of skills acquisition is to be commended.

8.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

The function and activities of the Study Programme Committee (SPC) with regard to assessment need to be strengthened. The SPC must drive the VEE's assessment strategy to ensure there is timely and effective evaluation of each student's progressive acquisition of Day One Competences at each and every stage of the curriculum. Each assessment must be designed as part of a continuum that drives student learning.

A more formal framework needs to be developed and implemented for the assessment of soft skills in all relevant subject areas. Feedback is essential for the improvement of soft skills and the feedback loop needs to be completed through clear, timely and concise feedback to students. A more structured and standardised assessment methodology applied at all levels of the curriculum will permit such feedback and drive appropriate behaviour and learning.

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 pass mark is 50%. Attendance at practical classes is compulsory. Failure to attend 25% or more of these classes will result in a student having to repeat the subject. If a final subject exam is failed, the student is allowed two resit opportunities. If the student has still not passed the exam, then the student will have to retake the coursework of the failed subject.

Appeals by students against assessment outcomes are investigated by an Appeal Commission, composed of student representatives (selected by the Student Union) and academic staff. Decisions of the Appeal Commission can be appealed to the Commission of the LSMU Dispute Settlement.

8.2.2. Comments

An electronic feedback system called the “Quality Thermometer” is used to gather student feedback on the subjects (including assessment) being taught.

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

The assessment strategy plan is updated by SPC and agreed with the Dean before being submitted for approval by the VEE Council.

8.3.2. Comments

Students are marked out of 10 with ≥ 5 being the pass mark. Approximately 1,43% of students fail and must re-sit.

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

Subject lecturers have responsibility for engaging students in the learning process. *Flash Poll* and *Kahoot* quizzes are used to encourage student participation. *Flipped Classroom* is used to help students acquire case analysis and problem-solving skills. Tasks, presentations and discussions are used to encourage both individual and teamwork.

8.4.2. Comments

Problem and case-based learning is used in a number of subjects.

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

Students are permitted to take the final OSCE, once they have successfully completed all of the required competences.

8.5.2. Comments

There are intermediate and final Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCE) to assess knowledge and skills. In the sixth year students are assessed by the practice supervisor and the evaluation commission. Upon receiving a positive assessment, they have the right to take the OSCE.

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

The VEE carries out a guaranteed control in the hiring of personnel and checking their training. The selection and recruitment of employees and academic staff are conducted in accordance with the LSMU Rules of Operating Procedure and Staff Selection and Evaluation Procedure. LSMU committee for recruitment and assessment of Professors and Senior Researchers is formed by 12 members, one of them a veterinarian. VA committee for recruitment and assessment of Lectures and Researchers of VEE is formed by 12 members, four of them Vet professors, one veterinarian and one vet student. After performing a residency programme, the candidate is invited to take an assistant position for no longer than two years. Then, a competition is announced and only a person who has worked as a lecturer and defended the dissertation for at least 3 years can participate in the competition for the position of an associate professor. The head of the unit assesses and presents the person's compliance with the requirements for the position. The candidate reads a public lecture from the area of the place applied for. One reviewer, who is specialist in the field, is appointed by the Dean of the VEE and another reviewer is appointed by the competition and attestation commission among the commission members. Reviewers write standardised reports, and the candidate is invited for an interview and answers the questions of the commission members. Finally, the candidate is selected with a secret ballot among the members of the commission.

A pedagogical, research, and practical experience of academic staff is evaluated by conducting a lecturer certification every five years following the Procedure of Qualification and Attestation (Procedure). To develop the educational competence of academic staff, the LSMU Study Centre has established an InoEdu that monitors the needs of training of teaching staff, organises, implements, and improves their training following the set Procedure for Ensuring the development of Educational Competences of the LSMU Lecturers. The employee is introduced to the general rules of LSMU work safety, fire safety, and the Biosafety and Biosecurity SOP implemented by VEE. In addition, Lecturers-practitioners are obliged to raise their professional qualifications following the Procedure established by Order of the SFVS Director.

The LSMU has an organisational Procedure for Organising Feedback on Study Quality at LSMU, which specifies how the VEE must organise surveys of students, graduates, lecturers, staff, and social partners. The InoEdu unit presents the results of the surveys to the dean and the heads of the study units. Personnel surveys allow evaluating employee satisfaction with working conditions and environment. The Human Resources Department (HRD) submits the results of the surveys to CMSQA, which offers suggestions to the responsible faculty. The analysis results on the staff development and their professional competences are publicly available in the annual reports of the Dean and Rector.

In the VM study programme, more than 2/3 of all academic staff are veterinarians with proper qualifications. The rest of the lecturers are specialists in other fields according to their competent capabilities.

9.1.2. Comments

More than 2/3 of all academic staff involved in the veterinary programme are veterinarians with proper qualifications. The rest of the lecturers are specialists in other fields according to their competent capabilities. A formal pedagogical and researching training is offered for all staff involved with teaching.

The procedure for recruiting new staff strictly follows the rules imposed by the Lithuanian State and by the LSMU. It mainly focuses on the research tract and pedagogical expertise of the candidates. However, the recruitment commission (the composition of which is imposed by law) doesn't include international experts in the concerned field for the assessment of the professional expertise of the candidates and does not listen to the lecture given by the candidates.

Proficiency in English for the teachers involved with the international curriculum is not formally evaluated.

9.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

The English level of those lecturers responsible for teaching international students should be assessed with a formal procedure.

It is suggested to include in the recruitment process of new teachers an evaluation of the expertise of the candidates in the concerned topic by internationally-recognised experts in this field.

Additionally, cross collaboration between VEE and international teachers should be encouraged.

9.1.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 9.1 because of suboptimal formal assessment of the expertise in their discipline of the new teachers and of the proficiency in English for the teachers involved with the international curriculum.

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

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

9.2.1. Findings

The VEE has 146 permanent staff (68.4% are veterinarians) and 30 temporary staff (63.6% are vets). According to the Procedure for selecting and recruiting academic staff and researchers, open competitions for a position at VEE are announced publicly in the LSMU weekly on the LSMU website. The qualification requirements and the course of attestation are described in the Procedure for each position separately. The LSMU Committee for Recruitment and Assessment of Professors and Senior Researchers considers the suitability of professor candidates for the offered positions. A candidate who won the competition is recruited in a relevant department on a five-year contract. At the end of the five-year term, assessment of academic staff or researchers' conformity with the

qualification requirements during the period of office takes place. Academic staff fill a spreadsheet indicating their activities, number and quality of scientific publications, participation in the preparation of prospective researchers, and the nature of improvement of educational activity. To ensure the proper educational competence of the academic staff, lecturers within five years shall take a minimum of 30 hours of educational competence training course. Each VEE lecturer improved their educational qualification during the period 2018–2021.

9.2.2. Comments

When a candidate is recruited, they have a five-year contract and at the end of the five-year term, assessment of academic staff or researchers' conformity with the qualification requirements during the period of office takes place and lecturers within five years shall take a minimum of 30 hours of educational competence training course.

9.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

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

The lecturers, who won a position by public competition, work under permanent employment contracts for a period of five years. Some lecturers are invited to work under fixed-term employment contracts for a maximum of two years (later, to continue working at the LSMU, a person must participate in the competition). The head of the Unit is responsible for the teacher's distribution based on the job description, and ensures the effectiveness of the study process and study-related activities. The academic staff workload includes 67% of teaching, preparation, and educational development and 33% research activities.

9.3.2. Comments

Lectures have a range of annual workload that goes from 400 to more than 500 teaching hours. Academic staff are given opportunities to develop and extend their teaching and assessment knowledge and they have the funding for that.

9.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

Academic staff should have more time available for performing their research and other scholarly activities.

International involvement of academic staff and postgraduate students should be encouraged.

9.3.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 9.3 because of an overload of teaching duties for most academic staff, which may reduce their available time for research and other scholarly activities.

Standard 9.4: The VEE must provide evidence that it utilises a well-defined, comprehensive and publicised programme for the professional growth and development of academic and support staff, including formal appraisal and informal mentoring procedures.

Staff must have the opportunity to contribute to the VEE's direction and decision-making processes.

Promotion criteria for academic and support staff must be clear and explicit. Promotions for teaching staff must recognise excellence in, and (if permitted by the national or university law) place equal emphasis on all aspects of teaching (including clinical teaching), research, service and other scholarly activities.

9.4.1. Findings

The VEE academic staff are required to improve their qualifications constantly in the subject taught and/or the research carried out. The regular organisation and implementation of professional development of the VEE academic staff are provided by the Regulation on Professional Development of Professional Qualifications. The InoEdu organises training for both new and experienced lecturers and staff for professional development. The LSMU has an Open LSMU Foundation, which supports and covers travel expenses for internships and attending conferences where the lecturers/researchers present their theses. The Erasmus+ programme allows the academic staff acquiring skills and knowledge needed for a current position and professional development at the LSMU. The practitioners of VTHs can also use these mobility opportunities and train at a partner institution or company. All licensed practitioners of VTHs taking part in the implementation of the VM studies must improve their educational and subject competences. Based on the SFVS director's order, every veterinarian shall develop professional competences by doing at least 32 hours of qualification improving training every two years. Some training courses are obligatory for the practitioners.

Lecturers and researchers participate in decision-making by voting to elect the Unit head, VEE Council, LSMU Senate and Council. The employees elected as representatives of the Unit participate in decision making activities of these collegial bodies. Thus, lecturers actively participate in various permanent and temporary commissions, committees, or working groups. They can also voluntarily be elected to the LSMU Labour Council, perform the functions of a subject coordinating lecturer, and make decisions on improving subject content or assessment methods.

The promotion of teachers is carried out every 5 years. However, after three years, if the lecturer, who won the competition, has fulfilled the needed requirements may be re-evaluated and promoted without waiting for the end of their term. Also, the candidates, who won the competition for the professor's or associate professor's position for the second term, can be awarded a respective academic rank. The academic rank award can also be awarded before the end of the first term if the person has fulfilled the qualification requirements beforehand but not earlier than three years after the recruitment to the position. Those, who won the competition for the professor's position

twice, at the end of the second five-year term, participate only in the attestation process, excluding the competition.

9.4.2. Comments

Academic staff have the opportunity to contribute to the VEE's direction and decision-making processes. Lecturers and researchers participate in decision-making by voting to elect the Unit head, VEE Council, LSMU Senate and Council. The employees elected as representatives of the Unit participate in decision making activities of these collegial bodies.

Promotion criteria for academic staff recognises excellence.

9.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

European board specialisation has to be promoted among the academic staff.

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

LSMUSIS operates a formal e-feedback system entitled the "Qualitative Thermometer", to analyse and assess study subjects and the lecturers evaluated anonymously by students. These opportunities to give feedback on teaching and course content are provided at the end of every module. Each lecturer can see relevant feedback. Within two weeks of receiving the results of the feedback, the parties involved provide SPC with information on what actions have been already taken and how the comments are planned to be considered. In 2020, 22.16% of students voluntarily participated in evaluation of lecturers.

9.5.2. Comments

A system for assessment of teaching staff is in operation and results are available for those undertaking external reviews. However, the percentage of undergraduates that participate in the evaluation of lectures is very low.

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

The academic staff is encouraged to take on high-quality research by establishing minimal criteria on the number of A1 original publications required for a PhD (minimum of 1 as first author and 1 as co-author), as well as by having a reward for high-quality research publications. Students receive extra points added to the competitive score entering the PhD studies and VM residency for publishing research papers and active participation in the Students' Scientific Society activities.

The VEE has an output of 80-100 research publications per year, of which partly in international journals with a citation index. The VEE demonstrates active performances in different research domains, though with a current focus on One Health (including 3 major topics: animal welfare, sustainable husbandry and safe food). An overview of the major funded research programmes at the VEE is included in the SER for the period 2017 and later. They are mainly situated in the domain of food quality and safety.

In the lectures, research-based knowledge is integrated, especially in the supervised self-learning modules.

10.1.2. Comments

The VEE demonstrates a research driven education and encourages all students to obtain research experience.

10.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

10.1.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.1.

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

10.2.1. Findings

Students experience research-based teaching and evidence-based research throughout the whole curriculum, particularly on how to search and analyse published research papers and other information sources, evaluate research methodologies, and generate data. This is mainly by compulsory courses as “Introduction to Veterinary Studies and Data Management” (1st year), “Biomathematics and Statistics” (2nd and 3th year), and the optional subject “Methodology of Research” (4th year, compulsory since 2020). Student training in different aspects of research data collection, evaluation and reflection is performed by the preparation of multiple reports in the different topics and study domains, self-reflection as part of the clinical rotations in small and large animal VTHs, training in FSQ, and writing a graduation thesis.

Students are encouraged to participate in research through engagement in the activities of Students' Scientific Society at LSMU, in which up-to-date research is presented and discussed in the form of a journal club. At present, around 52 VM students participate.

The preparation and training for the compulsory graduation thesis is supervised by experienced (minimal 3 years) academic staff, and scheduled in the 10th semester. The VEE allocates funding to support the preparation of the graduation thesis. The VEE has a detailed procedure on the

organisation, expectations, evaluation and final public defence (commission of 7 members, including an external chair) of the graduation thesis. The graduation thesis starts with an individual work plan on the research topic (including objectives and tasks) and outline of the thesis. The work plan must be approved by the supervisor and appropriate Unit of VEE. Students can access the facilities, laboratories and have access to the equipment of VEE units, necessary for preparing the graduation theses.

Students failing in the defence of the graduation thesis, can defend repeatedly no sooner than three months after the expulsion. An appeal procedure is in place.

10.2.2. Comments

The VEE is clearly committed to train students on good research practice, evidence-based veterinary medicine, and decision-making.

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

The VEE offers postgraduate clinical training (national residencies VMR) in 13 veterinary disciplines, with a mean of 14 students enrolled per year. The VMR are of applied nature and focus on specific practical skills. Information on the VMR study programme is communicated to the internal and external stakeholders and published on the LSMU website. VMR students are admitted by open competition, described in the LSMU Admission Rules applied to each year's newly ongoing admission. To be admitted, candidates must hold a master's degree, a qualification of a veterinary doctor, and a valid licence of a veterinary practitioner.

There is no sign of conflicts concerning clinical training between graduate and postgraduate programmes as the VTHs have a sufficient and a yearly increasing number of patients, and the number of resident students is relatively small. Residency studies and veterinary assistant work do not interfere, and both have planned schedules.

The continuing education process at the VEE is under LSMU regulation and is in close collaboration with Lithuanian Association of Veterinary Surgeons, Ministry of Agriculture and SFVS enabling the VEE to offer relevant continuing education courses. The VEE organises 13 continuous education programmes, of which 3 are mandatory for practitioners. In addition, the VEE holds scientific-practical conferences for veterinary specialists and other interested persons. The Large Animal VTH organises different one-time practical seminars. The VEE academic staff take part in the projects and educational activities designed to disseminate scientific knowledge and innovations implemented by the LSMU Centre for Continuous Education and Consulting in Veterinary Science.

Since 2011, the VEE has permission to launch and operate the Doctoral study programme in Veterinary Sciences. The national Student Register, LR MESS, sets the number of positions for doctoral studies. There is also the opportunity to apply for EU-funded PhD positions offered by LT Research Council. The Doctoral Committee of Veterinary Sciences, chaired by the VA Chancellor, supported by the LSMU Research Centre, provides administrative support to Ph.D. students and supervisors. Information on the doctoral study programme is communicated to the internal and external stakeholders and published on the LSMU website. PhD students are admitted by open competition, described in the LSMU Admission Rules applied to each year's newly ongoing admission. The progress of the PhD students is annually evaluated within the Doctoral Committee of Veterinary Sciences based on the report submitted by the doctoral students.

10.3.2. Comments

The VEE runs several advanced postgraduate degree programmes, though residency training is predominantly nationally organised and oriented. The number of PhD students is borderline low.

10.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to initiate EBVS residency programmes and to enhance the number of PhD students.

10.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.3.

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

10.4.1. Findings

The VEE participates in a 5-year research evaluation by international experts at the request of the government strategic analysis centre.

The VEE Council is the main body taking decisions regarding approval of VEE research topics, including projects for the doctoral studies, respective reviews, and a confirmation of continuing and postgraduate education programmes. Each VEE unit is responsible for the realisation of the intended research aims following the Guidelines for the Strategic Development. Every year, the VEE units report to the VEE Council on the ongoing operation and current situation, progress, and emerging new needs.

The VEE takes, through the Study Programme Committee (SPC), care of a research-based integration into the curriculum content.

The education programmes are registered in the LSMU IT system Medas, with an annex anonymous survey by the attendees. Based on the survey results, programmes or content is renewed.

For the PhD research, the Doctoral Committee of Veterinary Sciences annually evaluates the progress of the PhD within the Doctoral Committee of Veterinary Sciences based on the report submitted by the doctoral students. The Curriculum of the doctoral programme studies is regularly revised.

The progress of the PhD students is annually evaluated within the Doctoral Committee of Veterinary Sciences based on the report submitted by the doctoral students.

The development of new residency programmes and annual planning of residency places take place

after evaluating the country's demand for such specialists, the opportunities for future employment, the demands of the state food and veterinary service of Lithuania, Ministry of Agriculture, enterprises and associations. The VMR are conducted following the Procedure of VMR implementation requirements and supervision framed by a decision of the LR Government and under the Regulation of LSMU Residency Studies prepared complying with LR LHER and approved by the LSMU Senate. The VMR programmes were designed using a bottom-up approach: discussions at the VEE Council, approval up to the LSMU Senate and submitted for accreditation to SKVC with final registration in AIKOS.

The VMR programmes are monitored, annually revised and updated by the Residency Commission. The relevant decisions are announced and posted on the LSMU website. The update frequency, if needed, is set by the Residency Committee, considering the evaluation results and the recommendations of internal and external stakeholders.

10.4.2. Comments

The VEE has a QA system in place to ensure research activity outcomes are integrated both at graduate and postgraduate level.

10.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

10.4.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.4.

11. ESEVT Indicators



ESEVT Indicators

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|------------------|-------------|
| Name of the Establishment: | | VEE - Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, LSMU, Kaunas, Lithuania | | |
| Name & mail of the Head: | | Vita Riškevičienė; vita.riskeviciene@lsmuni.lt | | |
| Date of the form filling: | | 30th August 2021 | | |
| Raw data from the 2 full academic years preceding AY 2019-2020 | | | | |
| | | 2018-2019 | 2017-2018 | Mean |
| 1 | n° of FTE academic staff involved in veterinary training | 176 | 173,75 | 174,88 |
| 2 | n° of undergraduate students | 903 | 862 | 882,50 |
| 3 | n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training | 113,5 | 108,74 | 111,12 |
| 4 | n° of students graduating annually | 151 | 132 | 141,5 |
| 5 | n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training | 89 | 82,75 | 85,875 |
| 6 | n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training | 1695,5 | 1695,5 | 1695,5 |
| 7 | n° of hours of clinical training | 1790 | 1790 | 1790 |
| 8 | n° of hours of FSQ & VPH training | 348 | 353 | 350,5 |
| 9 | n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in FSQ & VPH | 54 | 54 | 54 |
| 10 | n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally | 8577 | 7964 | 8270,5 |
| 11 | n° of ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally | 160 | 125 | 142,5 |
| 12 | n° of equine patients seen intra-murally | 253 | 181 | 217 |
| 13 | n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen intra-murally | 202 | 533 | 367,5 |
| 14 | n° of companion animal patients seen extra-murally | 60 | 70 | 65,0 |
| 15 | n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extra-murally | 1689 | 902 | 1295,5 |
| 16 | n° of equine patients seen extra-murally | 268 | 189 | 228,5 |
| 17 | n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds | 363 | 215 | 289,0 |
| 18 | n° of visits of poultry and farmed rabbit units | 3 | 10 | 6,5 |
| 19 | n° of companion animal necropsies | 207 | 514 | 360,5 |
| 20 | n° of ruminant and pig necropsies | 71 | 199 | 135,0 |
| 21 | n° of equine necropsies | 13 | 17 | 15,0 |
| 22 | n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies | 307 | 498 | 402,5 |
| 23 | n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training | 21 | 21,5 | 21,3 |
| 24 | n° of PhD graduating annually | 8 | 7 | 7,5 |

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



ESEVT Indicators

| | | | | | |
|--|---|--|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Name of the Establishment: | | VEE - Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, LSMU, Kaunas, Lithuania | | | |
| Date of the form filling: | | Vita Riškevičienė; vita.riskeviciene@lsmuni.lt | | | |
| Calculated Indicators from raw data | | | | | |
| | | Establishment values | Median values¹ | Minimal values² | Balance³ |
| I1 | n° of FTE academic staff involved in veterinary training / n° of undergraduate students | 0,198 | 0,15 | 0,13 | 0,072 |
| I2 | n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually | 0,785 | 0,84 | 0,63 | 0,155 |
| I3 | n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually | 0,607 | 0,88 | 0,54 | 0,067 |
| I4 | n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training | 1695,500 | 953,50 | 700,59 | 994,910 |
| I5 | n° of hours of clinical training | 1790,000 | 941,58 | 704,80 | 1085,200 |
| I6 | n° of hours of FSQ & VPH training | 350,500 | 293,50 | 191,80 | 158,700 |
| I7 | n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in FSQ & VPH | 54,000 | 75,00 | 31,80 | 22,200 |
| I8 | n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually | 58,449 | 62,31 | 43,58 | 14,869 |
| I9 | n° of ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually | 1,007 | 2,49 | 0,89 | 0,117 |
| I10 | n° of equine patients seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually | 1,534 | 4,16 | 1,53 | 0,004 |
| I11 | n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic seen intra-murally / n° of students graduating annually | 2,597 | 3,11 | 1,16 | 1,437 |
| I12 | n° of companion animal patients seen extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually | 0,459 | 5,06 | 0,43 | 0,029 |
| I13 | n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually | 9,155 | 16,26 | 8,85 | 0,305 |
| I14 | n° of equine patients seen extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually | 1,615 | 1,80 | 0,62 | 0,995 |
| I15 | n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds / n° of students graduating annually | 2,042 | 1,29 | 0,54 | 1,502 |
| I16 | n° of visits of poultry and farmed rabbit units / n° of students graduating annually | 0,046 | 0,11 | 0,04 | 0,001 |
| I17 | n° of companion animal necropsies / n° of students graduating annually | 2,548 | 2,11 | 1,40 | 1,148 |
| I18 | n° of ruminant and pig necropsies / n° of students graduating annually | 0,954 | 1,36 | 0,90 | 0,054 |
| I19 | n° of equine necropsies / n° of students graduating annually | 0,106 | 0,18 | 0,10 | 0,006 |
| I20 | n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies / n° of students graduating annually | 2,845 | 2,65 | 0,88 | 1,965 |
| I21* | n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating | 0,150 | 0,27 | 0,06 | 0,090 |
| I22* | n° of PhD graduating annually / n° of students graduating annually | 0,053 | 0,15 | 0,07 | -0,017 |
| 1 | Median values defined by data from Establishments with Accreditation/Approval status in May 2019 | | | | |
| 2 | Recommended minimal values calculated as the 20th percentile of data from Establishments with Accreditation/Approval status in May 2019 | | | | |
| 3 | A negative balance indicates that the Indicator is below the recommended minimal value | | | | |
| * | Indicators used only for statistical purpose | | | | |

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

| Area 1. Objectives, Organisation and QA Policy | C | P C | N C |
|---|----------|----------------|----------------|
| 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 | X | | |

FINAL REPORT AS ISSUED BY ECOVE ON 8 JUNE 2022

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| 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). | | | |
| 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 | | |
| 3.1.4. Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals (including Animal Production and Herd Health Management) | X | | |
| 3.1.5. Food Safety and Quality | X | | |
| 3.1.6. Professional Knowledge | X | | |
| Standard 3.2: Each study programme provided by the VEE must be competency-based and designed so that it meets the objectives set for it, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme must be clearly specified and communicated and must refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area. The VEE must provide proof of a QA system that promotes and monitors the presence of an academic environment highly conducive to learning including self-learning. Details of the type, provision and updating of appropriate learning opportunities for the students must be clearly described, as well as the involvement of students. The VEE must also describe how it encourages and prepares students for self-learning and lifelong learning. | X | | |
| Standard 3.3: Programme learning outcomes must: <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 | | |

FINAL REPORT AS ISSUED BY ECOVE ON 8 JUNE 2022

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <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). 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. 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 | | |
| <p>Area 4. Facilities and equipment</p> | | | |
| <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 ● 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. | X | | |

FINAL REPORT AS ISSUED BY ECOVE ON 8 JUNE 2022

| | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| <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.</p> <p>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. Evidence must be provided that these data are regularly recorded and that procedures are in place for correcting any deficiencies.</p> | | 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 | | | |

FINAL REPORT AS ISSUED BY ECOVE ON 8 JUNE 2022

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| <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. 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. In relation to enrolment, the VEE must provide accurate and complete information regarding all aspects of the educational programme in all advertisings for prospective national and international students. Formal cooperations with other VEEs must also be clearly advertised.</p> | X | | |
| <p>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.</p> | X | | |
| <p>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.</p> | X | | |
| <p>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.</p> | X | | |
| <p>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.</p> | X | | |

FINAL REPORT AS ISSUED BY ECOVE ON 8 JUNE 2022

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p>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.</p> | X | | |
| <p>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).</p> | X | | |
| <p>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.</p> | X | | |
| Area 8. Student assessment | | | |
| <p>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.</p> | X | | |
| <p>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.</p> | X | | |
| <p>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.</p> | X | | |
| <p>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.</p> | X | | |
| <p>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.</p> | X | | |
| Area 9. Academic and support staff | | | |
| <p>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</p> | | X | |

FINAL REPORT AS ISSUED BY ECOVE ON 8 JUNE 2022

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| receive, as determined by student teaching hours, is delivered by qualified veterinarians. | | | |
| <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.</p> <p>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><i>C: (total or substantial) compliance; PC: partial compliance (Minor Deficiency); NC: non-compliance (Major Deficiency)</i></p> | | | |

Executive Summary

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (called the VEE in this Report) was created 85 years ago, it is the only VEE in the country and is part of the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences since 2010, together with six other faculties.

The VEE was first visited by EAEVE/ESEVT in 2012 and was eventually granted the Accreditation status in 2019. The VEE was also accredited by the Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC which is a member of ENQA) in 2011.

The SER was provided on time and written in agreement with the SOP 2019 as amended in September 2021. Replies to the pre-Visitation questions from the experts were provided before the start of the Visitation. In agreement with the Exceptional Rules, an Addendum was also provided on time for explaining how the COVID-19 outbreak has affected the VEE and what actions have been taken to alleviate the impact of the lockdown.

The Visitation was very well organised and in agreement with the 'Exceptional Rules for ESEVT Visitations linked to the COVID-19 outbreak' and with the 'Minimum requirements concerning health and safety measures to protect ESEVT Experts' health and to prevent the spread of COVID-19', as adopted by ExCom in 2021. The Liaison Officer did a great job to adapt the schedule of the Visitation, to search for the requested information, to organise the relevant meetings and e-meetings, and to ensure the health and safety of the Visitors.

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

-) Positive and cooperative atmosphere between staff and students
-) Dedicated academic and support staff to assist undergraduate students
-) Rapid implementation of solutions to problems identified from student feedback
-) Easily accessible psychological counselling service for students experiencing difficulties
-) Efficient and regular interaction with stakeholders
-) Excellent isolation facilities and neurology unit
-) Impressive cleanliness of all facilities
-) Extensive intramural practical training in FSQ
-) Implementation of OSCEs for assessment of skill acquisition.

Additional commendations are described in the Visitation Report.

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

-) Partial compliance with Substandard 3.4 because of the suboptimal functioning of the study programme committee (SPC) with regard to the detection of overlapping and redundant areas of the curriculum and the fostering of horizontal and vertical integration between several curriculum subjects
-) Partial compliance with Standard 4.5 because of suboptimal X-ray facilities and equipment for the equine species
-) Partial compliance with Standard 5.1 because of a non-systematic recording of the frequency of use of individual teaching animals during practical training

FINAL REPORT AS ISSUED BY ECOVE ON 8 JUNE 2022

-) Partial compliance with Standard 9.1 because of suboptimal formal assessment of the expertise in their discipline of the new teachers and of proficiency in English for the teachers involved with the international curriculum.

-) Partial compliance with Standard 9.3 because of an overload of teaching duties for most academic staff, which may reduce their available time for research and other scholarly activities.

Additional suggestions of improvement are described in the Visitation Report.

Items of non-compliance with the ESEVT Standards:

None.

Glossary

CMSQA: Commission for Monitoring and Study Quality Assurance

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: External Practical Training

ESEVT: European System of Evaluation of Veterinary Training

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

FSQ: Food Safety and Quality

FTE: Full-Time Equivalent

ILO: Intended Learning Outcomes

IT: Information Technology

LSMU: Lithuanian University of Health Sciences

OSCE: Objective Structured Clinical Examination

PDCA: Plan Do Check Adjust

QA: Quality Assurance

SER: Self Evaluation Report

SOP: Standard Operating Procedure

VEE: Veterinary Education Establishment (Faculty of Veterinary Medicine)

VMSC: Veterinary Medicine Simulation Centre

VPH: Veterinary Public Health

VTH: Veterinary Teaching Hospital

Decision of ECOVE

The Committee concluded that no Major Deficiencies had been identified.

The Veterinary Education Establishment (VEE) of the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, Kaunas is therefore classified as holding the status of: **ACCREDITATION**.