



VISITATION REPORT

**To the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the Ghent University, Merelbeke, Belgium
(and to the Bachelor of Science in Veterinary Medicine, University of Antwerp,
Antwerp, Belgium)**

On 27 – 31 March 2023

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Introduction

General Introduction

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (FVMG) at Ghent University is the only faculty in the Flemish speaking region of Belgium where students can qualify with a degree of “Master in Veterinary Medicine”. At Ghent, this Master’s degree is integrated with an initial three-year Bachelor course in Veterinary Medicine, resulting in a six-year course which leads finally to the degree of Master in Veterinary Medicine. Crucially, this initial three-year course is not solely obtained at FVMG but can also be obtained as a Bachelor degree at the University of Antwerp which is over 50 km east of FVMG.

Although FVMG has no meaningful control over the Veterinary Medicine Bachelor degree in Antwerp, they are historically tied to accepting the Antwerp Bachelor degree students. A challenge for FVMG has been their limited control over the number of students starting the Veterinary Medicine course, as up to and including the academic year 2022-2023, anyone who has a secondary education diploma can theoretically start the veterinary course in Flanders. However, from the academic year 2023-2024 onwards, a binding admission test for entrance of the veterinary study programme in Flanders will be implemented. The format of this entrance examination will be like the entrance examination of human medicine and dentistry, both already existing for 25 years in Flanders. It will be composed of 2 parts: (1) knowledge and insight in sciences and (2) generic competences. A successful candidate will have to pass both parts of the examination, and the 240 best-ranked candidates are eligible to enter the veterinary medicine Bachelor programme. The selected students will be free to enrol at Ghent University or at the University of Antwerp.

Based on the past distribution of the veterinary bachelor students in Flanders, this would mean 160 new first year students at Ghent University and 80 new students at the University of Antwerp each year, the majority of the latter will join Ghent University after completing the BSc programme in Antwerp. However, students are free to choose their course.

Ghent Introduction

The “School of Veterinary Medicine” was founded in 1933 in the city centre of Ghent as part of the Faculty of Medicine in Ghent University which was itself founded in 1817. The “School of Veterinary Medicine” then became an independent faculty in 1968 termed the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (FVMG). Although it was decided in the 1960’s to move away from the city centre it was not until 1996 that a new campus was built.

The Veterinary Curriculum underwent a profound restructuring in 2004, after an earlier EAEVE visitation. In 2013 there was an EAEVE visitation under the Stage 1 and Stage 2 system where the team identified several really strong areas of excellence:

- Teaching Hospital (with no exception)
- Small and Large Animal case load
- Necropsy, especially the innovative use of specimens
- Ambulatory Clinics
- Morphology Laboratory
- Local small animal hospital in Ghent aimed very much at routine first opinion work
- Research, including a remarkable number of PhD students
- An excellent number of publications in refereed journals
- Effective monitoring of student workload

However, although there were no deficiencies, there were a number of suggestions made within the report:

- Size of groups in some practicals
- Bio-safety in a number of laboratories
- Monitoring of free access to Pharmacy
- Hygiene and dress code in clinics
- Lack of student facilities for both study and recreation
- Size of workload for both students and staff
- Career development somewhat inward looking
- Support for Erasmus scheme
- Representation on the Faculty Board
- “Visibility” of VPH within the whole course.

Antwerp Introduction

Until 2003, the university bachelor programme in Veterinary Medicine in Antwerp was formally organised by the ‘Rijksuniversitair Centrum Antwerpen’ (RUCA), which since 1970 had the authority to set up the current bachelor programme in Veterinary Medicine. At RUCA, the bachelor programme in Veterinary Medicine was initially organised from a number of laboratories spread across several faculties. After the establishment of the Faculty of Medicine at RUCA, two specific veterinary research groups (Comparative Perinatal Development and Veterinary Physiology and Biochemistry) were established and housed within two departments of this faculty. In 2001 both these veterinary research groups merged into one department, the Department of Veterinary Sciences, which was incorporated into the Faculty of Pharmaceutical, Biomedical and Veterinary Sciences (FFBD). The two groups were then joined by the research group Laboratory of Cell Biology and Histology; thus, the Department of Veterinary Sciences currently consists of three research groups.

Since 2016 the entire Bachelor in Veterinary Medicine has been situated on one campus termed Campus Drie Eiken north of Antwerp.

The majority of students who obtain the degree of Bachelor of Science in Veterinary Medicine at Antwerp will continue their studies at the Masters level within the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at Ghent. Therefore, one of the main general objectives of the Bachelor in Veterinary Medicine at UAntwerp is that students following this programme should be able to follow the Master in Veterinary Medicine at Ghent without any problems (either content-related or practical). To this end, UAntwerp offers its students a scientifically based and student-centred educational programme in Veterinary Medicine that is regularly assessed, reviewed and, if necessary, adjusted based on regular consultation and interaction with the Study Programme Committee of Veterinary Medicine at Ghent.

The Bachelor of Science in Veterinary Medicine students from Antwerp have the right by law to continue their studies at the Masters level at Ghent University without any restriction.

The Visitation was undertaken under SOP 2019 as amended in September 2021.

NB The acronym VEE (Veterinary Education Establishment) is used throughout this document, but for editorial reasons it is used to refer to both Ghent University and Antwerp University. However, it is important to note that VEE in the context of Ghent refers to a traditional six-year course leading to a qualification as a Veterinarian, whilst VEE in the context of Antwerp refers to a three year Bachelor course in Veterinary Science whose graduates then join the Ghent students for the final three years of the six year course.

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

GHENT: The FVMG focuses on 9 principles to ensure that the curriculum is in agreement with the EU Directives, ESG recommendations and ESEVT standards. Clinical and scientific expertise, commitment to train veterinarians able to cope with the challenges of society and open to the international scene, are emphasised.

ANTWERP: UAntwerp offers a BSc in Veterinary Medicine with the primary objective of providing graduates with the opportunity to directly enter and complete the Master phase (years 4-6) of the Ghent VEE veterinary degree programme. Therefore, and crucially, the ESEVT standards related to the clinical phase of the veterinary curriculum and the practical clinical training are not covered. Their aim is to provide competences needed to successfully integrate into and complete the MSc in Ghent, thus in combination fulfilling the requirements laid out in

2005/36/EC. However, UAntwerp BSc graduates should also acquire general competences characteristic to a more generic academic BSc degree including critical thinking, social and intercultural sciences and lifelong learning, thus allowing them to enter a wider range of subsequent study programmes.

1.1.2. Comments

GHENT:

- These general statements are aligned with the six strategic education objectives of Ghent University: “think broadly, keep researching, cultivate talent, contribute, extend horizons and opt for quality”.

ANTWERP:

- The UAntwerp is in compliance with the providing the basic skills of veterinary training (BSc level) as set by the respective EU, ESEVT and national legislation.

1.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

1.1.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: The FVMG is one of the 11 faculties of Ghent University, overseen by the Flemish Ministry of Education and Training.

The FVMG has a faculty management board composed of the Dean, the academic secretary, the director of studies, the director of research and the representative of the faculty at the Board of Governors (at the university level), that meet every two weeks.

The faculty council, which meets every month, includes the members of the faculty management board as well as the heads of the 7 departments and elected representatives of staff and students. Departments have autonomy of decision over their daily life in the fields of education and research. Several thematic committees, both at university and faculty levels, allow the involvement of all internal and external stakeholders. They have an advisory role, with all decisions to be taken by the faculty council.

The person responsible for the veterinary curriculum and the persons responsible for the professional, ethical, and academic affairs of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) hold a veterinary degree.

ANTWERP: The Faculty of Pharmaceutical, Biomedical and Veterinary Sciences (FFBD)

belongs to the University of Antwerp and includes the Department of Veterinary Medicine that has the responsibility for the Bachelor in Veterinary Medicine at UAntwerp. As all the other higher education institutions of UAntwerp are controlled by the Flemish Ministry of Education and training. The Department of Veterinary Medicine is constituted by three research groups managed by three spokespersons, two of whom have a veterinary degree as well as the vice-chair of the Department. The Faculty board is composed of delegations of the three Departments consisting of representatives of Senior academic staff (ZAP) and Assistant academic staff (AAP) and administrative and Technical Staff, Education Committee and students. The Departmental Board concerns research matters, PhD programmes and financial items. It consists of all ZAP and a representative of part-time professors and a delegation of AAP/BAP and ATP staff. The Education Committee for Veterinary Medicine concerns all the aspects of Education such as curriculum, admission requirements and related information. It consists of all the professors who teach in the programme and representatives of the Assistant and non-statutory academic personnel, students, and alumni. Usually, one delegate from the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of Ghent is present. There is no VTH in Antwerp.

1.2.2. Comments

GHENT and ANTWERP:

- The composition and diversity of the committees allows for dynamic reflection and broad participation of faculty members.
- The contributions of the advisory councils provide useful input for the committees dedicated to teaching and research.

1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- It is suggested that the current departments be further reorganised and their collaboration strengthened.

1.2.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: In 2022, the FVMG developed a strategic plan with an horizon of 2030, on the basis of the overall vision of Ghent University in terms of teaching, research, services and infrastructure (UGent Verbeeldt 2050). A participative method was used to build this strategic plan combining several symposia (till 2018) and a “faculty vision day” organised in the early 2022. The document defines the direction in the areas of education, research, organisation and welfare, with a number of priority action points. Timeframe is available for the main actions of each area. In addition, the Faculty Council carried out an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the FVMG in the areas of staff and organisation, teaching, research and development, clinical services and infrastructure.

ANTWERP: All Flemish higher education institutions including UAntwerp are periodically

subjected to an institutional review by the national higher education authority (NVAO). The institutional review (most recently done in the fall of 2021) provided a positive assessment of the quality of the education policy of an institution, including the conduct for confirming the quality of its programmes. Uantwerp has a clear vision on education which is translated into appropriate policy measures that are implemented on a daily basis both at the central level as well as in the Faculties and study programmes. Faculties have a large degree of autonomy which offers opportunities for working on interdisciplinarity and educational innovation. The quality system for study programmes follows international standards with six-year cycles and both internal and external audits. The Department of Veterinary Sciences developed a new strategic plan in 2021 (for the period until 2035) in which various aspects including a SWOT analysis related to the BSc in Veterinary Sciences (as one of the degrees offered in the Faculty) are identified. The vet med education committee also has its own plan that needs to be consistent and coherent with Uantwerp Faculty and Department and has developed a table of recommendations for improvement of the BSc vet med training, the related actions and the state of implementation / execution. A mid-term operational plan for its implementation (starting from the academic year 2023-24 up to 2026-27 depending on the topic) focuses on several topics such as number of students and learning efficiency, learning trajectory, staff professionalisation, curriculum optimisation, increase of number of case studies and practical training intra-muros, inclusion of alumni in the bachelor programme, internationalisation and stimulation of a research attitude of students.

1.3.2. Comments

GHENT

- The Ghent University global strategic plan will integrate the FVMG in one of the three university clusters (the south one) and will integrate the small second campus (Heide) in the main one. Relocation of 7250 m² gross floor surface from Heide to Merelbeke is planned. Strengthening of the public transport network will improve accessibility to the site.
- The SWOT analysis is the result of a collaborative reflection and is documented with a detailed and coherent action plan

ANTWERP

- The Bachelor in Veterinary Medicine has a clear vision on education and a global strategic plan.

1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- It is advised to revise the list of objectives and the indicative time regularly in the light of new internal and external developments.

1.3.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: In 2016, Ghent University developed a Quality Assurance system called "Quality conduct 1.0" which must be applied to all its faculties. This document has been revised for the period 2020-2024. The approach is based on the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) method on central, faculty and study programme level and aims to boost quality improvement. Following the European and national standards and Guidelines for QA in Higher Education, the university translates its 6 strategic objectives into operational objectives that are monitored. This supervision is carried out thanks to a multi-perspective approach, combining quantitative (via the UGI system) and qualitative data (focus group, committees, surveys...) and involving a wide variety of actors (students, lecturers, alumni...). A digital platform called "Education monitors" has been developed to facilitate monitoring.

The FVMG Monitor and the Veterinary Programme Monitor contain 28 and 39 operational objectives respectively. In order to respect the identity and culture of each faculty, the latter is free to choose the actions and means allowing it to achieve the objectives set.

A review of the improvements is carried out annually and reported to the University. Moreover, a specific entity at the university level called Education Quality Board is in charge of the pluriannual review of the QA system for each study programme. It produces a critical reflection on the quality system in place with a view to continuous improvement.

ANTWERP: All Flemish higher education institutions including UAntwerp are periodically subjected to an institutional review by the national higher education authority (NVAO). The quality assurance system for higher education programmes in Flanders (revised 2014-2015) provides the institutions with the QA procedures to assess and accredit their respective study programmes. Study programmes are assessed in 6-year cycles and focus on educational development, internal process monitoring and guidance, and self-reflection with peer review. Reports of the self-reflection with peer-review are made publicly available on the UAntwerp website. A portfolio of tools is provided by the university to monitor study programme components, and results can be compared between faculties. During programme assessments, information is collected from students and alumni. Curricular as well as study programme component reviews are performed on a regular basis. Study time spent on programme components is measured and assessed, and students during focus group discussions are asked about various aspects of the quality of the education provided. The results of the various assessments are used by the VEE education committee to further improve the programme.

1.4.2. Comments

GHENT:

- QA is closely monitored with good coordination between the university and the faculty. The latter has set up a series of actions, defined according to the Plan Do Check Act method, the progress of which is measured by monitoring indicators.

ANTWERP:

- The QA system is well developed within the higher education programmes in Flanders; and study programmes as well as study programme components are assessed in a peer-review process in regular intervals.

1.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- A communication plan on the quality assurance approach could be launched to promote the development of a quality culture.

1.4.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: External stakeholders interact with the FVMG through membership of various committees and/or regular meetings:

- the External Advisory Board composed of practitioners, industry and public sector representatives ('sister' universities and national agencies);
- The Study Programme Committee;
- The Externship Committee;
- The Flemish Council of Veterinarians and the professional bodies,

Information about the study programme as well as the ESEVT VEE's status is available on the faculty website. Moreover, each year FVMG organises an 'open day' and staff members participate in Study Information Days (SID-ins) in the 5 Flemish provinces.

ANTWERP: UAntwerp provides the relevant information for all study programmes on their website (in Dutch). Information on the quality of the study programmes and activities to further improve their quality are also made publicly available. During annual information days open to the public in the main cities of Flanders, the study programmes are presented to all stakeholders. The VEE education committee through a designated advisory board receives input from stakeholders such as veterinary practitioners and industry. This input is used to adjust the curriculum. The results of the national review processes are available on the University website. The Antwerp eVEE until now has not been assessed by ESEVT / EAEVE; therefore, no SER and visitation report is publicly available.

1.5.2. Comments

GHENT and ANTWERP:

- Both VEEs are commended for their efforts to provide relevant information on the content and quality of their study programmes to all stakeholders, and to interact with them regularly to collect input for adjustments in the study programmes.

1.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- A better emphasis of the information regarding employment destinations of past students, gathered through the periodic alumni survey, could be relevant.

1.5.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: The QA system uses quantitative and qualitative data using a wide range of data collection methods (surveys, databases, feedback...) from all audiences (students, lecturers, external stakeholders, alumni).

ANTWERP: UAntwerp - as mandated by national QA requirements - periodically assesses its activities and the quality of the study programmes and makes this information available to all stakeholders.

1.6.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The emphasis put on the integration of quantitative data and qualitative information provides a 360°-view which is of great relevance to monitor the activities.

1.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT and ANTWERP:

- More accurate planning and monitoring of the data collection may improve the efficiency of the QA system.

1.6.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: Since the last EAEVE evaluation (March 2013), both QA system and QA management changed significantly by setting up the successive versions of the Ghent University Quality Conduct. Ghent University was visited and accredited in 2022 by the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders. Curriculum has been revised twice (2016 and 2020).

ANTWERP: The UAntwerp VEE was not yet assessed by ESEVT, however, during the Ghent VEE visitation in 2013 some members of the UAntwerp VEE attended group discussions in Ghent, and results of that visitation were used to (together with Ghent) implement changes in the BSc curriculum at UAntwerp. The VEE at UAntwerp was visited and accredited by national QA/accreditation bodies in 2009, 2010 and 2018.

1.7.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The FVMG provides evidence that the suggestions made by the ESEVT team in March 2013 had been reviewed with a continuous improvement approach. The collaboration with the department of Ghent University in charge of Quality Assurance is close and very beneficial.

ANTWERP:

- There is a strong effort of VEE Antwerp to make the curriculum similar to that of the Bachelor programme (years 1-3) in Ghent in order to allow for an easy transition of their students into the Master phase.

1.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

1.7.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: The FVMG funding comes primarily from the University of Ghent that, in return, is mainly funded by the Flemish government (80% of funding is to pay for staff wages and 20% to run and maintain the University infrastructures). The amount of funding given by the University of Ghent to the 11 faculties depends primarily on the number of staff at each faculty. The funding that FVMG received from the University of Ghent has been kept since 2014 at 654,630.00 Euros per annum. Other sources of income of the FVMG are originated from Public authorities (mean income of 3,949,390.90 Euros in the last three years), Clinical Services (mean income of 12,304,577.71 Euros in the last three years), and from Research grants (mean income

of 502,531.79 Euros in the last three years). Total mean revenue for the last three years is at 14,688,239.86 Euros, total mean expenditure for the last three years is at 13,264,963.40 Euros. The financial overview shows that the FVMG balance has been positive in the past years, resulting in a global balance on the FVMG accounts of ca. 22,000,000.00 Euro. The cost of personnel in 2021 was 8,405,899.81 Euro. The FVMG also receives 254 ‘regular personnel points’ + 13 BOF (research) ‘points’ on a yearly basis. These 267 points correspond to ca. 17,400,000 Euro / year that is only used for personnel salaries. In summary, the total personnel expenses/year: 25,684,000 Euro of which 19,409,000 Euro (=75.6%) covered by the university and 6,275,000 Euro (=24.4%) covered by the FVMG. The University of Ghent is also responsible for paying for the FVMG infrastructure costs including, renovation works, energy bills, maintenance, etc... In return, the University of Ghent charges 20% on all revenues from teaching, educational projects, scientific research (central management and general operating costs).

The revenue from the Clinical Services is managed financially by the clinical departments. Revenue from Clinical Services represents up to 75% of the revenues on the FVMG’s accounts and derives from a high patient load. The FVMG maintains that the time that is devoted by clinicians to the high patient load does not detract towards the teaching time for students but actually gives students, interns and residents the necessary caseload and a good exposure to clinical work, and is recognised as part of the staff promotion process. There is also no pressure on the clinicians to increase the revenue of the clinical services, since the vast majority of the salary is paid by the University of Ghent and not by the revenue of the clinical services itself.

Research grants awarded by the University of Ghent (e.g. BOF, IOF, some of the FWO) are managed by the university itself. Other research grants are managed by faculty accountants that are specialised in financial project management (front officers), and they ensure that the money granted is not overspent and utilised in the best possible way. In the last three years, internal and external project funding was underspent of 2,314,963.06 Euros (average mean). However, an accurate early balance cannot be made because some grants are given all in one go at the beginning of a project, whereas some others are paid monthly or yearly.

ANTWERP: The University is mainly state-funded, and students only pay a moderate (administrative and ECTS-based tuition) fee. The Faculty has autonomy on staff and operational budget allocations between departments. At the faculty level, both the 2019-2021 expenditures and revenues ranged between 2.5 and 2.75 million Euro, with a small positive balance. Utility costs (e.g. water, electricity, gas) and other expenditures directly paid by the University are not included in these figures. The budget for each academic member depends on the research and teaching activities (number of students and mode of instruction). Annual tuition fees for students are moderate. The total costs of offering the BSc veterinary medicine programme, and a separate staff and operational budget for this programme were not provided. Based on information provided during the visitation, the substantial reduction of incoming students, as a consequence of the numerus fixus, at least for the next five years will not result in any substantial reduction of financial resources allocated to the Faculty.

2.1.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The FVMG provided detailed amendments to the original SER to the tables on revenue and expenditure of the establishment. Finances show a positive balance to sustain educational and research activities, and clinical services in the next three years.

ANTWERP:

- Government funding mainly covers the salaries of staff. The expected reduction in the number of students for the next few years are seen as an opportunity to improve the student-staff ratio, however, the incoming student numbers need to be monitored closely since a further reduction might pose a threat to the sustainability of the VEE.

2.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

2.1.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: Clinical services have mean earnings in the past three years of 12,304,577.71 Euros. The revenue from the Clinical Services is managed financially and independently by the clinical departments. They are used to buy medication, equipment and materials but also contribute to pay the salary of staff members including interns and residents. The seven departments also receive funds for operations administered by the Faculty Council based on the number of staff in each department.

ANTWERP: Not applicable since the VEE only offers the first three years of the veterinary curriculum and does not run a VTH.

2.2.2. Comments

GHENT:

- Clinical and field services are an integral part of the organisational chart of the FVMG. The FVMG has full autonomy of its financial process, as well as the clinical services
- There is no accountability required for money the FVMG receives yearly from the University nor for how the FVMG spends its revenues.

ANTWERP:

- The VEE in recent years invested in building a small farm-animal teaching stable to train all students in animal observation, maintenance and handling of horses, cattle and llamas.

2.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

2.2.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: The FVMG is reporting a possible cut of 4.5% (around 783,000 Euro/ over three years) of the 267 personnel points funding from the University of Ghent based on their financial forecast up to 2027. The FVMG management considers this cut within their reasonable limits because they have in place a contingency plan to cope with the reduction of funding from the University. The reduction in the number of students from the academic year 2023/2024 (from 1973 students in 2022 to an estimate of 1100 students in 2028) will allow for a reduction of the workload for members of staff. In addition, the Board of Governors at the University of Ghent confirmed that the reduction of students' number intake would have no negative impact on FVMG funding. The parameters 'number of students' and 'number of delivered degrees' will be frozen at the level of the mean of the three years before introduction of the examination. The FVMG has also plans for a leaner and more efficient re-organisation in many sectors of its operations (e.g. ICT organisation, personnel administration, VTH administration, and animal care facilities). All of these initiatives are included in a faculty 10 year saving plan.

With the approval of the 'Ugent verbeeldt 2050' plan on 1st July 2022, there are many infrastructure renovations that are planned in the next years including for example the laboratory building D1, small animals (section hospitalisation, planned for 2024), experimental animal units on campus Merelbeke, building on campus Heide, large animal clinic, etc... In addition, several buildings are outdated and have poor insulation and energy efficiency or do not comply with biosafety regulations. Some buildings need replacement (old stables for experimental animals and the buildings at campus Heide). However, the vast majority of expenses for infrastructure works have been secured by the University. For some infrastructure work, co-financing between the university and the FVMG will be necessary. Finally, the FVMG has financial reserves (around 22,000,000 Euros) that can be partially used for this purpose, if necessary. The municipality of Merelbeke is involved in the development and refurbishment of infrastructure on the Campus as part of a wider 'Spatial Implementation Plan' that includes other businesses in the surroundings and as such the faculty campus may benefit from local infrastructure being funded by other businesses (e.g. improvements in local roads, off campus parking lots, and other amenities).

ANTWERP: Source of teaching resources are research funds and depending on the nature of the investments are the ICT Governance Committee or the UAntwerp Education Board. As part of the renovation of UAntwerp research and teaching infrastructures, older buildings on Campus Drie Eiken are going to be renovated as well as new student facilities will be constructed in 2023. Faculty and Department have the power to decide about staff and research resources. The Education Committee decides about resources for teaching. The Dean of the Faculty participates in the meetings of the UAntwerp Executive Board and meetings with other deans and the rector where several strategic and faculty decisions are discussed. The information about decisions flows to the staff and students since representatives are present in the Education Committee.

2.3.2. Comments

GHENT:

- Resource allocation is regularly reviewed and the FVMG has a long-term contingency plan in place to cope with the cut of funding from the University for the next three years. The renovation works that are underway are mainly funded by the University of Ghent but the FVMG can participate with its own funding if necessary to complete the work.

ANTWERP:

- The Faculty supervises that the resources are sufficient for the teaching programme.

2.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- The state of play of present and future financial implications should be clearly, timely and accurately communicated and/or cascaded to all members of staff by the faculty or university senior management, as appropriate.

2.3.4. Decision

The VEEs are compliant with Standard 2.3.

Area 3. Curriculum

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

3.1.1. General findings

3.1.1.1. Findings

GHENT: The Ghent VEE offers a 6-year Diploma Programme in Veterinary Medicine that follows a competence-based curriculum. It is divided into a Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine (180 ECTS) and a Master of Veterinary Medicine (180 ECTS) programme, and the current curriculum was implemented in 2020. Students upon completion of the first three years are awarded a BSc degree; after completing years 4-6 they graduate with a “Master of Veterinary Medicine”. Within the 6-year curriculum, competence-based learning outcomes have been mapped against the requirements for veterinary education laid down in EU Directive 2005/36/EC (and translated into local legislation) as well as the ESEVT Day One Competences to assure that all required competences are covered. The University of Ghent is the only higher education institution in Belgium (Flanders) where students can acquire a full veterinary degree, and the VEE has independence to adapt the curriculum as necessary.

The subject distribution across years of study is rather traditional, moving from the fundamental knowledge-based natural sciences courses towards first healthy animals (anatomy, physiology, management & handling but also food technology and safety) and later into the classical medical domains.

Years 1-3 of the curriculum (Bachelor) are aligned as much as possible with those of the BSc programme in Veterinary Medicine offered at the University of Antwerp. All students

graduating with that BSc in Antwerp are enrolled into the 4th year of the Vet Med MSc programme at University of Ghent.

During years 1-3, the basic subjects, basic sciences subjects (anatomy, physiology, histology, general pathology, microbiology, virology, parasitology, immunology as well as animal genetics, production, behaviour, welfare and nutrition) are covered. In addition, students take courses in biostatistics, epidemiology and animal health economics, principles of veterinary public health (VPH), food and environmental chemistry, food microbiology, pharmacology, clinical and communication skills (skills-(lab-)based courses focussing on dogs, cats and horses); they also receive basic knowledge in surgery and do a first orientation internship/externship. Propaedeutics is introduced in 3rd year as a theoretical class combined with a virtual introduction of the VTH.

During year 4 the focus moves towards diseases in various species, advanced pathology, pharmacology, toxicology and the acquisition of first medical skills in all species. In addition, animal handling competences and the methodological basis for the master thesis (to be completed in year 5) is provided.

In year 5 students enrol in one of three clusters (companion animals, horses, production animals) and in year 6 they select one of the five graduation tracks ((i) companion animals, (ii) horses, (iii) ruminants, (iv) pigs, poultry and rabbits and (v) research) to deepen their knowledge and skills in the respective domains. Through a sequence of curriculum reforms, it was assured that all graduation tracks offer the same level of clinical training. In the final year, students of all graduation tracks (60 ECTS) have to take part in an interdisciplinary major subject (15 ECTS) to further broaden their horizon.

There is limited lecturer mobility between the VEE Ghent and the BSc programme in Antwerp, and some courses in Antwerp and Ghent (during the visitation, a pathologist from Antwerp was in the anatomy room with students) are taught in the respective second national language or in English.

Basic subjects account for 450 hours, approx. 50% of them taught as lectures. Some of the core courses such as physics and chemistry are delivered by lecturers from the main university of Gent, and students have to relocate to the centre of Gent in order to follow them. The areas of basic sciences, clinical sciences in companion animals as well as in food-producing animals, food safety and quality and professional knowledge are adequately covered in the curriculum to meet the ESEVT D1C. Soft skills including communication and professional development are embedded in various courses across the curriculum, and students are exposed to research approaches through the requirement to conduct a research project and write a Master thesis.

ANTWERP: The three-year BSc veterinary medicine curriculum consists of 180 ECTS (approx. 60 per academic year). The VEE has formulated thirteen core competences to be achieved within this programme that are based on both the UAntwerp and the Faculty educational visions, and that reflect the specific learning outcomes set by the national accreditation organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders. The curriculum is designed to meet these requirements as well as the ESEVT D1C at the preclinical (BSc with 180 ECTS) level. In order to fully meet the EU directive 2005/36/EC as well as all ESEVT D1C, a MSc programme (180 ECTS) with focus on clinical training must also be completed; this is possible without restrictions at UGhent. In 2010 UAntwerp implemented so-called learning trajectories (pathways) and added hands-on preclinical training on live animals to align with the UGhent preclinical training. In 2016, the BSc curriculum was redesigned to reduce the overall student

workload, to cover all relevant DIC especially related to (pre-)clinical skills, and to encourage veterinary students to acquire additional (soft skill) competences. The five learning pathways are (i) introduction to chemistry, biochemistry and physics, (ii) normal development of form and function, (iii) diseases and the immune system, (iv) domestic animals in society and the environment and (v) veterinary skills. Recently, again to align the BSc curriculum with the preclinical course of study in Ghent, propaedeutics (5 ECTS), a one-week internship (EPT) in a veterinary practice and an increase in ECTS in immunology and immunopathology were implemented. Each learning pathway contains a range of subjects related to the overarching theme, starting in pathway (i) with the natural sciences (basic) subjects of physics, chemistry with biochemistry and food and environmental chemistry, biology, general and molecular genetics and biomedical statistics. In pathway (ii) the focus lies on anatomy, embryology, cell biology and histology, veterinary physiology, functional (locomotory) and neuroanatomy, as well as animal appraisal. Pathway (iii) mainly addresses subjects related to immunology and immunopathology, microbiology, general pathology, pathophysiology, pathobiochemistry, and parasitology. In pathway (iv) the focus is on animal husbandry and production with subjects on ethology, biomedical statistics and epidemiology, general principles of VPH, animal nutrition, animal hygiene, animal welfare, economics as well as food microbiology, technology and biological hazards. Pathway (v) covers the preclinical medical skills such as propaedeutics, general surgery, communication and the veterinary practice internship. In each year of study, subjects from all pathways are taught, resulting in a partly integrative structure. The study of basic subjects is comparable with that of UGhent with the exception of animal biology, zoology and cell biology; here the number of hours listed in table 3.1.2 within the SER is 55 hours. Substantially more hours when compared to UGhent are listed for anatomy, histology and embryology; possibly some of the respective content is listed in different categories of table 3.1.2 between the two VEEs. Direct comparison of the two tables therefore is difficult.

For optional courses students are obliged to select one optional course of 3 ECTS. Talented second-year bachelor students can enrol in the Honours College programme worth 18 ECTS through which they can get involved in a research project lasting two years. At the end they receive a certificate in Dutch and in English signed by the dean and a mention during proclamation.

There is limited lecturer mobility between the VEE Ghent and the Bachelor programme in Antwerp, and some courses in Ghent are taught in the respective second national language or in English.

Completion rates during the Master part of the curriculum in Ghent varied to some extent between student cohorts from the Bachelor programmes in Ghent and Antwerp, but based on the data no consistent trend favouring one of the cohorts was visible over time.

3.1.1.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The Ghent VEE is praised for their efforts to offer a state-of-the-art curriculum that provides students with a strong foundation in all relevant subjects, but also allows them to select major areas and tracks based on their interest for the different working domains in our profession. The VEE has the legally given flexibility to constantly assess and further adapt the curriculum
- Constraints in curricular flexibility (especially full integration of subjects in all years) are set by the requirement to align the first three years of training with that of the Antwerp BSc Vet Med programme to allow the Antwerp graduates to directly transfer

into the 4th year of the Ghent VEE Veterinary Master programme.

ANTWERP:

- The Antwerp VEE offers a well-structured partially integrated curriculum that meets both the preclinical requirements of a full veterinary medicine degree programme, thus allowing their students to progress into the MSc programme in Gent, and the more generic requirements of BSc programmes within a diverse University environment of Antwerp University.

3.1.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.1.1.4. Decision

The VEEs are compliant with Standard 3.1.1.

3.1.2. Basic Sciences

3.1.2.1. Findings

Most of the basic sciences classes are offered in the second and third year of the curriculum to align the training between Ghent and Antwerp VEEs.

GHENT: The number of hours allocated at the VEE to these subjects is well balanced and considered sufficient to meet the respective DIC. Biomedical statistics, (population) epidemiology and animal health economics is represented with 100 hrs during the first years of the curriculum. Food technology and food safety subjects (summarised under VPH) have an allocation of 150 hrs, anatomy (including vertebrate zoology and embryology) has 410 hrs, biochemistry and physiology 169 hrs, and the introduction to the infectiology-related subjects receives 195 hrs. Soft skills including information literacy and communication are included in various subjects throughout the curriculum.

ANTWERP: The number of hours allocated at the VEE to the basic sciences subjects is well-balanced and considered sufficient to meet the respective DIC. Biomedical statistics, (population) epidemiology and animal health economics is represented with 67 hrs. An introduction to food technology and food safety subjects (summarised under VPH) is covered in 75 hours, anatomy, histology and embryology have 411 hrs, biochemistry and physiology 286 hrs, and the introduction to the infectiology-related subjects receives 160 hrs. Animal ethology and welfare topics are covered in 47.5 hrs and animal nutrition in 60 hrs. General pharmacology is offered in 3rd year (24 hrs) by a lecturer from the pharmaceutical faculty. General pathology is also introduced in 3rd year (70 hrs). Soft skills including information literacy and communication are included in various subjects throughout the curriculum.

3.1.2.2. Comments

GHENT

- The number of hours and subject distribution of basic sciences subjects is considered sufficient to meet the respective DIC.

ANTWERP

- The number of hours and subject distribution of basic sciences subjects, albeit in parts differently distributed when compared to Ghent VEE, is considered sufficient to meet the respective preclinical D1C.

3.1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.1.2.4. Decision

The VEEs are compliant with Standard 3.1.2.

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

3.1.3.1. Findings

GHENT: Companion animals make up 2 of the 5 graduation tracks offered in Ghent - companion animals and horses. The curriculum covers the basic sciences and relevant specific veterinary subjects in years 1-4. Tracking into the various areas is in 5th and 6th year. To ensure all students are able to carry out day 1 competences (D1C), all students have to carry out a number of common track subjects in semester 9 before splitting into the various clusters.

In Y5, companion animals and horses have 270 hours, consisting of 180 hours of lectures and seminars and 90 hours of practical clinical training.

In Y6, it is 1260 hours for companion animals and for equine. These hours are made up of 780 hours for clinical practical training and 70 hours for seminars and self-directed learning, plus 480 hours for their two Master dissertations.

In Y6, students also choose 1 out of 5 majors (Wildlife Health in the context of Conservation, Clinic International, Clinic@Home, Veterinary Medicine in the Global South, Master of Science Teaching) and 1 elective out of 7 subjects.

Students on the companion track spend 2 weeks in the exotics clinic during their clinical rotation.

Core clinical rotations:

- 4th year - Clinic I- consists of 24 days of clinical rotations - 23 during the week and 3 on a weekend or holiday. For companion animals and horses there are 8 rotations
- 5th year - Clinic II and Clinic III:
 - There are 26 days of rotations in Clinic II and 22 days in Clinic III.
 - In semester 9, the common track is for all students (Clinic II) is as follows: 12 companion animal days, 7 horse days and 4 ruminant ones and 3 pathology rotation days.
- 6th year clinical training for students in each graduation tracks
- All students have 17 weeks of rotations (30 hours per week)
- Students choosing Clinic@Home have an additional 11 weeks on clinics.

Common track ('Clinic II', semester 9):

- 12 companion animals' rotation days including anaesthesia, cardiology, dermatology, internal medicine, medical imaging, neurology, orthopaedic surgery and physiotherapy, soft tissue surgery, exotics, and hospitalised patients care

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- 7 horse rotation days including surgery, hospitalised patients care in surgery and internal medicine, orthopaedics, internal medicine, and obstetrics
- 4 ruminants' rotations including internal medicine, obstetrics, and hospitalised patients care
- 3 pathology rotations

Companion animals cluster ('Clinic III', semester 10):

22 rotations including anaesthesia, dermatology, cardiology, internal medicine, medical imaging, neurology, nutrition, orthopaedic surgery and physiotherapy, soft tissue surgery, care of the hospitalised patients, emergency service, exotic animals (medicine and pathology).

1. **Horse cluster ('Clinic III', semester 10):** 22 rotations including anaesthesia, dentistry, orthopaedics, care of the hospitalised patients on surgery and internal medicine, medical imaging, internal medicine, obstetrics, nutrition, and pathology.
2. **Sixth (final) year** - clinical training for students of the graduation tracks 'Companion Animals', 'Horse', 'Ruminants' and 'Research': courses 'Clinical Training IV: Companion Animals Medicine' or 'Clinical Training IV: Horse Medicine' or 'Clinical Training IV: Production Animal Medicine' - further in this document 'Clinic IV'
3. In their final year, all students have 17 weeks of clinical rotation (30 hours per week). Within the chosen track, all clinical specialties mentioned above are included and for the 'Companion Animals' track additional rotations in behaviour, endocrinology, reproduction, stomatology are also included. In all courses, emergency service is an integral part of the clinical rotations. Students choosing the major 'Clinic@Home' have an additional 11 weeks of clinics.
4. In their final year, students are part of the clinical team at every stage from the medical history, via clinical examinations and results of further investigations up to treatment, including surgical procedures and postoperative treatment. In addition, they are responsible for monitoring and treating intensive-care patients and monitoring births. Discussion of specific cases and clinical.
5. The students from the 'Pig, Poultry and Rabbit' track spend two weeks in the necropsy room for exotic and non-conventional small animals.
6. Electives are an important part of the strategy of FVMG as students can individually choose their preferred electives. Since electives can be done at any accredited university, there are no capacity problems, and a selection procedure is not needed.

ANTWERP: In addition to propaedeutics, two skills lab sequences are offered in the 2nd and 3rd year. During the first sequence, lectures on low stress animal handling of all relevant species (companion animals, horses, cows, pigs, laboratory animals), 20 hrs of practical training of animal handling and clinical examination, injection techniques and lab-based skills are taught on dummies.

In addition, two 4 hr extramural supervised visits to an equine and a dairy cow farm are performed with all students.

During the second skills lab round, in addition to lectures and demos, 24 hrs of practical clinical skills on dummies and live animals as well as basic surgery and suture techniques are taught.

A total of five weeks of internship (1 weeks EPT on an animal facility; 3 weeks of internship on the on-campus animal holding facility "the Ark", one-week EPT in a veterinary practice or clinic) is included with instructions, peer teaching and practical training.

In the practical modules on animal handling at “the Ark”, student experts are certified by staff and are included in several peer teaching modules using live animals.

3.1.3.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The FVMG is to be commended for the excellent Exotic Animal Clinic and its extensive caseload and teaching experience for the students
- The FVMG provides a comprehensive companion and equine curriculum.
- Exotic animals are taught in detail to the companion animal track students allowing them practical experience with a wide variety of species.
- The curriculum covers requirements for students to meet D1C.

ANTWERP

- The UAntwerp is commended for the efforts to in 3rd year introduce first preclinical and clinical skills to their students including hands-on training in hygiene procedures, animal handling and examination (both on models and on live animals).

3.1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- The FVMG could consider making more use of the Exotic clinic for more of the final year students to give them a larger basic knowledge of such species like rabbits as pet animals.

3.1.3.4 Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: ‘Production animals’ is one of the 3 clusters students enrol in the 9th semester. This cluster has 295 lecture hours. In Y6, the production animals cluster splits into “Ruminants” and “Pig, Poultry and Rabbit” graduation tracks. Ruminants has 780 hours for clinical practical training and 480 hours for two master's theses. Pig, Poultry and Rabbit has 835 hours for herd health management and 480 hours for two master theses.

Within graduation tracks students are able to choose between 5 majors for 15 ECTS credits and have an elective for 3 ECTS credits.

General Clinical Training I (Clinic I) in Y4 includes 5 rotations in production animals.

General Clinical Training II (Clinic II) in semester 9 includes 4 ruminant rotations.

Production Animal Medicine Clinical Training (Clinic III) in semester 10 has 22 rotations.

Students of the graduation track ‘Ruminants’ have 17 weeks of clinical rotation (30 hours per week). The inadequacy of courses on pigs, poultry and rabbits in the first 5 years of the

curriculum is compensated by the inclusion of some courses in the graduation track ‘Pig, Poultry and Rabbit’ in year 6. ‘Herd Health Medicine and Epidemiology of Pigs, Infectious Diseases and Pathology’ students have 50 hours of lectures and 415 hours of clinical training. In the course ‘Herd Health Medicine, Epidemiology and Pathology of Poultry and Rabbits, with Externship’, the students have 25 hours of lectures and 165 hours of clinical training.

ANTWERP

The UAntwerp introduces preclinical and clinical skills to their students including hands-on training in hygiene procedures, animal handling and examination (both on models and on live animals).

3.1.4.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The VEE has a comprehensive track for production animals, both at the didactic level as well as the clinical level
- Students have an extensive experience of production animal clinical work, both within the VTH as well as in the ambulatory service.

ANTWERP:

- The UAntwerp is commended for their effort in 3rd year to introduce initial aspects of preclinical and clinical skills to their students

3.1.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.1.4.4. Decision

The VEEs are compliant with Standard 3.1.4.

3.1.5. Food Safety and Quality

3.1.5.1. Findings

GHENT: Food Safety and Quality, Veterinary Public Health, and One Health Concept is well represented in the curriculum with a good blend of lectures, seminars (this includes talks by external lecturers and government representatives), supervised self-learning, laboratory work, etc... that are appropriate for the discipline. A total of 315 hours in food safety and quality are present in the curriculum. However, the high number of students limits the practical (i.e. hands-on) classes that are carried out in the bachelor years where extensive use of online teaching resources is made.

The course unit Veterinary Public Health V includes externship and practical training for all fifth-year students. This includes 2-days visits to food processing establishments accompanied by a government officer. A 1-day visit to a ham-producing factory is also included and a member of the FVGM staff accompanies students during the visit.

All students, with no exception, must visit at least two different types of slaughterhouses, in most cases one pig and one poultry slaughterhouse. At the poultry slaughterhouse, the students are also exposed to cutting plant operations. Students that request a third abattoir visit, on a voluntary basis, will be directed to a beef abattoir. The students on abattoir visits are

accompanied and taught by government meat inspectors on site.

The students spend around 37 hours on FSQ extra-mural practical activities.

Abattoir visits: all fifth-year students are required to attend abattoir visits in groups of five. The students are responsible for travelling to the abattoir arranging their own means of transport. The faculty does not subsidise travel expenses to the students but encourages students to organise themselves for car-sharing. The faculty provides personal insurance to the students on external visits and arrange the visits with government authorities. The faculty provides personal protective equipment (PPE) to the students (hard-hat, coveralls, hairnets), who are required to bring their own clean wellie boots. However, no earplugs or ear protectors are provided to the students.

The faculty has a list of six abattoirs (two pigs, two poultry and two beef). The FVMG has a formal contract with the Flemish Food Safety Authority for veterinarians and meat inspectors working at these abattoirs to teach students.

They have a quarterly meeting between FVMG members of staff and government representatives to discuss students' feedback, learning objectives of the visits, and operational issues. There is no formal contract between the FVMG and the abattoirs themselves as this is done as a free form of collaboration between the university and the food industry.

On 29th March, we visited a pig slaughterhouse that is included in the list of abattoirs attended by students, but on the day of our visit there were no students present on site. This abattoir has a high volume of incoming and ongoing lorries. There is also a high traffic of private cars since it is co-located to a commercial butcher' shop but there is no clear signage for safe passageways for pedestrians entering the abattoir or crossing the yard.

The veterinarians and meat inspectors that teach the students on site show them the entire slaughter process with a focus on the tasks that are Day One Competences of the veterinarian at the slaughterhouse (i.e. animal welfare, ante mortem and post-mortem inspection, and hygiene). The official veterinarian and meat inspectors also have an array of photos and videos of the most common ante- and post-mortem lesions that are shown to the students before the visit, including information on the diagnosis, description of the lesion, aetiology, differential diagnosis, occurrence/impact, related legislation, and the inspection decision.

During the visit, some plant-specific health and safety hazards were noticed. Students are not required to write a report or complete any form of summative assessment after the visit, however they need to attend a feedback session/ round table discussion with members of staff.

Approximately 35 Masters students every year decide to carry out their research project in the Food Safety department. The number of students is limited only by the laboratory space and capability. Members of staff encourage students to publish their research in peer-reviewed journals as much as possible and support students that decide to carry on postgraduate study (i.e. PhD) in food safety related topics.

ANTWERP: Food safety, food technology and the One Health concept are addressed in all three years of the curriculum. During 1st year, in an introductory course (VPH 1) the basics of primary food production are covered. In the second semester students are offered about 20 hours of legislation linked to veterinary public health. They study the role of the FAO, the OIE and the EU in terms of food safety and public health legislation. More specifically the legal obligations of each farmer and his veterinarian are studied in detail. In later VPH modules (2nd

and 3rd year of the curriculum) topics related to food and environmental chemistry as well as food microbiology and biological hazards are taught. The VPH modules are aligned with similar modules at the UGhent, and some are taught by a faculty member from Ghent.

3.1.5.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The Food Safety and Quality Curriculum of the FVMG meets the requirements of the EU Directive 2005/36/EC (as amended by directive 2013/55/EU) and its Annex 2 and Annex V.4.1.

ANTWERP:

- A substantial effort is made to align the content of the food safety, food technology and the One Health modules with those taught at UGhent to prepare students for the advanced topics taught in the Masters phase of the curriculum at UGhent.

3.1.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- It is suggested that, with the reduction of the number of students from the academic year 2023/2024, there will be the introduction of more practical (i.e. hands-on) classes that can replace tutorials that are currently delivered online
- Earplugs and high visibility vests could be provided to the students as part of their PPE when visiting an abattoir
- Health and Safety of students at the abattoir (including abattoir specific issues) could be included as a standing agenda item in the quarterly meetings between the faculty members and the government representatives.

3.1.5.4. Decision

The VEEs are compliant with Standard 3.1.5.

3.1.6. Professional Knowledge

3.1.6.1. Findings

GHENT: Several subjects are concerned by Professional Knowledge. Information literacy and data management, professional ethics and communication, and animal health economics and practice management are part of different courses, such as Biomedical Statistics, Master Dissertation, Epidemiology, Clinical practical training and Veterinary legislation. The latter discipline also deals with official controls, regulatory veterinary services and certification.

Students taking the Research track in Y6 are taught scientific reasoning and communication for 50 hours and earn 3 ECTS.

Electives for all graduation tracks in Y6 include animal welfare, law and ethics for 24 hours, practice management and entrepreneurship for 15 hours and ambulatory clinics and herd health management for 90 hours.

In addition, practical rotations in Y6 cover ambulatory clinics and herd health management in ruminants for 5 weeks and in pigs, poultry and rabbits for 16 weeks.

Before the start of the clinical rotations, students are taught and trained in communication (active listening, empathy, client relations, communication in consultation, etc.).

ANTWERP: Professional knowledge is an integral part of 7 of the 13 core competences which are the aims of the 3-year course at the VEE. The student must acquire skills in communication, critical analysis, information literacy, methodology, the role of animals in the society, animal welfare, entrepreneurship and the role of the veterinary profession in general. Information literacy and data management receives 4 hours, professional ethics and communication 9 hours, animal health economics and practice management 21 hours, animal welfare 10 hours, animal productions 46 hours and veterinary legislation 20 hours.

The EPT activity in Y3 completes the acquisition of professional knowledge regarding veterinary practices (see 3.5.1).

3.1.6.2. Comments

GHENT & ANTWERP:

- The requirements for Professional Knowledge laid down in the DIC are satisfactorily covered by the curriculum.

3.1.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.1.6.4 Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: Learning outcomes have been defined both at the study programme and course levels following the Ghent University and EAEVE SOP requirements. Based on the QA system and management (see 1.6), these learning outcomes are routinely supervised by the Study Programme Committee (SPC) through feedback from internal and external stakeholders. Study Programme learning outcomes had been revised in 2015 and 2020 due to changes in the curriculum. Course learning outcomes are reviewed yearly.

Training and assessment are competence-based. Moreover, FVMG proposes non-technical courses (such as ethics, communication) or promotes methods to stimulate students' involvement (self-reflection, feedback).

ANTWERP: The VEE offers a BSc in Veterinary Medicine acquired through a full-time course of study with 60 ECTS per year of study (180 ECTS in total) that is in line with University, national and international higher education requirements. The VEE uses a concept of learning

trajectories and an alignment matrix to map and monitor course content and reduce overlaps between courses. In the alignment matrix, teaching methods, assessment and test methods, test levels and study materials are also listed. This alignment matrix forms the basis for every educational innovation and is discussed by the Education Committee. Learning objectives are communicated to all students through course information sheets that are publicly available and to which lecturers refer students to at the beginning of each module. The faculty QA body reviews these course information sheets annually, and the VetMed Education Committee, in consultation with the Advisory Board, assures that the relevant Day One Competences are met. The overall quality of the Bsc programme is ensured by the respective University QA committee (CIKO). The University itself is Quality assured by the national QA / accreditation bodies with visitations in 2009, 2010 and 2018.

3.2.2. Comments

GHENT:

- Facilities and digital tools provided to students as well as the diversity of training and assessment methods enhance appropriate learning and promote students' involvement.

ANTWERP:

- UAntwerp is part of a complex and hierarchically structured QA system that assures that the structural and organisational requirements to offer BSc degrees are met. Within the BSc of veterinary medicine, a complex alignment matrix was developed to clearly describe the content and to assure that the competences needed by BSc graduates to transfer into the MSc programme of veterinary medicine at UGhent are acquired.

3.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.2.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: A dedicated committee (SPC - 30 members) defines the teaching objectives of the study programme in cooperation with the EQCU. A particular attention is paid to the alignment between teaching and assessment methods and learning outcomes, promoting interdisciplinary approach and students' and lecturers' involvement. SPC organises a systematic review of the course content every 3 years and several processes up to enhance feedback (student evaluation each year, review of the competences matrix, stakeholder's and alumni feedback). Activities

and conclusions of the SPC reported to the faculty council. Moreover, the EQCU can propose measures to improve lecturers' competences or infrastructures.

ANTWERP: The VEE uses a concept of learning trajectories and an alignment matrix as well as course information sheets to map and monitor course content and assure that the learning outcomes are compliant with the EU Directive 2005/36/EC (as amended by Directive 2013/55/EU) and its Annex V.4.1 to offer a Bachelor of Science in Veterinary Medicine (preclinical level) degree with D1C as listed in Annex 2 of the EAEVE ESEVT SOP. A detailed alignment matrix and publicly available course information sheets are used to communicate the expected learning outcome to all stakeholders. These sheets have to be reviewed and updated annually by the responsible lecturers, and necessary significant changes in the curriculum should also be approved by the Faculty Board, the Education Board and the Board of Governors of the University. Regular input to the alignment matrix and learning objectives is provided by both internal and external committees to assure that learning outcomes meet the University requirements of BSc degrees but also the D1C requirements of EAEVE, thus assuring a transition of BSc graduates into the MSc study programme at UGhent.

3.3.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The SPC and EQCU actions assure that the programme contents and learning outcomes are regularly monitored and reviewed.
- Feedbacks from stakeholders and assessment results are regularly used as input data to measure if learning outcomes are effectively achieved.

ANTWERP:

- The educational programme governance / QA processes implemented at UAntwerp assure that the programme structure as well as the learning objectives are well monitored, that external input is sought, and that substantial changes have to be approved in advance.

3.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- It is suggested that communication to students about the D1Cs be reinforced.

3.3.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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 an 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

GHENT: A 4-steps procedure is used to introduce major changes in the curriculum: 1) proposal introduced by the Director of studies and the chair of the Study Programme Committee (SPC) based on the QA review (see 3.3.1); 2) discussion and approval by SPC; 3) approval by the Faculty council; 4) submission to the Programme committee of Ghent University of the proposed changes and transitional measures. Following approval, the changes are communicated to all relevant internal and external stakeholders.

The SPC has 14 voting members including the heads of departments and 6 bachelor and master students. It receives information from various thematic advisory committees (assessment, externships, Master dissertation and Education Quality Control Unit). A Ghent University department (DOWA) provides support for all education-related activities at university and faculty level. It provides education training to faculty staff.

ANTWERP: The University has a clearly defined governance structure (University, Faculty, Department) with established committees in both strategic and educational matters are discussed and decided. Educational decisions related to the BSc veterinary medicine are taken by the respective education committee, in which all members of academic staff who cover a programme component, representatives of the assistant and non-statutory academic personnel, student representatives and alumni as well as one delegate from the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of UGent have a seat. The established national and university QA system assures that programmes are reviewed periodically, and reviews and subsequent changes of the curriculum implemented into the study programme information and made available online and in-class to all stakeholders and students. The human resources (HR) division of the University offers seminars, workshops and training courses to maintain and improve educational competences.

3.4.2. Comments

- The successful implementation of quality assurance should be highlighted in both Ghent and Antwerp. The main processes are properly monitored.
- The close collaboration between the services of the universities of Ghent and those of the faculties allow the emergence of a quality culture.

3.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

- For both VEEs the progress achieved through the actions carried out in the quality assurance system should be better communicated to make the value of the approach more visible to the whole community.

3.4.4. Decision

The VEEs are compliant with Standard 3.4.

Standard 3.5: External Practical Training (EPT) is compulsory training activities organised outside the VEE, the student being under the direct supervision of a non-academic person (e.g. a practitioner). EPT cannot replace the core intramural training

nor the extramural training under the close supervision of academic staff (e.g. ambulatory clinics, herd health management, practical training in FSQ and VPH).

Since the veterinary degree is a professional qualification with Day One Competences, EPT must complement and strengthen the academic education inter alia by enhancing student's professional knowledge.

3.5.1. Findings

GHENT: EPT, called Externship by the VEE, is conducted in Y3, Y5 and Y6 with specific objectives. Moreover, the SPC sets up a list of skills to be performed during the EPT in Y6.

In Y3, it is called Orientation externship. The student has to discover three different professional fields of veterinary activities according to his/her own choice. It lasts 3 weeks and accounts for 3 ECTS.

In Y5, it is part of the veterinary public health course V. It lasts 1 week and accounts for 3 ECTS.

In Y6, the EPT focuses on the implementation in the fields of the student's learning and therefore varies according to the graduation track. It lasts 8 weeks for all tracks, except for the Pork, Poultry and Rabbit track which lasts 5 weeks. 9 ECTS are acquired for all tracks except the Pork, Poultry and Rabbit track which accounts for 5 ECTS.

Students benefit from an additional 4 weeks when they choose an EPT linked to the majors "Wildlife health in the context of conservation" and "Veterinary medicine in the global South".

When linked to the "International Clinic" major, the duration is increased to 9 and up to 13 weeks to allow participation in Erasmus programs.

ANTWERP: During their third year of the bachelor program, students undertake two one-week EPTs. The first EPT takes place during the summer holidays between the second and third year and is part of the Skills Lab module II. This EPT focuses on day-to-day animal care and animal handling in a routine farm animal setting, small animal breeders or shelters. Students are given key questions to focus on during their visit, which increases the learning efficiency and provides guidance for their seminar group task in the following semester. Students must choose a motivated EPT at a production animal or companion animal facility.

The second one-week EPT occurs during the second semester of the third year, where students visit a veterinary practice and observe the day-to-day preclinical and clinical work. They are also asked to expand on one clinical case, which becomes the topic of an interactive practical session in the Skills Lab course. Students must motivate their choice for a large or small animal veterinary practice or a mixed practice.

3.5.2. Comments

GHENT & ANTWERP:

- The EPT in all fields of activities complements the teaching and training in several disciplines at the VEE, strengthens the day one skills and increases the student competences.

3.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- Student feedback on veterinary EPTs should be systematically collected and made available to students in subsequent years.

3.5.4. Decision

The VEEs are compliant with Standard 3.5.

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

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

3.6.1. Findings

GHENT: There is a contract between the EPT provider, the VEE and the student which is generated and registered by a software program called VESTA. The evaluation of the student is carried out online via VESTA. The EPT provider can contact the EPT coordinator or any member of the Externship Committee, which consists of 15 members, including students. The Externship Committee is chaired by a senior and experienced faculty member.

ANTWERP: A contract describes the conditions of the EPT and the relationship between the VEE, the student and the EPT provider as well as the insurance matters. The signature of the student is not required as everything can be carried out on the Mobility Online platform. A risk assessment of the EPT is also carried out and has to be read by the student before starting the EPT.

The internship supervisor discusses the learning objectives of the student at the beginning of the EPT. The EPT provider evaluates the student, who must complete a survey on the EPT when it is over.

Each EPT site is visited beforehand by the teachers in charge of the EPT in order to assess its quality. Every 2-3 years, EPT providers are invited by the VEE to learn how to assess students properly.

Several members of staff supervise the EPT while another staff member is the internship supervisor.

3.6.2. Comments

GHENT

- Monitoring of EPT is very structured and allows relevant feedback both to students and providers.

ANTWERP:

- The two one-week EPT are covered by a legal framework, with an oversight provided by a core group within the VEE.

3.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.6.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: Students are fully responsible for the successful running of their EPT, from the intake by the EPT provider to the learning objectives, the completion of the logbook, the evaluation of the workplace, and their personal reflections on the activity. They need to be aware of the course-specific learning outcomes, set their own learning goals, and discuss with their mentor how to achieve them. Everything is recorded on VESTA. The EPT provider must guide the student, evaluate the logbook and provide feedback. If necessary, students can complain, possibly anonymously, to the EPT director.

ANTWERP: Students receive information on EPT through a brochure produced by the VEE and two compulsory information sessions before starting their EPT. Once the EPT is chosen, the student can register on Mobility Online. In order to stimulate their initiative and communication skills, each student after the appropriate indications, is called to carry out all the procedures for the stipulation of the contract with the EPT provider.

For the first EPT, students can use a list of “useful questions” as a guidance in order to focus on specific issues (husbandry, nutrition, welfare, etc.) This list replaces the logbook. The findings will be discussed in small groups and presented during a one-day seminar.

For the second EPT, a logbook is provided by the VEE and can be used as a model. Students must choose a clinical case seen during the EPT for a practical session.

Students can voice concerns related to the EPT with the internship supervisor at any time.

3.7.2. Comments

GHENT & ANTWERP:

- Students have a large choice of EPT activities and benefit from an appropriate follow-up. They have to take responsibility for the content and provide feedback whether the content has been covered.

3.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.7.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: The FVMG is in Merelbeke, a small town in the suburbs of Ghent. It consists of two campuses Merelbeke and Heide. The FVMG is easily accessible by car and has a large car parking lot. It can also easily be reached by bike (8 km from Ghent city centre) and there is a bus stop at the entrance of the campus.

There were no signs to indicate the presence of a veterinary hospital on site.

The campus 'Merelbeke' includes:

- A 4-story laboratory building with adjacent housing facilities for laboratory animals and the veterinary research building.
- The buildings for morphology and pathology and exotics/non-conventional small animals' clinic plus bacteriology/mycology
- The buildings for small and large animals' clinics with offices and laboratories and stables/riding hall/examination hall in the back
- The restaurant, the building for the faculty central administration, which also includes the library and the skills lab building are located at the entrance of the campus.

Campus 'Heide' houses the Department of Veterinary and Biosciences and has facilities for the housing of faculty owned horses. On the same premises the veterinary student organisation has a facility ("de Peerdestal") used for student activities including a faculty club for students and faculty members.

The FVMG also has a teaching farm for ruminants (Bio-centrum Agrivet) and participates in the pig facility of IAFF. Both are in Melle at 5,5 km from campus 'Merelbeke'.

Students attend the Dispensary for first opinion work. This facility has two consult rooms, a theatre, prep area and imaging room with an x-ray and ultrasound room.

In the first year of the veterinary curriculum, different teaching locations in the centre of Ghent (8 km from the main campus) are used.

The buildings of the FVMG are owned by Ghent University that is primarily responsible for maintaining and upgrading the buildings. Each year 30 to 50 million euro is used to realise building and renovation plans throughout the university. In July 2022, the building plan '[UGent Verbeeldt 2050](#)' was launched and aims at reorganising and clustering the more than 20 campus locations in 3 major clusters.

The FVMG complies with EU and national legal regulations. All working equipment complies with current European legislation and the equipment is subject to the required periodic inspections by an External Service for Technical Inspections, an independent inspection body recognized by the government (Ghent University framework agreement). The Internal Service for Prevention and Protection at Work (Safety Department, Department of Occupational Health, the department of psycho-social well-being and the Radiation Protection Service) together with the Environmental Office of the university, inspect all workplaces every 2 years. The results of these analyses are discussed with the departmental heads and the dean. All necessary adaptations are performed to ensure a safe working space.

The laboratories and animal facilities meet the legal biosafety / biosecurity requirements and operate under supervision and with authorization of the Department of Environment and Spatial Development of the Flemish government. Internal audits are periodically performed by the

biosafety coordinator.

ANTWERP: The Bachelor in Veterinary Medicine is allocated on the Campus Drie Eiken where all the activities are carried out. In addition to lecture halls the Campus provides the rooms (dry and wet labs) needed for practical sessions such as animal dissection, histology, biochemistry, physiology and gross pathology.

A well-equipped two-floor library available for students at FFBD with several microscopes and skeletons. Space was available for students to work in groups There was a space to be used for mindfulness training.

Office rooms for the staff are also present. Lecture halls are well-equipped with internet access and other new multimedia technologies. All the facilities allow access to wheelchairs.

The Campus and buildings are maintained and cleaned by the university's Infrastructure department staff or external providers (buildings). The education stable "The Ark" is cleaned by trained employees and veterinary students. Annually, maintenance work is planned and requested by UAntwerp.

New constructions or rebuilding are implemented by the UAntwerp after consulting with the Faculty and the Health and Safety Department. The latter is in charge of ensuring the compliance of the facilities with the national and international legislation. Animal facilities are equipped with cleaning and disinfection units. Students have to read biosecurity handbooks and then follow strict measures of biosafety when entering the stable Ark and other animal facilities.

All the procedures carried out in animal facilities are supervised by a consultant veterinarian, not employed by the University.

4.1.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The funding for the VEE going forward indicates that it may be difficult to maintain the facilities to the standards required
- All aspects of the physical facilities provide an environment conducive to learning, including internet access
- There are plans to update some parts e.g isolation and kennel areas of the VTH (small animals) by 2024
- The Dispensary does not meet radiation safety legislation.

ANTWERP:

- Campus Drie Eiken has sufficient facilities that are regularly cleaned and checked for safety and comply with all relevant legislation including health, safety, biosecurity, accessibility to people with reduced mobility, and EU animal welfare and care standards.

4.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- The VEE is encouraged to continue to look into ways of maintaining their building to the highest standards and to undertake the necessary changes in the facilities to meet modern standards.
- Fit appropriate signage and lighting for radiation within the Dispensary. See 4.9.3.

4.1.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: There are a number of lecture rooms available for teaching. All lectures are recorded and so not all students attend lectures allowing for adequate lecture room space for all students. There are few rooms for group work. The faculty library has been changed into a multifunctional room with capacity for 40 students.

There is no separate computer room as the policy is for students to bring their own computers, however, working spaces both in the cantina (outside or lunch meal times), in the museum of anatomy and in the library are provided. The cantina becomes a silent place at 3:00 pm

For practical work, there is a demonstration theatre for anatomy and a cadaver dissection room. Lockers are available for students to use throughout the various buildings of FVMG.

The microscopy room has 100 microscopes.

The laboratory building houses a diagnostic practical exercise room with another facility for other exercises such as bacteriology is also available for use as well as as a lecture theatre

The clinic building houses one practical area for small animals and 2 for large animals and are used for surgery, dentistry, and orthopaedic practical exercises and for reproduction practical exercises.

There is a state-of-the-art clinical skills lab fitted out with a wide variety of practical and clinical skills. The lab is open during normal working hours for classes for students throughout their course. The lab staff in addition run practice sessions for specific tasks that students can book online. The room is also used for animal handling and clinical examination of live dogs. Communication skills are also taught here.

Students use the restaurant from 3.00 pm (once food service is over), a study room adjacent to the campus library as well as the anatomy museum for study, with open access for both. They also have access to the space in libraries of 9 other faculties in Ghent.

There is a restaurant open for food from 11.30 to 14.00 during the week.

There are 12 bedrooms for overnight accommodation for students on call in the clinics.

ANTWERP: The Campus contains lecture halls well-equipped, rooms for group work, seminar rooms, and a state-of-art multi-room skill lab dedicated to veterinary students.

In different buildings a dissection hall for anatomy, embryology and gross pathology is present together with a large microscopy room, physiology and biochemical training and research laboratories.

The stable facility “The Ark” is equipped for keeping the necessary number of animals for hands-on non-clinical training (see Standard 4.3). In addition, there are several facilities for students such as a cafeteria, a resting room, a library, study rooms and several outdoor green spaces. Sanitary rooms and a limited number of locker rooms available to students. Offices

accommodate two to four employees and are located close to the research laboratories or practical rooms.

There are multiple bookable study spaces for students who can also book a study place at other campuses (e.g. city campus) of UAntwerp.

4.2.2. Comments

GHENT:

- Lecture theatres, teaching laboratories, tutorial rooms, clinical facilities and other teaching spaces are adequate in number, size and equipped for the instructional purposes and are generally well maintained
- Students have access to adequate and sufficient study, self-learning, recreation, locker, sanitary and food service facilities
- Offices, teaching preparation and research laboratories are sufficient for the needs of the academic and support staff.
- The VEE is commended for the well-equipped and organised clinical skills lab that is fully integrated into the respective teaching pathways.

ANTWERP:

- Given the number of students attending the Bachelor course, there are several lecture halls and there are enough rooms for practicals and the skills lab.

4.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

4.2.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: The VEE has access to a number of healthy animals for teaching purposes -

- 5 horses for clinical demonstrations held in individual boxes and a further 10 in a group stable
- There are facilities for 70 dogs and 20 cats.
- 2 bulls are held on site and one goat and one sheep for clinical demonstrations
- A limited number of calves are bought each year for surgical practices.
- The VEE has access to the Bio-centrum Agrivet farm with its robot dairy farm
- The VEE has an agreement with the pig facility of IAFF
- Some of the flooring in the VTH is tiled, and none of it covered for disinfection purposes. In a number of areas the tiling is uneven and needs replacing.
- There is a separate exotic animal hospital with an extensive caseload

Hospitalised cases are as follows:

- Consulting rooms for the different specialties
- 11 cages for dogs and cats in ICU.
- There are more kennels for hospitalisation including 3 large dog cages and 10 cat cages
- Four separate rooms for exotic/non-conventional animals, allowing for up to 20-30 animals per room, they are temperature controlled for different species
- There is a scintigraphy unit for dogs and cats
- 125 individual boxes for horses and 64 boxes for cattle. Some boxes have video surveillance
- A medical imaging unit offers services for both small and large animal. The unit includes CT and MRI scanning.

There are central clinical diagnostic laboratories as well as small labs in the clinics. There are also point of care tests available in the clinics. If tests are not available in house, outside labs are used.

Necropsies are performed daily in the unit, normally 2 horses, 2 cattle and 3-4 dogs/cats.

The Dispensary 'Prins Laurent' provides first line care to companion animals owned by people with financial difficulties. This is open 8-12 each day. Operations are carried out from 8-10, followed by consults. Students carry out 1 operation per day, one student doing the anaesthetic and one the surgery, supervised by an intern. Gloves, masks and hats are worn during these procedures. They carry out 8-10 consults per day. All students on Clinic 1 visit the Dispensary and carry out consults. Students on the Master graduation track for companion animals visit the clinic for 2 weeks. Medicines are held in a locked cabinet with the part time veterinarian the only one with the combination. The drugs are checked daily. The facility has an X-ray and an ultrasound machine. These are in a room off the theatre area. No biosecurity signage or radiation light was visible to prevent entry into this room. Gowns were available for staff and students to wear in this area. They are able to carry out some blood sampling tests e.g blood smears.

FVMG does not have its own slaughterhouse. Students in 5th year visit at least 2 different slaughterhouses off site.

Students can choose to visit the animal shelter in Ghent on a voluntary basis. They are insured through student services. This is a modern well run establishment housing over 100 cats and 40 dogs in environment rich areas. Students can visit, prearranged by the student body, on a Wednesday when an external vet visits. He demonstrates a cat spay and a cat neuter. There are 10 cats for surgery a day, 5 for castration and 5 for spaying. The students then carry out the procedure themselves under his supervision. All drugs are locked in a secure locker in a locked room, only accessible by the vet. The students are not involved with the dogs in the shelter. The students that volunteer are mainly from the production animal or other tracks rather than the companion animal one.

Students of the 3rd bachelor visit the pig farm at the IAFF facility for 1 morning to familiarise with the structure and the animals, they also visit di Biocentrum AGRIVET for three mornings one to learn the handling, one for the housing and one for the stall management.

Students attend the exotic animal hospital which is a modern facility with an extensive caseload

ANTWERP: The stable facility 'The Ark' is approved by the Animal Ethics Committee and can house a limited number of healthy animals: two to four horses, eight to twelve llamas, two to ten cows, four sheep, goats and pigs. It is also equipped with safety stands to prepare students

for the clinical examination of large animals safely. There are biosafety units including foot mats and a marked changing area, and signage with hygiene instructions.

In addition, there is a kennel with room for two dogs (to be used during regular working hours), regularly visited by a veterinarian, and some facilities to house research animals such as rodents. All the facilities are equipped to maintain good air quality for the animals.

Premises for hands-on clinical training, practical Food Safety and VPH are not provided since practical training in these subjects is not included in the BSc curriculum.

4.3.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The VEE is commended for the exotic hospital and the extent and scope of its caseload as well as the enthusiastic staff.
- The VEE is commended for its extensive caseload in pathology.
- Some of the facilities in the VTH require modernisation. Some of the spaces are outdated and not up to modern standards but are functional and not detrimental to teaching and to the animals under the VTHs care.
- Horse and cattle are examined and housed in the same space as equine.
- Plans and funding for changes to the structure and facilities offered for the hospitalisation of dogs and cats has been obtained and work is expected to start in the coming months to be completed by the end of this year.
- The absence of radiation signage in the Dispensary needs to be rectified.

ANTWERP:

- It is commended for the facilities being well maintained.
- Commendation for its well-equipped clinical skills lab that is fully integrated into the respective teaching pathways.
- Commended for its very well-equipped lecture theatres
- There is a plan for new structures and reorganisation of the external paddocks of the “Ark”.

4.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- In the long term, having separate handling areas for horses and ruminants would be beneficial to both species
- The floors in the VTH should be improved as some are cracked and uneven, which is an infection threat.
- Radiation protection signs and activity light must be placed in the Dispensary. See 4.9.3

4.3.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: The VTH is open throughout the year and has a busy 24-hour emergency clinic in which the students participate in small animal, equine and ruminant cases.

There is an ambulatory clinic for large animals with emphasis on cattle and some small ruminants. Routine herd health work is also carried out by the clinic.

Within the VTH, the standard of education and clinical research were research-based and evidence-based clinical training supervised by academic staff trained to teach and to assess,

4.4.2. Comments

GHENT:

- There is availability for staff and students of facilities and patients for performing clinical research and relevant QA procedures.
- For ruminants, an on-call service is available
- Although Belgium has some basic practice standards, there is no national scheme for veterinary hospitals like the VTH.

4.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

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

GHENT: The clinics have a broad range of equipment of which students have access to when on clinics.

There is a large necropsy room on site.

Each Department has its own pharmacy that is managed according to the national legislation. All controlled drugs are held in locked cupboards, some of which have keys and others keypads for access. The policy on checking the contents of the controlled drugs cupboards varies between the units, some doing twice a week while others only do a check once every six months. There are a number of pharmacy rooms within the VTH, some for larger quantity storage and some for everyday use. In general, veterinary staff have keys to these locked rooms/safes and

administration or nursing staff are in charge of checking the quantities used of controlled substances within the small animal VTH. Some of the cupboards have keys for access while others are opened by a keypad, which students could easily see when being opened. In other areas the senior veterinary surgeon carries out this task.

Ordering of medicines and consumables are done individually by each clinic.

Opened medicine bottles that were out of date were found in one of the clinical areas.

4.5.2. Comments

GHENT:

- There is no consistent protocol for checking usage of controlled substances with checks being made twice a week in some clinics and once every 6 months in others.
- Open out of date drugs were found in the clinical area in the equine VTH.
- Students have access to a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic facilities, including diagnostic imaging, anaesthesia, clinical pathology, intensive/critical care, surgeries and treatment facilities, ambulatory services, pharmacy and necropsy facilities.

4.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- A protocol providing a consistent way of checking the usage of controlled drugs should be considered.
- Out of date drugs must be disposed of correctly and on time.
- Consistent ways of opening controlled cupboards would be useful.
- More centralised purchasing could save on expenditure.

4.5.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.5.

Standard 4.6: Appropriate isolation facilities must be provided to meet the need for the isolation and containment of animals with communicable diseases. Such isolation facilities must be properly constructed, ventilated, maintained and operated to provide for animal care and for prevention of spread of infectious agents. They must be adapted to all animal species commonly handled in the VTH.

4.6.1. Findings

GHENT: There are 17 isolation rooms available on site, 10 for horses/cattle and the others for dogs/cats (6) and exotic animals (1). There are biosecurity rules for entering these stables. Some of the equine unit doors were wide open and had easy, unregulated access, others were closed. Wild birds had access to these areas.

There were no consistent entry areas specifically for staff/students to change into appropriate PPE before entry to one of the equine units. Lorries had open access to the isolation areas. A bucket for cleaning feet in one of the calf isolation areas was present but not being used consistently.

In the SA VTH isolation facility, staff had to change into PPE in the general corridor including shoes. No disinfection mat was available within the isolation unit itself. On leaving the area, they have to exit still wearing their clogs, which are left in the general corridor.

There was no consistent biosecurity signage in all places. A number of notices were made of simple pieces of paper and stuck to the wall/ door with sellotape.

Some signage was only in Dutch, some in English and some in both.

The manure from the isolation unit is not decontaminated like the one coming from the experimental animals unit but is mixed with the 'normal' manure from healthy animals.

4.6.2. Comments

GHENT:

- Horses and cattle could share isolation facilities. One unit has a number of separate boxes all within the same air space. The entrance to this area has limited signage or visible protocols were seen and no separate changing area for PPE
- The access to the isolation facilities for both large and small animals did not meet present day standards. There is little to impede entry by non-authorized staff/students. No cordoned off access for lorries going to large animal isolation was seen.
- The area to go from the VTH corridor into the isolation unit in the small animal hospital did not allow sufficient biosecurity provisions to be followed and adequate instructions for students on PPE to be worn was not clear and/or visible.
- There was no separate change area in one of the isolation barns delineating dirty from clean areas.
- All biosafety signage was not apparent/or and installed in a permanent manner, some were attached to the wall using sellotape.
- To assist foreign students, all safety signage should have been in English as well as Dutch. Instructions to students on protocols was also often only given in Dutch
- The manure from the isolation units should be decontaminated or collected and disposed of in a separate and secure manner in order not to spread potentially diseased material

4.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- A separate entry area for changing with appropriate PPE should be formed within the cat/dog isolation unit or delineated with disinfection mat for shoes on entry. This is expected and may happen under the new plans for that area of the VTH by 2024
- The entry to the large animal unit should be made more secure to prevent people and wild birds having access to the unit with the possible consequential disease implications
- Appropriate signage should be visible with full instructions on biosecurity. These should be in Dutch and English to ensure Erasmus and other foreign students can understand the instructions. The signs were not consistent in this in any part of the VTHs, large or small animal
- Access to isolation units should be secured for lorries and for other non-authorized persons
- All students instruction on first day of rotations must be given in English as well as Dutch to ensure all students can understand what is expected of them in these areas
- The VEE must decontaminate manure from its isolation units as they do for experimental animals.

4.6.4. Decision

The VEE is not compliant with Standard 4.6 as although isolation facilities were provided, they were not maintained and operated to provide for animal care and for prevention of spread of infectious agents to modern standards.

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

GHENT: The service is available 24/7, accommodation for students is available.

The ambulatory clinic has 5 cars - 2 for veterinarians on duty in the clinic, 2 on the road for herd health visits and 1 for claw trimming or a visit to a problem herd

1 or 2 students will accompany the vets on calls.

4.7.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The VEE has an ambulatory clinic for production animals so that students can practise field 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

GHENT: The FVMG has transport for patients, teaching animals and /or dead animals. They also have the ability to collect and carry small animal carcasses. Students organise their transport themselves except when on the ambulatory clinic when they go with the veterinarian.

ANTWERP: Students are transported to extramural activities by private buses paid by the Education Committee budget with a small contribution (5-10€) from the students. They can also use their own cars. Biosafety procedures are always addressed.

4.8.2. Comments

GHENT and ANTWERP

- The transport of students, live animals, cadavers, materials from animal origin and other teaching materials was clearly done in agreement with national and EU standards.

4.8.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

4.8.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: There is a Faculty Manual for biosecurity, environment and health in a Sharepoint library. This covers 4 domains - biosecurity clinics, biosecurity (contained use) labs, Health and Safety, environment. The management of the manual is by the Biosecurity Committee.

For students the Ufora course 'Biosecurity - FVMG' provides information of 'Introduction to Biosecurity and Risk Classification, General and Hand Hygiene, Clothing and Footwear, and Cleaning and Disinfection.

Students should pass this course at the start of the first masters and before they enter clinics. They will also have had training in 'Housing and biosecurity' in their second year.

There is a clear protocol for accident reporting at departmental level. If it is a reportable accident, it will be escalated to the central University department.

As stated earlier, the Dispensary has no red-light radiation warning sign or appropriate signs on entering for protective clothing use. Thyroid collars were not visible.

Dirty boots were found in some areas alongside trainers which also were not clean. In addition, in some areas of the large animal clinic, a number of staff and students were not wearing suitable shoes while working on animals.

ANTWERP: All courses on hygiene and biosafety are taught at the beginning of the third year before the start of the intra-muros internship and before entering the animal facilities. In addition, students receive written instructions related to hygiene on animal holding facilities, and are instructed on the use of the hygiene lock when first entering "The Ark". Students also receive information on biosecurity and how to do practicals before attending the dissection room. They are given the necessary PPE (gloves) and can only enter the room when wearing a clean lab coat.

Instructions are repeated several times throughout the curriculum.

4.9.2. Comments

GHENT:

- In the companion animal surgery area, students are required to provide their own clogs and are responsible for cleaning them. These they take home each day.
- Students and staff have appropriate training courses in biosecurity.
- Isolation facilities - see 4.8.6.
- There is no system for accident reporting across departments that might identify trends in accidents or a problem with a specific individual; however, location and types of accidents are compiled and used to reduce hazards.
- Boots were found with mud on them in the entrance to the equine VTH as well as a mixture of dirty trainers alongside clean boots.
- The signage is inconsistent across the various departments, some in Dutch and some in English and some both. Biosecurity instructions at the beginning of rotations are not always given in English as well as Dutch which can be a problem for foreign students See 4.8.6 as well.

- Although protocols exist for the clinical areas, these are not consistently implemented in all cases.
- Some areas appeared to have a relaxed culture relating to biosecurity in general.
- Appropriate radiation notices, protective clothing and lighting must be placed in the Dispensary.

ANTWERP:

- Students are made aware of the relevance of hygiene and biosafety. Biosecurity and other signage should be all in Dutch and English even if there are few international students.

4.9.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- Use of shoes dedicated for areas such as theatres should be kept on site to guarantee a higher level of biosafety
- Boots must be cleaned and be free of mud when hung up in clinical areas
- Signage on biosecurity, use of PPE and other protocols must be used consistently throughout the VEE
- This signage should follow the protocols and be in two languages
- All staff and students must follow the policies and protocols
- The Dispensary must put in the appropriate radiation signage/red light and policies for everyone to see and use
- Reinforcement of these each rotation for all to understand and follow is encouraged.

ANTWERP:

- Signage across the campus available in English.

4.9.4. Decision

The VEE at Ghent is partially compliant with Standard 4.9 because of sub-optimal posting of biosecurity signs, and other procedures not being adhered to, in a number of areas where students are trained.

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

GHENT: Anatomy education in the VEE is done on cadavers and slaughterhouse materials. Anatomy museum with a rich collection and museum specimens are actively used in education. Anatomy training on fresh material is repeated 8 times for groups of 6 students and all students dissect each common animal species, including laboratory animals. The adequacy and ethical

aspects of animal materials used in anatomical education are closely monitored.

The basic principle of the VEE for practical training is "Never on a live animal for the first time". Hence, preclinical training using healthy animals is preceded by an online learning path with video material and a practicum with models. Healthy cattle, small ruminants, pigs, horses, dogs and cats are used in the preclinical training of students. A total of 137 cattle is used for palpation in groups of 7 students. Handling of cattle is taught to students in groups of 10. A sheep and a goat in the internal medicine clinic are used for handling practices. The pig herd at IAFF is visited in groups of 10 students for preclinical training. The horses, dogs and cats are used in groups of 5 and 7 students for handling and palpation, respectively. In recent years, The VEE owned screened social dogs and cats have been replaced by social dogs and cats of students and staff in preclinical training.

There is a large and diverse caseload in the VTH. Except for a slight decrease in companion animals in the 2019-2020 academic year, the number of patients seen in the VTH has not been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The percentage of first opinion patients in ruminants, pigs, poultry and rabbits is relatively high and they are mostly seen at the ambulatory clinic. Depending on the species, at least half of exotic pets seen are first opinion cases. Only 15% of patients seen in the VTH are first opinion cases. However, The Dispensary 'Prins Laurent' provides first-line veterinary care to companion animals. The VTH has an exceptional equine caseload and about 25% of equine patients are first opinion cases.

The VEE obtains necropsy materials from many different sources. In addition to domestic animal species, students perform necropsies on a wide range of species from aquatic animals, to wildlife animals and exotic animals. Organic material emerging from anatomy and pathology education is disposed of by a professional company.

The number and variety of healthy and sick animals, cadavers, and materials of animal origin provide practical and safe hands-on training for all students enrolled. Practical and safe hands-on training is performed in small groups of students. Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin are adequately adapted to the number of students for the acquisition of Day One Competences. A very high number of equine patients are treated in the VTH. Therefore, the only ESEVT Indicator that shows a negative balance for the last 3 Y is the I14: n° of equine patients seen extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually.

Cattle and pig herds and poultry flocks are visited very frequently for training in animal production and herd health management. In contrast, only a few small ruminant flocks, rabbit herds and aquatic animal units are visited.

The VEE continuously repeats a PDCA cycle to ensure the number and variety of animals and materials of animal origin for preclinical and clinical training.

The VEE adopts procedures to ensure the welfare of animals used in educational and research activities. Ethical review committee, including student members, reviews applications for educational activities and research projects involving animal experiments. Information on the Ethical Review Committee, animal experimentation and legislation hereof are publicly available. Animal welfare in the slaughterhouses is assured by the continuous presence of an animal welfare officer, supervised by the Flemish Government veterinarian responsible for animal welfare.

ANTWERP: Materials of animal origin are used starting from the first year (Anatomy 15h and Embryology 6h) to the second (Anatomy 83h). Live animals are approached by students only after having acquired basic skills with simulators or dummies or plastinated specimens. It is taught during the second year (Anatomy 12 h, summer internship 40 h) and third year (Skill lab 127 h). The VEE uses several methods to ensure the students receive preclinical training such as stimulation to discussion, personal thinking, reading and presenting. During the third year, students have to demonstrate the ability to integrate different programme components. Since 2016-2017 a more prominent training on basic veterinary skills has started within the curriculum. This type of activity, performed in small groups of students, is comprised of i) animal handling during internship in intra or extramural facilities; ii) basic preclinical examination (skills) of large or companion animals; iii) basic preclinical surgical skills such as aseptic procedures and suturing techniques.

All animals housed in the teaching stable are registered as animals used for educational purposes and are treated according to the Animal Welfare Service (in agreement with Animal Ethics Committee of UAntwerp) and are regularly checked for welfare by the veterinarian in charge. Horses and cows stay at the “Ark” for six months and then are exchanged with animals housed elsewhere.

Material of animal origin is purchased from slaughterhouses and transported to the VEE using appropriately equipped vehicles. Cadavers are supplied by veterinarians or by farmers. Healthy material is stored separately from pathological material. Plastinated material is purchased from the Centre of Excellence for plastination and virtual reality of the University of Utrecht.

5.1.2. Comments

GHENT:

- Every student performs anatomical dissections and necropsies in all domestic animal species and independent of the graduation track they choose.
- A high caseload for all species provides a highly significant clinical exposure for students.
- The number and variety of animal material used in pathology education is commendable.
- The VEE has an excellent Poultry, Exotic Companion Animals, Wildlife and Experimental Animals clinic with an extensive caseload.
- Continuous efforts for the welfare of animals used in education and research are much appreciated.

ANTWERP:

- It is a mission of the VEE to substitute live animals with simulators or dummies. The VEE runs a PDCA cycle created by different partners, intra and extra academics.

5.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- The VEE is encouraged to continue efforts to increase the number of visits in small ruminant flocks.
- Although it is regularly recorded on paper sheets, it is recommended to know the exact number of bovine patients seen in the ambulatory clinic.

5.1.4. Decision

The VEEs are compliant with Standard 5.1.

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

GHEENT: The VEE offers practical training at external sites in addition to facilities on the Campus and VTH. Fourth-year students (Clinic I) and last-year students from the companion animals track (Clinic IV) are on duty at the Ghent City Companion Animal Dispensary. The activities of the dispensary are carried out by the VEE at high standards.

Some of the extramural activities are performed at Institute for Agricultural, Fisheries and Food Research (IAFF), an independent scientific research centre of the Flemish Government. There are facilities for pig production in IAFF. Being one of the owners, the VEE actively uses the new pig facility for educational purposes. The pig facility is visited every 3 weeks by students to monitor herd health. The farm is at the highest level in terms of biosecurity, animal health and welfare. Visiting students participate in meticulously planned practicals covering all stages of production, considering the academic year they are in. The VEE also provides veterinary services to older pig farm at IAFF and herd visits are made with students. Furthermore, fifth- and sixth-year students visit the IAFF dairy farm for regular herd health controls. Practical training in IAFF is well organised.

Biocentrum-Agrivet of Ghent University has been extensively used by the VEE for teaching and research. Year 3 students visit Agrivet dairy cattle farm for "Clinical & Communicative Skills II" course and animal handling practices are performed under direct academic supervision. During the ambulatory clinic and herd health visits within Clinic I, practical work i.e. body condition scoring, reproductive tract and udder health examinations are shown to fourth-year students in groups. Master 3 students of the graduation Track 'Ruminants' spend 1 week in Agrivet dairy cattle farm including nights. During this period, the students are given daily tasks to perform and they participate in the entire workload of the farm. One academic staff member attends to students one day a week. Students record their activities and make a presentation at the end of the week.

Agrivet dairy cattle farm has bedrooms, kitchen and meeting room for students. The farm is managed by well-trained staff and provides an environment that enhances learning with an adequate number of productive livestock, equipment, and good animal husbandry practices.

The externship of final year students includes a full week visit to one of three sheep flocks during the lambing season. Students participate in the daily activities of the farms.

Students can visit the Small Animal Shelter of Ghent and voluntarily participate in cat castrations under supervision. The shelter is open to students of all tracks and of all three master years.

Externship and practical training of fifth year students in FSQ & VPH include joining an officer (inspector) from the FASFC in at least 2 different sectors (primary production, transformation, distribution or border control). A ham producing company is visited by all students of the fifth year, accompanied by an assistant from Ghent University during the visit to the premises. In addition, all students from the fifth year also visit at least 2 different slaughterhouses (pigs,

poultry, cattle). The students are accompanied by meat inspectors and the visit includes a recap of the entire process with a focus on the tasks of the veterinarian in the slaughterhouse.

ANTWERP: Students are introduced under academic supervision to animal production during an outside visit to a dairy farm and a horse breeder at the end of the second year, and also as part of Skills Lab module I. As part of the third-year programme component Animal Husbandry and Hygiene, students make a compulsory visit to a modern chicken farm, supervised by the lecturer teaching this programme component. Aspects of hygiene, animal management, husbandry and the 'One Health' concepts are then introduced.

5.2.2. Comments

GHENT:

- Both establishments use various opportunities to expose students to animal handling and practical tasks during visits and practicals under academic supervision in the respective years.
- Practical training of students at external sites is of high standards.

5.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

5.2.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: Nursing skills are taught from the second year on. It begins with preclinical skills on models and mannequins in the skills lab followed by hands-on nursing skills in the fourth year (Clinic I) and the fifth year (Clinic II and III).

The skills lab is well-equipped with all the necessary facilities for practicing nursing skills. Practical sessions in the skills lab are spread over four years of training. Therefore, the skills lab is used by a high number of students. During 4 major clinical rotations, students progress in nursing procedures under the supervision of a veterinarian. In the Master Dissertation IV course, students make a case presentation in front of a jury that is open publicly.

A specific list of hands-on clinical procedures is shared with students and EPT providers to ensure that less practiced procedures in the VTH are learned in EPT. Results are planned to be evaluated shortly.

5.3.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The VEE has a well-established learning pathway for students to be introduced to hands-

on preclinical and clinical procedures first in the skills lab and subsequently during the in-house rotations, with increasing responsibilities for patient intake and care.

- Well planned student group sizes enable students to learn and practice nursing skills.

5.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

5.3.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: An in-house application is being used for the patient registration system in the VTH. The application used for the small animal clinic and the large animal clinic has separate data files. The patient system is accessible directly from all examination and surgery rooms, and all relevant data are entered into the system instantly. Staff members can access the agenda and the patient files after logging in with their university account and password. All written clinical data, lab reports and medical images from the different departments can be viewed by all staff members.

The patient registration system is user-friendly and data security was ensured by defining the roles of users. The application has been redesigned recently and data security is provided by the University of Ghent.

Students can access the patient registration system both using computers in the hospital and by logging into their personal university accounts. Data entry of students into the system is only done under the control of a staff member. Students are free to access all clinical data for their case studies and master's theses.

A web based medical veterinary application (FUGA), is used for the recording of client and patient data at the Poultry, Exotic Companion Animals, Wildlife and Experimental Animals clinic. Authorization sharing has been determined in accessing the applications, and students can access patient records for clinical cases and their master's dissertations provided that they are in the relevant clinics.

Patient and herd data of the ambulatory clinic is being recorded on hand-filled information sheets. Although these records are open to student access, work continues to transfer data to the digital environment. There are ongoing efforts for digitalization of the data to overcome challenges specific to the ambulatory clinic: connection to prepare invoices for the clients, connection to the official databank for registered use of antibiotics, the privacy of the animal owners, the herd approach (instead of the individual animal approach in the other clinics).

5.4.2. Comments

GHENT:

- All clinical units except for the ambulatory service use a digital patient information

system; however, several different systems are currently still in operation.

5.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- It is suggested that ongoing patient registration system integration cover patients treated during herd health visits as well as the ones seen at the ambulatory clinic.

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

GHENT: In 2010, the University of Ghent decided to radically change its library by increasing its online content and making it available to everybody from anywhere. In short, to move from the paper age to the digital age! The library consists of a central unit and of 10 faculty libraries. The central unit holds the catalogue, offers technical support and is responsible for security.

The faculty libraries are in charge of the resources according to the study programmes provided. The VEE library will be transformed into a knowledge centre in 2023 with only three computers, but one librarian will remain on-site.

The VEE has its own library committee which advises on library services and collection development, prepares the budget, and evaluates the quality of services. The committee is composed of 5 members, one of whom is a student.

Before the start of any activity, teachers must assess the need for any learning materials whatever their types (syllabus, books, e-material, etc.) which must be recorded in the document “Course specifications”.

All students receive specific training in the use of the library in Y1 (Statistics course) and also in Y4 (Master dissertation I course).

All learning materials are accessible by students on the Ufora platform.

ANTWERP: The strategy of the VEE is to have an effective learning environment, both on site and on-line. Teaching and learning materials are available on the recently upgraded Blackboard platform.

When entering the Bachelor, students can log in to various platforms on the “Starting at UAntwerp” website. They also need to use the Student Portal to access Blackboard. These digital tools allow them to find all the relevant information they need.

As in Ghent, course material is listed on Blackboard by the teachers before the start of each course.

Training on information literacy, library use, search for scientific information and use of

sources is organised through Blackboard, videos and tutorials, as well as training sessions which can be individual.

The purchase of new teaching materials is decided by the Education Committee of Veterinary Medicine after suggestions from the teachers.

A specific working group is in charge of the learning environment and its actions are based on student and teacher surveys.

The VEE has a Faculty Library Committee which advises on library policy, is a consultative body and selects books, electronic journals, etc. for purchase.

The IT Governance Committee supervises all ICT matters. There are no students in the Library Council of the Faculty of FFBD in contrast with some other faculty councils. The library also consults the general Student Council considering the working and adaptations of the library. Informal contacts of the library head with students provide feedback for the working of the library.

6.1.2. Comments

GHENT and ANTWERP:

- Learning resources are easily accessible and students are taught on how to use them. Libraries offer a learning and working environment.

6.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

6.1.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: Staff, students and stakeholders have access to the on-line library on a 24/7 basis, and to the physical library from Monday to Saturday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. opening hours are extended from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm during exam sessions.

The library is staffed by a qualified librarian.

The VEE library can currently accommodate 30 students but will be converted in 2023 into 2 multi-purpose rooms to allow for working groups and increase capacity to 40 students.

The VEE receives 5.4% of the annual library budget of Ghent University which amounts to about 90.000 €, of which 5.000 € are spent on the purchase of e-books.

The Ghent University policy is to develop Wi-Fi (access and coverage) to implement the BYOD (bring your own device) principle. It also provides students with information on technical requirements and financing possibilities, as well as free use of many software, including Office 365.

Every document in the university catalogue can be scanned free of charge using a “scan button”. Anyone with a Ghent University account has access to the entire e-library, regardless of discipline. 40 of the 100 most read e-books are related to veterinary medicine.

ANTWERP: The library is located on campus Drie Eiken and is managed by 5.7 FTE. It contains not only digital documents, books, journals and historical collections but also anatomical models and microscopes which are available at any time.

Opening hours vary throughout the year but offer an average of 8 hours per day with an increase during exam periods.

In 2021, the budget was approximately 3.6 million €, of which 266.400 € of which were allocated to the FFBD.

The total surface of the library is 1.544 m² and is divided into study space on the ground floor and working space on the first floor. There is no space for working groups. It is equipped with 278 workstations, 43 of which with a computer, and power sockets and cords.

The Discovery Service on the library home page is the tool to search for scientific information whatever its nature (journal, article, database, etc.). The main databases are PubMed, Medline, Web of Science and Scopus.

Students and staff have access to the library on and off-campus.

Subsidiary libraries can be found in the different research groups.

The ICT Department is staffed with 91.9 FTE. The University has made investments in distance learning and streaming options since 2020. Several classrooms are fully equipped with modern media and digital tools. Students can also borrow laptops and have access to Blackboard.

5 technicians provide training and support to teachers in the use of high-tech equipment in their teaching.

Staff and students have access to numerous electronic learning resources from all over the world.

6.2.2. Comments

GHENT and ANTWERP:

- Both VEEs have qualified and dedicated librarians and IT experts as well as an effective portal highly conducive to learning, teaching and research.

6.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

6.2.4. Decision

The VEEs are compliant with Standard 6.1.

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

GHENT: The VEE library contains more than 9,200 titles which are in the university central catalogue and available free of charge.

The skill lab is under the responsibility of the teachers in charge of the course “Clinical and

Communication Skills” course. Y2 to Y5 students have access to it. It is well equipped and contains a wide range of models and workshops. It is used by around 1.000 students every year. The Skill lab team makes its own models and is part of the “Veterinary Clinical Skills and Simulation community”.

Electronic resources such as a virtual clinic, learning paths (online modules in which various learning activities and evaluation/feedback are offered to students in a structured way and include different learning materials), lecture recordings, knowledge clips and on-line cases are also available.

ANTWERP: 147 e-books and 101 e-journals are available in the VEE digital library, which is open 24 hours a day.

The Blackboard platform allows teachers to create and deliver on-line courses. It is also used for tests and as a communication channel. Recording of lectures is encouraged.

The classrooms for practicals are equipped according to modern needs (computers, cameras, microscopes, etc.)

In physiology, students use software and hardware to avoid killing live animals (muscle contraction) and can perform measurements on their own bodies (blood pressure, ECG). The software also allows students to test their knowledge and access the learning modules, which can all be done remotely.

Arrangements are made to help students with difficulties.

In anatomy, plastinated specimens and cadavers are used.

The skills lab covers over 240 m² and allows students to practice basic techniques (injection, suture, etc.) as well as laboratory techniques (pipetting, blood smear, etc.). A Haptic cow is used for rectal examination under the supervision of the teacher who can see on a computer screen what the student is doing. A kennel with two dogs can be found in the skills lab. After training in the skills lab, students are allowed to practise on live animals at the Ark.

6.3.2. Comments

GHENT and ANTWERP:

- The students have access to relevant learning resources. The practical skills lab for the development of procedural skills consists of a lot of models and equipment, with other projects in progress.
- The skill labs serve the 3R principle and “never the first time on a live animal” principle efficiently.

6.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

6.3.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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 advertising for prospective

national and international students.

Formal cooperations with other VEEs must also be clearly advertised.

7.1.1. Findings

GHENT: Information about Bachelor and Master study programmes is available on the University website in Dutch and less extensively in English languages. Prospective students can find the contents of the courses year by year and the terms of admission. In addition, information events are regularly organised within the faculty (Faculty Information Day, Faculty "Open Days") or in the 5 Flemish provinces (Study Information Days). Finally, Ghent University has a website dedicated to the information of international students.

There is no formal cooperation agreement with the University of Antwerp, but by law any student with a Bachelor's degree from this university can enrol for a Master's degree at Ghent University.

ANTWERP: All information concerning enrolment at UAntwerp is published on the UAntwerp admission pages and specifically in the Veterinary Medicine page for the Bachelor in veterinary medicine. Information about enrolment, study programme and learning outcome are in Dutch and English. More in-depth information is only in Dutch.

7.1.2. Comments

GHENT:

- Information regarding enrolment, educational programmes and progression are accurate and available in Dutch and English, through the websites and several electronic platforms

ANTWERP:

- In-depth information about the course programme on the website is in Dutch only.

7.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

ANTWERP:

- Introduce a complete English version of the information for students.

7.1.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: Due to free admission, the number of students enrolling each year may vary: in the last three years an average of 346 students enrolled each year. Over the last three academic years, an average of 242 veterinary students have graduated. 72.4% of them completed their degree in 6 years.

ANTWERP: Up to now there is a free admission rule so the number of students enrolling each

year may vary. In the last three years an average of 210 students enrolled each year. From 2023-2024 a *numerus fixus* will be established for veterinary education and an estimate of 80 places is considered for Antwerp Bachelor in Veterinary Medicine.

There is a variability of the number of students enrolled in the second and third year related to the acquisition of ECTS. In the last three academic years a mean of 14% of students graduated in line with the legal duration of the Bachelor, 31% one year more, 19% two years and 14% 3 years or more.

7.2.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The high number of students, especially in the bachelor programme, results in a high workload for the staff. The size of the practical groups is still adequate to ensure good learning but at the cost of a large number of repetitions.
- Digital resources have been developed to facilitate the dissemination of information.

ANTWERP:

- The high number of students and the percentage of students graduating later than the legal terms of the course is the result of unbalanced student/staff and consequently overload of teaching work and negative impact on teaching efficiency.

7.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT and ANTWERP:

- The introduction of a selective examination in September 2023 will lead to a decrease in the number of Bachelor students
- It is suggested to continue efforts in the production of innovative resources (digital contents, skills labs activities) and to reduce the group size per session for some practical activities in the Bachelor course.

7.2.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: Since 2017, students wishing to enter the FVMG must take an orientation test which is compulsory but not binding. As a result, there is no limit to the number of students enrolled

in the first year of the Bachelor's programme, which increases the academic load on the staff. Following a request from the FVMG and Ghent University for more than 30 years, an entrance examination will be introduced from the start of the academic year 2023, following the example of human medicine and dentistry. A maximum of 240 students will be able to enter either Ghent University or the University of Antwerp. A distribution of 160 students in Ghent and 80 in Antwerp is expected. The selection committee will be composed of 21 people appointed by the Flemish Ministry of Education and will be common to human medicine, dentistry and veterinary medicine.

An IT platform (SIMON-tool) allows students interested in veterinary training to estimate their probability of admission.

All students with a secondary degree will be able to participate, but the test will be held in Flemish for everybody.

ANTWERP: All applicants must fulfil the same requirements in terms of the entrance qualifications for the Bachelor of Science in Veterinary Medicine. The course is taught in Dutch. Foreign applicants must provide proof of Dutch language proficiency. Practicals are reduced during the first years due to the high number of enrolled students. All the graduate students can freely enrol in the Master of Science in Veterinary Medicine at Ghent VEE.

From the academic year 2023-2024, due to the rule of *numerus fixus* only 240 students will be enrolled in the Veterinary Medicine programme in Flanders.

7.3.2. Comments

GHENT and ANTWERP:

- Two lecturers (one from Ghent, one from Antwerp) will be involved in the examination committee. They have been selected based on his/her expertise in a specific field based, his/her curriculum vitae and recommendation by his/her working institution.

ANTWERP:

- The introduction of *numerus fixus* will positively impact on the management of the practicals and teaching load.

7.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT and ANTWERP:

- It is suggested to enhance the tracking of how students perform after the introduction of the entrance exam, considering the diversity amongst students with regard to nationality (Belgium, Netherlands, ..) and social background. It would be useful to evaluate if the selection gives equal and long-term successful possibilities to enrol in the veterinary medicine curriculum and successfully enter the profession.

7.3.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: Study programme indicates that all senses and normal physical abilities are required to become a veterinarian. If a student's disability arises during the course of their studies, Ghent University can grant a Special Status in accordance with article 25 of the Education & Examination Code (EEC). The needs of the student are analysed on a case-by-case basis with the support of the Student Counselling Service of the FVMG

ANTWERP: Candidates with disabilities can contact a Student Information Point (only in Dutch) and be informed by the care coordinator and a member of teaching staff about the required DIC and the impact of his/her disabilities. Even if the students can freely enrol in the Bachelor of Vet Medicine independently from the disability, the DIC must be met to graduate. There is some help for students with light disabilities, such as standing-sitting chairs during practicals or use of computers with reading software during the exam for dyslexic students. All students are treated on par for the practical skills. For students with dyslexia, lecturers can use Blackboard Ally to check the accessibility of their study materials.

7.4.2. Comments

GHENT:

- EEC sets out very explicitly the procedure to be followed by students who wish to benefit from Special Status on the grounds of disability.
- Students with disabilities are supported by the Student Counselling Service of the VEE which can tailor appropriate measures on a case-by-case basis.

ANTWERP:

- The VEE allows students with disabilities to be enrolled in the bachelor programme. Nevertheless, the disabled students must be conscious that the DIC must be met. It is a policy for candidates' self-reflection on awareness of their limits and rights

7.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

7.4.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: The rules for progression through the curriculum are set out in the Education & Examination Code. They are presented at the beginning of the academic calendar and are available on the website.

The curriculum allows a student to validate 60 ECTS per year according to the model provided by the Study Guide or according to a personalised programme validated by the Curriculum Committee and in accordance with the Personalised Tracking Rules established by the Study Programme Committee.

At the beginning of their studies, each student has a learning account of 140 ECTS. If he/she passes the course units (grade above 10/20) in the corresponding year, the credits are added to this account (double for the first 60 ECTS that are passed). If not, they are permanently removed from the account and the student is allowed to validate the course unit(s) the following year. Once a student has used up their credit, they are no longer allowed to enrol in higher education. The Study Advice Department supports students who do not perform adequately through personal or group meetings and, if necessary, counsellors propose curriculum adjustment. Moreover, frequent feedback and meetings with lecturers and digital tools help students to progress.

At the moment, the attrition rate during the two first years is high due to the absence of an entrance exam. The situation cannot be monitored but will change from the start of the school year 2023.

ANTWERP: Newly enrolled students without scientific requirements very often abandon the course during the first year (20%). A global drop-out rate of 35% is registered at the VEE. Several committees monitor the progression and study efficiency of students. A Student Progress Committee is strictly focused on students of the first year who are monitored about their results and study methods. Role of the Study Trajectory Committee in the further course of study to clearly and regularly advise students regarding their results, such as the poor acquisition of credits, and the consequence on their study progression. If students do not acquire the requested number of credits in a fixed period of time they have to repeat the particular course or even leave the study programme. A more restricted regulation is going to be introduced by the Flemish Government starting from 2023–2024 onwards. According to this regulation, new students at any university will need to complete their study programme of the first year of the bachelor at the end of the year of enrolment. If they do not succeed in the first year, they will need to pass the remaining courses in the following year. If not, they will be excluded from their chosen study programme and any closely related study programmes for a period of five years.

7.5.2. Comments

GHENT:

- Decisions on progression are explicit and well-known by the students.
- The VEE provides evidence of mechanisms to identify and provide appropriate support for students who are not performing adequately (warnings, mentoring...).
- The VEE has been very proactive for a long time in obtaining an entrance examination with the aim, among others, of reducing the attrition rate.

ANTWERP:

- There is in place a strict rule for a regular and efficient progression of student career. The VEE constantly monitors and give suggestions and guide to the students.

7.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT and ANTWERP:

- It is suggested to provide a clearer and more accessible policy on the honour programme should be available for students starting their first bachelor year.

7.5.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: If after 3 years a student has not obtained more than a third of the credits he should have obtained, his new enrolment will be refused.

Article 81 of the EEC describes the appeal process: in the first instance, the student applies to an ombudsman at the FVMG. If the result is not satisfactory, the student can contact a conciliator at Ghent University. Finally, he or she may apply to the Institutional Appeals Committee for an appeal.

ANTWERP: Students can be asked to temporarily or permanently leave the study programme if they do not follow rules and regulations such as the acquisition of credits. A Faculty Appeal Committee is in place to receive students applying for an exemption from a rule preventing them from finishing the study programme. In case of rejection of application, students may make an appeal for exclusion to the Council for Disputes with Regard to Decisions on Academic Progress, which is a legal governance body within the governmental education department. Decision is communicated to the student and the Rector.

7.6.2. Comments

GHENT and ANTWERP:

- In both VEEs, a structured organisation is in place for exclusion from the study programme and students appeal.
- Communication to students is effective.

7.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT and ANTWERP:

- It is suggested to reinforce the communication of the mechanisms for the progression and exclusion of students to 1st Year Bachelor.

7.6.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: All relevant information for prospective students is available online. After registration, students can access several services both physically and through the University website. A medical service is provided at the city centre of Ghent. Ghent University has its own sports facilities as well as restaurants accessible to students near the different faculties. Moreover, a dedicated student association – called “Vlaams Diergeneeskundige Kring” (VDK) – organises social events for veterinary students. Lastly, Ghent University supports its graduates when they enter the labour market and maintains contact with its alumni through a dedicated platform (Infinity).

ANTWERP: Information on services for all students at Antwerp University are available on the website: <https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/study/student-services-advice/> either in Dutch and in English.

Students can also consult STIP for information.

At university level, a working group on student well-being has been established to promote awareness of student well-being, to make students conscious of the importance of socialisation and to approach and to address and solve mental health issues in time if possible.

At Faculty level, several initiatives and figures are present for the student well-being such as tutoring groups are in place for basic subjects; a mentoring programme has been established for student with a low social background. Special attention is paid to disabled or ill students for a specific and special programme and exam arrangement so long as the level of the exam is not lowered.

Procedures for student grievances are in place; several Committees are in charge to receive them from the students, according to the motivation: complaints about exams can be addressed to the programme coordinator, or to ombudsperson of the Bachelor course or to the Faculty Appeal Committee or even, in case of non-previous resolution of grievances to the Council for Disputes with Regard to Decisions on Academic Progress; grievances about programme component can be addressed directly to the programme coordinator, or the chair of the Education Committee or student representative in this organ; grievances about incidents can be addressed to the chair of Education Committee or Faculty director for investigation. In the past years very few cases of appeals and grievances occurred and all of them were solved.

7.7.2. Comments

GHENT:

- Both Ghent University and FVMG provide effective support to students through several services (Student Counselling Service, Study Advice Department for study-related problems) and invite students to take an active role during their curriculum
- The location of the campus outside the city and the quality of facilities enhances a high degree of interaction among staff and students
- Great effort was put by both students and academic staff to elaborate a platform easily accessible to give peer support from student to student for illness or discomfort.

ANTWERP:

- At University and Faculty level there is in place a clear regulation to safeguard mental health, deal with psychological discomfort and all possible situations of grievances of students.

7.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- It is suggested to extend the number of areas allowing students to work in groups.

7.7.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: Direct contact between students and teachers is favoured. In addition to their representation on the various FVMG councils, students can turn first to the Education Quality Control Unit. If the response is deemed unsatisfactory, they can then turn to the Study Programme Committee or the Faculty Council. Veterinary students are represented at the Ghent University level through the Ghent Student Council.

ANTWERP: The students can influence the contents and teaching methods of study programmes through four channels such as:

- 1) the Student Board, a central organ of the university consisting of student representatives from all faculties;
- 2) the Education Committee of Veterinary Medicine in which student representatives from each year of the bachelor programme are present;
- 3) programme component assessments. The assessment takes the form of an online questionnaire to be completed anonymously with room for additional comments. There are also informal meetings of lecturers and students at the end of each semester. The results of questionnaire and formal and informal meeting are taken to the attention of the programme component assessment and reforwarded to the Committee for final decision if they accept the changes requested. Formal assessment of the programme component is also part of the evaluation criteria of the programme component coordinator. Student representatives can have contacts with lecturers and other institutional figures on behalf of a single student or group of students for any study-related matter;
- 4) Graduation undergraduates are asked to express feedback on the programme highlighting strategic policy critical issues and competences arising from the programme.

7.8.2. Comments

GHENT:

- Students can easily convey their needs to the VEE by direct interactions with staff or through their representatives in different committees both at Faculty and University levels.

ANTWERP:

- Students have the opportunity to make their voices heard and express criticisms and comments on the study programme. They have several channels to communicate but always through their representative in the Committees, although even direct contact from a single student is allowed.

7.8.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- It is suggested to improve the information for students regarding the mechanisms in place at the University level and the Faculty one, to be sure that all students are aware.

7.8.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: Student assessment follows the principles described in the EEC of Ghent University. It consists of three phases: pursuing, measuring and guaranteeing. In addition to the lecturers, the process involves several committees (including the Assessment Committee). Each course unit is described in a study guide which specifies the content, the teaching methods and the methods of assessment of competences.

Each learning outcome must be taught and assessed in at least two course units. In addition, the questions asked in the examination subjects and the answers given are systematically reviewed by a colleague ("four-eyes principle").

The assessment of theoretical knowledge uses a wide variety of methods combining written (some of them open book) and oral examinations including microteaching. Students have the opportunity to self-assess through practice tests on the Ufora platform (formative assessment). Ghent University supports teachers in developing these contents by recruiting education specialists.

The assessment of pre-clinical practical skills is based on an Objective Structured Clinical Examination format and run from the 2nd to the 4th year of study. As with theoretical knowledge, students can practise before the summative assessment and receive feedback from their peers and lecturers.

Prior to their clinical rotations in the 4th and 5th year, the prerequisites are individually checked

through learning paths available on the Ufora platform. The evaluation of medical and non-medical skills during the rotations combines a self-assessment through a report submitted by the student and a formal evaluation by the supervisors.

Soft skills are taught and assessed from the beginning of the course through a combination of microteaching, peer-tutoring, case studies, presentation and video assignment.

ANTWERP: A first version of a vision statement on assessment policy at UAntwerp was developed in 2012. In 2019 further updates were done with more focus on qualitative assessment policy.

In this view, FFBD's assessment policy emphasises an integrated application of knowledge, skills and attitudes, gradual development and eventual acquisition of competences, and the use of a mix of assessment methods and formative testing. The guidelines of UAntwerp's Education and Examination Regulations are respected and followed by the lecturers and the Education Committee at the VEE.

Assessment is focused on achieving the core competences of the study programme and is aligned with the teaching methods and teaching-learning activities. The lecturer is responsible for the assessment of the programme component. Based on UAntwerp's educational vision, the student assessment is performed considering several aspects: i) link to core competences; ii) in a realistic context; iii) with a mix of assessment methods; iv) steering student learning; v) formative assessment and feedback that permit the students be clearly conscious of their learning process. Discussions inside the learning trajectories among lecturers involved in interconnected programme components are aimed to define how the student competence will be assessed.

Different assessment methods can be used for different programme components and are always determined in advance. Students are informed by consulting the Blackboard and UAntwerp website. Examination format section which reports the assessment methods and assessment criteria is present in each programme component. There are several methods for assessing: for theoretical knowledge, oral or written questioning using different types of question; for preclinical skills continuous assessment is used; soft skills are assessed during oral exams (an alignment matrix is provided as an appendix in the SER). A competence monitor program is going to be in use to follow the progression and the acquisition of competences by the students.

8.1.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The assessment strategy is very well defined and implemented across.
- The setting up of learning paths are useful tools to demonstrate the progressive development of competences.

ANTWERP:

- The VEE puts a lot of effort to emphasise an integrated application of knowledge, skills and attitudes, gradual development and eventual acquisition of competences, and the use of a mix of assessment methods and formative testing.

8.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- It is suggested that learning paths continue to be developed throughout the curriculum.

8.1.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: The assessment tasks and grading criteria are described in the Study Guide for each course study. Class and exam schedules are available to students early through an online tool (TimeEdit).

The result of the assessment of each course unit is expressed as a single examination mark, calculated as indicated in the course sheet. The student passes any course unit for which the examination mark is at least 10 out of 20. Students who pass all the course units of a deliberation set are declared to have passed the deliberation set by the Examination Board. Derogations to this rule are specified in Article 67 of the EEC: for the 1st year study, a compensation may be offered for a 6-credit course unit for which the student has obtained a mark of 8 out of 20.

Cumulative conditions, described on Article 71 of the EEC, are necessary to pass a Bachelor or Master programme:

-the student has taken all the remaining course units to pass the study programme of his/her course;

- the deficit for passing one or two course units is a maximum of 6 weighted marks, using ECTS credits as weighting;

- the student has obtained at least 8/20 for all course units.

- the student has obtained less than 10/20 for a maximum of two course units.

- the student has used the most recent examination opportunity for the course units concerned.

The tolerance does not apply to the Master thesis and compulsory internships. Several grades of merit are awarded depending on the total points obtained by the student.

Feedback post-assessment is compulsory following Article 60 of the EEC: lecturers are available to students for feedback sessions during the feedback period defined in the academic calendar.

Ghent University provides training tools for teachers to help them achieve this feedback. Moreover, a student who faces specific difficulties in his/her studies can address central student psychologists.

A student can appeal against assessment outcomes at the 3 levels listed above (course unit, deliberation set and study programme), as stated in EEC article 81. The Institutional Appeals Committee is chaired by the Rector or the Vice-Rector. The student may be assisted by a legal adviser.

ANTWERP: UAntwerp's Education and Examination Regulations stipulates for the upcoming academic year. i) the assessment methods and criteria that members of academic staff make available for their programme component on Blackboard before the start of the semester and the lecturers at the first lesson describe to the students; ii) the earning a credit after the successfully completion of each programme component (results marks ranging from 0 to 20 with the cut off of 10 to pass or the non-numeral form of pass or fail) iii) the awarding grades.

The final result is a weighted average of all numerical exam results the student has obtained in the study programme. A student who has not obtained all credit certificates may possibly be declared as 'passing the study programme', if the maximum number of credits for which they have not passed is no more than 12 credits and they have obtained at least an 8/20 as an examination result. The non-passed credits are reported in the diploma certification. The final result is expressed as a mark out of 100. The diploma is awarded one of the following grades of merit based on the overall end result.

§ satisfaction: final mark between 50 and 67 out of 100;

§ distinction: final mark between 68 and 76 out of 100;

§ great distinction: final mark between 77 and 84 out of 100;

§ greatest distinction: final mark of 85 or more out of 100.

Each year in July, the course information of each programme component in the study programme is published on the website. The course information clearly describes assessment tasks, assessment methods and requirements to pass a programme component. The mark of examination is entered in SisA and is made available to students once all marks for the study programme have been entered into SisA.

The assessment methods and level of assessment are also described in the alignment matrix, which is discussed by the Education Committee at the beginning of the academic year. Assessment results and final grades of merit are discussed by the study programme's examination board.

There is the opportunity for students to have a feedback post assessment. The faculty ensures the possibility to discuss the exam and to peruse one's own written exams. The Education and Examination Regulations describe clearly the procedure students can follow to appeal against assessment outcomes.

Students can also appeal to the Council for Disputes with regards to Decisions on Academic Progress if internal appeal to the Faculty Appeals Committee is unsuccessful. Students can ask for help from a faculty ombudsperson.

8.2.2. Comments

GHENT:

- EEC clearly describes the requirements to pass and defines the possible derogations.
- The results of assessment and feedback are systematically provided to students, as well as information regarding mechanisms to appeal.

ANTWERP:

- Education and Examination Regulations clearly identified the assessment methods and the rules to pass.

8.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

8.2.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: In addition to the lecturer-in-charge of the course, the evaluation of outcomes is based on different committees whose membership is specified in the EEC: the SPC, the EQCU and the Assessment Committee (AC). After each examination period, the Director of Studies analyses the results and discusses them with the responsible if deviations are observed.

The AC is in charge to verify the alignment between the learning outcomes and the assessment design. Based on the Ghent University QA Principles and the veterinary curriculum competency matrix, AC contributes to closing the PDCA cycle (“Act”) by checking that the main inputs of the assessment have been taken into account for the following academic year.

ANTWERP: UAntwerp’s general assessment policy is a document that is used by the faculties to shape their own assessment policy. The Faculty’s assessment policy is discussed by the CIKO Council and the Education Committee.

The alignment matrix gives an overview of the assessment strategy of each programme component and ensures that a variety of assessment methods are used to allow students to gain all learning outcomes on different levels. Assessment methods are evaluated by the lecturer via learning trajectory discussions, via the report cards, via the student evaluation forms, via focus group discussions, and via programme assessments.

8.3.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The VEE has an efficient and yet effective process to review assessment outcomes.
- Programme learning outcomes at programme and course unit levels form the basis for assessment design.
- A dedicated committee advises the SPC regarding assessment methods.

ANTWERP:

- A regular and effective process to evaluate and review program components and assessment outcomes is in place.

8.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

8.3.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: See 8.3. Every 5 five years, a complete review is performed to ensure that the QA system allows to certify the achievement of learning outcomes by students. The last one took place in late spring 2022 following the change of curriculum with the help of the AC.

Since the implementation of the new learning platform Ufora in 2018, active learning has been progressively promoted. A specific working group is dedicated to the development of new content promoting active learning for students. Finally, the involvement of students in pedagogical innovation or peer-tutoring is encouraged through different programmes (Honours Programme,...).

ANTWERP: SisA provides students with an overview of their study progress. The faculty monitors the study progression of students. When students do not obtain all possible credits, they are placed in a study progress monitoring system where they can receive more attention and suggestions for a more appropriate study programme. Monitoring the study progression is aimed to avoid students abandoning the study programme. In this view students are encouraged to actively participate in the learning process and study programme counsellors to give student suggestions, helping and support regarding their career are available.

At the start of their career students with difficulties find support from several initiatives such as Sciences Tutoring and Mentoraat Plus. Particularly brilliant students can apply for the Honours College programme.

8.4.2. Comments

GHENT:

- Students have multiple opportunities to be active during teaching exercises.
- The training programmes offered by Ghent University help lecturers to develop new contents promoting active learning.

ANTWERP:

- A continuous monitor of the students' study progression is in place.
- Particular attention is paid to students who experience difficulties.
- Students have opportunity to apply for a Honours College program (research programme).

8.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- It is suggested that communication about programmes that reward student engagement be expanded.

8.4.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: See 8.1. Formative and summative assessment use a wide variety of approaches defined in the EEC and which lecturers are trained on.

An e-logbook of clinical competences, hands on training and clinical procedures is used by the FVMG for externships through the VESTA platform. The competences are not checked systematically for each student during the 4th and 5th year clinical rotations. During the 6th year, at the end of each rotation week, students write a self-reflection report in which they indicate the clinical cases they have seen and the practical/clinical procedures they have performed and a self-evaluation report. These documents are checked and signed by the clinical rotation responsible for student's assessment and feedback.

The assessment of the competence is assured by the communication between the responsible clinician and the person following the clinical activities with the students. Signed documents are uploaded to the Ufora platform.

In addition to the clinical rotations, supervised small group practical exercises and the integrated clinical examination complete the assessment of the 6th year students.

ANTWERP: The alignment matrix allows for monitoring of examination formats, assessment methods and levels in correspondence with the core competences. A test matrix is available for each programme component with the course aims and level of testing. There is no focusing on clinical skills and D1C even students can gain such a competence in the skill lab and in the Ark stable.

8.5.2. Comments

GHENT:

- A detailed coding of hands-on training and clinical procedures has been elaborated. Each clinical rotation is associated with a list of codes which relate to specific competences.
- The SATYR programme (under development) allows the tracking of each student through the different clinical rotations.
- However, there is currently no logbook to centrally record all student's clinical activities and ensure that he/she has achieved the Day One Competences.

ANTWERP:

- The study programme is a bachelor level programme. For this reason, clinical skill and D1C are not the main concern.

8.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- The VEE needs to complete its reflection on the setting-up of a user-friendly student-centred system to collect the hands-on and clinical procedures performed by each student and to link them with the acquisition of the D1Cs as is already done for the activities carried out during the externships.

8.5.4. Decision

The VEE at Ghent is partially compliant with Standard 8.5 because of (at the current time) a sub-optimal use of a logbook system for the recording of clinical skills.

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

GHENT: The approval authority for the recruitment of independent academic staff is Ghent University. Job postings are shared on the university web page as well as in many other media. In addition, it is obligatory to disseminate job postings by the recruiting departments. Candidates are informed on job descriptions, tasks, expectations and the whole recruitment process. A selection committee including staff from all categories, external experts and students ranks the candidates after a face-to-face interview. The candidates will be asked to give a public lecture in the near future. Research and education are equally weighted among the selection criteria.

Faculty departments recruit their assistant academic staff, provided that they are compatible with the HR policy of the VEE. During the process, departments get the approval of the Committee of Assistant Staff and the guidance of the HR policy officer. The requirements for assistant academic staff recruitment are predefined.

Several support services are provided for teaching staff by Ghent University and the VEE. A wide range of training courses is available for teaching staff at the university level. A full web page with teaching tips and a support team is also available. In the VEE, a team supports teaching staff on digital teaching tools and lecturers are guided to identify the most appropriate teaching methods for their courses.

Newly appointed professors follow a pedagogic learning path and the required courses have to be taken in a certain period. From the 22-23 academic year, all staff and students are required to attend the biosafety course. Biosecurity training is also available on a dedicated “biosecurity” SharePoint as well as a UFORA course. Both for the safety and biosecurity in clinics and the labs, online training courses exist that are to be followed by every collaborator before starting the job. DOWA provides training courses for QA at regular intervals.

Recruitment of support personnel is at the discretion of the departments. An HR expert appointed by the university assists the departments at all stages of recruitment.

Selection and recruitment of academic and support staff are within the national and EU regulations. More than 2/3 of teaching staff involved in the veterinary curriculum hold a DVM diploma and postgraduate qualifications. Eighty-five and 89% of academic staff are permanent and temporary veterinarians, respectively. Many academic staff hold a European Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS) diploma.

ANTWERP: Applicants for a job related to education are aware that their profile should match

UAntwerp's educational vision and they have to further develop teaching skills through educational training made available at Uantwerp ECHO and also at Faculty level.

Lecturers, teaching staff and PhD students and Postdocs may attend educational training courses. Training courses on biosafety are mandatory for all newly hired staff. Even if the course is a bachelor programme, lecturers should have in-depth knowledge and hands on research experience in order to make students develop a critical spirit and skill competence.

Senior academic staff (ZAP) need to attend a lecturer training spread over 2 years (120 hs). Junior staff may attend similar training that is not mandatory but is recommended by the Educational Board, and is mainly focused on assessment methodologies, tools and feedback.

9.1.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The VEE strictly adheres to human resource planning and long-term research and teaching needs in the recruitment and development of staff.
- Within Ghent, the study programme does not require 2/3 of the staff to be veterinarians.
- Training for interns, residents and assistants involved in teaching is not mandatory at present.

ANTWERP:

- There is a negative ratio of students/academic staff (Indicator I1).
- The study programme does not require 2/3 of the staff to be veterinarians.
- Training for senior academic staff is mandatory.

9.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

GHENT:

- Training for interns, residents and assistants involved in teaching should be mandatory.

9.1.4. Decision

The VEEs are compliant with Standard 9.1.

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

GHENT: The total number and qualifications of academic and support staff currently involved in the veterinary programme are sufficient to deliver the educational programme and fulfil the VEE's mission. The VEE complies with ESEVT indicators I1, I2 and I3. There has been a slight but steady increase in academic staff (calculated as FTE) of the veterinary programme in the last three years.

The competence and teaching skills of staff involved in veterinary education are primarily determined through staff selection and recruitment criteria and assessment of courses. Since January 2023, a specific learning path has been developed for interns, residents and postgraduate students. It is on the VEE's agenda to start peer teaching by assistant students, which has been abandoned for some years.

Expected financial perspectives for Ghent University are negative until 2028.

ANTWERP: There is an average of 29.1 FTE Academic staff in the bachelor of Vet Med consisting of an average of 19.93 FTE Permanent Academic Staff, an average of 0.53 FTE Temporary senior academic staff and 8.63 of Temporary research assistants. Even for a Bachelor programme, an average of 34% veterinarians are included in the curriculum.

The support staff includes personnel employed for support of all students of the FFBD and counts for 94.98 FTE.

All new employees participate in a personal on-the-job training course depending on the personal experience and skills of the new member of staff.

9.2.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The VEE strictly adheres to human resource planning and long-term research and teaching needs in the recruitment and development of staff.

ANTWERP:

- The total number of Academic Staff when related to the number of students, as reported in the Indicator I1, produces a result below the minimum required, whereas the ratio of support staff/undergraduate students is over the recommended median value.

9.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

9.2.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: Independent academic staff, heads of clinic, clinical staff and educational staff have a permanent contract. Independent academic staff have job profiles per framework that contain a non-exhaustive list of qualitatively defined result areas, responsibilities, and roles per framework. An HR committee was appointed to academic staff with a focus on research and

teaching.

The VEE offers temporary positions for assistant academic staff, interns, residents and Ph.D. students with a balanced workload depending on their roles. For instance, assistants are expected to devote at least half of their time to the preparation of their Ph.D. thesis. Post-doctoral assistants can maximally spend 30% of their time supporting teaching.

The career path of academic staff is not a one size fits all model that is mainly focused on research performance to allow promotion up to the level of full professor. Assistant and associate professors can put a high focus on education and their teaching performances are recognized. Another career path 'fast-track promotion' in which teaching excellence is an important element in the selection of candidates was possible. However, it was abandoned recently.

ANTWERP: Training courses for professionalisation are available on the UAntwerp website. According to Flemish legislation, permanent senior academic staff are evaluated every five years according to clearly set evaluation criteria (including teaching excellence).

The evaluation is performed by the Faculty Evaluation Committee (FEC), comprising all senior members of staff of the Department of Veterinary Sciences and two senior members of staff from other departments of the Faculty of Pharmaceutical, Biomedical and Veterinary Sciences.

The FEC assesses performance in education, research, service provision, leadership and organisation. and the time senior academic staff (ZAP) members were assigned to spend on those assignments. It is the responsibility of the university management to ensure the balance between research and teaching. As regards permanent appointment and the associated promotion from tenure track research lecturer to senior lecturer, the criteria used are those imposed by the Research Board for that statute, as explicitly agreed upon at the time of appointment. Also, for other members of staff, clear evaluation procedures are in place.

9.3.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The system of the individual HR committee per academic staff member allows for all aspects of career progression to be acknowledged and ensures that the staff member can set their agenda and goals for the following years. It is clear to staff that if they meet the agreed goals, they will be promoted.
- As mentioned above, training for interns, residents and assistants involved in teaching should be mandatory.
- The state of play of present and future financial implications should be clearly, timely and accurately communicated and/or cascaded to all members of staff by the faculty or university senior management, as appropriate.
- The recent cessation of the 'Fast Track promotion' career path has led to the need for alternatives to reward teaching excellence.

ANTWERP:

- Opportunities of career progression are made available to the academic staff.

9.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

9.3.4. Decision

The VEEs are compliant with Standard 9.3.

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

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

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

9.4.1. Findings

GHENT: Ghent University offers various courses and continuing education programs through the online GUTDP platform. Supervisors are able to plan employee training via the GUTDP platform. Ghent University also offers specific modules for the professional development and development of lecturers, Ph.D. students, researchers, and incoming staff.

A clearly defined career policy for independent academic staff aims to stimulate professional growth and development. Assistants, teaching assistants and post-doctoral assistants are evaluated at each renewal of their term through an activity report. A career policy based on trust was developed for support staff. It is based on a combination of regular feedback moments together with a minimum number of formal performance evaluations.

Each staff category takes part in the Faculty Council. Different staff categories are also represented in relevant committees and councils. Support staff are also encouraged to continue their training at Ghent University's online training platform (UTOP).

A central service of Ghent University (Trustpunt) and an external organisation (IDEWE) are available to all staff members in terms of ensuring psychosocial well-being, health and safety in the workspace. Through a mentoring project, each new academic and support staff gets a designated godfather or godmother. The VEE recently established a welfare committee that defined community feeling, workload and organisation, communication and psychosocial well-being as topics for the coming years to focus on.

ANTWERP: Procedures for professional growth and development are clearly available on UAntwerp. Staff is also encouraged to participate in several governance bodies (e.g. Education Committee of Veterinary Medicine, Department of Veterinary Sciences, Faculty Board, and several university organs and working groups). This active participation is also part of the appraisal and promotion procedures.

9.4.2. Comments

GHENT:

- Academic and support staff contribute to the VEEs direction and decision-making processes through their presence on a variety of committees
- Formal performance evaluations of support staff in a reasonable time scale would be favourable as the low number of evaluations may result in less comprehensive results.

ANTWERP:

- Particular attention to the professional growth of the staff is in place.

- Members of staff are encouraged to participate in Committees and Boards.

9.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

9.4.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: The teaching staff is assessed through a course feedback mechanism that includes student views. A course feedback questionnaire is prepared at the university level. However, the VEE has the opportunity to include additional queries. In all course units, the lecturers and co-lecturers are surveyed frequently. After the completion of all stages of education in each course unit, student questionnaires are filled in. The results are processed and provided to the relevant lecturer. Lecturers can comment on the results and possible areas for improvement.

The results and lecturer comments are discussed in the relevant committee (EQCU) and actions are taken if follow-up is necessary. Action plans are made in an environment where open and mutual views are at the forefront, and the suggestions of the teaching staff that are considered sufficient are supported. On the other hand, at the request of the EQCU, teaching staff can be instructed to participate in certain training courses or even to follow a full follow-up process. In recent years, a full follow-up process has not been applied in the VEE.

ANTWERP: Teaching staff assessment is performed in several ways being the more relevant: i) Senior academic staff are assessed every five years by the FEC; ii) Temporary academic staff are assessed before each renewal of their position (every two or three years) iii) A formal programme component assessment is performed every four years by veterinary students; iv) Informal Discussions on programme components with students; v) Veterinary students give an award for the 'Best Lecturer' every three years.

Allocating, recruiting, promoting, supporting and assessing academic and support staff are managed and monitored at department level depending on department budget.

9.5.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The change to assessing courses rather than individual staff is understood to be helpful for the VEE.
- There is no direct peer review of individual staff teaching.
- A system for assessment of teaching staff is in operation and includes student participation.

ANTWERP:

- A system for assessment of teaching staff is in operation and includes student participation.
- All the procedure for allocation, recruitment and progression is done at the department

level.

9.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

9.5.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: The FVMG staff has a strong and well-established international reputation of performing top research projects. The FVMG staff is also successful in applying and obtaining research government funding from the University of Ghent (through the BOF, IOF and FWO) and from international funders (i.e. Horizon 2020, Horizon Europe, ERANET, Winn & Morris foundation and the Bill Gates Foundation).

Support from the University of Ghent is given through the 'EU-cell' programme that guides and helps researchers with their grant applications. Research activities are well funded with €46 million.

The research projects funded for fundamental research was approximately €22.6 million. Applied research projects amounted to approximately €23.6 million. Revenue from additional Research grants (mean income of the last three years) is €866,407.45.

ANTWERP: The curriculum is research and science-based. Lecturers are mainly involved in basic and a little less applied research, which leads to an integration of research into the bachelor curriculum.

Students can be involved in research activities also to prepare their master dissertation. Several students from other departments (also from FVMG of Ghent) carry out research for their master dissertation at FFBD. Research projects make it possible to attract highly skilled researchers (at PhD and postdoc level) who contribute to the veterinary curriculum.

Most academics are involved in international review commissions, scientific associations and European colleges for veterinary specialisations.

10.1.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The VEE is commended for its excellent and broad research activities that integrates with and strengthens the veterinary degree programme through research-based teaching.
- An outstanding international reputation for research.
- All students are well supported by members of staff and have plenty of opportunities to participate in a variety of research projects.

ANTWERP:

- Academic staff are extensively involved in research activities.

10.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

10.1.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: In the study programme of the FVMG, the students can develop both clinical and pre-/para-clinical research skills. The intra-curriculum research programme called learning pathway “Research” must be followed by all bachelor students. This course is primarily aimed at giving students the foundation to complete their research component in their Masters years. Learning objectives for this course are well established.

In the Masters years, the research component culminates with the Master’s dissertation. Learning objectives for the Master’s dissertation are also available. Students can choose to follow up a research project on a topic of their choice or contribute to a pre-existing research stream.

In terms of academic support, students are assigned one promotor and one co-promotor to support them during the master dissertation from the fourth year to the final year. This includes providing guidance with literature search, with the set-up of an (experimental) study, help with the analysis of the data and with the preparation of their written thesis and oral presentation.

The experiments performed by the students are financially supported by the department of their promoters. For each master dissertation it is the responsibility of the promotor to decide if the research, done by the student, is experimental and must be approved by the Ethical Committee. The promotor makes up the application to the Ethical Committee.

In the last year of their Master’s, students can follow a research externship of 4 weeks as an elective.

The FVMG also offers to their students, on a voluntary basis, Extra-Curriculum research opportunities.

ANTWERP: Some learning outcomes focus on academic and scientific skills since the study programme, proved by the alignment matrix, prepare the Bachelor to be able to navigate in the international literature to approach veterinary problems; able to communicate using medical and scientific appropriate language; in possess of the required experimental skills and critical spirit to make scientific observations; able to discuss scientific papers, prepare poster and oral communications.

10.2.2. Comments

GHENT:

- All students are involved at bachelor and masters level in scientific method and research

techniques relevant to evidence-based veterinary medicine and have plenty of opportunities to participate in a variety of research programmes with an appropriate level of supervision.

ANTWERP:

- Students are prepared to discuss scientific articles; talented student may apply to a research program, the Honours College programme.

10.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

10.2.4. Decision

The VEEs are 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

GHENT: As part of the FVMG organisational structure, there is a Scientific Research Committee that overlooks PhD thesis and mobility. This Committee has an advisory function to the Faculty Council.

The international reputation of the FVMG postgraduate research programmes on offer attracts international students (e.g., Chinese Government Scholarship (CSC) students from China and Higher Education Commission (HEC) students from Pakistan). The average number of registered PhD students at the FVMG is 206 with 108 successfully defended PhDs in the last three academic years.

Comprehensive and professional postgraduate education is provided by the Academy of Veterinary Medicine. Average number of attendees to continuing education courses is 2,618/per annum. International training programmes such as internships and residencies to train EBVS (European Board of Veterinary Specialisation) specialists in various disciplines is also provided. The FVMG employs around 20 interns/per annum, and around 54 residents/per annum in all the main disciplines.

ANTWERP: The VEE offers a PhD programme. There are an average number of 18 PhD students at the VEE. The PhD programme is not addressed to bachelor students; nevertheless, the VEE organises a micro-credential post graduate course in Laboratory Animal Science.

10.3.2. Comments

GHENT:

- The FVMG has a well-developed and integrated QA system to evaluate research activities for student training within the veterinary teaching programme.

10.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

10.4.4. Decision

The VEEs are compliant with Standard 10.4.

11. ESEVT Indicators

GHENT INDICATORS

Name of the Establishment:		Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Ghent University			
Date of the form filling:		16/Jan//2023			
Calculated Indicators from raw data		VEE values	Median values¹	Minimal values²	Balance³
I1	n° of FTE academic staff involved in veterinary training / n° of undergraduate students	0,136	0,15	0,13	0,010
I2	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,906	0,84	0,63	0,276
I3	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,671	0,88	0,54	0,131
I4	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	771,583	953,50	700,59	70,993
I5	n° of hours of clinical training	750,000	941,58	704,80	45,200
I6	n° of hours of FSQ & VPH training	260,000	293,50	191,80	68,200
I7	n° of hours of extramural practical training in FSQ & VPH	37,000	75,00	31,80	5,200
I8	n° of companion animal patients seen intramurally / n° of students graduating annually	51,904	62,31	43,58	8,324
I9	n° of ruminant and pig patients seen intramurally / n° of students graduating annually	4,554	2,49	0,89	3,664
I10	n° of equine patients seen intramurally / n° of students graduating annually	24,175	4,16	1,53	22,645
I11	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic seen intramurally / n° of students graduating annually	9,162	3,11	1,16	8,002
I12	n° of companion animal patients seen extramurally / n° of students graduating annually	4,624	5,06	0,43	4,194
I13	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extramurally / n° of students graduating annually	15,351	16,26	8,85	6,501
I14	n° of equine patients seen extramurally / n° of students graduating annually	0,083	1,80	0,62	-0,537
I15	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds / n° of students graduating annually	4,669	1,29	0,54	4,129

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I16	n° of visits of poultry and farmed rabbit units / n° of students graduating annually	0,807	0,11	0,04	0,763
I17	n° of companion animal necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	3,270	2,11	1,40	1,870
I18	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	1,453	1,36	0,90	0,553
I19	n° of equine necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	2,381	0,18	0,10	2,281
I20	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	1,268	2,65	0,88	0,388
I21*	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,270	0,27	0,06	0,210
I22*	n° of PhD graduating annually / n° of students graduating annually	0,149	0,15	0,07	0,079
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				

ANTWERP INDICATORS

Name of the Establishment:		University of Antwerp, Bachelor of Science in Veterinary Medicine			
Date of the form filling:		November 2022			
Calculated Indicators from raw data		VEE values	Median values¹	Minimal values²	Balance³
I1	n° of FTE academic staff involved in veterinary training / n° of undergraduate students	0.048	0.15	0.13	-0.078
I2	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0.105	0.84	0.63	-0.525
I3	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	1.009	0.88	0.54	0.469
I4	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	520.000	953.50	700.59	-180.590
I5	n° of hours of clinical training				
I6	n° of hours of FSQ & VPH training	125.333	293.50	191.80	-66.467
I7	n° of hours of extramural practical training in FSQ & VPH				
I8	n° of companion animal patients seen intramurally / n° of students graduating annually				
I9	n° of ruminant and pig patients seen intramurally / n° of students graduating annually				
I10	n° of equine patients seen intramurally / n° of students graduating annually				
I11	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic seen intramurally / n° of students graduating annually				
I12	n° of companion animal patients seen extramurally / n° of students graduating annually				
I13	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extramurally / n° of students graduating annually				
I14	n° of equine patients seen extramurally / n° of students graduating annually				
I15	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds / n° of students graduating annually	0.011	1.29	0.54	-0.529
I16	n° of visits of poultry and farmed rabbit units / n° of students graduating annually	0.011	0.11	0.04	-0.034

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I17	n° of companion animal necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0.320	2.11	1.40	-1.080
I18	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies / n° of students graduating annually				
I19	n° of equine necropsies / n° of students graduating annually				
I20	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies / n° of students graduating annually				
I21*	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0.033	0.27	0.06	-0.027
I22*	n° of PhD graduating annually / n° of students graduating annually	0.032	0.15	0.07	-0.038
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				

Since UAntwerp only offers a bachelor programme, this table should be interpreted with caution. All benchmarks and standards used to set the reference values are based on a full programme in Veterinary Medicine (bachelor and master programme). For this reason, the indicators yielded through the self-calculating tool are not accurate and should be reassessed solely at bachelor level (with the application of the correct reference values). For the same reason, UAntwerp invites the EAEVE Review Committee to assess these indicators with caution and to only benchmark the UAntwerp data using the corrected figures of other VEE's (only using data from the bachelor programme).

11. 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))

G = Gent

A = Antwerp

(A) = partially or not applicable to Antwerp

Area 1. Objectives, Organisation and QA Policy	C	PC	NC
Standard 1.1: The VEE must have as its main objective the provision, in agreement with the EU Directives and ESG recommendations, of adequate, ethical, research-based, evidence-based veterinary training that enables the new graduate to perform as a veterinarian capable of entering all commonly recognised branches of the veterinary profession and to be aware of the importance of lifelong learning. The VEE must develop and follow its mission statement which must embrace all the ESEVT Standards.	G A		
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.	G A		
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.	G A		
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.	G A		
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.	G (A)		
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.	G A		
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.	G A		
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).	G A		
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.	G (A)		
Standard 2.3: Resources allocation must be regularly reviewed to ensure that available resources meet the requirements.	G A		
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.	G A		
3.1.1. General findings			

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3.1.2. Basic sciences	G A		
3.1.3. Clinical Sciences in companion animals (including equine and exotic pets)	G (A)		
3.1.4. Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals (including Animal Production and Herd Health Management)	G (A)		
3.1.5. Food Safety and Quality	G (A)		
3.1.6. Professional Knowledge	G (A)		
<p>Standard 3.2: Each study programme provided by the VEE must be competency-based and designed so that it meets the objectives set for it, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme must be clearly specified and communicated and must refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.</p> <p>The VEE must provide proof of a QA system that promotes and monitors the presence of an academic environment highly conducive to learning including self-learning. Details of the type, provision and updating of appropriate learning opportunities for the students must be clearly described, as well as the involvement of students.</p> <p>The VEE must also describe how it encourages and prepares students for self-learning and lifelong learning.</p>	G A		
<p>Standard 3.3: Programme learning outcomes must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure the effective alignment of all content, teaching, learning and assessment activities of the degree programme to form a cohesive framework • include a description of Day One Competences • form the basis for explicit statements of the objectives and learning outcomes of individual units of study • be communicated to staff and students • be regularly reviewed, managed and updated to ensure they remain relevant, adequate and are effectively achieved. 	G A		
<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. 	G A		
<p>Standard 3.5: External Practical Training (EPT) is compulsory training activities organised outside the VEE, the student being under the direct supervision of a non-academic person (e.g. a practitioner). EPT cannot replace the core intramural training nor the extramural training under the close supervision of academic staff (e.g. ambulatory clinics, herd health management, practical training in FSQ and VPH).</p> <p>Since the veterinary degree is a professional qualification with Day One Competences, EPT must complement and strengthen the academic education inter alia by enhancing student's professional knowledge.</p>	G A		
<p>Standard 3.6: The EPT providers must have an agreement with the VEE and the student (in order to state their respective rights and duties, including insurance matters), provide a standardised evaluation of the performance of the student during their EPT and be allowed to provide feedback to the VEE on the EPT programme.</p> <p>There must be a member of the academic staff responsible for the overall supervision of the EPT, including liaison with EPT providers.</p>	G A		
<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>	G A		
Area 4. Facilities and equipment			
<p>Standard 4.1: All aspects of the physical facilities must provide an environment conducive to learning, including internet access. The veterinary VEE must have a clear strategy and programme for maintaining and upgrading its buildings and equipment. Facilities must comply with all relevant legislation including health, safety, biosecurity, accessibility to people with reduced mobility, and EU animal welfare and care standards.</p>	G A		
<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>	G A		
<p>Standard 4.3: The livestock facilities, animal housing, core clinical teaching facilities and equipment used by the VEE for teaching purposes must:</p>	G (A)		

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<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. 			
<p>Standard 4.4: Core clinical teaching facilities must be provided in a veterinary teaching hospital (VTH) with 24/7 emergency services at least for companion animals and equines. Within the VTH, the VEE must unequivocally demonstrate that Standard of education and clinical research are compliant with all ESEVT Standards, e.g. research-based and evidence-based clinical training supervised by academic staff trained to teach and to assess, availability for staff and students of facilities and patients for performing clinical research and relevant QA procedures.</p> <p>For ruminants, on-call service must be available if emergency services do not exist for those species in a VTH. The VEE must ensure state-of-the-art standards of teaching clinics which remain comparable with or exceeding the best available in the private sector.</p> <p>The VTH and any hospitals, practices and facilities (including EPT) which are involved with the curriculum must meet the relevant national Practice Standards.</p>	G (A)		
<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>	G (A)		
<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>	(A)		G
<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>	G (A)		
<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>	G (A)		
<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>	A	G	
Area 5. Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin			
<p>Standard 5.1: The number and variety of healthy and diseased animals, cadavers, and material of animal origin must be adequate for providing the practical and safe hands-on training (in the areas of Basic Sciences, Clinical Sciences, Pathology, Animal Production, Food Safety and Quality) and adapted to the number of students enrolled.</p> <p>Evidence must be provided that these data are regularly recorded and that procedures are in place for correcting any deficiencies.</p>	G (A)		
<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>	G A		
<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>	G (A)		
<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>	G (A)		
Area 6. Learning resources			
<p>Standard 6.1: State-of-the-art learning resources must be adequate and available to support veterinary education, research, services and continuing education. When the study programme is provided in several tracks/languages, the learning resources must be available in all used languages. Timely access to learning resources, whether through print, electronic media or other means, must be available to students and staff and, when appropriate, to stakeholders. State-of-the-art procedures for bibliographical search and for access to databases and learning resources must be taught to undergraduate students.</p>	G A		
<p>Standard 6.2: Staff and students must have full access on site to an academic library administered by a qualified librarian, an Information Technology (IT) unit managed by an IT expert, an e-learning platform, and all the relevant human and physical resources necessary for the development of instructional materials by the staff and their use by the students.</p> <p>The relevant electronic information, database and other intranet resources must be easily available for students and staff both in the VEE's core facilities via wireless connection (Wi-Fi) and from outside the VEE through a hosted secured connection, e.g. Virtual Private Network (VPN).</p>	G A		
<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>	G A		
Area 7. Student admission, progression and welfare			

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<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 advertisements for prospective national and international students. Formal cooperations with other VEEs must also be clearly advertised.</p>	G A		
<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>	G A		
<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>	G A		
<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>	G A		
<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>	G A		
<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>	G A		
<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>	G A		
<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>	G A		
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>	G A		
<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>	G A		
<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>	G A		
<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>	G A		
<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>	A	G	
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.</p>	G A		

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<p>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.</p>			
<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. 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>	G A		
<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. 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>	G A		
<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. Staff must have the opportunity to contribute to the VEE’s direction and decision-making processes. Promotion criteria for academic and support staff must be clear and explicit. Promotions for teaching staff must recognise excellence in, and (if permitted by the national or university law) place equal emphasis on all aspects of teaching (including clinical teaching), research, service and other scholarly activities.</p>	G A		
<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>	G A		
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>	G (A)		
<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>	G (A)		
<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>	G (A)		
<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>	G (A)		
<p><i>C: (total or substantial) compliance; PC: partial compliance (Minor Deficiency); NC: non-compliance (Major Deficiency)</i></p>			

Executive Summary

Brief history of the VEE and its previous EAEVE Visitations

The Visitation to the VEE at Ghent in Belgium involved two Universities. The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (FVMG) at Ghent University is the only faculty in the Flemish speaking region of Belgium where students can qualify with a degree of “Master in Veterinary Medicine”. At Ghent, this Master’s degree is integrated with an initial three-year Bachelor course in Veterinary Medicine, resulting in a six-year course which leads finally to the degree of Master in Veterinary Medicine.

However, and crucially, the initial three-year Bachelor course at Ghent is not the only route for students to enter the three-year masters course. A similar Bachelors course can also be obtained at the University of Antwerp which is over 50 km east of FVMG.

Although FVMG has no meaningful control over the Veterinary Medicine Bachelor degree in Antwerp, they are historically tied to accepting the Antwerp Bachelor degree students. Although the Antwerp Bachelor graduates have a choice, in reality the vast majority of them enter the Masters course at Ghent, leading to a numerical ratio of 1:2 with Ghent students who have completed the first three years of their integrated Master in Veterinary Medicine course. A more detailed history of VEEs is given above in the Introduction.

At Ghent the Veterinary Curriculum underwent a profound restructuring in 2004, after an earlier EAEVE visitation. In 2013 there was an EAEVE visitation under the Stage 1 and Stage 2 system where the team identified several really strong areas of excellence.

Antwerp has never had a separate EAEVE Visitation.

The VEEs at Ghent and Antwerp are being evaluated under the ESEVT SOP 2019 as amended in September 2021.

Brief comment on both SERs

The two SERs had quite different functions. The SER from Ghent covered a traditional six-year course at a major European VEE. The SER from Antwerp covered a three-year “Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine” course designed to allow their graduates to study within the three-year Masters component of the Ghent six-year course.

Although both SERs were reasonably comprehensive, they still had sufficient gaps to cause a very extensive list of questions to be produced by the team prior to the visitation.

Brief comment on the Visitation

Although somewhat complicated due to the need to visit and involve the Antwerp faculty staff in addition to the Ghent faculty, the visitation went smoothly. The addition of a second basic science expert in the team allowed for a comprehensive evaluation of the teaching facilities within Antwerp.

The visitation programme itself was well organised and both VEEs dealt efficiently with several requests from the ESEVT team for alterations and additional visits.

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

GHENT

- Excellent staff to student ratio during practical and clinical training
- Excellent involvement of stakeholders in Ghent
- Excellent and broad research activities of staff that integrates with and strengthens the veterinary degree programme through research-based teaching
- All students are well supported by the members of staff and have plenty of opportunities to participate in a variety of research projects
- A high caseload for all species that provides a highly significant clinical exposure for students
- Excellent Exotic clinic with extensive caseload
- Impressive caseload in pathology
- Well-equipped and organised skills lab that is fully integrated into the respective teaching pathways
- The VEE maximizes opportunities for students to learn more all the time, for example the display of the findings of the day in the necropsy room.

ANTWERP

- Strong commitment of the teaching staff to prepare students for their transition into the Master programme in Ghent
- Excellent student involvement in practical activities
- A well-equipped and organised skills lab that is fully integrated into the respective teaching pathways
- Very well-equipped lecture halls.

GHENT and ANTWERP

- Dedicated and successful efforts to develop a QA culture in both Ghent and Antwerp
- Excellent collaboration and focus between the QA departments in the main universities and the QA people in the faculties
- Highly committed staff in both Ghent and Antwerp
- Outstanding student commitment in representation and activity organisation in both Antwerp and Ghent

Additional commendations are described in the Visitation Report.

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

- Partial compliance of the VEE at Ghent with Standard 4.9 because of sub-optimal posting of biosecurity signs, and other procedures not being adhered to, in a number of areas where students are trained.
- Partial compliance of the VEE at Ghent with Standard 8.5 because of (at the current time) a sub-optimal use of a logbook system for the recording of clinical skills.

Additional suggestions for improvement are described in the Visitation Report.

Items of non-compliance with the ESEVT Standards:

- Non-compliance with Standard 4.6 as although isolation facilities were provided, they were not maintained and operated to provide for animal care and for prevention of spread of infectious agents to modern standards.

Glossary GHENT

Abbreviation Meaning

AC	Assessment Committee
AMCRA	Antimicrobial Consumption and Resistance in Animals (Ghent University) Special Research Funds
BOF	(Ghent University) Special Research Funds
COIL	Collaborative Online International Learning
CSC	Chinese Government Scholarship
CT	Computed Tomography
D1C	Day-One Competences
DOWA	Department of Educational Policy
EAEVE	European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education
EBVS	European Board of Veterinary Specialisation
EEC	Education and Examination Code
ECTS	European Credit System
EPT	External Practical Training
EQB	Education Quality Board
EQCU	Education Quality Control Unit
ESEVT	European System of Evaluation of Veterinary Training
ESG	European Standards and guidelines
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FASFC	Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain
FES	Faculty Education Services
FSQ	Food Safety & Quality
FVMG	Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Ghent
FWO	Research Foundation - Flanders
HEC	Higher Education Commission
HR	Human Resources
IAFF	Flemish Research Institute for Agriculture, Fishery and Food
IWT	Agency for Innovation by Science and Technology
MRI	Magnetic Resonance Imaging
OSCE	Objective Structured Clinical Examination
PDCA	Plan-Do-Check-Act
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SPC	Study Programme Committee
SWOT	Strengths - Weaknesses - Opportunities - Threats
UGI	Ghent University's Integrated Business Intelligence System
VEE	Veterinary Education Establishment
VPH	Veterinary Public Health
VRB	Veterinary Research Building
VTH	Veterinary teaching hospital

Glossary ANTWERP

Abbreviation Meaning

AAP	Academic Assistant Staff
AHOVOKS	Agency for Higher Education, Adult Education, Qualifications and Study Grants
ATP	Academic Technical Staff
Ba1, Ba2, Ba3	first, second or third year of the bachelor programme
BAP	Contract Research Staff
BSc	Bachelor of Science
CIKO	Cell for Innovation and Quality Assurance in Education
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
DLR	discipline-specific learning outcomes
DVM	Doctor of Veterinary Medicine
EAEVE	European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education
ECHO	Centre of Expertise for Higher Education
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
ECG	electrocardiogram
EMG	electromyography
ESEVT	European System of Evaluation of Veterinary Training
ESG	Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
EU	European Union
EPT	External Practical Training: clinical and practical training done extramurally and fully supervised by non-academic staff (e.g. practitioners)
EEA	European Economic Area
FEC	Faculty Evaluation Committee
FFBD	Faculty of Pharmaceutical, Biomedical and Veterinary Sciences
FSQ	Food Safety and Quality
FTE	full-time equivalent
GMO	Genetic Modified Organism
IPS	internal process monitoring and guidance
IT	Information Technology
LTI	Learning Tools Interoperability
NVAO	accreditation organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders
PDCA	Plan-Do-Check-Act
PINTRA	intranet platform for staff at UAntwerp
PowerBI	a powerful statistical software – business Intelligence to analyse data
Propaedeutics	preliminary collection of data about patient by observation, palpation, temperature measurement, etc., without specialised diagnostic procedures
QA	Quality Assurance
RUCA	State University Centrum Antwerp
SisA	Student Information System Antwerp
STIP	Student Information Point
SER	Self-Evaluation Report
SOP	standard operating procedure
SWOT	strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats
SYZO	systematic care of educational development
UAntwerp	University of Antwerp
UFOO	University Fund for Innovation in Education

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UFSIA	University Faculties Sint-Ignatius Antwerp
UGent	Ghent University
UIA	University Institution Antwerp
VPH	Veterinary Public Health
VTH	Veterinary Teaching Hospital
VEE	Veterinary Education Establishment, the official and legal unit that organises the veterinary degree as a whole, either a university, faculty, school, department, institute
Ambulatory clinic	clinical training done extramurally and fully supervised by academically trained lecturers
VLHORA	Flemish Council of Universities of Applied Sciences and Arts
VLUHR	Flemish Higher Education Council
VPN	virtual private network
WIKO	Working Group for Innovation and Quality Assurance in Education
YERUN	Young European Research Universities Network
YUFE	Young Universities for the Future of Europe
ZAP	Senior Academic Staff
ZPR	self-reflection with peer review

Decision of ECOVE

The Committee concluded that the following Major Deficiency had been found:

- Non-compliance with Standard 4.6 as although isolation facilities were provided, they were not maintained and operated to provide for animal care and for prevention of spread of infectious agents to modern standards

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