

**REPORT ON THE VISIT TO THE FACULTY OF
VETERINARY MEDICINE OF TERAMO
8 – 12 OCTOBER 2007**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Teramo was visited by the EAEVE team from 8-12. October 2007. It was the first visit of that University and the first time that the shortened programme and the new report format have been applied. It appeared that both Faculty and team found these changes beneficial.

The visiting programme was well conceived by the Faculty and all aspects functioned to plan.

The overall impression gained by the team was that the Faculty has made the best of limited financial means, staff shortage and non-purpose-built buildings. Both the staff and students appeared to be highly motivated and the attitudes were optimistic. There was a noticeable pride taken in the activities in general by the Faculty.

The Faculty objectives were clear but heavily weighted in the direction of teaching. Research was very much subsidiary. It was suggested, that this relationship be modified to bring research more into the limelight and closer to equivalence with teaching in terms of research and clinical services funding. It was also noted, that long-term goals need to be defined.

The organisation of the Faculty is classical, the decision-making organ being the Faculty Council, composed of all full and associate professors together with representatives of research, lay staff and students. It elects a Dean for up to two 4-year terms, who is responsible to the Rector and the Senate of the University.

The Faculty seems to have limited influence on University policy, particularly due to the increasing size and therefore influence of the other Faculties, which are expanding rapidly. Since the Faculty does not have its own financial department, and uses the general University facilities, it does not have financial autonomy, but the relationship appears to offer the necessary flexibility.

On the budgetary side, the suggestion was made, that student contributions to their education should be increased and that fees paid by “*off course*” students, those who have repeated examinations many times, should be doubled at least. This would discourage long-term students or better, would encourage study efforts.

The curriculum appears to be complete and covers all aspects outlined in the SOP. The balance of theory to practical work meets the SOP ratios, although improvements should be made. It was suggested, that practical work should be increased in the earlier years and not just concentrated in the final year. It was strongly recommended by the team, that the 2nd year syllabus should be modified to relieve some of the excessively heavy burden currently imposed on students in that year. Extramural work should also be introduced at a later stage so that the students see more cases during the curriculum.

The team lauded the efforts which have been made to integrate basic subjects with later courses. It was suggested that increasing the number of practical sessions in basic subjects would raise the comprehension level. Pharmacology and toxicology clearly had disadvantageous facilities and anatomy of large animals needed to be improved. It was recommended, that further efforts be made to integrate basic subjects such as anatomy,

physiology, epidemiology and infectious diseases, pharmacology and pathology with clinical subjects and cases.

The lack of separation of anatomy and necropsy facilities would normally have resulted in a category 1 deficiency, but due to the building of the new hospital, which has started to be built and the written confirmation to the team, that the separation is planned into the new building (see Annex), the team decided to refrain from making this an issue. The suggestion that an EAEVE expert should be requested to review the plans has already been enacted and the team chairman has taken on consultancy on this aspect.

The small Faculty farm is in the process of becoming custom-built and offers good opportunities for students to get "hands on" experience. The opening of stray dog kennels for 60 animals will ensure, that adequate cases are available for disease control, handling and neutering. There is a need to demonstrate to students, that herd health and clinical problems on individual animals cannot be separated and there should be more integration between the clinics and the herd health veterinarians. There is a definite shortage of clinical veterinarians

Farm animal medicine and surgery, together with the teaching of radiology are in need of improvement and the team has made suggestions to help resolve this issue.

On the subject of food hygiene, the suggestion has been made to reduce the number of lectures and increase the practical training, particularly in ruminants and swine, in the slaughterhouses.

There seems to be an excellent teaching environment with lecturers being very motivated and dedicated to their teaching commitment and are normally open and approachable to the students. The use of English books and literature was highlighted as poor and it was suggested, that theses should be permitted in the English language. It was clear that problem-based learning should be introduced as soon as feasible.

The examination system is mostly defined by the Italian State, but it was recommended, that the number of chances to re-sit examinations should be limited in order to reduce the burden of the "off course" students. Students should not be permitted to enter the next year if they have not passed the previous year's examinations.

The physical facilities are not custom-made. Nevertheless, the impression has been gained by the team that the best has been made of the circumstances offered. Naturally, the whole question will be resolved once the new buildings/Faculty have been completed within the next 2 years.

The library is limited, but all students have access to the internet and to a limited number of CD lecture notes.

The admission procedure needs to include an aspect of motivation and personality, rather than just evaluation of largely non-biology related exam results.

The shortage of staff in general and in the clinical area in particular is a common situation but some improvement should be sought.

The CPE programme needs to be increased and the post-graduate courses need to become more profitable and more practice-oriented.

Research need to receive greater attention and coordination; the balance between teaching commitments and research time should be made transparent and more equal. Requirements for faculty promotion should clearly be defined.

All in all, the members of the team were impressed with the way the Faculty have made the most of limited means and facilities.

In the EAEVE Team`s opinion, there were no major unresolved deficiencies and the Team recommends that the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in Teramo be approved.

This report was presented to the Joint Education Committee of the EAEVE and FVE on 29. November 2007. The committee considered that since the visitation reflects a "moment in time" the two potential Category 1 Deficiencies i.e. lack of a 24 hour service to the public 7 days per week and the anatomy /pathology facilities inadequacies have to be taken into account. The decision was made, that since the Teramo Faculty opted to be visited under the new SOP's, the new category of "Provisional Approval" would be applied, with the proviso, that the deficiencies would be resolved within a period of three years, during which the Faculty should request a revisit by EAEVE.