



FULL VISITATION REPORT

To the Estonian University of Life Sciences, Tartu, Estonia

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Introduction

The first educational establishment in Estonia providing higher education was Tartu Veterinary School, founded in 1848 and reorganised as Tartu Veterinary Institute in 1873.

After several changes, the Institute of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Sciences (called the VEE in this report) has been part of the Estonian University of Life Sciences since 2005.

The last ESEVT Full Visitation took place in 2015, and the VEE was granted the status of Full Approval after the 2019 Revisitation. The VEE was also positively evaluated by the Estonian Research Council in 2024.

Alongside the two integrated bachelor's and master's studies curricula in veterinary medicine (taught in Estonian and English), the VEE manages additional bachelor's and master's degree curricula in Animal Science, Food Technology and Circular Bioeconomy, as well as doctoral degree curricula in Veterinary Medicine and Food Science and Agricultural Sciences. The responsibility areas of academic activities include clinical veterinary medicine, veterinary bio- and population medicine, food science and technology, veterinary public health and food hygiene, animal breeding and biotechnology, animal nutrition, One Health and circular economy.

The main developments since the last visitation are the development and implementation of biosecurity, bioethical, recruitment, quality management, intellectual property and remote working procedures.

The current strategic plan is being renewed, and the modernisation and expansion of the VEE facilities have been approved by the University and are ongoing.

The ESEVT SOP 2023 is valid for the Full Visitation.

Area 1. Objectives, Organisation and Quality Assurance Policy

Standard 1.1: The VEE must have as its main objective the provision, in agreement with the EU Directives and ESG Standards, 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 the ESEVT Standards.

1.1.1. Findings

A. LSP

The VEE has a mission to provide science-based education, conduct impactful research, and share knowledge with society, and a strategic framework that focuses on delivering veterinary education, promoting sustainable management, ensuring effective professional communication, and fostering career readiness for roles as veterinarian, educator and/or researcher. This is succinctly captured in the VEE's declared mission of: Healthy animals, safe food, healthy future. Currently, the VEE is developing a new plan for the period 2026–2030 in parallel with the University's development plan.

The VEE has a vision to be an internationally recognised centre for education, research, and development that promotes animal welfare, food security, farm-to-fork principles, One Health and a sustainable future.

The VEE integrates academic and research activities to deliver a science-based, ethical, and evidence-based curriculum aligned with EU Directives, ESG Standards and Estonian legislation. The VEE delivers an integrated bachelor – master's programme, which is offered in Estonian and English and registered with the Ministry of Education and Research of Estonia. The curriculum is structured according to EU Directive 2005/36/EC (amended 2013) and aligned with the ESEVT Day One Competences, ensuring graduates are prepared to enter a range of career options within the veterinary profession.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE's main objectives are to provide veterinary training through both local and English language programmes that are compliant with European and ESEVT Standards and produce graduates ready to enter the veterinary profession. The VEE's mission describes its aims in relation to education, research, knowledge exchange, internationalisation, food security, One Health and a sustainable future.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.1.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 1.1.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 1.1.

Standard 1.2: The VEE must be part of a university or a higher education institution providing training recognised as being of an equivalent level and formally recognised as such in the respective country.

The person responsible for the veterinary curriculum and the person(s) responsible for the professional, ethical, and teaching 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

A. LSP

The VEE is part of the Estonian University of Life Sciences and is one of the university's three institutes. The university is governed by the University Council, with a Senate as the academic decision-making body, chaired by the Rector. The veterinary programme aligns with Estonian governmental and higher education legislation and regulations on requirements for health professional education, including veterinary medicine. Both the Estonian and English language curricula are registered with the Ministry of Education and Research of Estonia (MER).

The Director and Head of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (Chief Clinical Officer) are veterinarians. The VEE's leadership roles for the Veterinary Medical Curriculum and the professional, ethical and academic affairs of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) are Director of the VEE, Director of Academic Affairs, Director of Research, Head of Curricula, VTH Chief Clinical Officer, with lead veterinarians for small animal, production animal and equine clinics. The organisational structure of the university and VEE are shown in Figures 1.2.1 and 1.2.2, respectively.

The VEE has an elected 15-member Council responsible for policy formation and strategic planning, led by the Director, and includes external representatives and students. The Director has overall development and financial responsibility, reporting to and from committees and councils at VEE and the university level.

The VEE management structure consists of Chairs who are responsible for their discipline's research, teaching and development of related academic activities within the veterinary curriculum. Organisational matters are discussed at regular meetings of Chairs and unit leads, while key decisions are made by the Director in collaboration with the Director of Academic Affairs and the Director of Research.

The VEE committees are:

- Scientific Committee
- Veterinary Medicine Curriculum Development Committee: Chaired by the Head of Curriculum, comprised of 16 members, academics, students and a professional (external) representative, and with responsibility for curriculum development and review, coordinating feedback and proposing changes.
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Committee: Oversees the university's RPL terms and procedures and transfer of study results.
- Two Admissions Committees: one for national and another for international students, comprising three members; the Chairperson is the same for both committees.
- Final Thesis Defence Committee
- PhD Committees

There is also a biosecurity Work Group, which oversees and coordinates biosecurity for the VEE.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE is one of the three institutes of the Estonian University of Life Sciences, and the programmes (Estonian and English language) are recognised by Estonia's Ministry of Education. The Director of VEE and Head of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (Chief Clinical Officer) hold veterinary degrees. The decision-making process, organisation and management of the VEE support the implementation of its strategic plan and the development and management of the veterinary programme in alignment with the ESEVT standards.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.2.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 1.2.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 1.2.

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

1.3.1. Findings

A. LSP

The VEE's strategic development plan (2018–2025) is aligned with the University Development Plan (DP), provides the overarching five-year action plan, follows a structure of objectives, goals, associated activities and indicators, and sets target levels. The University DP is the foundation of the annual operational plans for the three institutes and their Chairs. The University Council approves the University's annual budget, its implementation and annual report including achievement of objectives against the associated indicators. The VEE contributes to the University's annual operating plan based on the VEE's development plan, the outcomes of which are reviewed at the end of each year.

The VEE's plan is focused on enhancing research and education in veterinary medicine, animal science, aquaculture and food technology, farm-to-fork food supply chain, One Health and is linked to the University's focus on the bioeconomy and international competitiveness. Underpinning these goals are the priorities of securing sustainable funding, supporting early-career researchers, and promoting the commercialisation of research outcomes. The VEE reports on achievement of and/or progress towards its goals, objectives and strategic targets annually at the level of the University Senate and the Council.

The VEE's new development plan (DP) for 2026-2030 is underpinned by the VEE's SWOT analysis (Table 1.3.1). Additionally, in 2025, staff members and other stakeholders have been actively involved in preparing the new development plan.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE has a strategic development plan (2018-2025) aligned with the University Development Plan, with goals, objectives, activities, timeframes, targets and indicators. The VEE has a SWOT analysis which informs the development and implementation of the VEE's 2026-2030 development plan. The VEE includes input from staff, students and external stakeholders. The current documentation is publicly available.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.3.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 1.3.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 1.3.

Standard 1.4: The VEE must have a policy and associated written procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of its programmes and awards. It must also commit itself explicitly to the development of a culture which recognises the importance of quality, and QA within the VEE. To achieve this, the VEE must develop and implement a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality.

The VEE must have a policy for academic integrity, i.e. the expectation that all staff and students act with honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

1.4.1. Findings

A. LSP

The University has comprehensive quality management systems overseen by the Quality Manager, which includes the management and processes that support its development, achievement of objectives and compliance with higher education legislation. The university QA system is process-oriented with regular monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation of processes and outcomes, with continuous improvement informed by stakeholder input. The Quality Management Model is detailed in Fig. 1.4.1. and describes the stakeholders (internal, students and staff, and external including employers), inputs, external and internal evaluations (including stakeholder feedback, the associated thematic analysis of the university, research and teaching), and the objectives (e.g. stakeholder satisfaction, compliance with and achievement of objectives and requirements). The principles of QA management include the processes, people, planning, continuous improvement and associated Plan, Do, Check and Adjust cycle. QA of curricula involves regular (3-yearly) internal audits in relation to achievement of curriculum objectives, quality and effectiveness. The evaluation process is depicted in Fig. 1.4.2 and is outlined in the Rector's directive Curriculum Quality Assessment. It underpins the development and implementation of curriculum improvement activities.

The VEE's veterinary medicine curriculum passed the most recent internal audit (31/12/2024). The feedback has been used by the Head of Curriculum and the Curriculum Development Committee to produce an improvement action plan. The VEE's QA management of the curriculum involves the Director of Academic Affairs, Heads of Chairs, Head of Curricula, the

Curriculum Development Committee (CDC), and the Department for Academic Affairs. Roles and responsibilities are defined and regulated by university documents that are publicly available.

The responsibility for ensuring and improving the quality of the curriculum is overseen at the university level by the Department for Academic Affairs (DAA). At the VEE, responsibility is held by: the Director of Academic Affairs (focused on curriculum management and conducting internal evaluations); the Director of the VEE (focused on institutional development, legal aspects and the financial resources); the Head of Curriculum (focused on managing and developing the curriculum and overseeing QA and evaluations); and the Curriculum Development Committee (focused on curriculum development, content analysis, monitoring performance indicators, identifying areas for improvement and making recommendations for enhancement while incorporating input of various stakeholders). The VEE's Chairs are primarily responsible for guiding their departmental research, teaching organisation and academic succession. While lecturers have responsibility for their course content and materials, monitoring and acting upon student feedback and engaging in pedagogic professional development.

Aligned with the university QA Plan-Do-Check-Adjust (PDCA) loop, the VEE collects, analyses and utilises relevant information to effectively manage teaching. Data to inform PDCAs are collected at university level through feedback surveys including on: admissions in Semester 1; student feedback on lecturers and courses each semester; a curriculum feedback survey for final-year students each spring; an alumni survey every three years; employer satisfaction with graduates survey every three years; an exit survey for all students upon withdrawal; a survey on awareness and satisfaction with support services every three years; doctoral study feedback every three years; staff satisfaction surveys every three years; and an annual University reputation survey. The results of these surveys are made available to relevant target groups via the university intranet.

There are quality management processes for the VEE's laboratories and goals set for the VTH so that it meets the needs of the curriculum and adheres to good clinical practice.

The University has guidelines around fair treatment, trust, respect and honesty in the workplace, and regulations around academic integrity, with associated processes in place. The VEE has additionally developed 'Good practice guidelines' for veterinary students.

The university is currently accredited by the Estonian Quality Agency for Education (HAKA), a member of ENQA, which recognises the ESEVT accreditation assessment, and does not conduct a duplicate evaluation.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The University and VEE have comprehensive policies and procedures which underpin the quality assurance of the veterinary programme, guided by the University's Quality Management Model. QA is supported at the University and VEE levels by individuals in relevant roles and committees that oversee and implement the associated processes. There is a strong and well-embedded culture of enhancement of quality within the University and at the VEE with regular cycles of data

collection from stakeholders (internal and external), analysis, and quality improvement. Students provide regular feedback on staff and courses through surveys every semester, and in the final year, as do alumni and employers every three years. Through the University, the VEE has guidelines in place for fair treatment, trust, respect and honesty, and regulations around academic integrity.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.4.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 1.4.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 1.4.

Standard 1.5: The VEE must provide evidence that it interacts with its stakeholders and the wider society. Such public information must be clear, objective and readily accessible; the information must include up-to-date information about the study programme.

The VEE's website must mention the VEE's ESEVT status and its last Self-Evaluation Report and Visitation Reports must be easily available to the public.

1.5.1. Findings

A. LSP

Information about the University's objectives, activities and study courses is publicly available on its websites. The university organises meetings with societal groups and invites stakeholders to decision-making bodies and Career Days to foster cooperation and an opportunity for veterinary students to meet potential employers. On the VEE's website, there is information about the veterinary programme including the curriculum, academic calendar, forms, deadlines and exchange opportunities. There is also information for the clients about each of the clinics in the VTH.

The VEE works with the Estonian Veterinary Chamber to address challenges within the veterinary profession including a shortfall across all areas of the profession (survey conducted in 2023) and co-organises events such as the Veterinary Medicine Conference and workshops at the Opinion Festival bringing together stakeholders from government and non-governmental organisations, universities, entrepreneurs, journalists and the public. There is an Educational Day for all

veterinarians during the Veterinarians' Summer Days. The VEE engages in various activities to further support practitioners and the profession including academic staff contributing articles to the Estonian Veterinary Review and through Open Doors and Researchers' Nights events. Veterinary students are involved in community outreach sharing their knowledge at public events and in schools, and the VEE cooperates with upper secondary schools providing workshops and modules. Students share their experiences via videos on the VEE's website and on social media platforms.

Information about the VEE's ESEVT status is on the VEE's website, which also provides information about the upcoming EAEVE visitation, preparation of the SER and FAQs. Previous EAEVE reports, the VEE's SERs, and university evaluations are also available.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE interacts with various stakeholders through university-level activities as well as specific veterinary-focused outreach with schools and the public, and engagement with the Estonian Veterinary Chamber and the profession. The VEE provides clear and easily accessible information about the veterinary programme and clinical services via its publicly available webpages. The VEE's ESEVT status, previous Self-Evaluation and Visitation Reports are publicly available.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.5.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 1.5.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 1.5.

Standard 1.6: The VEE must monitor and periodically review its activities, both quantitative and qualitative, to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. The VEE must make public how this analysis of information

has been utilised in the further development of its activities and provide evidence as to the involvement of both students and staff in the provision, analysis and implementation of such data. Evidence must be provided that the QA loops are fully closed (Plan Do Check Adjust cycles) to efficiently enhance the quality of education.

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

1.6.1. Findings

A. LSP

The monitoring and QA processes are described in detail in Standard 1.4. The university and VEE have a comprehensive approach to QA, including a Quality Management Model, associated management structure and roles, engaging in quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, analysis, PDCA cycles, and publishing associated documentation. The QA processes, documentation reports are used to enhance the quality of student education and the veterinary programme. Additionally, the university runs annual seminars on QA. The VEE is a part of EAEVE's Region 6 and enhances its QA processes through engagement with that network.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The University and VEE monitor and review the VEE's activities against its objectives through various quality assurance processes, qualitative and quantitative data collection from internal and external stakeholders, analysis, and the relevant committees with staff and student input, with associated reports produced and published. There are Plan Do Check Adjust cycles.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.6.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 1.6.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 1.6.

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

1.7.1. Findings

A. LSP

The VEE has regularly participated in EAEVE evaluations: 2005, 2009, the last full visitation in November 2015, followed by a re-visitation in 2019 when the major issues were deemed to have been adequately addressed, leading to the VEE receiving "Approval" status. The VEE's interim report (2023) outlined improvements and ongoing initiatives that included procurement of clinical equipment, curriculum updates and measures related to mental health, and changes have been made to the requirements for the final thesis, leading to greater standardisation for students.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.7.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE undergoes external review through ESEVT with the last interim report in 2023 outlining progress, improvements and ongoing initiatives since the last visitation, which have been linked to quality assurance processes.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

1.7.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 1.7.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 1.7.

Area 2. Finances

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

2.1.1. Findings

A. LSP

Revenues

The VEE receives annually public funding, tuition fees, continuing education fees, and project funding (including research and development) . For the year 2024, public funding was 38% (€5.1m) and other funding was 62%, including sales/services €3.7m and project funding €6.3m (a total of €15.1m/2024). Other funding may include laboratory services, expert consultation fees, or charges for specialised training courses. Public funding originated from the Ministry of Education and Research of Estonia (MER), and partially from the Ministry of Regional Affairs and Agriculture. Sales/services include clinical income, laboratory services etc. Project funding includes development and research activities and is provided by the university from its capital. In 2022, there was a surplus of €1.1m for the VEE, but in the last two years, there has been a deficit of €469K (2023) and €543K (2024).

Expenditures

The VEE annual expenditures consist of personnel costs, operating costs, utilities costs, maintenance costs, equipment costs, and overhead costs (including management and support units). Operating costs may include direct expenses associated with core clinical activity, such as the purchase of medications and supplementary materials or expenses for conducting educational activities (e.g., teaching materials, administration, travel, transportation). The total expenditure for 2024 was €15.7m, with personnel costs (€9.7m) being the highest, accounting for more than 50% of the overall expenditure.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP. Important to note that the ESP is a tuition-based curriculum, whereas the LSP is a tuition-free curriculum for a full-time student who cumulatively obtains the required level of credits of the curriculum every semester, based on the Higher Education Act of Estonia.

2.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE is supported well financially by the public authorities, as well as the non-public sources, indicating financial security. However, for the last 2 years, there has been a deficit that could be associated with the ongoing developments, modernisation of equipment, assurance of competitive employee salaries, and concurrent state underfunding.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

2.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

2.1.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 2.1.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 2.1.

Standard 2.2: Clinical and field services must function as instructional resources. The instructional integrity of these resources must take priority over the 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

A. LSP

The VEE's Chair of Clinical Veterinary Medicine encompasses the Small Animal, Equine and Production Animal Clinics, the pharmacy, and it also owns a dairy farm at Mårja. Finances are managed by the head of each unit, monitored by the Department of Finance of the VEE. The Chair of Clinical Veterinary Medicine of the VEE revenues are funded by medical and pharmacy services (€5.7m in 2024), followed by public education support (€1.13m in 2024), tuition fees (€0.62m in 2024) and continuing education fees and research grants.

The VEE's dairy farm has 120-130 dairy cows and a similar number of younger animals. It is a private limited company exclusively owned by the VEE; it has its own budget and its annual turnover is around €0.6m (in 2024).

The university approves the financial budget, but the VEE independently decides how the financial resources are used and is responsible for strategic planning.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

2.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE has an important percentage (24%) of income originated from the services/goods that it provides. Financial stability has a good balance between sales of services/goods, public funding and other sources. The VEE has full autonomy in allocating resources originated from its financial activities.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

2.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

2.2.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 2.2.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 2.2.

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

2.3.1. Findings

A. LSP

The resource allocation is reviewed annually as part of the annual financial year review by the Budget Committee and the Senate of the University. The VEE budget is also planned at a long-term (5-year) plan via the University Developmental Plan.

Currently, there are 4 investment developments for the VEE that are priorities for the next 3 years and are mainly funded by loans or other funding, including capital or EU funding. These are:

- Interior renovation of the Equine and Production Animals Clinic (€0.4m)
- Renovation of the food technology and aquaculture buildings (€4.5m)
- Design and construction of clinical facilities (including Small Animals) (€8.8m)
- Design for an extension for Zoomeedikum study facilities (amount to be determined).

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

2.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE has made substantial investments in the development of the clinics, laboratory and study areas for clinical service and student education and training. The VEE has identified that there are problems associated with delays to the developments and has a plan for further funding of most of the investment projects. The VEE has also realised it needs to recruit more veterinary specialists (and associated salaries) and has taken action by communicating about this need with the Estonian government.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

2.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

2.3.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 2.3.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 2.3.

Area 3. Curriculum

Standard 3.1: The curriculum must be designed, resourced and managed to ensure all graduates have achieved the graduate attributes expected to be fully compliant with the EU Directive 2005/36/EC (as amended by directive 2013/55/EU) and its Annex V.4.1. The curriculum must include the subjects (input) and must allow the acquisition of the Day One Competences (output) listed in the ESEVT SOP 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)**
- **Veterinary Public Health (including Food Safety and Quality)**
- **Professional Knowledge (including soft skills, e.g. communication, team working skills, management skills).**

When part of the study programme cannot be organised because of imposed regulations or constraints, convincing compensations must be developed and implemented.

If a VEE offers more than one study programme to become a veterinarian, e.g. in different languages or in collaboration with other VEEs, all study programmes and respective curricula must be described separately in the SER. For each Standard, the VEE must explain if there are differences or not with the basic programme and all this information must be provided as a formal annex to the SER.

Similarly, if a VEE implements a tracking (elective) system in its study programme, it must provide a clear explanation of the tracking system in the SER.

3.1.1. General findings

3.1.1.1. Findings

A. LSP

The VEE offers two curricula in Veterinary Medicine: one delivered in Estonian (curriculum code 398) and another delivered in English, which was introduced in 2013. The subject syllabi of the VEE are organised as per EU Directive 2005/36/EC and its Annex V.4.1. The integrated Veterinary Medicine programme spans 6 years and comprises a total of 360 ECTS credits. Each ECTS credit corresponds to 26 hours of student work, with 60 ECTS credits allocated per academic year. Upon completion, graduates are awarded the Degree of Veterinary Medicine (DVM), a master's level qualification that provides eligibility for admission to doctoral (PhD) programmes. The curriculum is structured as an outcome-based programme, aligned both with its learning outcomes (LOs) and Day One Competences (D1C). The learning outcomes are well defined in the VEE's Catalogue of Learning Objectives. The curriculum contains all subjects mentioned in the EU Directives and the SOP of ESEVT

At the VEE, the Head of Curriculum and Curriculum Development Committee (CDC) manage the curriculum under the supervision of the Department of Academic Affairs (DAA), based on feedback from students, staff, alumni, and employers. The University's DAA provides guidance on the development of the curriculum and oversees its implementation. Proposed changes are initiated by the CDC and require approval from the Senate Committee of Academic Affairs. Evidence-based planning is supported by feedback in accordance with the needs of stakeholders.

At the VEE, students begin their education in their first academic year with a general module that forms the basis of academic learning and provides them with fundamental knowledge in veterinary medicine. In the first two academic years, the submodules of Pre-Clinical Sciences and Basics of Animal Production are taught. The third, fourth, and fifth years focus primarily on the Clinical Sciences submodule. In the fifth year, students also take courses related to food hygiene, food safety, veterinary legislation, and supervision. Since 2002/2003, students have chosen elective specialisation sub-modules within the scope of the Specialisation Module taken in the sixth year. Additionally, the curriculum includes speciality electives and optional subjects, as well as a Final Thesis in Veterinary Medicine.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.1.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The curriculum is designed and structured to ensure that all graduates achieve the attributes required for full compliance with EU Directive 2005/36/EC. Furthermore, learning outcomes are aligned with the acquisition of D1Cs. Different teaching modalities, including seminars and supervised self-learning, are integrated across basic, preclinical, and clinical subjects.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.1.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.1.1.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.1.1.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.1.1.

3.1.2. Basic Sciences

3.1.2.1. Findings

A. LSP

All basic subjects and basic sciences listed in the SOP of ESEVT are included in the VEE curriculum. The curriculum comprehensively covers all basic subjects and sciences, combining lectures, seminars, supervised self-learning, and laboratory work in proportions appropriate to each topic.

Both basic subjects and basic sciences are taught during the first three years of study. Basic course subjects are taught as a general module (18 ECTS) in the first academic year, including the basics of evidence-based veterinary medicine, cell and molecular biology, and informatics and biometry.

The preclinical sciences (83 ECTS) submodule is taught during the first two academic years. Theoretical learning is represented by lectures and seminars, whereas practical training is mainly carried out in the form of laboratory and desk-based activities. These modules allow VEE students to gain experience with basic subject knowledge in veterinary medicine.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.1.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The content of teaching in the basic subjects and sciences provides an appropriate preparation and scientific background for clinical training. The theoretical components of the basic sciences are well represented and appropriately balanced within the curriculum. The volume of these subjects is sufficient, and their proportion within the curriculum is appropriate.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.1.2.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.1.2.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.1.2.

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

3.1.3.1. Findings

A. LSP

In the core curriculum of Clinical Sciences of the VEE, small animal training comprises approximately 1,000 hours, including 19 ECTS in Small Animal Medicine (around 500 hours of lectures, seminars, practicals, and clinical rotations), 10–12 ECTS in Small Animal Surgery (about 250–300 hours), and 6–7 ECTS in Clinical Diagnostics (around 150 hours). For equine medicine, students complete about 300 hours, divided between 5–6 ECTS in Equine Clinical Medicine (140–160 hours) and 5–6 ECTS in Equine Surgery and Reproduction (140–160 hours). The compulsory teaching of exotic animals represents about 100 hours (3–4 ECTS), focusing on the medicine of small mammals and birds, which includes both cadaver work and live patient handling.

Students gain progressive clinical experience through lectures, seminars, laboratory and desk-based work, and hands-on training. The latter begins in the third year with the compulsory Clinical Skills Lab courses and the Clinical Skills Lab Moodle tool, which also includes soft skills training, and it is further developed in the curriculum through work with live animals and cadavers. The Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) provides 24/7 medical and surgical services for small animals and horses, ensuring exposure to both routine and emergency cases.

Equine medicine is reinforced through the Equine Clinic, farm visits, and elective submodules in the final year. Exotic animal training is integrated via cadaver work (e.g., birds of prey, guinea pigs), live animal handling, and optional rotations such as zoo medicine.

Elective specialisation tracks in the 6th year allow students to focus on different areas (equine, small animals, production animals or food safety).

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.1.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

Although some subjects in Table 3.1.2 appear with limited or no practical hours (anaesthesia, infectious diseases), the structure of the core curriculum compensates for this in such a way that ensures that all students acquire compulsory hands-on competences in every clinical discipline. Practical training is integrated into the main clinical modules—small animal, equine, production animal medicine, surgery, reproduction, anaesthesiology, diagnostic imaging, and clinical rotations—delivered within the Veterinary Teaching Hospital and through field practice. During the rotations, students are divided into small groups and take responsibility for a number of cases across different disciplines under the supervision of the teaching staff.

The practical training in small animals, exotics and equines ensures general exposure to key clinical disciplines.

The Clinical Skills Lab is functioning efficiently; however, it is mainly focused on small animals and equines, with only a few models available for ruminants.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

It is suggested to improve the organisation and structure of clinical rotations in the fourth and fifth years to ensure that all students acquire the necessary competences in relevant clinical disciplines. Likewise, courses such as “Therapy in Common Companion Animals” and “Anaesthesia” should include practical hours to enhance the acquisition of hands-on skills.

It is suggested to increase both the space available and the number of models and dummies in the Clinical Skill Lab, particularly for ruminants and pigs.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.1.3.4 Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.1.3.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.1.3.

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

3.1.4.1. Findings

Before clinical rotations, students must complete general modules and preclinical modules, including preclinical training in food-producing animals (FPA). Preclinical training is organised as a core activity during the 2nd academic year with a 4-week duration.

The main objective is to gain practical skills and to get direct farming experiences with the farm

animals. Hands-on skills, such as feeding and diet formulation, housing practices, record keeping, disease control, and all other management operations are offered. In addition, students have to prepare a report of practical training that contains detailed information about the whole farm and its activities. The VEE is using different types of farms to support this training.

Clinical training in FPA is organised during rotation in semester 10 and is based on farm visits where students are exposed mainly to dairy and beef cattle, sometimes to small ruminants and poultry. The student group size is from 1 to 7. Duration is 4 weeks per student. During those rotations, students are exposed to herd health management as well as clinical training in emergency on cattle, whenever such an issue arises during the daily work on the farms.

During semester 11, students can choose one elective submodule, “production animal medicine”. It includes education in pig health treatment.

Core clinical training in pig medicine is organised through repeated practical farm visits.

Traditionally, students attend two sessions in the 4th year and two sessions in the 6th year. On farms, they perform both herd-level and individual clinical examinations, administer treatments and vaccinations, carry out castrations and necropsies, make diagnoses, and discuss therapy, prevention, and control measures. They also practise pregnancy testing and, when possible, participate in artificial insemination. Farm management and animal welfare are systematically assessed as part of the training.

3.1.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

During potential biosecurity risk (mainly the African Swine Fever outbreak), alternative teaching methods are applied, including the use of recorded videos and simulators, which compensate for the reduction of access to farms by students. Regarding support for clinical teaching in Poultry, see standard 5.1.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.1.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.1.4.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.1.4.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.1.4.

3.1.5. Veterinary Public Health (including Food Safety and Quality)

3.1.5.1. Findings

A. LSP

Food Safety and Quality and Veterinary Public Health are very well represented in the curriculum with a good blend of lectures, seminars, supervised self-learning, laboratory work, etc. that are appropriate for the specific topic. A total of 882 hours in food safety and quality are present in the curriculum from year 1 to year 5. There are also 2 weeks of practical rotation in veterinary surveillance and 2 weeks of meat inspection in year 5.

In year 6, the EPT rotation in VPH consists of a module in Food Hygiene and VPH of 33 ECTS. This module includes a meat inspection and a food production hygiene course to be taken before students go for training at the slaughterhouse, and laboratory practical training for milk and dairy products.

Abattoir visits last one week during the core rotation and consist of supervised training at a slaughterhouse, and one week is spent at the VEE, where students prepare a case study from data and material (pictures and notes) collected during the abattoir visit. The case studies are presented in seminars to all other students and assessed by members of staff. Two students at a time attend the training at the abattoir and in veterinary surveillance.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.1.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

As part of the core practical training in Veterinary Public Health (VPH), students travel from Tartu to a designated abattoir located approximately two hours away. During this placement, students participate in a structured programme that includes: Observation of animal welfare during slaughter, Practical ante-mortem inspection, Documentation and registration of ante-mortem findings, Practical post-mortem inspection, Documentation and registration of post-mortem results, Trichinella sampling and testing, Sampling procedures within the context of meat inspection.

Students also travel to the central veterinary office in Tallinn and regional offices to complete the “Practical Training in Veterinary Surveillance” (VL0828) course. This two-week placement includes: Accompanying official veterinary officers during routine inspections, participating in animal health and welfare visits on farms, and attending food safety inspections in various establishments (e.g. catering services, food wholesalers, retailers, small meat plants, and farm dairies).

Prior to both placements, students receive guidance on general health and safety (H&S) and biosecurity principles from responsible instructors. On-site, specific H&S protocols are explained by designated personnel. Students are provided with comprehensive logistical information, including: Accommodation details, travel options, contact persons, addresses and emergency phone numbers. In accordance with Estonian legislation, students must present a valid medical certificate before participating in either practical training. The VEE organises and finances the required medical check-ups.

Due to the absence of poultry and small ruminant slaughter facilities in the region, the VEE compensates by offering: 3 hours of video-based instruction and discussion, 4 hours of dedicated lectures, and practical meat inspection of poultry, rabbit, and small ruminant carcasses conducted at the VEE. Fish hygiene is covered across multiple courses, including VL0827, VL1168, VL0434, and VL1162.

On average, four students per year choose to complete their Final Thesis in the fields of Veterinary Public Health (VPH) and Food Quality (FQ).

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.1.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.1.5.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.1.5.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.1.5.

3.1.6. Professional Knowledge

3.1.6.1. Findings

A. LSP

Professional knowledge is generally taught throughout the curriculum. Report drafting and associated skills are taught in Basics of evidence-based veterinary medicine (VL.1218), whereas professional communication, psychological skills, and decision making are taught in Veterinary Clinical Skills (VL.1340). However, there are also 2 specific professional knowledge modules: Professional Ethics (VL 0796), which develops deontology and ethical dilemmas in veterinary medicine, and Veterinary mental health and self-care (VL.0142), which develops mental health problem support and applications in the work environment. Professional mistakes and how to deal with these are taught in Veterinary mental health and self-care (VL.0142) and Professional Ethics (VL.0796). Neurodivergence is also addressed in Veterinary mental health and self-care (VL.0142). Euthanasia and its management are taught within various core courses, such as Small Animal Medicine (VL.0045) and Anaesthesiology (VL. 0491), but also electives such as Pain (VL.0265), while in Professional Ethics (VL. 0776), its emotional management and communication with the client are addressed. Professional knowledge is taught in more than 80 hours of total training (lecture and practical).

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.1.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE has an excellent curriculum regarding professional development with cutting-edge topics, which is aligned with the Day One Competences in soft skills required by veterinary graduates.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.1.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.1.6.4 Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.1.6.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.1.6.

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

The VEE must provide proof of a QA system that promotes and monitors the presence of a teaching 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 lifelong learning.

3.2.1. Findings

A. LSP

The veterinary medicine curriculum is designed to provide students with the Day 1 Competences, and the degree corresponds to Level 7 of both the national and European Qualifications Frameworks. The programme and each subject have defined learning outcomes, which are reviewed and updated as required using an internal evaluation process. Course

organisation is the responsibility of lecturers, while overall management of the delivery of courses is overseen by the relevant department Chair.

A quality management system and the University's Statutes of the Curriculum ensure that the veterinary curriculum conforms to the University and programme goals, is adequately resourced, undergoes regular quality assessment and enhancement, and is responsive to changes in veterinary medicine. Internal evaluation of the curriculum occurs every three years, with the findings and any required changes overseen by the Head of Curriculum and the Curriculum Development Committee. Stakeholder feedback - students, alumni, employers - is monitored by the Head of Curriculum.

In order to promote an environment conducive to learning, the VEE ensures the appropriate quality and qualifications of its academic staff and aims to deliver evidence-based instruction and provide close clinical supervision by motivated teaching staff who are actively involved in both education and professional practice. The VEE is responsive to feedback through its QA systems to enhance the student learning experience. Job descriptions align with Estonian legislation, and teaching and research staff are required to hold a doctoral degree. Most of the VEE's academic staff are veterinarians (>85%). The University and VEE provide various pedagogical courses, and staff can attend additional pedagogical courses through a collaborative agreement with Tartu University. PhD students can be involved in teaching under supervision after completing a pedagogical course. The VEE increasingly provides training sessions and seminars on various teaching approaches, where staff can also learn from one another and share experiences.

Course materials are hosted on the university's electronic platforms, the Study Information System (SIS) and Moodle. Students have various opportunities to develop their lifelong learning skills, including undertaking independent work (50% per ECTS) with tasks including presentations, written reports and e-learning. All students complete a research project and produce a final thesis.

Currently, students' personal learning progress is assessed through self-tests, self-reflection, self-assessment, personal feedback, and practical verification of skills. Students are also prompted to think critically, express their opinions, and reflect on their learning to identify areas for improvement. This takes place in small groups in a seminar format, which supports their learning progress.

Students have opportunities to further develop their research skills, participate in associated projects, and engage in outreach and extracurricular activities. They can also join national, international and species-specific associations, and participate in exchanges through ERASMUS+ and can gain recognition for courses taken at other universities.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The veterinary medicine curriculum is designed to meet the Day 1 Competences, the programme objectives and intended learning outcomes and result in a qualification aligned with national and European frameworks for higher education. The VEE has QA systems, staff with relevant qualifications, and online learning platforms that together promote an environment that is

conducive to learning and fosters the development of lifelong learning skills through independent study and research activities. The VEE utilises a variety of pedagogical methods, provides teacher training and encourages students to participate in external associations and courses.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.2.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.2.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.2.

Standard 3.3: Programme learning outcomes must:

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

3.3.1. Findings

A. LSP

The learning outcomes of courses and the programme are aligned with the Day One Competences. To graduate and be awarded the Degree of Veterinary Medicine, students must pass all compulsory courses and achieve the Day One Competences. The quality assurance system utilised by the VEE, including feedback from students, graduating students, alumni and employer representatives from the Estonian Veterinary Chamber, supports the review and update of the programme to ensure it remains aligned with the outcomes, up to date and relevant. The last major update to learning outcomes was in 2023, and new learning outcomes outlined in the Standard of Higher Education, which have a particular emphasis on soft skills, will be introduced by 2028. Course details, including objectives, learning outcomes and a brief description, are available to students and staff on the online learning platforms. First-year

students are made aware of learning outcomes as part of an introductory course. Review of course details and the replacement or introduction of courses is overseen by the Curriculum Development Committee, with minor changes approved at the VEE level. Major changes require University approval and must be submitted to the Estonian Education Information System.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The programme's learning outcomes are designed to ensure that teaching, learning and assessment activities are aligned and support the acquisition of the Day One Competences. Each course description includes the objectives, learning outcomes and a brief overview. Information is available via the VEE's webpages and the online learning platforms. The quality assurance system involves regular feedback mechanisms and periodic comprehensive review to enable the VEE to manage and update the programme.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.3.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.3.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.3.

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

- **determine the pedagogical basis, design, delivery methods and assessment methods of the curriculum**
- **oversee QA of the curriculum, particularly gathering, evaluating, making change and responding to feedback from stakeholders, peer reviewers and external assessors, and data from examination/assessment outcomes**
- **perform ongoing reviews and periodic in-depth reviews of the curriculum (at least every seven years) by involving staff, students and stakeholders; these reviews must lead**

to continuous improvement of the curriculum. 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

A. LSP

The VEE oversees and manages the curriculum, its delivery and associated financial and non-financial resources through individual responsibilities, including the Director of Academic Affairs, the Director of the VEE and the Head of Curriculum and the Curriculum Development Committee.

The Curriculum Development Committee is led by the Head of Curriculum, has 16 members, including students, academic staff from various disciplines, and a professional representative to ensure external stakeholder input. The committee oversees quality assurance, gathering and evaluating internal and external feedback from stakeholders, peer reviewers, and external assessors, and makes changes as required. The committee monitors and analyses subject content and learning outcomes, focusing on integration between subjects, avoiding overlaps, and addressing teaching quality issues. The committee also advises on the design, delivery, and assessment methods of the curriculum, and is responsible for identifying areas for improvement and associated resource allocation to support curriculum enhancement and sustainability.

Potential changes are classified as curriculum-level and subject-level; the latter is under the remit of the Head of Curriculum and their team and is based on analyses and evaluation results provided by lecturers. Proposals for major curriculum changes and changes applicable to new entrants must be reviewed by the University Senate Committee of Academic Affairs.

Training courses are provided by the University and VEE. Additional courses are provided following analysis of student feedback and the training course feedback forms, which recently led to training on AI being provided.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE has assigned roles and a committee structure that includes student representation to oversee and manage the curriculum. The VEE's Curriculum Development Committee's activities support the curriculum design, delivery and review. The Head of Curriculum and the Curriculum Development Committee are actively involved in the quality assurance cycle using regular and periodic internal and external feedback to inform change. Continuing education for staff is provided through university and local-level training courses, with ongoing needs informed by student and staff feedback.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP
None.

B. ESP
No difference with LSP.

3.4.4. Decision

A. LSP
The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.4.

B. ESP
The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.4.

Standard 3.5: Elective Practical Training (EPT) includes compulsory training activities that each student must achieve before graduation to complement and strengthen their core theoretical and practical academic education, inter alia by enhancing their experience, professional knowledge and soft skills. Like all elective activities, its contents may vary from one undergraduate student to another.

EPT is organised either extra-murally with the student being under the direct supervision of a qualified person (e.g. a veterinary practitioner) or intra-murally, with the student being under the supervision of a teaching staff or a qualified person.

EPT itself cannot replace the Core Clinical Training (CCT) under the close supervision of teaching staff (e.g. ambulatory clinics, herd health management, practical training in VPH (including Food Safety and Quality (FSQ))). A comparison between CCT and EPT is provided in Annex 6, Standard 3.5.

3.5.1. Findings

A. LSP
The EPT consists of several practical intramural subjects such as: Practical training on the livestock farm (VL0822), artificial insemination and veterinary nurse training (VL0821), clinical training in production animal medicine (VL0468), clinical training in equine medicine (VL0697), and clinical training in small animal medicine (VL0178). The intramural EPT is coordinated and supervised by a teaching staff member. There are criteria to allocate students to the intramural EPT. Students provide feedback for the course after finishing it. The students maintain a logbook. The VEE maintains strong links with various companies and organisations to host students for training.

The EPT throughout all the curriculum consists of production animals (pre-clinical) (2 weeks), production animals (clinical) (12 weeks), companion animals (clinical) (12 weeks), and equine (10 weeks). There is no EPT on companion animals (pre-clinical).

Extramural EPT is structured and integrated into the curriculum and is included in the Practical training in livestock farms (VL.0822) and Artificial insemination and veterinary nurse training (VL.0821), where students are responsible for selecting the place to be trained.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE has a structured EPT mainly based on intramural training. The EPT is scattered throughout semesters within the curriculum and across animal species. However, there is no EPT associated with companion animals (pre-clinical). The EPT does not replace the CCT, and EPT is a distinct part (intramural) of the curriculum.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

It is suggested to add an option for some EPT on companion animals (pre-clinical).

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.5.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.5.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.5.

Standard 3.6: The EPT providers must meet the relevant national Veterinary Practice Standards, have an agreement with the VEE and the student (stating 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 teaching staff responsible for the overall supervision of the EPT, including liaison with EPT providers.

3.6.1. Findings

A. LSP

The VEE allocates teaching staff members as supervisors or coordinators in the EPT programme. The EPT providers must have veterinarians who hold a professional activity license from the national veterinary authority Agricultural and Food Board. All animal production units and slaughterhouses must comply with the EU regulations, and they are inspected by the same authority. The EPT provider is also evaluated and approved by the VEE supervisor.

A tripartite agreement is signed by the VEE (Director of Academic Affairs), the student and the EPT provider. There are also specific supervisors for each EPT activity allocated by the VEE.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

There is a structured intramural EPT which is coordinated by VEE supervisors. There are tripartite agreements between VEE, the student and EPT providers.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.6.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.6.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.6.

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

3.7.1. Findings

A. LSP

The students are introduced to the EPT training at the beginning of the course. During the EPT, the students maintain a logbook or write case reports. At the end of EPT, the EPT provider provides formal feedback for the student.

The student complaint process is going directly through the VEE supervisor responsible for EPT. If the problem is not resolved, the complaint is escalated to the Director of Academic Affairs of the VEE. Additionally, there is anonymous feedback from students via the Study Information System (SIS).

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.7.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE is preparing the students properly for EPT and has procedures for evaluation of the EPT as well as the EPT provider. The students keep a logbook provided by the VEE, but in some cases, instead of it, they write a case report. There is a student complaint process that escalates, and there is an anonymous option for feedback.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

3.7.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.7.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 3.7.

Area 4. Facilities and equipment

Standard 4.1: All aspects of the physical facilities must provide an environment conducive to learning, including internet access at all relevant sites where theoretical, practical and clinical education takes place. The 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 including students with a disability, and EU animal welfare and care standards.

4.1.1. Findings

A.

LSP

All veterinary teaching, research, and clinical facilities, except the Märja experimental dairy farm, are located on the University's F. R. Kreutzwaldi Street campus in Tartu. Buildings are within walking distance, ensuring easy access.

The main building, Zoomeedikum, houses the Animal Clinic and pharmacy. Built in 1992, it has been renovated and extended several times. Campus buildings are managed under the University's Territorial-Spatial Development Plan (2016–2025), reviewed annually in the capital budget process. Funding comes from University revenues and is supplemented by public and EU sources. The construction of the new clinical buildings (Clinical Education Centre) has been

approved and will begin soon, although work has not yet started. Other VEE units are housed on the campus, covering food hygiene, animal nutrition, breeding, aquaculture, genetics, and milk quality. Student dormitories and cafes are nearby, and teaching also takes place in the Main, Forestry, and Technology buildings.

The experimental dairy farm in Märja (5 km from Tartu) provides 200 ha for research and training, renovated in 2023–24 with modern equipment and precision farming tools.

Clinical services and the pharmacy are located on the ground floor of Zoomeedikum. Buildings have elevators, barrier-free entrances, and designated parking spaces. High-speed Wi-Fi is available in the facilities; however, in some areas of the campus, the Wifi signal sometimes is not adequate.

Maintenance includes preventive inspections and minor upgrades, while major investments (e.g., imaging equipment, compressors, hoists) are prioritised by the VEE Board. Regular inspections ensure compliance with safety regulations.

All facilities comply with national and EU legislation on health, safety, accessibility, biosecurity, radiation, and animal welfare. With regard to occupational safety, it is governed by the Occupational Health and Safety, and each unit maintains a risk analysis with the Labour Inspectorate. Radiation safety is managed by a designated radiation expert under the Radiation Act; compliance is monitored by the Environmental Board and Labour Inspectorate. First aid kits are available in all buildings; staff are trained in first aid; fire and evacuation procedures are in place. Biosecurity and animal welfare are ensured under the Veterinary Act, Animal Protection Act, and EAEVE recommendations.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

While the University has committed to renovating and expanding VEE teaching facilities under the Territorial-Spatial Development Plan, progress is expected to be gradual due to external financial constraints.

In general, the clinical facilities are well constructed and maintained, and the VEE has a strategy to maintain and repair its facilities, as well as to improve Wi-Fi access throughout the buildings and premises.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

It is suggested to begin the construction of the new Clinical Educational Centre as soon as possible to address the current space constraints. Additionally, it is suggested that Wi-Fi access

in all facilities be improved.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.1.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 4.1.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 4.1.

Standard 4.2: Lecture theatres, teaching laboratories, tutorial rooms, clinical facilities and other teaching spaces must be adequate in number and size, equipped for instructional purposes and 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 teaching and support staff to support their teaching and research efforts.

4.2.1. Findings

A. LSP

The University provides adequate lecture halls and seminar rooms across several campus buildings, all equipped with audiovisual technology, hybrid-teaching capacity, and internet access. Wifi access is unstable in some areas of the facilities. Zoomeedikum hosts 15 specialised veterinary laboratories, a necropsy hall with full safety facilities, and a Clinical Skills Laboratory equipped with simulators for small and equine training. Clinical training is also supported by the small animal, equine, and production animal clinics, which include changing rooms, lockers, showers, and overnight rest facilities. Renovations are underway to further improve student and staff spaces, as well as the air quality in teaching facilities.

Dedicated self-study rooms in the clinics are not available; however, in the present year, a new student area is being created with facilities for study, rest, and meals. Likewise, in clinics there are services for students including lockers, vending machines and cafés nearby. Sports and leisure facilities are also easily accessible.

Staff are provided with adequate office space, generally shared by two to four people, with individual offices for senior staff. Research laboratories are located within Chairs, while high-level pathogen work is conducted in collaboration with the National Centre for Laboratory Research and Risk Assessment.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

Overall, the combination of hybrid teaching, hands-on clinical training, and ongoing campus expansions ensures a safe and functional learning and research environment, while highlighting areas where further space and dedicated facilities are needed.

Although the number of consultation rooms and hospitalised patients is adequate for the current caseload in the Small Animal Clinic and in the Equine Clinic, expanding the available space — allowing for more consultation rooms, surgical theatres, and related facilities — would enhance both clinical and teaching activities. Likewise, the planned modifications to the Equine Clinic will provide additional space for surgical procedures and improve access to advanced diagnostic imaging, including the MRI already available for small animals. The number of computers in the clinical rooms of the Small Animal and Equine Clinics is limited, which leads to limited use of the Provet Cloud system.

Zoomeedikum has scarce self-study rooms and group facilities; however, students use alternative areas such as the museum, adapted spaces in galleries, library and association rooms; the planned building upgrades specifically aim to improve this aspect of the learning environment.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

It is suggested to construct and implement the planned Clinical Education Centre, which will help to improve the space problems of the VEE. This will also help to solve the current space problems in all the clinics, as well as improve the air quality of the facilities.

It is suggested to increase the number of computers in clinical areas to improve the use of the Provet system for students and staff.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.2.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 4.2.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 4.2.

Standard 4.3: The livestock facilities, animal housing, core clinical teaching facilities and equipment used by the VEE for teaching purposes must:

- be sufficient in capacity and adapted for the number of students enrolled in order to allow safe hands-on training for all students
- be of a high standard, well maintained and fit for the purpose
- promote best husbandry, welfare and management practices

- **ensure relevant biosecurity**
- **take into account environmental sustainability**
- **be designed to enhance learning.**

4.3.1. Findings

A. LSP

The VEE provides specialised facilities for teaching, clinical practice, and research across small animals, equines, and production animals.

Healthy animals are generally not housed permanently in the Small Animal Clinic, though students may bring pets for supervised practical sessions. In addition, students have access to healthy animals during their rotations in the vaccination clinic of the VEE. The Märja experimental dairy farm houses up to 250 cattle, and the Equine Clinic maintains four teaching horses.

Hospitalised patients are accommodated in purpose-built wards, isolation units, and ICU facilities, all equipped with advanced diagnostic and surgical tools.

Practical teaching also covers veterinary public health (VPH) through food hygiene and safety laboratories, meat inspection, and training in slaughterhouses, with hands-on learning in necropsy, reproductive technologies, and meat and dairy production.

Facilities comply with biosecurity, animal welfare, and occupational safety standards, though some areas have limited capacity or require renovation, particularly in self-study and clinic support spaces.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.3.2 Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The facilities are well constructed, equipped, and maintained. Some deserve particular commendation, including the meat and dairy laboratories, the central pharmacy in the VTH and the Märja dairy farm. The current clinical facilities are now limited in space. Despite their efficient use, it would be advisable to proceed with the construction and equipment of the new Clinical Educational Centre at the earliest opportunity.

The Small Animal Clinics comply with biosecurity regulations; however, signage and posting in English are limited in some areas. For example, the flow for students and staff is not clearly indicated in the radiology unit, ICU, and even in the isolation facilities. Another point to note is that students are not consistently using dosimeters during radiographic procedures, as these are currently used only by the staff.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

It is suggested to improve the signalling and posting of biosecurity procedures in certain clinical areas of the Small Animal Clinic, including radiology, oncology, ICU, and isolation facilities, as well as in the teaching farm.

It is suggested to have students wear dosimeters during their training in the radiology units for both small animals and equine patients.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.3.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 4.3.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 4.3.

Standard 4.4: Core clinical teaching facilities must be provided in a veterinary teaching hospital (VTH) with 24/7 emergency services at least for companion animals and equines. Within the VTH, the VEE must unequivocally demonstrate that the standard of education and clinical research is compliant with all ESEVT Standards, e.g. research-based and evidence-based clinical training supervised by teaching staff trained to teach and to assess, availability for staff and students of facilities and patients for performing clinical research and relevant QA procedures.

For ruminants, on-call service must be available if emergency services do not exist for those species in a VTH.

The VEE must ensure state-of-the-art standards of teaching clinics which remain comparable with or exceed the best available clinics in the private sector.

The VTH and any hospitals, practices and facilities which are involved with the core curriculum must be compliant with the ESEVT Standards and meet the relevant national Veterinary Practice Standards.

4.4.1. Findings

A. LSP

The Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) of VEE is the only veterinary hospital in the south of Estonia, and it is organised into three main units: the Small Animal Clinic, the Equine Clinic, and the Production Animal (mobile) Clinic. The Small Animal and Equine Clinics provide 24/7 medical and surgical care, including emergency services, while the Production Animal Clinic delivers on-farm veterinary care, including surgery and herd health management, with on-call availability for private farms and the University's experimental dairy farm in Märja. Each clinic is managed by a Head of Clinic, supported by an Operational Manager, with overall oversight by the Chief Clinical Officer. In-house laboratory services are available 24/7, supporting diagnostics and patient care.

Clinical education is fully integrated into the VTH. Students receive supervised, hands-on

training in specialised facilities through small-group rotations across clinical disciplines. The Equine Clinic focuses on team-based, case-oriented learning, while the Production Animal Clinic provides supervised field experience with significant student autonomy.

All facilities follow biosecurity and hygiene protocols, including disinfected clothing and equipment, dedicated hygiene stations, and vehicle decontamination. Hospitalisation and inpatient care are provided in specialised wards and ICU cages, with continuous staff monitoring. Emergency services include on-call specialists for telephone consultation and in-person intervention during nights and weekends.

The VTH and affiliated clinics comply with national Veterinary Practice Standards. Veterinary activities are regulated under the Estonian Veterinary Act and Medicinal Products Act, ensuring compliance with EU animal health regulations, veterinary supervision, animal welfare, and safe handling of medicines. Oversight is provided by the Agriculture and Food Board and the Agricultural Registers and Information Board, while professional ethics are guided by the Estonian Veterinary Chamber's Code of Good Veterinary Practice.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

Overall, the VTH provides state-of-the-art clinical facilities, integrated practical teaching, and sufficient supervision, ensuring that education and clinical research meet ESEVT standards. The VTH of the VEE is the only veterinary hospital open 24/7 in southern Estonia, which means it receives clinical cases from the entire region, ensuring an adequate and varied caseload. Students under rotations are supervised, although there is room for improvement in the supervision of all clinical tasks and disciplines, particularly in the small animal clinic.

The use of the Provet patient management system is not yet fully effective. Both staff and students should integrate it into the daily clinic workflow, allowing students to access clinical cases and actively participate in patient care.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP, but the use of the Provet system for English-speaking students should be improved. They must have access to the program in English.

4.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

It is suggested to improve the student supervision system to ensure a consistent approach among all clinical staff, rather than one that depends on individual teachers or clinicians.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.4.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 4.4.

B. ESP

The study programme 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 clinical skills laboratory, diagnostic imaging, clinical pathology, anaesthesia, surgeries and treatment facilities, intensive/critical care, ambulatory services, pharmacy and necropsy facilities. Procedures and facilities should also be available for soft skills training, e.g. communication skills training through role-play.

4.5.1. Findings

A. LSP

Students access clinics, laboratories, and the necropsy room through a structured timetable and safety guidelines. Before practicals, they are introduced to the facilities and protocols to ensure safe use. Certain rooms, such as the histology class, clinical skills lab, osteology lab, and Anatomy Museum, are available during working hours for individual study. Extracurricular use of labs, including surgery club activities, can be arranged in advance through the Academic Affairs Office. During clinical rotations, students have access to all clinic areas except MRI, CT, and the medication room.

Communication skills are provided in the clinical skill lab, early in the 3rd year of the curriculum.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE provides students with access to a wide range of diagnostic and therapeutic facilities, including diagnostic imaging, anaesthesia, surgery, intensive care, emergency cases, and necropsy areas. A well-equipped Clinical Skills Laboratory is available for hands-on training. Facilities and activities for soft skills development, such as communication training through role-play, are also in place.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.5.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 4.5.

B. ESP

The study programme 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 the prevention of the spread of infectious agents, animal care and student training. They must be adapted to all animal species commonly handled in the VTH. When permanent isolation facilities are not available in any of the facilities used for clinical training, the ability to provide such facilities and the procedures to use them appropriately in an emergency must be demonstrated during the visitation.

4.6.1. Findings

A. LSP

The equine and small animal isolation units were redesigned in 2020. The equine isolation unit has three fully separated stalls with negative pressure systems, accessible only via external doors, and entry is restricted to clinic staff and supervised students.

The small animal isolation unit contains four large cages, an ante-room with PPE and supplies, and an intermediate room for equipment and access to an outdoor area. Measures are in place to minimise cross-contamination, including spacing between animals, thorough cleaning and disinfection after each patient, proper PPE use, and strict handling of waste. Staff are trained in antiseptic procedures and infection control, with detailed protocols described in the Biosecurity Handbook.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

Both equine and small animal isolation units comply with national biosecurity standards, ensuring safe management of infectious patients and minimising the risk of cross-contamination. However, in the Small Animal Isolation Facility, the signage and postings are not clearly positioned, and physical barriers such as a bench are missing, so the movement of students through these areas is not clearly defined.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

It is suggested to enhance signage and information displays within the Isolation Facility to improve orientation and access to information for students.

B. ESP

It is suggested to enhance English signage in the Isolation Facility so that instructions and information can be easily understood by English-speaking students.

4.6.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 4.6.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 4.6.

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

4.7.1. Findings

A. LSP

Herd health management is integrated throughout the curriculum, beginning with pre-clinical training in animal welfare, protection, hygiene, and nutrition. Practical training takes place at the University experimental dairy farm in Märja and at various local farms, including dairy, beef, pig, horse, sheep, goat, poultry, and quail operations. These early courses prepare students for advanced subjects in Semester 11, such as ruminant, pig, and small ruminant health management, herd health, and field veterinary medicine, which are reinforced through practical training at the Production Animal Clinic.

The ambulatory clinic functions as a mobile teaching unit, equipped with buses, trailers, ultrasound, surgical instruments, tranquilliser guns, and portable surgery tables. Strict biosecurity measures are applied during all field visits, including the use of disinfectants, sealed containers for used medicines, and leak-proof boxes for contaminated clothing. Vehicles and equipment for student transportation and fieldwork are provided by the Institute and the University.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.7.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The ambulatory clinic of the VEE operates regularly, allowing students to visit and work with farm animals under proper supervision. The service complies with all established requirements.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.7.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 4.7.

B. ESP

The study programme 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 animal welfare, and to prevent the spread of infectious agents.

4.8.1. Findings

A. LSP

The regulation of animal products in Estonia follows the Estonian Food Act and EU Regulation 178/2002/EEC, with supervision by relevant authorities, including the Agriculture and Food Board.

Student transportation to the clinical facilities is efficiently organised by the VEE; however, transportation to the abattoir is arranged by the students themselves. Student transport complies with the Traffic Act and VEE biosecurity guidelines, while live animal transport is the owner's responsibility, following the Animal Protection Act.

VEE provides dedicated vehicles for cadavers, organs, and emergency animal transport, with proper storage in coolers or freezers and handling using specialised equipment.

Rendering, cremation, and organ transport are carried out through approved external services, following biosecurity and safety protocols.

Transport activities at VEE comply with national and EU regulations, ensuring animal welfare and biosecurity. However, the transportation of narcotic drugs during external visits to farms is carried out in non-locked drug boxes.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.8.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

Transportation of narcotic drugs during external visits to farms is carried out in non-locked drug boxes, which is not in full compliance with the Estonian law (Regulation No. 73 of the Minister of Social Affairs governs the handling of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and research purposes).

The penetrative captive-bolt gun employed for livestock stunning and euthanasia, which is regulated under the Estonian Weapons Act, is not kept in a locked cabinet or safe that meets security standards. Safe storage is also required under workplace safety laws.

Students travel from the VEE to the abattoir (approximately two hours by car) to complete their core practical training in VPH and FQ, and to the central veterinary office in Tallinn (also approximately two hours by car) for the “Practical Training in Veterinary Surveillance” (VL0828) course. Transportation is arranged individually, with students choosing to travel either by bus or car at their own expense. The VEE provides financial support for accommodation during both placements, covering one week for the abattoir visit and two weeks for the VL0828 course.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.8.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

It is suggested to keep all boxes used for the transportation of narcotic drugs locked, as required by Estonian legislation.

It is suggested to keep the penetrative captive-bolt gun employed for livestock stunning and euthanasia in a secure locked cabinet or safe that meets security standards and is maintained in good working order on a regular basis.

It is suggested that the VEE evaluates ways to enhance transportation support for students during external visits, which form an integral part of the core practical training in VPH and FQ.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.8.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is partially compliant with Standard 4.8 because some legal requirements are not fully implemented in the transportation of drugs and equipment.

B. ESP

The study programme is partially compliant with Standard 4.8 because some legal requirements are not fully implemented in the transportation of drugs and equipment.

Standard 4.9: Operational policies and procedures (including biosecurity, good laboratory practice and good clinical practice) must be taught and posted (in different languages if the curriculum is taught in them) for students, staff and visitors and a biosecurity manual must be developed and made easily available for all relevant persons. The VEE must demonstrate

a clear commitment for the delivery and the implementation of 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 regular monitoring of the feedback from students, staff and clients.

4.9.1. Findings

A. LSP

VEE strictly adheres to national and international safety, biosecurity, and occupational health regulations. The Biosecurity Handbook is reviewed regularly, introduced to students and staff, and comprehension is verified through tests and signed acknowledgements. Each clinic and unit has designated biosecurity contact persons, with oversight by the Biosecurity Working Group and the Director, ensuring continuous updates and compliance. Laboratories operate according to Good Laboratory Practice, while clinical and animal-handling activities follow established guidelines, emergency procedures, and the Estonian Code of Ethics for Veterinary Medicine. Waste management, including biohazardous and chemical waste, complies with EU and national regulations, with certified disposal services and exceptional use of a small incinerator. Students and staff are trained in safe practices, report breaches through structured channels, and are regularly informed of updates via email, intranet, meetings, and the VEE blog. Biosecurity signalling and posting are located in different areas in both languages (SEE IT)

Heads of clinics, the Chief Clinical Officer, and specialised personnel coordinate facility management, clinical supervision, and equipment maintenance, ensuring ongoing compliance with safety, biosecurity, and professional standards.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.9.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE demonstrates compliance with the requirements for teaching and making operational policies and procedures accessible, including biosecurity and good clinical practices. A biosecurity manual is readily available, and its implementation is supported by a dedicated committee.

In some clinical areas, notably the Isolation Facility, ICU and oncology room in the Small Animal Clinic, and in the Dairy Unit, the visibility and posting of relevant information could be further enhanced.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

4.9.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

It is suggested an improvement of the signage and posting in the mentioned areas of the Small Animal Clinic, as well as at the dairy farm.

B. ESP

It is suggested that an improvement in posting in the English language in the mentioned areas.

4.9.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 4.9.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 4.9.

Area 5. Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin

Standard 5.1: The number and variety of healthy and diseased animals, first opinion and referral cases, cadavers, and material of animal origin must be adequate for providing the practical and safe hands-on training in all relevant areas 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

A. LSP

Practical teaching in Anatomy relies on dry and wet specimens and cadavers collected from the VTH.

Clinical pathology practical teaching relies on cadavers collected either in the VTH or collected by the VEE at the Märja University farm or external farms and slaughterhouses.

FSQ practical training is based on carcasses of different species and organs collected in slaughterhouses. Students are also visiting slaughterhouses for all the main food-producing animal species.

The VEE adheres to the principles of “never the first time on live animals”. All students have access to the clinical skills lab. The experimental farm in Maria is used for both preclinical and clinical training in bovine practice. The VTH holds 5 healthy horses for preclinical training.

Clinical training is performed either on animals seen intramurally for small animal species or extramurally for food-producing animal species. Animals used for clinical teaching in small animal and equine are mainly first-opinion cases.

Students also have access to external practices for equine, aquatic species and zoos.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

5.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

Access to pig farms was limited due to African swine fever. Access to poultry farms is also limited, although the VEE have put in place a strategy to increase access of students to poultry farms from spring 2026. The VEE is working on increasing the topic of welfare during studies.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

5.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

It is suggested to the VEE that they implement the strategic plan to increase access to the poultry farm for students in order to enhance core clinical training in that field.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

5.1.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is partially compliant with Standard 5.1 because of suboptimal exposure of students to poultry.

B. ESP

The study programme is partially compliant with Standard 5.1 because of suboptimal exposure of students to poultry.

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 the supervision of teaching staff and follows the same standards as those applied in the VEE.

5.2.1. Findings

A. LSP

Facilities used for practical training at external sites are cattle farms, pig farms, poultry farms and slaughterhouses. All practical training is closely supervised by faculty members.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

5.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

Students, from both curricula, have access to a wide variety of well-designed and managed farms. Biosecurity strategy as well as management practice are well above the standards. The variety of animals and practices is commendable.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

5.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

5.2.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 5.2.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 5.2.

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

5.3.1. Findings

A. LSP

Nursing procedures are taught from the beginning of the curriculum. Students are exposed to the clinical workup during the rotations in the VTH and during external rotations. Problem-oriented diagnostic and decision-making are taught to students throughout the clinical rotations.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

5.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

Students claim that they are sometimes not really active in the clinical workup on patients in the VTH.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

5.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

The VEE should continue to improve active involvement of students in clinical workup during clinical training, mainly in the VTH.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

5.3.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 5.3.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 5.3.

Standard 5.4: Medical records for patients seen intra- and extra-murally under Core Clinical Training (CCT) must be comprehensive and maintained in an effective retrieval system to efficiently support the teaching and learning, research, and service programmes of the VEE.

5.4.1. Findings

A. LSP

The VEE uses a dedicated software for recording of clinical data (Provet) including diagnostic images from patients seen in the VTH. Data from large animal clinical practice seen at the Märja University Farm as well as from large animals examined during the ambulatory clinic, are also recorded onto the same system. Herd health information is gathered in the national computer system for Estonia (Vissuke).

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

5.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

In the VTH, a considerable amount of paper-based documentation is still used for recording data during clinical practice. Some of these documents are not fully translated into English. Students are not consistently involved in entering case reports into the clinical case recording system, even in draft form. Reports in the system are required to be written in Estonian, which limits the ability of students in the English-language curriculum to actively participate in report writing.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

5.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

It is suggested to the VEE that they continue to develop the use of the medical record retrieval system to reduce paper usage and to enhance its use for teaching and learning purposes. The involvement of students in clinical report writing, for both Estonian and English language programmes, even as drafts to be reviewed and validated by teachers, could be further encouraged.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

5.4.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is partially compliant with Standard 5.4 because of suboptimal use of the medical record retrieval system for teaching and learning purposes.

B. ESP

The study programme is partially compliant with Standard 5.4 because of suboptimal use of the medical records retrieval system for teaching and learning purposes.

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. Learning resources must be suitable to implement teaching facilities to secure the ‘never the first time on a live animal’ concept. 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, together with basic English teaching if necessary.

6.1.1. Findings

A. LSP

The VEE has an on-campus library open for the students during the week to consult books and journals in electronic format through the most common database search platforms for academia (e.g. Web of Science, CABI, Scopus, etc.). The library also has a digital archive to store other kinds of publications (e.g. thesis, reports, etc.). The library staff support students in their search for books and articles and gather new resources that are considered useful to the students, researchers and academic staff. Learning resources are available in English and in Estonian (if available).

At the beginning of the academic year, all new students attend an introductory session in the library on basic search interfaces, available services and resources. There are online courses on library and information skills for international students and searching scientific information from databases for national students. The library staff provide training sessions for academics and researchers on demand on using library resources, digital competences, information search, and reference management tools.

The library shares information about the available learning resources on the website, staff and student mailing lists, a weekly newsletter, and social networks.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

6.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The library is open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. on working days and from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays. E-learning resources can be accessed at all times online. The library has a feedback form on its

homepage: <https://library.emu.ee/en/vorm/tagasisideveebilehele>. It is also possible to give direct feedback to the library's circulation desk staff. In February 2025, the library was awarded the title of Student Friend of the Year.

The library is spacious and available to the students; however is underutilised by the students who prefer studying at home or at coffee shops. It is situated about 500 meters from the VEE main building.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

6.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

6.1.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 6.1.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 6.1.

Standard 6.2: Staff and students must have full access on site to an academic library administered by a qualified librarian, an Information Technology (IT) unit managed by a qualified IT person, an e-learning platform, and 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

A. LSP

The University library employs 12.75 full-time equivalent (FTE) permanent staff, including the Director of the library. The library has computers that can be used for catalogue searches and printers are available for students. The VEE has a department of information and communication and technology (ICT) to deal with IT issues and servers. Each building has a dedicated ICT specialist on-site. There are 16 classrooms equipped with computers. There is Wifi coverage on campus. The Microsoft Office 365 package is available for students with 100GB of online storage. There is also a secure VPN service. The ICT staff created training videos to facilitate software installation available on a wiki website. The VEE also uses Microsoft for authentication

purposes.

The University has a Study Information System (SIS) to facilitate the exchange of information related to the programme of study (e.g. curricula, timetables, study materials, exam plans, academic progress tracking, student status information, etc.). Access to the SIS requires a University user account and an official University email address. Academics can use the SIS to communicate with the students and share resources and materials. Some areas of SIS are restricted to the students depending on the role they have in committees.

In addition, the VEE uses the Moodle e-learning platform. 40% of the courses are available in Moodle.

The VEE uses a content creation tool H5P to develop interactive learning materials (quizzes, presentations, interactive videos, and other content). Web-based polling platforms are used to engage students and collect feedback, and the most common platforms (MS TEAMS and Zoom) are used to deliver online lectures and seminars.

The University clinics use Provet Cloud veterinary software to manage clinical records. Students can request access to the software through the clinic manager. Provet Cloud is also used to retrieve retrospective data for thesis research.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

6.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The director of the library holds a Master's degree in Estonian Philology from the University of Tartu. Professional training and long-term experience in the Library of the Estonian University of Life Sciences, including its management, have provided the academic background and professional competence necessary for the effective management of the Library.

Moodle is increasingly used but not in all courses. Study materials and information for all courses are available through the university's SIS. H5P is also used and supports the development of interactive learning resources including self-assessment tools. In animal clinics, students are granted access to Provet once they register for practical training.

There is WiFi coverage on campus; however, it is limited in some areas and sometimes insufficient to support student learning activities.

The VPN service for access to learning resources from outside the VEE is in good working order.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

6.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

It is suggested to expand the use of Moodle and its full functionalities.

It is suggested to enhance the reliability of the Wifi in all buildings on campus.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

6.2.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 6.2.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 6.2.

Standard 6.3: The VEE must provide students with unimpeded access to learning resources, internet and internal study resources, as well as facilities and equipment for the development of procedural skills (e.g. clinical skills laboratory). 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

A. LSP

A veterinary clinical skills course is delivered to students in the third year to make full use of the clinical skill lab. Training is delivered either in small groups or individually, under the supervision of a dedicated specialist. When the room is free, students can practice on their own initiative by prior agreement. Printed instructions are available for each clinical skill, and tablets are available for students to watch videos on learning respective skills. There is a Moodle-based course with information about all the skills, including videos to support student learning. An online anatomy museum is available but only in Estonian. This resource has been primarily designed as a museum for the wider public rather than as a direct teaching tool for students.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

6.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

Students can practice clinical skills required for small animals, horses, and cattle. The clinical skills lab provides supporting learning resources for practising animal handling and restraint, obtaining diagnostic samples, laboratory skills, drug and fluid administration, surgical skills and theatre practice, nursing skills, experience in performing other specific procedures. The tasks have been selected in collaboration with veterinarians from the clinics to reflect the skills currently needed in clinical practice. The majority of the procedures practised in the clinical skills lab are part of a veterinarian's daily routine and are essential for developing competence and confidence before working with live patients. In the veterinary clinical skills course, students receive 14 contact hours of supervised training (Animal behaviour 6, Communication psychology 2, Practical large animal tasks 2, Practical small animal tasks 4), in addition to access for independent practice. Students can provide feedback on the use of the clinical skills lab in the SIS system via course evaluations. Feedback is also given verbally during practical sessions. Although this is not formally recorded, it is used when possible to adjust the organisation of training and access to the clinical skills lab, and to improve students'

professional skills. Additional feedback is received from lecturers who highlight the main gaps in students' practical skills. Based on this input, the exercises and equipment in the clinical skills lab are selected and prioritised.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

6.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

6.3.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 6.3.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 6.3.

Area 7. Student admission, progression and welfare

Standard 7.1: The VEE must consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e.g. student admission, progression and certification.

In relation to enrolment, the VEE must provide accurate and complete information regarding the educational programme in all advertisements for prospective national and international students.

Formal cooperation with other VEEs must also be clearly advertised.

7.1.1. Findings

A. LSP

Information about enrolment is available to students in Estonian and English on the University website. The academic calendar, curriculum and individual course/subject details including learning outcomes, study plans, progression and certification, are provided in Estonian and English on the Study Information System (SIS).

The University's Department of Marketing and Communication promotes curricula both in Estonia and internationally in a variety of ways including advertising and social media and reviews the strategy annually. Outreach activities, education fairs and events, both on-site and external, are run by the university and VEE for schools and prospective students to raise awareness of study opportunities. For international outreach, the University collaborates with

the Study in Estonia portal and veterinary medicine student organisations (e.g. Suolet, EVÜS and IVSA).

Collaborations and partnerships with other VEEs are showcased through the VEE's website news, blog, Instagram accounts (equine and small animal clinics), publications and testimonials from participants in exchange programmes and joint initiatives. A list of partner institutions, including through Erasmus, is available on relevant websites.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

7.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE provides publicly available information about the student life cycle including admission, progression and certification. Information about the programme is available via the Study Information System (SIS). Information about collaborations with other VEEs are publicised.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

7.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

7.1.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 7.1.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 7.1.

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

7.2.1. Findings

A. LSP

The Ministry of Education and Research defines each university's areas of responsibility, which in turn determines its public funding. The number of students in the 6-year programmes between 2021-22 and 2023/24 has averaged just under 170 for the Estonian language programme and just over 200 for the English language programme. All the students currently enrolled on the Estonian programme are classified as standard and exempt from tuition fees, whereas all

students currently on the English programme are full fee paying (Euro 4,800 per semester); the amount is reviewed annually and approved by the University Senate, with a potential increase of up to 10% per year. Admissions data are evaluated by the Department for Academic Affairs and shared with the VEE. The intake to the veterinary programmes has remained unchanged for the past ten years and aligns with current budget, staffing and resources, which is considered adequate.

B. ESP

There is a slightly higher number of students in the English language programme (ESP). ESP students pay tuition fees, Estonian students are exempt from tuition fees.

7.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The available resources are currently consistent with the number of students in the programmes.

B. ESP

Although the number of students on the English language programme is slightly higher than on the Estonian language programme (LSP), overall the available resources are currently consistent with the number of students in both programmes.

7.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

7.2.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 7.2.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 7.2.

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

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

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

7.3.1. Findings

A. LSP

Currently students enrolling at the university require a secondary education or equivalent qualification in accordance with the Higher Education Act. Universities can require additional criteria for selection to a specific curriculum. For foreign applicants the University recognises foreign qualifications based on international conventions, agreements, and Estonian legislation and the Estonian Centre evaluates international candidates' applications based on their diplomas, academic supplements, and having met a minimum language proficiency. Admission requirements are publicised on the university's website.

The VEE admits approximately 70 students annually. There has been a small increase in the number of standard students recently, but the VEE does not anticipate significant further increases. The Curriculum Development Committee analyses admissions data in relation to the labour market and the VEE's resources and is currently revising selection criteria based on the reasons for students dropping out. The recommendations will be reviewed and ratified at the university level. Due to current veterinary workforce shortages, the university is working with the Estonian Veterinary Chamber and Estonian Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce to address the issue. The University Senate approves the admission criteria and regulations for each curriculum annually, and this information is made available to applicants in both Estonian and English on the University's website.

Admissions are organised at the university level by the Department for Academic Affairs through the Estonian admission system. A specialist in admissions reviews applications to ensure they meet the requirements and then the Veterinary Admissions Committee evaluates applications and compiles a ranked list, which is submitted to the University's Admissions Committee. Current selection criteria for standard students applying to the LSP relate to high school grades in specific subjects and a letter of motivation. The admission system for the VEE runs from May to June, with successful applicants notified in mid-July and they must confirm their enrolment within two days. Selection criteria for full-fee students applying to the ESP are the International Student Admission Test (ISAT), English language proficiency at a minimum of B2, and a letter of motivation. The admission system runs from February to May with successful applicants notified at the end of June and they must confirm their enrolment within seven days. Unsuccessful applicants can submit an appeal and information about the process is available on the university website. Appeals are reviewed and a decision is made by the Admissions Committee and their decision is final.

The university admission committee members are approved by the Rector and are trained. The University Admission Commission is chaired by the Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs, comprises the Directors of Academic Affairs, a student representative, and the Department for Academic Affairs admissions specialists, approves the list of admitted students and handles appeals. The VEE has a sub-commission to review veterinary programme applicants.

B. ESP

Differences relate to English language requirements, types of evidence of qualifications and a slightly different/earlier time scale.

7.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The selection criteria and process are clearly defined. Applications are submitted through the Estonian admissions system, checked by the university and then ranked by the VEE's Veterinary Admissions Committee based on grades and a letter of motivation. The VEE Curriculum Development Committee is reviewing and revising selection criteria to try to address levels of dropout and the current workforce shortages. Training for those involved in admission is provided by the university.

B. ESP

Differences relate to English language requirements, types of evidence of qualifications and a slightly different/earlier time scale.

7.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

7.3.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 7.3.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 7.3.

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

7.4.1. Findings

A. LSP

Applicants with disabilities and special needs are subject to the same admission conditions. As associated information is considered sensitive personal data it is only collected by the University if the applicant voluntarily chooses to disclose it. The requirements of a student with special needs are assessed at an individual level by the university in consultation with the VEE's Head of the Curriculum and the university psychologist, who together evaluate whether the student can complete the curriculum and determine what adjustments should be put in place.

All University buildings are accessible to persons with mobility impairments. Students diagnosed with a disability may apply for state-funded support. If students have a serious illness, they will be required to suspend studies until they are medically cleared to continue.

The university provides free psychological counselling, and first- and second-year students engage in a mentorship scheme with tutors and course supervisors. The VEE's curriculum includes a course on Veterinary mental health and self-care.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

7.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

Applications from individuals with disabilities or special needs are reviewed in consultation with the VEE to evaluate whether the student can complete the programme and determine what adjustments are required. The VEE has clear policies and procedures around disabilities and illness. Accommodations are made where appropriate while still ensuring attainment of Day One Competences.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

7.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

7.4.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 7.4.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 7.4.

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

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

7.5.1. Findings

A. LSP

The academic calendar, deadlines for graduation and thesis defence, and information about the veterinary medical programme courses, credits and examinations are available to students online via webpages and the Study Information System (SIS).

Academic progress is recorded in SIS and can be accessed by the student, the study officer who

monitors progress and provides support, the Director of Academic Affairs who issues regulations related to studies, and members of the Department for Academic Affairs (DAA). Only students who have completed at least 75% of the cumulative study load by the end of August progress to the next academic year. Credits from Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) may be transferred. Students who have completed all the programme's compulsory and elective subjects by the specified deadline are permitted to defend their final theses.

The VEE maintains academic standards while providing flexibility to support students facing challenges. Students must complete prerequisites before enrolling in clinical subjects. The Regulation of Studies outlines the procedures for evaluating academic progress, requirements to complete 75–100% of the prescribed credits and criteria for removal from a programme. Retake examinations are available until the end of the academic year. The majority of the VEE's students complete 100% of the credits within the year, a few carry credits forward and retake exams. There are some pre-requisite courses in the veterinary programme where students cannot progress unless these are completed; for example, students can only participate in clinical subjects when all pre-requisite courses have been passed. Academic progress is monitored by officers of DAA, who contact students experiencing difficulties and work collaboratively to find solutions and appropriate support, including coordinating with academic staff to provide targeted support. The veterinary curriculum mandates full-time enrolment, although under certain academic circumstances and for health reasons, maternity and military service or caring responsibilities, students may take academic leave. During such periods, students may retake exams. Students who have a valid reason for missing an exam may still be permitted to take it. Extensions may also be granted for the defence of the final thesis.

Veterinary students are provided with guidelines around professional good practice, which outline acceptable behaviours as well as actions that would contravene veterinary professional ethics. These guidelines also specify behaviours that may prevent future employment as a veterinarian. The guidelines are introduced to first-year students, as are the regulations around academic behaviour, misconduct and associated consequences.

During the first year of study, students are supported by tutors and buddies trained to provide guidance on academic procedures. Additional support is provided by academic officers and the Director of Academic Affairs, who offer individual and group consultations.

Attrition rates for the English language programme are low, but for the Estonian programme have historically been high. Most students drop out in years 1 and 2, and most do so voluntarily, with a few dismissed due to unsatisfactory academic performance. Admission criteria were revised in 2020 with changes to academic entry requirements and greater weighting on the motivation letter, which has resulted in a decrease in the dropout rate.

B. ESP

The dropout rate for the ESP is low, and much lower than for the LSP.

7.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The information about decisions around progression, academic and professional fitness to practise is clear and available to students. The VEE provides information on the mechanisms around remediation and the associated support. The VEE monitors attrition and progression and adapts admission criteria accordingly.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

7.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

7.5.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 7.5.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 7.5.

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

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

7.6.1. Findings

A. LSP

The Regulation of Studies document provides information for students about study requirements and activities, assessments (including formats, marking schemes, taking exams, resits and feedback), degree awards, student rights and obligations, academic integrity, and appeals.

Students may be removed from a programme at their request, due to exceptional circumstances such as serious illness, or by the University due to e.g. inability to commence studies, prolonged absence without a valid reason, unsatisfactory academic performance, non-payment of tuition fees, and unprofessional behaviour, including academic fraud. Other reasons include failure to complete the curriculum by the designated end date or having the required number of credits each year.

Students have the right to request the formation of an examination board to retake an exam by submitting a reasoned application to the Director of Academic Affairs. However, failure in a board examination results in removal from the programmes. The Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs makes the final decision based on information supplied by the Director of Academic Affairs.

The Regulation of Studies provides detailed guidance on the appeal process. Students can appeal the outcome of a failed exam, their final exam and their thesis defence. The timeframes and procedures for the submission of an appeal and the university's response are described in the Regulation of Studies. Initially, the student filing the complaint approaches the decision-making person or the chairperson of the decision-making body. The student can further appeal

in writing to the VEE's Director of Academic Affairs.

Students can also file complaints concerning unequal treatment on a variety of grounds. Support around the appeals process is available from student representatives, academic mentors and academic officers.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

7.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

Mechanisms for exclusion of students and the procedures around appeals are transparent and publicly available.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

7.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

7.6.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 7.6.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 7.6.

Standard 7.7: Provisions must be made by the VEE to support the physical, emotional and welfare needs of students. This includes but is not limited to learning support and counselling services, career advice, and fair and transparent mechanisms for dealing with student illness, impairment and disability during the programme. This shall include provision for disabled students, consistent with all relevant equality, diversity and/or human rights legislation.

There must be effective mechanisms for the resolution of student grievances (e.g. interpersonal conflict or harassment).

7.7.1. Findings

A. LSP

The University provides comprehensive support for students' physical and emotional well-being through a range of dedicated services. This starts during Orientation/Welcome Week to support the transition to academic life, raise awareness of leisure and cultural activities, and introduce

key members of the university administration, support staff and members of the Student Union, who play an active role in welcoming and assisting new students. There is a buddy and tutor system, including one specifically for international students, and the university provides training courses for tutors. International and exchange students can also access support from international relations specialists, Erasmus+ coordinators, at the Tartu Welcome Centre and through the University's International Club. The university offers a wide range of student services, including IT support, library access, a language centre and a sports centre.

In the veterinary programme, the 'Introduction to veterinary studies' course includes guidance on study skills, time management, learning strategies, academic procedures and useful resources. The role of academic supervisor has been introduced specifically at the VEE to provide students with academic guidance and motivational support, and has been well received by students.

Support for students with special needs is available from the Estonian government, which may include tuition fee exemption. Subject-specific accommodations are discussed directly with the relevant academic staff. Reasonable adjustments are available during examinations. The University provides comprehensive mental health support, including free access to two psychologists who offer counselling and strategies to maintain mental well-being. The veterinary curriculum includes a 'Veterinary mental health and self-care' course.

Career advice is available from careers advisors, international relations officers through the University's partnerships and at an annual Career Fair. In addition to university societies, veterinary students can be involved in various national, international and interest-specific student associations. The VEE provides logistical and some financial assistance for these student initiatives. Veterinary students are covered by accident and liability insurance provided by VEE.

There are multiple ways to raise and resolve grievances, informally and formally depending on the nature and severity of the issue including to a tutor, buddy, lecturer, course supervisor, the VEE's officers of academic affairs or the Head of Curriculum. There are procedures for appealing academic and administrative decisions and tuition fee-related grievances. In cases of serious misconduct or unresolved grievances, students may submit a formal complaint to the Director of Academic Affairs, a student representative in decision-making bodies, the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs or the Rector. Grievances are handled confidentially and in a timely manner and support is available to students throughout the process. Students may also raise issues through their elected representatives who serve on university bodies and committees e.g. VEE Council and University Senate. The Director of the VEE meets with student representatives once per semester to discuss feedback and concerns.

There are procedures to handle cases related to discrimination, harassment or bullying and guidelines to promote equality, ethical behaviour and good academic practice, with associated documentation on the University's website.

B. ESP

There is support specifically focused on international students.

7.7.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

Support for physical, emotional and welfare needs of students is provided by the central

university, the VEE, tutors, and student representatives and organisations. Provisions are made to support disabled students. There are various ways in which complaints and concerns can be raised, informally and formally, and mechanisms for resolution of grievances.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

7.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

7.7.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 7.7.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 7.7.

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

7.8.1. Findings

A. LSP

Students can submit proposals for improvements to teaching activities, which may be conveyed directly to lecturers or members of the VEE or university leadership teams. There are formal ways to express views, make suggestions and provide feedback on courses, lecturers and the curriculum through course evaluation surveys. There is a dedicated university-level survey to provide feedback on support services and service quality. Other mechanisms to provide feedback include informally e.g. via email, meetings between the Head of Curriculum and students, and via the Erasmus+ coordinating units for exchange students. Additionally, the VEE Board regularly meets with the Veterinary Student Organisation. Students are involved in various decision-making bodies with representatives serving on the VEE Council and Curriculum Development Committee, and at the university level on the Senate, the Committee for Academic Affairs and via the Student Union. Students have the right to raise concerns or lodge complaints about the compliance of the VEE and their courses with the relevant regulations and the ESEVT Standards.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

7.8.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

Students can convey their needs and make comments and suggestions to the VEE in formal, informal and anonymous ways including about the VEE's compliance with the relevant regulations and the ESEVT Standards. The mechanisms are comprehensive and functional.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

7.8.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

7.8.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 7.8.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 7.8.

Area 8. Student assessment

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

8.1.1. Findings

A. LSP

At the VEE, assessments of the Veterinary Medicine curriculum are conducted in accordance with the Regulation of Studies and the Statutes of Curriculum (accessible via the website). Two examinations or assessment processes are held during each semester, followed by one make-up exam session. Both summative and formative evaluations are employed in oral and written formats. A diverse range of methodologies (multiple-choice questions, true/false statements, short-answer and essay questions, matching exercises, case analyses, written tests, presentations, research projects, specimen identification, Objective Structured Clinical Examinations, literature reviews, thesis plans, thesis writing and defence, and written self-analyses) is applied to evaluate students' acquisition of theoretical knowledge, pre-clinical skills, and clinical practical skills. Pre-clinical practical skills are assessed during Semester 6 through performance in laboratory assignments and dissection protocols, checklist-based evaluations, and skills demonstrations, prior to students' progression into clinical training.

Clinical practical skills are evaluated throughout clinical rotations and EPT, using methods such as logbooks, case analyses, and clinical reports. VEE provides students with feedback on their test results and submitted assignments to support learning and improve performance. A variety of soft skills are incorporated into the curriculum in VEE.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

8.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

A clearly defined structure of diverse assessments is implemented within the VEE, ensuring the progressive development of students throughout the study programme. The structured assessment ensures a comprehensive evaluation of students' theoretical knowledge, practical abilities, and soft skills, supporting their progression.

Integrating various assessment methods, including written and practical evaluations, ensures a comprehensive and holistic assessment of students' competences.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

8.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

8.1.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 8.1.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 8.1.

Standard 8.2: The assessment tasks and grading criteria for each unit of study in the programme must be published, applied consistently, clearly identified and available to students in a timely manner well in advance of the assessment. Requirements to pass must be explicit.

The VEE must properly document the results of assessment and provide the students with timely feedback on their assessments.

Mechanisms for students to appeal against assessment outcomes must be explicit.

8.2.1. Findings

A. LSP

A structured and transparent assessment system has been established at the VEE, ensuring that students are informed in a timely manner about assessment tasks, grading criteria, and evaluation methods. The Examination Regulations are available for students, lecturers, and examiners on the University website. At the start of each academic year, the responsible lecturers provide detailed information regarding the study process, including curriculum and assessment procedures, to the students. The date, time, and format of the examinations are published in the Study Information System (SIS). At least a two-day gap is maintained between scheduled examinations in different subjects. Exam results are published in the SIS, where each student can access only their own results, while lecturers have access to the results of their respective subjects. Students have the right to review their written exams and receive explanations regarding their results. The grading scheme is defined in the Regulations of Studies at the VEE, with learning outcomes (LOs) serving as thresholds for determining levels of achievement. Final theses (FT) are evaluated by appointed reviewers and by the members of a five-member Defence Committee. The defences are open to the public, while the evaluations are conducted in a closed session. The Defence Committee unanimously makes the final grade decision, which is conveyed to the student via the SIS. Students receive feedback on their results depending on the structure of the assessment process.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

8.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

Clear regulations and information regarding all aspects of exam results and appeals are made available.

The Study Information System (SIS) provides key assessment information, including assessment types, grading criteria, final requirements, scheduling, retake options, study materials, and the final grade calculation.

The feedback mechanism represents a key strength of the assessment system, as it offers students clear guidance on their performance and highlights areas requiring further development. The well-structured appeal process enables students to contest their grades through an impartial and transparent review.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

8.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

8.2.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 8.2.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 8.2.

Standard 8.3: The VEE must have a process in place to review assessment outcomes, to change assessment strategies and to ensure the accuracy of the procedures when required. Programme learning outcomes covering the full range of professional knowledge, skills, competences and attributes must form the basis for assessment design and underpin decisions on progression.

8.3.1. Findings

A. LSP

Based on feedback, the Curriculum Development Committee (CDC) evaluates the assessment framework and proposes necessary changes at the VEE. The responsible lecturer for each course selects the appropriate assessment methods that align with the specific LOs of the course and designs and implements the assessment strategy. Assessment methods and any changes to assessment principles, criteria, and formats are shared with students through the SIS and Moodle. After evaluating grade distributions, dropout rates, and examination pass rates, the CDC may recommend changes to assessment types, their weightings, or even the redefinition of LOs at the VEE. The curriculum is evaluated every three years.

Various assessment methods are used based on the specific knowledge, skills, or attitudes that the students are expected to acquire in each course.

In the SIS and on the Moodle platform, course syllabi contain the assessment methods and criteria.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

8.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE has a clearly defined process in place to review assessment outcomes. The curriculum at the VEE is evaluated regularly. The assessment methods are appropriately aligned with the programme learning outcomes, which cover the full range of professional knowledge, skills, and competences.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

8.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

8.3.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 8.3.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 8.3.

Standard 8.4: Assessment strategies must allow the VEE to certify student achievement of learning objectives at the level of the programme and individual units of study.

The VEE must ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.

8.4.1. Findings

A. LSP

The Officer of Academic Affairs monitors students' academic progress at the end of each semester. Only students who have completed at least 75% of the required credits and passed all prerequisite courses are allowed to progress to the next academic year. Students must successfully pass the clinical skills examination as well as all pre-clinical subjects in order to participate in the clinical courses. Only students who have successfully completed all curriculum-based subjects are eligible to defend their final thesis. The Moodle learning platform is used for some courses at the VEE, providing a variety of online learning activities for students. Self-learning is promoted through extracurricular activities such as surgery clubs and research projects. Students have the opportunity to choose specialisations aligned with their learning paths, interests, and career goals. At the VEE, students can participate in teaching activities to support first-year students by serving as teaching assistants. The VEE provides support services to help students maintain motivation and remain engaged in their studies. Course supervisors are available to first- and second-year students to support their smooth transition into academic life.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

8.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

Assessment strategies at the VEE enable the certification of student achievement of learning objectives at both the programme and individual course levels through a structured assessment system. Student academic progress is continuously monitored to ensure that learning outcomes are met. The VEE promotes active student engagement in the learning process by offering academic advising, tutoring, and mental health support. The use of the Moodle platform enhances student participation through diverse online learning activities. Additionally, opportunities such as serving as teaching assistants, participating in surgery clubs and research

projects, and selecting specialisations according to individual interests and career goals further motivate students to take an active role in their education.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

8.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

8.4.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 8.4.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 8.4.

Standard 8.5: Methods of formative and summative assessment must be valid and reliable and comprise a variety of approaches. Direct assessment of the acquisition 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 regular quality control of the student logbooks, with a clear distinction between what is completed under the supervision of teaching staff (Core Clinical Training (CCT) or under the supervision of a qualified person (EPT). The clear distinction between CCT and EPT ensures that all clinical procedures, practical and hands-on training planned in the study programme have been fully completed by each individual student. The provided training and the global assessment strategy must provide evidence that only students who are Day One Competent are able to graduate.

8.5.1. Findings

A. LSP

The VEE uses teacher feedback to encourage students to take an active role in their education during practical training. The use of simulation environments and models prior to working with real patients provides a safer setting for practice. During various practical training activities, students maintain records in their logbooks.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

8.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE has adopted a variety of approaches for the assessment strategy, emphasising D1C, use of simulation, small group training, direct feedback, and quality control of student logbooks. However, VEE should adopt a standardised electronic format for logbooks to enhance consistency and traceability of student activities.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

8.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

It is suggested to adopt a standardised electronic format for logbooks to enhance consistency and traceability of student activities.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

8.5.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 8.5.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 8.5.

Area 9. Teaching 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 quality-assured programme of teacher training (including good teaching and evaluation practices, learning and e-learning resources, use of digital tools education, biosecurity and QA procedures) must be in place for all staff involved with teaching. Such training must be mandatory for all newly appointed teaching staff and encouraged on a regular basis for all teaching staff.

Most teaching staff (calculated as FTE) involved in core 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

A. LSP

Recruitment of teaching staff follows university-based rules. In addition, the VEE hires practitioners who are mainly working in the clinical field, some full-time but mainly part-time. A formal quality-assured programme of teacher training is in place, based on some courses led by the VEE and some provided by the University, and also on a contract with Tartu University. 85% of the FTE teaching staff hold a veterinary degree.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

9.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The training to teach and to assess is not fully mandatory for newly appointed teaching staff, except for those who have achieved a PhD degree. However, most of the faculty members take the opportunity to attend some of the proposed courses for teacher training. Teacher training is carefully followed by the Chair of the department.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

9.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

It is suggested that the VEE ensures that it is mandatory for all newly appointed teaching staff to attend a training program. The VEE is encouraged to continue providing opportunities for faculty members to take teaching education programmes.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

9.1.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is partially compliant with Standard 9.1 because the training to teach and to assess is not yet compulsory for all new teaching staff.

B. ESP

The study programme is partially compliant with Standard 9.1 because the training to teach and to assess is not yet compulsory for all new teaching staff.

Standard 9.2: The total number, qualifications and skills of all staff involved with the study programme, including teaching, technical, administrative and support staff, must be sufficient and appropriate to deliver the study 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, teaching or support staff, senior or junior, permanent or temporary, teachers. Guidelines for the minimum training to teach and to assess are provided in Annex 6, Standard 9.1.

9.2.1. Findings

A. LSP

15% to 20% of the overall number of support staff are devoted to administrative activities, the

rest of the support staff are nurses and technical staff.

Education about the way of working with students is available but not mandatory. Senior nurses educate the junior nurses.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

9.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE can be commended for the number of support staff in both the clinic and the labs. Support staff are regularly evaluated and have opportunities to apply for many different types of professional improvement.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

9.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

9.2.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 9.2.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 9.2.

Standard 9.3: Staff must be given opportunities to develop and extend their teaching and assessment knowledge and must be encouraged to improve their skills. Opportunities for didactic and pedagogic training and specialisation must be available. The VEE must clearly define systems of reward for teaching excellence in operation.

Teaching positions must offer the security and benefits necessary to maintain the stability, continuity, and competence of the teaching staff. Teaching 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.

9.3.1. Findings

A. LSP

The VEE has a defined system for recognition of teaching excellence. Workload balance is determined in relation to the academic career model set at the university level. This balance is monitored by the Chair of the department and discussed at the department level.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

9.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE proposes to staff regular pedagogic training and scholarly activities.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

9.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

9.3.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 9.3.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 9.3.

Standard 9.4: The VEE must provide evidence that it utilises a well-defined, comprehensive and publicised programme for the professional growth and development of teaching 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 teaching 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

A. LSP

Professional growth is managed according to University rules based on well-defined programmes related to each different track for faculty members, practitioners and support staff. Teaching and support staff are represented in different committees. Promotion criteria are defined for each individual working contract.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

9.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

Informal mentorship is available in many cases including for support staff.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

9.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

9.4.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 9.4.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 9.4.

Standard 9.5: A system for assessment of teaching and teaching staff must be implemented on a cyclical basis and must formally include student participation. Results must be communicated to the relevant staff and commented upon in reports. Evidence must be provided that this system contributes to correcting deficiencies and to enhancing the quality and efficiency of education.

9.5.1. Findings

A. LSP

Faculty members are evaluated every semester by students using an electronic system. The CDC analyses the results and then transfers the results to the Head of Curriculum as well as to the head of Chairs. Student feedback is incorporated into each faculty member's portfolio.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

9.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The evaluation system of faculty members is efficient.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

9.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

9.5.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 9.5.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 9.5.

Area 10. Research programmes, continuing and postgraduate education

Standard 10.1: The VEE must demonstrate significant and broad research activities of teaching staff that integrate with and strengthen the study programme through research-based teaching. The research activities must include veterinary basic and clinical sciences. Evidence must be provided that most teaching staff are actively involved with research programmes (e.g. via research grants, publications in congress proceedings and in peer-reviewed scientific journals).

10.1.1. Findings

A. LSP

Teaching staff at the VEE are actively involved in research. Between 2022 and 2024, they have published 625 research articles and participated in several research projects funded by national and international institutions. Participating in research projects and publications is a parameter for career promotion, and teaching staff are appraised every five years. Both doctoral and undergraduate students are integrally involved in the execution of research projects. The University supports high-quality research by providing baseline funding for proposals that receive positive evaluations in the Estonian Research Council's grant competitions.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

10.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

During the period 2021–2024, VEE produced 395 publications indexed in the WoS/Scopus databases. Of these, 292 are basic science and 103 (26%) were categorised as clinical studies. Within this subset, 55 were clinical studies, 22 were clinical-epidemiological studies, and 26 focused on animal welfare.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

10.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

10.1.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 10.1.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 10.1.

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

10.2.1. Findings

A. LSP

In the early years of the curriculum, students are introduced to research terminology and to the importance and application of statistical concepts and data representation through compulsory courses. Students engage with scientific literature, preparing and delivering presentations, formatting and referencing techniques, clinical report writing, and presenting relevant scientific data. In semester 9, students attend a course on research methodology to prepare them to plan for their final thesis. The final thesis is a formal course split into two parts: writing of a literature review (8 ECTS), and the actual research project (14 ECTS). Part I is assessed on a fail/pass basis, Part II includes a full written thesis, and it concludes with the public defence. Guidelines are provided by the VEE and the university to students, supervisors, and reviewers on thesis composition, the assessment matrix, the review process, and defence procedures. The student's supervisor provides academic guidance.

The final thesis is assessed and graded by combining the reviewer's score with individual assessments from each Board member. An assessment matrix available to staff and students in advance is used for grading purposes. A list of defended theses is accessible on the website of the VEE and the University library, which can be used as an example by students writing their thesis.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

10.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

Statistical support is provided to the students by a trained statistician during the final thesis

preparation.

Academic staff offer opportunities for students to participate in research projects. Undergraduate students are reluctant to participate in research projects outside their final thesis. There are some initiatives taken by the VEE to promote research activities within the student community.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

10.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

It is suggested that the VEE should continue to promote research activities within the undergraduate student community.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

10.2.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 10.2.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 10.2.

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

10.3.1. Findings

A. LSP

The VEE offers two internship programmes: in small animal clinics (3 - 4 students) and the equine clinic (1 student). There are no official veterinary internship programmes in Estonia, and VEE does not offer any EBVS-approved residency programme.

The University offers two doctoral programmes for veterinary students: Veterinary Medicine and Food Science, and Agricultural Sciences. There are around 50 PhD students enrolled of which 7 are state-funded students – four in Veterinary Medicine and Food Science, and three in Agricultural Sciences. The government support is expected to remain stable compared to previous years. The university also provides additional support through the Estonian Doctoral School (EDS) that supports the participation in conferences of students presenting orally or with a poster presentation, and in the writing camps organised for crafting articles or PhD theses.

The VEE PhD system supports the involvement of industrial PhD students through collaborations with external companies; however, they often lack the capacity and interest to participate.

The VEE offers five microdegree programmes primarily focused on food science, but they are

available only in Estonian on the website.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

10.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

The VEE does not directly provide funding for graduates pursuing EBVS-accredited programmes abroad. Young clinicians indicated a strong interest in joining residency programmes. Currently, graduates can access limited financial assistance through mobility grants. The VEE offers personalised guidance, including discussions about specialisation opportunities, recommendation letters, and encouragement to explore career prospects.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

10.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

It is suggested that the VEE continue to promote residency programmes and considers opportunities for joint residencies with other VEEs.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

10.3.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 10.3.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 10.3.

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

10.4.1. Findings

A. LSP

Academic staff have a job description that stipulates the percentage of engagement with teaching, research and clinical work. Based on their job description, they undergo annual performance reviews that include their research outputs. Promotion of academic staff is based on their achievements in teaching and research, supervision of undergraduate and postgraduate students, and research publications. PhD supervisors are selected based on their strong research background.

The development of the PhD curriculum in Veterinary Medicine and Food Science is overseen by the curriculum committee that meets at least once per year. The progress of PhD students is

evaluated annually, in accordance with their individual study plans, by the attestation committee, the Defence Committee, and the appointed opponent.

The PhD curriculum in Veterinary Medicine and Food Science was assessed in 2022 by an international panel of experts within the framework of institutional accreditation of the University. Following this, the Higher Education Assessment Council of the Estonian Quality Agency for Education decided to accredit the University for seven years.

External evaluations are conducted by the Estonian research institutions every 7 years. The University successfully passed the last evaluation in September 2024.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

10.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A. LSP

Undergraduate students have the opportunity to engage in PhD-level research projects during their studies, particularly in connection with the development of their final thesis. This collaboration fosters early exposure to advanced scientific inquiry and strengthens the research culture across academic levels.

In response to the growing relevance of generative AI tools in academic writing, the Curriculum Committee has initiated a structured dialogue on their appropriate use in the preparation of final theses by both undergraduate and postgraduate students. These discussions are aimed at establishing clear and responsible guidelines to ensure academic integrity, transparency, and ethical use of AI-assisted technologies.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

10.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

A. LSP

None.

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

10.4.4. Decision

A. LSP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 10.4.

B. ESP

The study programme is compliant with Standard 10.4.

ESEVT Indicators *(The 2 study programmes are globalised for the calculation of the Indicators)*



ESEVT Indicators

Name of the VEE:		Institute of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Sciences, Estonian University of Life Sciences				
Name & mail of the VEE's Head		Toomas Tiirats; toomas.tiirats@emu.ee				
Date of the form filling:		31/05/25				
Raw data from the last 3 complete academic years						
		2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Mean	
1	n° of FTE teaching staff involved in veterinary training	77,6	80,2	81,2	79,67	
2	n° of undergraduate students	365	371	376	370,67	
3	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training	67,2	68,1	68,5	67,93	
4	n° of students graduating annually	49	43	56	49,33	
5	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training	78	78,9	79,8	78,9	
6	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	955	936	936	942,3	
7	n° of hours of Core Clinical Training (CCT)	799	799	773	790,3	
8	n° of hours of VPH (including FSQ) training	702	702	702	702	
9	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in VPH (including FSQ)	104	104	104	104	
10	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally	9906	9191	9231	9443	
11	n° of individual ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally	15	26	25	22	
12	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally	528	722	1003	751	
13	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen intra-murally	857	956	987	933,3	
14	n° of companion animal patients seen extra-murally	0	0	0	0,0	
15	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extra-murally	4126	2988	2708	3274	
16	n° of equine patients seen extra-murally	232	217	181	210,0	
17	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen extra-murally	0	0	0	0,0	
18	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds	27	34	32	31,0	
19	n° of visits to poultry and farmed rabbit units	1	1	1	1,0	
20	n° of companion animal necropsies	125	130	136	130,3	
21	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies	107	114	105	108,7	
22	n° of equine necropsies	19	17	18	18,0	
23	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies	110	109	118	112,3	
24	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training	2	2	1	1,7	
25	n° of PhD graduating annually	2	4	7	4,3	



ESEVT Indicators

Name of the VEE:		Institute of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Sciences, Estonian University of Life Sciences				
Date of the form filling:		31/05/25				
Calculated Indicators from raw data						
		VEE values	Median values¹	Minimal values²	Balance³	
I1	n° of FTE teaching staff involved in veterinary training / n° of undergraduate students	0,215	0,15	0,13	0,089	
I2	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	1,377	0,84	0,63	0,747	
I3	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	1,599	0,88	0,54	1,059	
I4	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	942,3	953,50	700,59	241,7	
I5	n° of hours of Core Clinical Training (CCT)	790,3	941,58	704,80	85,53	
I6	n° of hours of VPH (including FSQ) training	702,0	293,50	191,80	510,2	
I7	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in VPH (including FSQ)	104,0	75,00	31,80	72,20	
I8	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	191,4	67,37	44,01	147,4	
I9	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	66,811	18,75	9,74	57,07	
I10	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	19,480	5,96	2,15	17,33	
I11	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	18,919	3,11	1,16	17,76	
I12	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds / n° of students graduating annually	0,628	1,29	0,54	0,088	
I13	n° of visits of poultry and farmed rabbit units / n° of students graduating annually	0,020	0,11	0,04	-0,024	
I14	n° of companion animal necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	2,642	2,11	1,40	1,242	
I15	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	2,203	1,36	0,90	1,303	
I16	n° of equine necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0,365	0,18	0,10	0,265	
I17	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	2,277	2,65	0,88	1,397	
I18	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,034	0,27	0,06	-0,026	
I19	n° of PhD graduating annually / n° of students graduating annually	0,088	0,15	0,07	0,018	
¹ Median values defined by data from VEEs with Accreditation/Approval status in May 2019						
² Recommended minimal values calculated as the 20th percentile of data from VEEs with Accreditation/Approval status in May 2019						
³ A negative balance indicates that the Indicator is below the recommended minimal value						
* Indicators used only for statistical purpose						

Findings

All Indicators are above the minimum value, except I13 and I18.

Analysis of the findings/Comments

The number of visits to poultry farms was low but will increase from this academic year because of new contracts with farms, which should correct the current negative balance for I13 (see also Standard 5.1).

Few specialised veterinarians are employed by the VEE, which does not allow intramural residency programmes. However, the VEE encourages graduate students to apply for international residency programmes, with a view to potential future engagement opportunities at the VEE.

Suggestions for improvement

See Standard 9.3.

ESEVT Rubrics (summary of the Decisions regarding 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))

A. LSP

Area 1. Objectives, Organisation and Quality Assurance 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 Standards, 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 the ESEVT Standards.	X		
Standard 1.2: The VEE must be part of a university or a higher education institution providing training recognised as being of an equivalent level and formally recognised as such in the respective country. The person responsible for the veterinary curriculum and the person(s) responsible for the professional, ethical, and teaching affairs of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) must hold a veterinary degree. The decision-making process, organisation and management of the VEE must allow implementation of its strategic plan and of a cohesive study programme, in compliance with the ESEVT Standards.	X		
Standard 1.3: The VEE must have a strategic plan, which includes a SWOT analysis of its current activities, short- and medium-term objectives, and an operating plan with a timeframe and indicators for its implementation. The development and implementation of the VEE's strategy must include a role for students and other stakeholders, both internal and external, and the strategy must have a formal status and be publicly available.	X		
Standard 1.4: 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 QA within the VEE. To achieve this, the VEE must develop and implement a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality. The VEE must have a policy for academic integrity, i.e. the expectation that all staff and students act with honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.	X		
Standard 1.5: The VEE must provide evidence that it interacts with its stakeholders and the wider society. Such public information must be clear, objective and readily accessible; the information must include up-to-date information about the study programme. The VEE's website must mention the VEE's ESEVT status and its last Self-Evaluation Report and Visitation Reports must be easily available to the public.	X		
Standard 1.6: The VEE must monitor and periodically review its activities, both quantitative and qualitative, to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. The VEE must make public how this analysis of information has been utilised in the further development of its activities and provide evidence as to the involvement of both students and staff in the provision, analysis and implementation of such data. Evidence must be provided that the QA loops are fully closed (Plan Do Check Adjust cycles) to efficiently enhance the quality of education. Any action planned or taken as a result of this data analysis must be communicated to all those concerned.	X		
Standard 1.7: The VEE must undergo external review through the ESEVT on a cyclical basis. Evidence must be provided of such external evaluation with the assurance that the progress made since the last ESEVT evaluation was linked to a continuous quality assurance process.	X		
Area 2. Finances			
Standard 2.1: Finances must be demonstrably adequate to sustain the requirements for the VEE to meet its mission and to achieve its objectives for education, research and services. The description must include both expenditures (separated into personnel costs, operating costs, maintenance costs and equipment) and revenues (separated into public funding, tuition fees, services, research grants and other sources).	X		
Standard 2.2: Clinical and field services must function as instructional resources. The instructional integrity of these resources must take priority over the financial self-sufficiency of clinical services operations. The VEE must have sufficient autonomy in order to use the resources to implement its strategic plan and to meet the ESEVT Standards.	X		
Standard 2.3: Resources allocation must be regularly reviewed to ensure that available resources meet the requirements.	X		
Area 3. Curriculum			
Standard 3.1: The curriculum must be designed, resourced and managed to ensure all graduates have achieved the graduate attributes expected to be fully compliant with the EU Directive 2005/36/EC (as amended by directive 2013/55/EU) and its Annex V.4.1. The curriculum must include the subjects (input) and must allow the acquisition of the Day One Competences (output) listed in the ESEVT SOP Annex 2. This concerns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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) ● Veterinary Public Health (including Food Safety and Quality) 	X		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Knowledge (including soft skills, e.g. communication, team working skills, management skills). <p>When part of the study programme cannot be organised because of imposed regulations or constraints, convincing compensations must be developed and implemented.</p> <p>If a VEE offers more than one study programme to become a veterinarian, e.g. in different languages or in collaboration with other VEEs, all study programmes and respective curricula must be described separately in the SER. For each Standard, the VEE must explain if there are differences or not with the basic programme and all this information must be provided as a formal annex to the SER.</p> <p>Similarly, if a VEE implements a tracking (elective) system in its study programme, it must provide a clear explanation of the tracking system in the SER.</p> <p>3.1.1. General findings</p>			
3.1.2. Basic sciences	X		
3.1.3. Clinical Sciences in companion animals (including equine and exotic pets)	X		
3.1.4. Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals (including Animal Production and Herd Health Management)	X		
3.1.5. Veterinary Public Health (including Food Safety and Quality)	X		
3.1.6. Professional Knowledge (including soft skills, e.g. communication, team working skills, management skills)	X		
<p>Standard 3.2: Each study programme provided by the VEE must be competency-based and designed so that it meets the objectives set for it, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme must be clearly specified and communicated and must refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.</p> <p>The VEE must provide proof of a QA system that promotes and monitors the presence of a teaching 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 lifelong learning.</p>	X		
<p>Standard 3.3: Programme learning outcomes must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure the effective alignment of all content, teaching, learning and assessment activities of the degree programme to form a cohesive framework include a description of Day One Competences form the basis for explicit statements of the objectives and learning outcomes of individual units of study be communicated to staff and students be regularly reviewed, managed and updated to ensure they remain relevant, adequate and are effectively achieved. 	X		
<p>Standard 3.4: The VEE must have a formally constituted committee structure (which includes effective student representation), with clear and empowered reporting lines, to oversee and manage the curriculum and its delivery. The committee(s) must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> determine the pedagogical basis, design, delivery methods and assessment methods of the curriculum oversee QA of the curriculum, particularly gathering, evaluating, making change and responding to feedback from stakeholders, peer reviewers and external assessors, and data from examination/assessment outcomes perform ongoing reviews and periodic in-depth reviews of the curriculum (at least every seven years) by involving staff, students and stakeholders; these reviews must lead to continuous improvement of the curriculum. Any action taken or planned as a result of such a review must be communicated to all those concerned identify and meet training needs for all types of staff, maintaining and enhancing their competence for the ongoing curriculum development. 	X		
<p>Standard 3.5: Elective Practical Training (EPT) includes compulsory training activities that each student must achieve before graduation to complement and strengthen their core theoretical and practical academic education, inter alia by enhancing their experience, professional knowledge and soft skills. Like all elective activities, its contents may vary from one undergraduate student to another.</p> <p>EPT is organised either extra-murally with the student being under the direct supervision of a qualified person (e.g. a veterinary practitioner) or intra-murally, with the student being under the supervision of a teaching staff or a qualified person.</p> <p>EPT itself cannot replace the Core Clinical Training (CCT) under the close supervision of teaching staff (e.g. ambulatory clinics, herd health management, practical training in VPH (including Food Safety and Quality (FSQ))). A comparison between CCT and EPT is provided in Annex 6, Standard 3.5.</p>	X		
<p>Standard 3.6: The EPT providers must meet the relevant national Veterinary Practice Standards, have an agreement with the VEE and the student (stating 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>	X		

There must be a member of the teaching staff responsible for the overall supervision of the EPT, including liaison with EPT providers.			
Standard 3.7: Students must take responsibility for their own learning during EPT. This includes preparing properly before each placement, keeping a proper record of their experience during EPT by using a logbook provided by the VEE and evaluating the EPT. Students must be allowed to complain officially and/or anonymously about issues occurring during EPT. The VEE must have a system of QA to monitor the implementation, progress and then feedback within the EPT activities.	X		
Area 4. Facilities and equipment			
Standard 4.1: All aspects of the physical facilities must provide an environment conducive to learning, including internet access at all relevant sites where theoretical, practical and clinical education takes place. The 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 including students with a disability, and EU animal welfare and care standards.	X		
Standard 4.2: Lecture theatres, teaching laboratories, tutorial rooms, clinical facilities and other teaching spaces must be adequate in number and size, equipped for instructional purposes and 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 teaching and support staff to support their teaching and research efforts.	X		
Standard 4.3: The livestock facilities, animal housing, core clinical teaching facilities and equipment used by the VEE for teaching purposes must: <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 • take into account environmental sustainability • be designed to enhance learning 	X		
Standard 4.4: Core clinical teaching facilities must be provided in a veterinary teaching hospital (VTH) with 24/7 emergency services at least for companion animals and equines. Within the VTH, the VEE must unequivocally demonstrate that the standard of education and clinical research is compliant with all ESEVT Standards, e.g. research-based and evidence-based clinical training supervised by teaching staff trained to teach and to assess, availability for staff and students of facilities and patients for performing clinical research and relevant QA procedures. For ruminants, on-call service must be available if emergency services do not exist for those species in a VTH. The VEE must ensure state-of-the-art standards of teaching clinics which remain comparable with or exceed the best available clinics in the private sector. The VTH and any hospitals, practices and facilities which are involved with the core curriculum must be compliant with the ESEVT Standards and meet the relevant national Veterinary Practice Standards.	X		
Standard 4.5: The VEE must ensure that students have access to a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic facilities, including but not limited to clinical skills laboratory, diagnostic imaging, clinical pathology, anaesthesia, surgeries and treatment facilities, intensive/critical care, ambulatory services, pharmacy and necropsy facilities. Procedures and facilities should also be available for soft skills training, e.g. communication skills training through role-play.	X		
Standard 4.6: Appropriate isolation facilities must be provided to meet the need for the isolation and containment of animals with communicable diseases. Such isolation facilities must be properly constructed, ventilated, maintained and operated to provide for the prevention of the spread of infectious agents, animal care and student training. They must be adapted to all animal species commonly handled in the VTH. When permanent isolation facilities are not available in any of the facilities used for clinical training, the ability to provide such facilities and the procedures to use them appropriately in an emergency must be demonstrated during the visitation.	X		
Standard 4.7: The VEE must have an ambulatory clinic for production animals or equivalent facilities so that students can practise field veterinary medicine and Herd Health Management under the supervision of teaching staff.	X		
Standard 4.8: The transport of students, live animals, cadavers, materials from animal origin and other teaching materials must be done in agreement with national and EU standards, to ensure the safety of students and staff and animal welfare, and to prevent the spread of infectious agents.		X	
Standard 4.9: Operational policies and procedures (including biosecurity, good laboratory practice and good clinical practice) must be taught and posted (in different languages if the curriculum is taught in them) for students, staff and visitors and a biosecurity manual must be developed and made easily available for all relevant persons. The VEE must demonstrate a clear commitment for the delivery and the implementation of 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 regular monitoring of the feedback from students, staff and clients.	X		
Area 5. Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin			
Standard 5.1: The number and variety of healthy and diseased animals, first opinion and referral cases, cadavers, and material of animal origin must be adequate for providing the practical and safe hands-on training in all relevant areas and adapted to the number of students enrolled. Evidence must be provided that these data are regularly recorded and that procedures are in place for correcting any deficiencies.		X	

Standard 5.2: In addition to the training provided in the VEE, experience can include practical training at external sites, provided this training is organised under the supervision of teaching staff and follows the same standards as those applied in the VEE.	X		
Standard 5.3: The VTH must provide nursing care skills and instruction in nursing procedures. Under all situations students must be active participants in the clinical workup of patients, including problem-oriented diagnostic approach together with diagnostic decision-making.	X		
Standard 5.4: Medical records for patients seen intra- and extra-murally under Core Clinical Training (CCT) must be comprehensive and maintained in an effective retrieval system to efficiently support the teaching and learning, research, and service programmes of the VEE.		X	
Area 6. Learning resources			
Standard 6.1: State-of-the-art learning resources must be adequate and available to support veterinary education, research, services and continuing education. Learning resources must be suitable to implement teaching facilities to secure the 'never the first time on a live animal' concept. 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, together with basic English teaching if necessary.	X		
Standard 6.2: Staff and students must have full access on site to an academic library administered by a qualified librarian, an Information Technology (IT) unit managed by a qualified IT person, an e-learning platform, and the relevant human and physical resources necessary for the development of instructional materials by the staff and their use by the students. The relevant electronic information, database and other intranet resources must be easily available for students and staff both in the VEE's core facilities via wireless connection (Wi-Fi) and from outside the VEE through a hosted secured connection, e.g. Virtual Private Network (VPN).	X		
Standard 6.3: The VEE must provide students with unimpeded access to learning resources, internet and internal study resources, as well as facilities and equipment for the development of procedural skills (e.g. clinical skills laboratory). The use of these resources must be aligned with the pedagogical environment and learning outcomes within the programme and have mechanisms in place to evaluate the teaching value of changes in learning resources.	X		
Area 7. Student admission, progression and welfare			
Standard 7.1: The VEE must consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e.g. student admission, progression and certification. In relation to enrolment, the VEE must provide accurate and complete information regarding the educational programme in all advertisements for prospective national and international students. Formal cooperation with other VEEs must also be clearly advertised.	X		
Standard 7.2: The number of students admitted must be consistent with the resources available at the VEE for staff, buildings, equipment, healthy and diseased animals, and materials of animal origin.	X		
Standard 7.3: The selection and progression criteria must be clearly defined, consistent, and defensible, be free of discrimination or bias, and take into account the fact that students are admitted with a view to their entry to the veterinary profession in due course. The VEE must regularly review and reflect on the selection processes to ensure they are appropriate for students to complete the programme successfully. If the selection processes are decided by another authority, the latter must regularly receive feedback from the VEE. Adequate training (including periodic refresher training) must be provided for those involved in the selection process to ensure applicants are evaluated fairly and consistently.	X		
Standard 7.4: There must be clear policies and procedures on how applicants with disabilities or illnesses are considered and, if appropriate, accommodated in the programme, taking into account the requirement that all students must be capable of meeting the ESEVT Day One Competences by the time they graduate.	X		
Standard 7.5: The basis for decisions on progression (including academic progression and professional fitness to practise) must be explicit and readily available to the students. The VEE must provide evidence that it has mechanisms in place to identify and provide remediation and appropriate support (including termination) for students who are not performing adequately. The VEE must have mechanisms in place to monitor attrition and progression and be able to respond and amend admission selection criteria (if permitted by national or university law) and student support if required.	X		
Standard 7.6: Mechanisms for the exclusion of students from the programme for any reason must be explicit. The VEE's policies for managing appeals against decisions, including admissions, academic and progression decisions and exclusion, must be transparent and publicly available.	X		
Standard 7.7: Provisions must be made by the VEE to support the physical, emotional and welfare needs of students. This includes but is not limited to learning support and counselling services, career advice, and fair and transparent mechanisms for dealing with student illness, impairment and disability during the programme. This shall include provision for disabled students, consistent with all relevant equality, diversity and/or human rights legislation. There must be effective mechanisms for the resolution of student grievances (e.g. interpersonal conflict or harassment).	X		
Standard 7.8: Mechanisms must be in place by which students can convey their needs and wants to the VEE. The VEE must provide students with a mechanism, anonymously if they wish, to offer suggestions, comments and	X		

complaints regarding the compliance of the VEE with national and international legislation and the ESEVT Standards.			
Area 8. Student assessment			
Standard 8.1: The VEE must ensure that there is a clearly identified structure within the VEE showing lines of responsibility for the assessment strategy to ensure coherence of the overall assessment regime and to allow the demonstration of progressive development across the programme towards entry-level competence.	X		
Standard 8.2: The assessment tasks and grading criteria for each unit of study in the programme must be published, applied consistently, clearly identified and available to students in a timely manner well in advance of the assessment. Requirements to pass must be explicit. The VEE must properly document the results of assessment and provide the students with timely feedback on their assessments. Mechanisms for students to appeal against assessment outcomes must be explicit.	X		
Standard 8.3: The VEE must have a process in place to review assessment outcomes, to change assessment strategies and to ensure the accuracy of the procedures when required. Programme learning outcomes covering the full range of professional knowledge, skills, competences and attributes must form the basis for assessment design and underpin decisions on progression.	X		
Standard 8.4: Assessment strategies must allow the VEE to certify student achievement of learning objectives at the level of the programme and individual units of study. The VEE must ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.	X		
Standard 8.5: Methods of formative and summative assessment must be valid and reliable and comprise a variety of approaches. Direct assessment of the acquisition 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 regular quality control of the student logbooks, with a clear distinction between what is completed under the supervision of teaching staff (Core Clinical Training (CCT)) or under the supervision of a qualified person (EPT). The clear distinction between CCT and EPT ensures that all clinical procedures, practical and hands-on training planned in the study programme have been fully completed by each individual student. The provided training and the global assessment strategy must provide evidence that only students who are Day One Competent are able to graduate.	X		
Area 9. Teaching 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 quality-assured programme of teacher training (including good teaching and evaluation practices, learning and e-learning resources, use of digital tools education, biosecurity and QA procedures) must be in place for all staff involved with teaching. Such training must be mandatory for all newly appointed teaching staff and encouraged on a regular basis for all teaching staff. Most teaching staff (calculated as FTE) involved in core veterinary training must be veterinarians. It is expected that more than 2/3 of the instruction that the students receive, as determined by student teaching hours, is delivered by qualified veterinarians.		X	
Standard 9.2: The total number, qualifications and skills of all staff involved with the study programme, including teaching, technical, administrative and support staff, must be sufficient and appropriate to deliver the study 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, teaching or support staff, senior or junior, permanent or temporary, teachers. Guidelines for the minimum training to teach and to assess are provided in Annex 6, Standard 9.1.	X		
Standard 9.3: Staff must be given opportunities to develop and extend their teaching and assessment knowledge and must be encouraged to improve their skills. Opportunities for didactic and pedagogic training and specialisation must be available. The VEE must clearly define systems of reward for teaching excellence in operation. Teaching positions must offer the security and benefits necessary to maintain the stability, continuity, and competence of the teaching staff. Teaching staff must have a balanced workload of teaching, research and service depending on their role. They must have reasonable opportunities and resources for participation in scholarly activities.	X		
Standard 9.4: The VEE must provide evidence that it utilises a well-defined, comprehensive and publicised programme for the professional growth and development of teaching 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 teaching and support staff must be clear and explicit. Promotions for teaching staff must recognise excellence in and (if permitted by the national or university law) place equal emphasis on all aspects of teaching (including clinical teaching), research, service and other scholarly activities.	X		
Standard 9.5: A system for assessment of teaching and teaching staff must be implemented on a cyclical basis and must formally include student participation. Results must be communicated to the relevant staff and commented upon in reports. Evidence must be provided that this system contributes to correcting deficiencies and to enhancing the quality and efficiency of education.	X		
Area 10. Research programmes, continuing and postgraduate education			
Standard 10.1: The VEE must demonstrate significant and broad research activities of teaching staff that integrate with and strengthen the study programme through research-based teaching. The research activities must include	X		

veterinary basic and clinical sciences. Evidence must be provided that most teaching staff are actively involved with research programmes (e.g. via research grants, publications in congress proceedings and in peer-reviewed scientific journals).			
Standard 10.2: All students must be trained in scientific methods and research techniques relevant to evidence-based veterinary medicine and must have opportunities to participate in research programmes.	X		
Standard 10.3: The VEE must provide advanced postgraduate degree programmes, e.g. PhD, internships, residencies and continuing education programmes that complement and strengthen the study programme and are relevant to the needs of the profession and society.	X		
Standard 10.4: The VEE must have a system of QA to evaluate how research activities provide opportunities for student training and staff promotion, and how research approaches, methods and results are integrated into the study programme.	X		
<i>C: (total or substantial) compliance; PC: partial compliance; NC: non-compliance</i>			

B. ESP

No difference with LSP.

Executive Summary

The first educational establishment in Estonia providing higher education was Tartu Veterinary School, founded in 1848 and reorganised as Tartu Veterinary Institute in 1873.

After several changes, the Institute of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Sciences (called the VEE in this report) has been part of the Estonian University of Life Sciences since 2005.

The last ESEVT Full Visitation took place in 2015, and the VEE was granted the status of Full Approval after the 2019 Revisitation. The VEE was also positively evaluated by the Estonian Research Council in 2024.

The SER was provided on time and written in agreement with the SOP 2023. Replies to the pre-visit questions from the experts were provided before the start of the Visitation.

The Liaison Officer did an excellent job adapting the Visitation schedule, searching for the requested information, organising relevant meetings and ensuring the health and safety of the visitors. An observer from the Estonian Quality Agency for Education participated in the Wednesday and Thursday meetings.

Several areas worthy of praise have been identified, i.e.:

- Well-written Self-Evaluation Report
- High commitment of teaching and support staff to create an environment conducive to learning
- Prompt responsiveness to enhancements proposed by students and staff
- Well-developed food technology and food hygiene laboratories
- Consistent biosecurity strategy
- Well-organised transportation of students to extramural core clinical facilities
- Diverse social facilities for students
- High ratio of teaching and support staff in relation to the number of students
- Efficient teamworking and collaboration between units and with external stakeholders
- High standard of English language of teaching and support staff.

Both study programmes are compliant with most ESEVT Standards.

However, several minor deficiencies have been identified. These deficiencies concern both the Estonian and the English Study Programmes.

Minor Deficiencies:

Standard 4.8

Both study programmes are partially compliant with Standard 4.8 because some legal requirements are not fully implemented in the transportation of drugs and equipment.

Standard 5.1

Both study programmes are partially compliant with Standard 5.1 because of suboptimal exposure of students to poultry.

Standard 5.4

Both study programmes are partially compliant with Standard 5.4 because of suboptimal use of the medical records retrieval system for teaching and learning purposes.

Standard 9.1

Both study programmes are partially compliant with Standard 9.1 because the training to teach and to assess is not yet compulsory for all new teaching staff.

Major Deficiencies:

None.

Additional suggestions for improvement are described in this Visitation Report.

Glossary

CCT: Core Clinical Training

D1C: ESEVT Day One Competences

EAEVE: European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education

EBVS: European Board of Veterinary Specialisation

ECOVE: European Committee on Veterinary Education

EPT: Elective Practical Training

ESEVT: European System of Evaluation of Veterinary Training

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

ESP: English language study programme

FSQ: Food Safety and Quality

FTE: Full-Time Equivalent

HAKA: Estonian Quality Agency for Education

IT: Information Technology

LSP: Local language study programme

OSCE: Objective Structured Clinical Examination

PDCA: Plan Do Check Adjust

QA: Quality Assurance

SER: Self Evaluation Report

SOP: 2023 Standard Operating Procedure

VEE: Veterinary Education Establishment (Institute of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Sciences)

VPH: Veterinary Public Health

VTH: Veterinary Teaching Hospital

Decision of ECOVE

The Committee concluded that no Major Deficiency had been identified.

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