



**FULL VISITATION REPORT**

**To the Universidad de León, Facultad de Veterinaria, León, Spain**

**On 4 - 8 March 2024**

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## **Contents of the Full Visitation Report**

Introduction

Area 1. Objectives, Organisation and Quality Assurance Policy

Area 2. Finances

Area 3. Curriculum

Area 4. Facilities and equipment

Area 5. Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin

Area 6. Learning resources

Area 7. Student admission, progression and welfare

Area 8. Student assessment

Area 9. Teaching and support staff

Area 10. Research programmes, continuing and postgraduate education

11. ESEVT Indicators

12. ESEVT Rubrics

Executive Summary

Glossary

## **Introduction**

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of León (FVULE = the VEE) is the oldest centre at the University of León. It was founded in 1852 as a Subaltern School of Veterinary Medicine, and transformed into the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, in 1943. The University of León (ULE) was created in 1979. In 1996 the DVM program was adapted to the EU directive (Directive 1027/78), and later included EU Directive 36/2005, and Spanish Law 44/2003 (BOE of 22/11/2003). The current curriculum started in the academic year 2010-2011 and is governed by European Directive 36/2005, as amended by Directive 55/2013.

The FVULE was the first Veterinary Faculty in Spain to be evaluated by the European Union's Advisory Committee for Veterinary Education in May 1989. Subsequently, it received a new visit from the Committee, now within the framework of the Evaluation Programme of the European Association of Veterinary Education Establishments (EAEVE) in November 2001. The last visit took place in 2014, with an ECOVE decision of three category 1 deficiencies: 1. Lack of strategic plan for the Establishment and especially for its Veterinary Teaching Hospital; 2. Insufficient caseload in all species and as a consequence, insufficient compulsory hands-on clinical training; 3. Insufficient exposure to emergency cases.

A strategic plan was approved in 2015 and after a revisitation in 2017, the VEE achieved Approved status by EAEVE.

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of León is the only veterinary training centre in Castilla y León, which is the largest region in Spain (94,226 km<sup>2</sup>). The main productive sectors of this region are agriculture and livestock (>20 % of cattle in Spain), together with the agri-food industry and tourism.

The VEE has adopted a 2015-2020 Strategic Plan (SPFVULE2015-2020) and progress has been made.

However, the VEE indicates that certain aspects in specific areas need to be reformulated, and several of the initially proposed measures should be intensified. During the last two years, an analysis has been conducted on the degree of achievement and implementation of the Strategic Plan which has also been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the Strategic Plan has been extended until 2024.

In 2019 the VEE obtained the "Certificate of Implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System", followed by the "Institutional Accreditation" of the VEE, granted by

the Spanish Ministry of Universities.

In 2022, the north wing of the main building was refurbished. A total of 2,016 m<sup>2</sup> was built to provide five new classrooms, a lecture hall, a new computer room, four practice rooms, as well as five rooms for group work or small seminars.

A revision of the infrastructure and equipment of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) has been undertaken, as well as the renovation of the small animal area. In 2021 a section of the hospital was modified to accommodate an MRI and a CT scanner.

The economic strategy and business plan of the VTH have been successfully implemented, with revenues increasing by 500% over the last five years.

Associate Professor positions have been created so that clinical veterinarians linked to the VTH and the Support Services have acquired the status of teaching staff.

The farm animal medicine programme has increased the number of collaborating veterinarians to eleven.

New collaboration agreements have been formalised with animal protection associations that collaborate with VTH.

The Veterinary Forum of Castilla y León was constituted in 2018, with the participation of the General Council of Veterinary Associations of Castilla y León, the Union of Veterinarians of Castilla y León and the VEE

The VEE indicates that major problems encountered include insufficient financial resources due to the crisis experienced in recent years. Furthermore, the VEE's capacity to intervene in the provision of human and other resources is limited, which compromises the execution of strategic plans. This situation has been aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The average age of the Faculty's teaching staff is considered to be high by the VEE.

The financial management of the Veterinary Hospital does not lie at the VEE administration but is carried out by the General University and Business Foundation (FGULEM), although there are members of the VEE on the VTH Management Committee. This situation has caused some difficulties in meeting the demands of teaching and clinical activity.

The VEE does not have a conventional ambulatory clinic and is not depending on the Veterinary Hospital in this matter. Instead, it has established a “farm animal medicine programme”, which has largely addressed this deficiency in recent years.

**The ESEVT SOP 2023, 8<sup>th</sup> June 2023 was valid for this 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**

The VEE's mission statement and objectives of the veterinary course comply with the European Directive 2005/36/EC (as amended by Directive 2013/55/EU) and the National Order ECI/333/2008 (see also 3.2.1). The training is in line with the recommendations of the OIE, ESG and the D1Cs of ESEVT. The training is built around the following objectives: Veterinary Medicine, Animal Production, Food Safety & Veterinary Public Health, Epidemiology, Legislation & Ethical Conduct and Practice Management.

In 2019, the faculty was accredited by ACSUCYL (Agency for the Quality of the University System of Castilla y Leon). The QA system of the veterinary training is further described in standard 1.4.

### **1.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The VEE has a long history with EAEVE. The main objectives embrace the ESEVT system.

### **1.1.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **1.1.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.1.

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

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

The details of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of León (ULE) are clearly stated in the SER.

The VEE is part of the ULE, a public university dependent on the Ministry of Education of the Regional Government of Castilla y Leon. The university, headed by a Rector, Vice-Rectors and supported by the Governing Council and the Social Council, has 13 faculties and 26 departments.

The VEE has the authority to organise the education and procedures for obtaining the Degree in Veterinary Medicine and the Degree in Food Science and Technology. The faculty is also

responsible for the QA of its courses. The Departments are responsible for teaching, research and initiatives for teachers in their area of competence contributing to the learning programmes of one or more faculties. The Dean is the head of the faculty and as such chairs the Faculty Board. The Vice Deans are empowered by the Dean as well as the DVM degree coordinator. The VEE has an official Secretary. A university official is responsible for the administration of the VEE. The Faculty Board is the most important decision-making body and is composed of all sections of the VEE, including students.

Within the VEE there are 5 departments (Biomedical sciences, Food hygiene & technology, Animal health, Veterinary medicine, surgery & anatomy and Animal production) and three departments from outside the faculty (Biochemistry section of the Molecular biology department, the Applied chemistry & physics department and the Biodiversity & Environmental management department).

The Faculty Board is responsible for the general management of the VEE. It is supported by various committees. These committees are the Executive Committee consisting of 24 members of which 25% are students and representatives of all the departments, the Teaching Committee with its various Course Councils, the Degree Monitoring Committee (which has an important role in the development of IQAS, in collaboration with the Faculty Quality Committee), the Library Committee, the Final-Degree project committee, the Mobility Committee, the External Practices Committee, the Validation Committee and finally the Quality Committee.

Formal cooperation with other VEEs mainly involves the SICUE, Erasmus and Amicus exchange programs with Spanish, European and American VEEs.

The VTH is headed by a veterinarian with a PhD degree who manages a Board of Directors and an Academic Committee. The main task is the training of undergraduate and postgraduate students. The VTH offers a 24/7/365 service for production and companion animals.

### **1.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The VEE is responsible for the general educational plan and its coherence. The Dean directs and supervises the teaching activities, whereas the Faculty board approves the teaching plan annually. The Degree Monitoring Committee (of which there are 2, one for each degree organised in the VEE) is responsible for overseeing the study programme. The departments are responsible for its concrete implementation. The departments are the bodies responsible for coordinating the teaching of their knowledge areas in one or more Faculties in accordance with the teaching planification of the University, supporting the teaching and research activities and initiatives of the affiliated teaching and research staff, including research fellows.

### **1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **1.2.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.2.

**Standard 1.3: The VEE must have a strategic plan, which includes a SWOT analysis of its current activities, 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**

The Strategic Plan 2015-2020 of VEE was updated and extended to the Strategic Plan 2022-2024 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This strategic plan was revised and approved in January '23. It contains a SWOT analysis and is organised into 5 strategic axes (Teaching, Clinical & Healthcare Teaching Activity, Research, Interaction with society, Resources & Infrastructure), 14 strategic objectives, 29 strategies and 84 actions, each with its own responsible persons and time frame. Regular progress assessments and annual reporting of the findings complete the operation of the strategic plan.

A new strategic plan for 2024-2029 is developed and awaiting approval.

Although several teachers are involved in subjects in which clinical training is involved and that indirectly students are able to assess the clinical work, there isn't an updated QA strategy for the VTH.

### **1.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Prior to the visit, an extensive update of the strategic plan was provided, demonstrating an active policy on continuous improvement. The achievements of the strategic plan also show that the ambitions, as in every VEE, are always higher than the realisations, but also that the urge for progress is strong.

The VEE is aware of not having a clear QA strategy for the teaching activity in the VTH.

### **1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement**

It is suggested to update and implement a QA strategy for the VTH.

### **1.3.4. Decision**

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 1.3. because of suboptimal QA strategy in the VTH.

**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**

The VEE has implemented the 'Internal Quality Assurance System' (IQAS) that was developed in 2010 and updated in 2022 by the Quality & Evaluation Office (OEC) of the ULE. IQAS has been evaluated and certified by the 'Agencia para la Calidad del Sistema Universitario de Castilla y León' (ACSUCYL) on 23/9/2019. ACSUCYL in turn is recognized by ENQA and EQAR. The certification by ACSUCYL is valid for a maximum of 5 years, counting from the date of issue.

IQAS consists of a set of activities to ensure the quality of teaching activities.

The OEC is responsible for the implementation of the processes involved in IQAS. It performs satisfaction surveys of students, surveys of graduates with a degree and surveys of the teaching & support staff.

At the faculty level, the IQAS is guided by the Dean's Team (or Faculty's Management Team), led by the Dean. The Dean appoints a Quality Coordinator, responsible for the implementation and maintenance of the IQAS. The Quality Committee (QCFVULE) is the most important

participant in the planning and monitoring of the IQAS. It collects all kinds of educational indicators and survey results, receives suggestions and indications of satisfaction from all internal and external stakeholders and considers proposals for improvement derived from these results. It also takes care of internal communication regarding the policy, objectives, plans, programmes, responsibilities and achievements of IQAS.

The Degree Monitoring Committee is responsible for the implementation of IQAS at the degree level. It works closely with and is accountable to the overarching faculty Quality Committee about the student's options for following the program.

All entities involved in IQAS regularly assess the system to ensure its adequacy, appropriateness, and effectiveness. Opportunities for improvement are identified and the necessity of modifications to the system are determined in this assessment.

All activities regarding IQAS are written down in an annual self-assessment report that is published on the faculty website, together with the evaluation procedures and tools. In this way, all faculty sections (including students) are informed about the ongoing quality measures, such as action plan, responsible persons, timeframe and monitoring or indicators. The Quality Committee (QCFVULE) is accountable to the Faculty Board.

The policy regarding academic integrity is regulated at the university level. The University of León's regulations outline procedures to be followed in cases of potential breaches of academic integrity within the university setting.

#### **1.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Because the IQAS system is subject to 5-year certification by ACSUCYL, a regular update of the QA policy is assured.

#### **1.4.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

#### **1.4.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.4.

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

**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**

Contacts with stakeholders outside the faculty are maintained, in addition to personal contacts, during meetings that often result in cooperation agreements. The faculty currently has more than 400 active collaboration agreements.

Relations with politics have been anchored since 2018 in the creation of the 'Veterinary Forum of Castilla y Leon', in which, in addition to the VEE, also the 'General Council of Veterinary Associations of Castilla y León' and the 'Trade Union of Veterinarians of Castilla y León' are represented. The Veterinary Forum of Castilla y Leon meets twice a year. The decisions reached during the meetings are forwarded to the relevant official bodies responsible for matters pertaining to the veterinary profession, namely the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health.

The Quality and Evaluation Office of ULE (OEC) is responsible for organising satisfaction

surveys of students, teaching staff, administrative staff and other employees and for monitoring the student from registration till graduation (See also 1.4). Afterwards, the OEC prepares an annual report on the employment placement of veterinary graduates in a specific academic year, as well as an aggregated report on graduates over the past 4-5 years. At the university level, the Social Council of ULE forms a bridge with society.

### **1.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The VEE regularly interacts with its stakeholders during meetings and personal contacts. The VEE's ESEVT status and SER is published on the website <https://veterinaria.unileon.es/evaluacion-europea/> and <https://centros.unileon.es/veterinaria/evaluacion-europea/>.

### **1.5.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **1.5.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.5.

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

As a major tool in IQAS, evaluations to improve education are completed after each semester by students, teachers, administrative and technical staff. Various aspects are questioned. The results are successively assessed by the dean's team, the quality coordinator and finally by the Quality Committee. Problems are ranked by importance and verifiable solutions proposed. All this is included in the annual report of the QCFVULE (See also 1.4) and is approved by the Faculty Board.

The quality coordinator has to submit a review report with possible reviews of the IQAS procedures, with strengths and weaknesses and suggestions for improvement. Once the QCFVULE has approved this report, the changes will be proposed to the Faculty Board.

The aggregated results can be found on the OEC website (<https://lookerstudio.google.com/u/0/reporting/e5629cff-adc5-4fd0-8ed5-b4c9e839ff1b/page/jZ9qC?s=sRnPLovGG2c>).

The faculty website is the most important means of communication for public information and accountability. The VEE has established processes to ensure the consistent release and widespread distribution of trustworthy, up-to-date, and accessible information about the offered degrees and their outcomes, as well as other conducted activities based on a number of guidelines.

### **1.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**



The most important source of information for QA is the answers to the surveys from the various sections organised by the University's Quality and Evaluation Office. The questionnaires are very extensive and the answers are collected afterwards and processed into reports that are passed on to the faculty.

In summary, VEE's QA-system IQAS works in the following PDCA cycle: Plans of the Degree Monitoring Committee, approved by the VEE's Faculty Board, are implemented. The Vee's quality committee (QCFVULE) Checks the implementation. For this it uses [the indicators of the degree](#), the results of the satisfaction surveys of all internal stakeholders which include Student Satisfaction Surveys with the Degree (including organisation of the study, practical training intra- and extra-muros and voluntarily, Infrastructure, the level of the degree), Student Satisfaction Survey with the teaching activity of the Professor, Student Satisfaction Survey with the Tutorial Action Plan (for the first 2 years of the veterinary programme), Graduate Satisfaction Survey with the Degree and employment, Teaching Staff Satisfaction Survey and Support Staff Satisfaction Survey, the annual monitoring self-report and the external reports by e.g. ACSUCYL. With the results of these checks, the Monitoring Degree Committee adjusts the plans and closes hereby the PDCA cycle.

### **1.6.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **1.6.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.6.

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

### **1.7.1. Findings**

Since the last evaluation in March 2017, IQAS has been implemented and has been approved by the Quality Agency of Castilla y Leon in 2019.

The new economic and marketing strategy of the VTH has had a positive impact which in turn has a positive impact on the students' clinical training.

The faculty will continue to be subject to cyclical assessment in the future due to the various elements set out in point 1.4 and the 7-yearly visitation by EAEVE.

### **1.7.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The faculty sees the coming into force of the new 'Organic Law on Universities (LOSU)' in Spain in April 2023 as a strong threat to the future sustainability of the policies and independent management of each university. The law obliges universities to adopt dedications and imposes rules for which they do not have the necessary financial support. The council of rectors of Spain calculates that applying the provisions of the LOSU regarding teaching and research personnel would have a cost of 844 million euros.

### **1.7.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **1.7.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.7.

## **Area 2. Finances**

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

### **2.1.1. Findings**

The budget for the VEE is supplied by the ULE which receives its budget from student tuition fees and funds from the Regional Government. The ULE manages the payment of all major expenses e.g. staff salaries and maintenance. The VEE only manages a small part of the total budget e.g. running costs and equipment. Possibilities for the VEE to generate additional income is limited. Staff expenses have risen considerably in 2023 because of salary increases and the employment of new staff. Total annual expenditures have risen in the last three years. VEE states that investments of the University in the VEE have increased by more than one million Euros. Major improvements in the VEE have been made in the last three years varying from renovations in the large animal area to installing video conference systems. The annual balance for each academic year is zero, generating no positive or negative balance. The VEE controls a limited budget itself, most of the financial transactions like payment of salaries are done by the University, therefore financial manoeuvrability of the VEE is limited.

### **2.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Prior to the visit, the VEE supplied additional information on the financial data. There has been an increase in the spent budget by the VEE due to an increase in staff positions. Also, new labour regulations forced the VEE to change the status of interns. During the last years, investments in the VTH have taken place.

### **2.1.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **2.1.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 2.1.

**Standard 2.2: Clinical and field services must function as instructional resources. 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**

The VTH is part of a private, non-profit foundation dedicated to the promotion of e.g. education. This foundation also manages the budget. Expenses paid are for personnel, equipment/maintenance and clinical activities. Revenues come from clinical activities, from funding from both private and public entities and from the ULE. The VTH charges market rates for clinical work with lower prices for VEE staff and specific non-profit organisations. The VTH has the greatest flexibility in generating income because part of its revenues are income

from clinical activities. The VEE mentions an increased caseload for the VTH causing increased income from clinical activities but also increased personnel costs. The annual/final balance of the VTH has been zero for the last three years. The Teaching Farm has had a positive balance in the last three years.

#### **2.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

A review of the current state of infrastructure needs and renovation of equipment in the VTH is part of the Strategic Plan of the VEE. The Departments of the VEE inform the vice-Rector of their needs. When the investment is considered appropriate acquisition has to be approved by the ULE.

#### **2.2.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

#### **2.2.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 2.2.

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

#### **2.3.1. Findings**

Resources allocation is done by the ULE, the Rectors' office. Requests for expenditure can be done annually by the Faculties. Employees of the VEE can send in requests for investments to the Department Head. The Department Head will discuss the request with the Dean. The Dean of the VEE can take the request to the Rector of the University.

The Office of the Rector consults the Faculties annually for their needs before the start of this cyclus. The Dean of the VEE then asks the Department for investment plans.

The Office of the Rector decides which actions are carried out by prioritising and budget possibilities. The VEE infrastructure was updated after prioritising the VTH and the VEE by the ULE in 2021 and 2022.

#### **2.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

At the VEE there are 2 routes to apply for investments. One route is through requests by the Dean to the Rector. The other route is to apply for funding from the central Government. The administrative work for these procedures is huge and time-consuming the staff and management describe.

#### **2.3.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

#### **2.3.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 2.3.

## **Area 3. Curriculum**

**Standard 3.1: The curriculum must be designed, resourced and managed to ensure all graduates have achieved the graduate attributes expected to be fully compliant with the**

**EU Directive 2005/36/EC (as amended by directive 2013/55/EU) and its Annex V.4.1. The curriculum must include the subjects (input) and must allow the acquisition of the Day One Competences (output) listed in 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**

The current curriculum of the DVM Course started in 2010 and subject syllabuses are organised as per Directive 36/2005/EU. It has a total of 300 ECTS organised in 5 years. Professional hands-on training accounts for 24 ECTS and is confined to the second semester of the 5<sup>th</sup> year. The National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA) reviewed the proposed curriculum that was approved by the Spanish Ministry of Education in 2011. Its accreditation was renewed in 2017.

The programme of the DVM Course is structured in units of study that are linked to the ESEVT D1Cs (detailed in Annex 5.3). Certification of the skills and/or competencies acquired by students is done through assessment tests as reported in Area 8 - Student Assessment.

Training activities are carried out in groups of different sizes depending on ULE regulations and on the activity requirement. Students are requested to take 1500 curriculum hours per year (Table 3.1.2) of which most are categorised as G (others) and include the student's personal study. Detailed information about the learning outcomes, criteria and methods of assessment of each individual subject is available online through the university website (Guía Docente page).

The degree programme is managed by different committees (ACSUCYL, the VEE Teaching Committee and Quality Committee). Class timetables are drawn up by the Dean's team and approved by the Course Council; students are involved in class and exam schedules definition. A specific Curriculum Committee was appointed to ensure the highest degree of coherence and integration, eliminating overlaps, redundancies, and omissions during the design of the current programme; this was done with the help of an external Advisory Committee. The curriculum is now monitored by a Quality Committee and the activities are carried out during the Academic Coordination Meetings and Faculty Board meetings. Among external stakeholders, representatives of the Official College of Veterinarians of León are mentioned.

The tables included in the SER, reporting curriculum hours taken by each student cannot be easily verified and the classification (lectures, seminars, supervised self-learning, etc.) relies on what teaching staff responsible for each subject had communicated during the SER redaction.

#### **3.1.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The curriculum includes all the EU-listed subjects for which learning outcomes are aligned with the acquisition of D1Cs despite a formal instrument to monitor their acquisition is not in place.

Students, academic staff and external stakeholders participate in the active monitoring of the curriculum through the activities of several committees.

The subject's syllabus, including detailed learning outcomes and assessment methods, are easily accessible through the University website.

Different teaching modalities such as seminars and supervised self-learning are included in many pre-clinical and clinical subjects.

#### **3.1.1.3. Suggestions for improvement**

It is suggested that the VEE considers adopting a common system of activity classification relevant to the ESEVT SOP in order to more easily monitor and retrieve data about curriculum hours taken by each student.

#### **3.1.1.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.1.

### **3.1.2. Basic Sciences**

#### **3.1.2.1. Findings**

Basic sciences are taught amongst the first three years of the degree. There are 1498 teaching hours devoted to Basic subjects, and these subjects are compulsory. Other activities linked to basic subjects (including the student's personal study) account for 1932 hours. Basic subjects totally account for 46% of the total programme workload. In table 3.1.5, 4 elective subjects, also belonging to basic subjects, are reported: these are offered during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> semesters. The curriculum hours are distributed among different teaching methods including seminars and supervised self-learning. Non-clinical animal work is taken in the anatomy subjects (56 hours) and in the physiology subjects (although only two hours). Clinical animal work is offered in anatomy, physiology and pathology.

The practical teaching of anatomy includes small group dissection activity of dog cadavers, use of plastinated samples and fixed organs from different species.

Hands-on activity represents a consistent portion of the training: laboratory and desk-based work in biochemistry and physiology includes several sessions focused on the evaluation of physiological parameters. Animal handling activity is performed by exposing students to laboratory rodents. Students are trained in handling farm and companion animals in the subject Introduction to Veterinary Profession. A specific subject in veterinary profession that includes professional ethics and communication is taught during the first year of the program.

#### **3.1.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The VEE is commended for teachers' engagement in students' education. The theoretical contents of basic sciences are well represented and well-balanced in the curriculum. Dissection activities are only performed on dog carcasses and handling activity only on laboratory rodents.

### **3.1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement**

Dissection sessions with carcasses of different species might be increased considering that small ruminants and/or pigs can be obtained from slaughterhouses. Animal handling of different species should be enhanced.

### **3.1.2.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.2.

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

### **3.1.3.1. Findings**

In total 300 ECTS (7,500 hours) are distributed over 5 years and 105 ECTS for clinical sciences and animal health (average 1,500 hours per year). The teaching of clinical sciences, with teaching in companion animals, is included in the following subjects presented in SER Table 3.1.3. It is 153 h lectures, 44.7 h seminars, 38.7 h supervised self-learning, 19 h laboratory, and desk-based work, 0 h non-clinical animal work, and 393.5 h clinical animal work, and other 473.7 (tutorials, field visits, reports, expositions, evaluations, self-work). The Tutored Practical Training (TPT) and the Final Degree Project (FDP) are offered in the final semester (24 ECTS and 6 ECTS).

During 1<sup>st</sup> year there are 261 theoretical, 390.1 practical and 27 clinical hours. In 2<sup>nd</sup> year 311 theoretical, 217 practical and 23 clinical hours, 3<sup>rd</sup> year 318 theoretical, 212 practical and 116.5 clinical hours, 4<sup>th</sup> year 215 theoretical, 230.5 practical and 151.5 clinical hours and in 5<sup>th</sup> year 156 theoretical, 372.5 practical and 373 clinical hours. Thus the total number of clinical hours during the whole course is 691 in the clinics.

Based on the type of activity students are divided into large groups (80-100 students), medium-sized groups (of 40-50 students), small group sizes (20-25 students), and special groups (4-13 students). During the clinical rotation (Practicum) at the VTH, the groups range from 2 to 5 students per service.

Practical activities in clinical sciences in companion animals (including equine and exotic pets) are divided into obstetrics, reproduction, and reproductive disorders, diagnostic pathology, medicine, surgery, anesthesiology and analgesia, clinical practical training in common companion animals, infectious diseases, preventive medicine, diagnostic imaging, therapy in common animal species.

Students' pre- and clinical skills are acquired during rotations at the VTH in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> years through various clinical services. During the 1<sup>st</sup> year, students attend the subject Introduction to the Veterinary Profession. After that, during the 2<sup>nd</sup> year they attend the small animal internal medicine consultation. At the 3<sup>rd</sup> year they take part in diagnostic imaging practices and at 4<sup>th</sup> year participate in VTH services for small, large, and exotic animals (Internal Medicine, Neurology, Oncology, Dermatology, Ophthalmology, Cardiorespiratory, Surgery, Diagnostic Imaging, Anatomopathological Diagnosis, Reproduction). During the course, students must have core clinical knowledge and skills introduced earlier in the course to participate in next-level training which is evaluated not only by the traditional theoretical exam but also by a series of practical tests.

In year 5 students start their practical rotations (CCT) (Clinical Rotation (9 ECTS)) under academic staff supervision (8.3 weeks of Practicum in total, 549 h/student), including placements at VTH (services in internal medicine and surgery for small and large animals, hospitalisation, diagnostic imaging, necropsy service) and Farm Animal medicine programme. For intramural clinics in equine and small animal service (internal medicine and surgery) as

well as laboratory diagnostic, imaging diagnostics, and necropsy service (at VTH) Practicum takes 22 days. During this time students take part in general consultations (internal medicine and surgery) by gathering clinical histories, restraining the patient if necessary, performing a physical examination, going through all diagnostic procedures, planning therapeutic approaches, and writing clinical reports. Also, students take part in emergency care and perform veterinary procedures (IV and urethral catheterization, CRI calculation, ECG, blood pressure measurement, etc.), fluid therapy calculation, and nursing care (dressing changes, walking, feeding, wound cleaning, post-operative care).

Additionally, students spend 12 days in extra-mural clinics (an Elective Practice (EPT)). 427 companies in the veterinary profession are approved by the VEE to perform EPT. However, students are allowed to propose other companies for the CCT. Thus, the 10th semester (in total 30 ECTS) is aimed at further developing and verifying the achievement of professional competencies and skills.

The report is written by the student after each rotation (clinical cases studied using evidence-based medicine; activities with the Official Veterinary Services, or the EPT activity report) and it is evaluated by the external tutor on an e-assessment sheet. The student is then evaluated by professors.

There are no electives offered in clinical science. The 4 elective subjects in the curriculum are in the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester (1<sup>st</sup> year) and the 4<sup>th</sup> semester (2<sup>nd</sup> year). It includes a History of veterinary medicine, Scientific and technical English, Anatomy and physiology of wild, exotic, and laboratory animals, and Applied informatics. The curriculum hours taken in electives are summarised in Table 3.1.5.

### **3.1.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

It is commendable that VEE ensures Students are introduced to a veterinary practice in the first year, initially by nursing care skills and then starting science in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year by introducing students to companion animals internal medicine consultation. Before clinical training students are trained on animal models, simulators, organs, and cadavers which are used in different subjects. The international standard veterinary education, and graduate professionals capable of self-responsible, independent veterinary work and life-long learning are provided by VEE. The curriculum is consistent with EU Directive 2005/36/EC (as amended by Directive 2013/55/EU).

The average proportion of first-opinion cases in small animals and horses is high which allows a proper introduction to future clinical work. Students are involved in night and emergency shifts. There are no electives offered in clinical science.

Students also had the opportunity to attend specialised congresses (through free registration), such as ANEMBE (Bovine symposium) and ASESCU (Rabbit symposium) in 2023.

The student associations (IVSA, AVAFES, ACODIL) organise courses, talks, workshops, etc. in the veterinary field.

### **3.1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement**

It is suggested to let the students have free access to the skills labs to have an opportunity to practise in their free time.

### **3.1.3.4 Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.3.

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

#### **3.1.4.1. Findings**

The curriculum is structured into different modules (see Table 3.1.1), where the modules "Clinical Sciences and Animal Health" and "Tutorized Practical Training" collectively account for 129 ECTS, encompassing clinical training in food-producing animals. Approximately 74 ECTS of the curriculum are dedicated to clinical sciences in food-producing animals, mainly from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> semester, finishing the clinical training during the clinical rotation in semester 10. The curriculum involves a total of 1,840 compulsory teaching hours in clinical sciences in food-producing animals, with 300 hours allocated to lectures and 284 hours to clinical animal work. Within the "others" category, a total of 1,022 compulsory teaching hours are offered. Each student is required to complete 16% in lectures, 5.5% in seminars, 4% in supervised self-learning, 3% in laboratory and desk-based work, 15.5% in clinical animal work, and 55.5% in "other" activities. The category "others" includes the student's non-personal working hours, accounting for approximately 60%. However, during the clinical rotation, the face-to-face hours increased to 93.3%.

Animal Production is addressed within the dedicated module (Table 3.1.1) with 33 ECTS. Each student must complete 564 curriculum course hours, primarily in the form of lectures (126 hours), seminars (40 hours), and "other" activities (349 hours).

Concerning herd health management, a total of 159 compulsory hours are required for each student, delivered through supervised self-learning formats (19.5 hours), clinical animal work (70 hours), and "other" activities (70 hours).

Within the practical rotations in the 5<sup>th</sup> year (10<sup>th</sup> semester), five days are allocated for herd health management of large animals and Animal Production Activities (1-3 student groups), five days for official veterinary services for animal health (7-10 student groups), and four days for Farm Animal medicine programme (1-4 students/group). Additionally, students must complete extramural clinics for a duration of 12 days, engaging in supervised work in the field of food-producing animals, provided the students select such institutions.

Students have to maintain a daily log of activities and are required to write a specific report for each rotation part, which is then evaluated by the assigned internal tutors. A minimum grade of 5 out of 10 is necessary to pass each rotation.

In addition to the curricular training of students, extracurricular external practices are offered to students from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> year. Approximately 12% of students opt for Extracurricular External Practices for training in production animals (see Table 3.7.1).

#### **3.1.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Clinical sciences in food-producing animals are taught mainly from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> semester. During the first two years, clinical topics and activities are integrated into various subjects. Practical training for Day 1 competencies is provided through simulations with a mannequin cow, hands-on sessions at the teaching farm, and clinical visits to farms alongside their teachers. In the clinical rotation, students spend 5 days on herd health management and reproduction. Additionally, they dedicate 4 days to working with veterinarians within the Farm Animal Medicine Programme, where they acquire D1Cs in food-producing animals. If students choose a food-producing veterinary practice during their placements (extramural clinics, 12 days), they can further enhance their competencies in this area.

Competency assessments occur through continuous evaluation of practical sessions, examination of student reports by respective teachers, and written exams conducted during the clinical rotations.

#### **3.1.4.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.



#### **3.1.4.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.4.

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

#### **3.1.5.1. Findings**

VPH (and FSQ) teaching is done in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> semesters of the curriculum. The VEE has 24 ECTS on Food Hygiene, Technology and Safety with extra tutorized practical training in a slaughterhouse and a food pilot plant. The total number of hours dedicated to Veterinary legislation, control of food, feed and animal by-products, Zoonoses, Food Hygiene and environmental health, and basic food technology exceeds 800 hours. During the practical rotation, students spend 2 days in a bovine and ovine slaughterhouse and 1 week in the food pilot plant. Modules related to this knowledge area vary from sustainable development to aquaculture and performing ante and post-mortem inspections of animals and foodstuffs. In the Food Hygiene and Technology Rotation students also have a structured rotation with a Public Health Official Veterinarian visiting places where HACCP is used. In the slaughterhouse rotation, students are under direct supervision of an official veterinarian who is also incorporated as a member of the university staff and performs all activities of an official veterinarian. Also during the extramural practical training, students can choose a place related to FSQ and VPH. However, only 0.77% of all students select this type of place.

#### **3.1.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The enthusiasm and teaching abilities of the teaching staff related to the subject of Food Quality Management and Veterinary Public Health at the VEE and in the slaughterhouse is commendable. They are very eager to explain the important tasks of the veterinarian in food quality control and management.

From year 1 the VEE informs students of the tasks of veterinarians in abattoirs. This is necessary because most students are not aware of these tasks at the start of the study. In total, students visit an abattoir five times during the study. Three days during the core course Food Hygiene, Inspection and Safety and two times during the Food Hygiene and Technology rotation. All subjects related to the veterinarian duties in the slaughterhouse e.g. AM inspection, PM inspection, HACCP and auditing are part of the teaching. Students meet veterinarians of the official services who are also faculty members, in the slaughterhouse visits. These teachers do not receive educational training. Students sometimes have strong negative emotional feelings related to visiting the abattoir. But the VEE enforces students to visit the abattoir. For Food Technology all students follow a core course and have a rotation in the Food Pilot plant where they receive training in food technology related to food safety. Students not only receive training in food hygiene and safety related to food of animal origin but also related to vegetables because in Spain veterinarians are in control of food quality of vegetables.

#### **3.1.5.3. Suggestions for improvement**

It is suggested to encourage the official veterinarians who do the teaching in the slaughterhouse to participate in educational training.

#### **3.1.5.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.5.

### **3.1.6. Professional Knowledge**

#### **3.1.6.1. Findings**

Professional Knowledge is taught in different subcategories and different ways: lectures, seminars, self-learning and a mix of situations (e.g. tutorials, field visits, reports, expositions) That includes: Information literacy and Data management 179 hours (120.5 in self-learning), Professional ethics and communication 63 hours (36.5 in self-learning), Animal health economics and practice management 65 hours (49.5 in various situations), Animal welfare 78 hours (52 in various situations), Herd health management 159 hours (70 hours during clinical work, 70 in others situations).

The total hours dedicated to professional knowledge is 544, 60 hours are taught through lectures and seminars.

#### **3.1.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The part of self-learning and the “spreading” of professional knowledge acquisition through various clinical or professional situations is high.

The responsibility of this field is not clearly assigned to anyone.

#### **3.1.6.3. Suggestions for improvement**

It is suggested to consider to appoint one member of the teaching staff to be overall responsible for organising teaching professional knowledge. Communication skills could be enhanced, regarding the increasing importance of being able to communicate properly with owners and clinics teams.

#### **3.1.6.4 Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.6.

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

**The VEE must provide proof of a QA system that promotes and monitors the presence of 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**

The European Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications, including veterinary medicine, is translated into the national Royal Degree 1837/2008, relating to the recognition of professional qualifications. The RD1837/2008 complies with the National Law 44/2003 concerning the Management Of Health Professions and is in accordance with National Order ECI/333/2008 that establishes the requirements to practise veterinary medicine. The Order ECI/333/2008 specifies that the veterinary degree is a university course that comprises 300 ECTS. The study plan must include, at least, the modules Basic formation, Clinical Sciences and Animal Health, Animal Production, Hygiene and Food safety and

Tutored Practices and End of work Degree. Each of the modules lists the competences as summarised in appendix 5.3.1, which form the basis of the veterinary curriculum in the VEE. In the Verified Curriculum of the Veterinary Degree at the ULE, Specific Competences of Knowledge (SCK) and Specific Competences of Know-How (SCKH) are outlined and summarised in appendix 5.3.1, which also demonstrates the accordance with the 38 D1C's of the EAEVE SOP.

The Teaching Guide (TG) lists the subjects to be followed each year. Each subject is provided with an extensive course sheet that lists general information about the subject and its teachers, the final competences and the learning outcomes (in reference to the "Degree Verification/Verification Report" see 3.3.1). Furthermore, an extensive content of the course can be found as well as the various didactic methods that will be used, with an extensive discussion of what the student can expect from each didactic working method. Finally, it is described in detail how the assessment of the course will proceed. The course sheet concludes with an extensive list of references. Each subject is supported by the electronic learning platform based on Moodle which enables personalised learning environments to be created, with multiple training tools available to students.

The TG acts as a formal contract between the student and the VEE and serves as a reference for the implementation and monitoring of the learning process.

All possible forms of student assessment are used in a competence-based evaluation system that is further described in detail in area 8.

The QA system, IQAS, is explained in Standard 1.4.

During daily education, students are made aware by their teachers of the importance of evidence-based medicine, scientific research, and lifelong learning through innovative teaching strategies that should ensure better student engagement (e.g., flipped classrooms, project-based learning, peer instructions, etc.).

An important element in the preparation for lifelong learning is the Final Degree Project during which students have to put into practice the research-related skills and knowledge they have acquired during their studies. In this subject, students are initiated into bibliographic search, scientific methods and research techniques, and the writing of scientific papers. Seminars, scientific meetings and congresses are held at VEE during the academic year. Most of them have free access or special rates for students, and some are organised by the Student Unions.

Finally, the importance of lifelong learning is demonstrated by the scientific dissemination activities, such as the National Science Week, the European Researchers Night and Expociencia, a local event organised by ULE. In addition, the VEE actively shares knowledge via social media (Instagram, Twitter and Facebook) and is in close contact with the Scientific Culture Unit of the ULE which helps to transfer the scientific knowledge generated.

### **3.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The first lesson of the academic year is called "Sesión de acogida"; in English "Welcome session", in which it is explained how the development of the academic year will be, including instruction of the Moodle platform. Furthermore, the first lecture of each subject is "Introduction" (it can be seen in the Teaching Guide), in which Moodle and the subject are explained.

The elements for a competency-based training course with qualification referring to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area are clearly present.

The QA-system is elaborately discussed in standard 1.4.

### **3.2.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **3.2.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.2.

### **Standard 3.3: Programme learning outcomes must:**

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

### **3.3.1. Findings**

Information regarding the three first points of this standard is also described in Standard 3.2.1. To date, the complete program includes 300 ECTS and lasts 5 years.

For each subject, the final competences and learning outcomes are listed in the course sheet of each subject in the TG (see also 3.2.1), which is the premier source of information for teachers and students and acts as an indivisible part of the contract between the VEE and the student.

The programme competences are divided into 3 categories (derived from ANECA's (National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain) 'White Book of the Veterinary Degree') and are described in the "Degree Verification/Verification Report" of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports of the Spanish Government: Basic skills (5), Transversal or generic competences (11) and Specific competences (85). The Specific competences (SC's) are further subdivided into 66 Knowledge competences and 19 Know How competences. Based on these competences, students gain knowledge and skills across the entire domain of the veterinary profession.

In order to keep the coherence across the different subjects, permanent coordination between courses/subjects is ensured by the Course Councils. This coordination includes actions to avoid overlaps, repetitions, absences and ensures coherence not only within the course, but at the level of the curriculum in general.

A congruence table between the SC's and the D1C is drawn up and can be found in appendix 5.3.1 and 5.3.3 of the SER.

The TG is reviewed annually and approved by the 'Department Council' and validated by the 'Teaching Committee' and the 'Quality Committee' of the faculty before being reported to the 'Centre Board'.

### **3.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Although the curriculum that is currently taught came into force with the arrival of the Bologna Plan (as in most of the Degrees of Spanish Universities) it is subjected to permanent review and evaluation at different levels through the mechanisms explained in the SER. In 2016 a modification of the curriculum was made although without substantial modifications. At the time of the visitation, the plans to extend the veterinary programme with 60 ECTS were put on hold as there is currently too little support from the government.

Meanwhile, the VEE is currently reviewing the veterinary curriculum (as an important strategic action plan) in order to improve it and adapt it to the new national regulations.

### **3.3.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **3.3.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.3.

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

- **determine the pedagogical basis, design, delivery methods and assessment methods of the curriculum**
- **oversee QA of the curriculum, particularly gathering, evaluating, making change and responding to feedback from stakeholders, peer reviewers and external assessors, and data from examination/assessment outcomes**
- **perform ongoing 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**

The method for designing the core curriculum is a coordinated procedure involving various committees (see 3.1).

All changes regarding the curriculum are communicated to teaching staff, support staff, students and stakeholders via the website.

Programmes for each subject can be reviewed annually by the Course Council meetings that are held 3 times in each academic year.

Evaluation and review of the programme is generally initiated by the Course Councils, and then goes through all the committees concerned such as Teaching Committee, the Quality Committee under the supervision of the Quality & Evaluation Office (OEC) (The committee that is responsible for the annual monitoring report of the veterinary course and for proposing measures to improve teaching quality.), The Degree Monitoring Committee, The Final Degree Project Committee and finally The External Practices Committee. Then the proposal goes to the Faculty Board, the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Activity and finally, the Governing Council of the University of León, all the way to the ACSUCYL. The final decision to accept a change to a curriculum belongs to the Ministry of Education.

### **3.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Although changes in the veterinary programme are not simple, adaptations to the curriculum do not imply proposing a new curriculum. Revision of the curriculum in this regard is annual. A clear structure of committees is in place, each committee with a well-defined task that together form a coherent whole in the implementation revision and QA of the programme.

### **3.4.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **3.4.4. Decision**

The VEE 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**

EPT is a part of a compulsory module. It takes place in the 10<sup>th</sup> semester. It is divided into: Clinical rotation inside the VTH and external clinics ( 9 ECTS).

Placements in external companies, or ULE research or services (4,5 ECTS).

Placements in an external farm with the official veterinary service ( 6 ECTS).

Placements in Food production sites with the official veterinary service (4,5 ECTS).

All students have access to a list of 427 companies, who have signed an agreement. New placements can be easily added. Two information meetings are held, one in 4<sup>th</sup> year, 2<sup>nd</sup> semester, the other in 5<sup>th</sup> year 1<sup>st</sup> semester.

A significant part of the EPT is done by students during the summer between 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> years. Around 35 academic tutors are available in the VEE.

The assessment of practical training is done through the evaluation report done by the external tutor which deals with participation, skills, knowledge and professional conduct. The academic tutor grades and reviews the students' reports.

The whole assessment process is oriented to link the learning outcomes with the demonstration of practical competencies.

### **3.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The duration of the external part of the practical training is short. The main reason is the fifth-year curriculum. Students can complete their practical training through voluntary engagement in the VTH. The increase during the last two years, of the caseload in the VTH, and the agreement with official vets allow the VEE to provide a significant CCT.

### **3.5.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **3.5.4. Decision**

The VEE 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**

The administrative management of agreements of EPT providers is done by the COIE of the ULE.

Students are involved in the whole process of EPT ( choice, writing evaluation report ..)

External and academic tutors are dedicated to the evaluation of professional skills and competencies.

An external practices Committee with 6 members supervises the EPT.

### **3.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Concerning the clinics, they must meet the standards defined by the local veterinary chamber, for other providers, the feedback of the students is used to decide whether to keep them or not on the list.

### **3.6.3. Suggestions for improvement**

NB: same suggestion as in standard 9.1 It should be considered to encourage EPT providers to participate in teaching courses.

### **3.6.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.6.

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

### **3.7.1. Findings**

Students choose institutions for EPT, actively contributing to new collaboration agreements. They must prepare before each placement, write a report on activities (equal to a logbook), and evaluate EPT. The EPT coordinator guides students on procedures and establishment contact. Students complete forms under academic tutor supervision, and at the end, they submit a report on their practical training. The report assesses competences and skills acquired during EPT. Complaints follow the established procedure. EPT, non-curricular external practices, offer additional training, enhancing competencies and employability. EPT coordinators facilitate procedures and support students. After selection, forms are completed and signed. At the end of EPT, students prepare a report assessing their experience. Complaints follow established procedures, aiming for improvement. EEPT offers voluntary additional training outside university hours, complementing core training and fostering competencies and employability. Regulations for EEPT mirror those of EPT, and participation can be included in the European Supplement to the Diploma. 80% of the students' attendance to the EPT is done in companion animals Clinics.

### **3.7.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Registration and assessment of the practical activities are done properly. EPT providers, students, and tutors are involved. An adequate committee using the QA system monitors the EPT activities.

### **3.7.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **3.7.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.7.

## **Area 4. Facilities and equipment**

**Standard 4.1: All aspects of the physical facilities must provide an environment conducive to learning, including internet access 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**

The VEE is a part of the ULE situated mostly on campus except for the Teaching Farm which is 1.5 km away and the Food Science and Technology Institute owned by the autonomous Government research facilities in which also some classes are performed. The VEE is constituted by 9 areas: main building, Veterinary Teaching Hospital, Teaching Farm, Animal House, Institute of Livestock Development, Institute of Molecular Biology, Genomics and Proteomics, Food Science and Technology Institute, Instrumental Techniques Laboratory and Central Library.

In the Main building, there are 3 floors where classrooms, meeting rooms, and lecture rooms, administrative service, departments, library, laboratories, kennel, changing rooms, and computer classrooms are situated.

The VTH has hospitalisation areas, clinic zones, diagnostic laboratories, and surgery rooms. A Wi-Fi network is present as well as Eduroam.

The Teaching Farm (130,000 m<sup>2</sup> surrounding area, facilities 5,412 m<sup>2</sup>, located 1.5 km from the campus) has several facilities for animal production such as general services, pig, cattle, and sheep barns, dog kennels, purification plants and those for research (part of the Animal House located on the Campus).

Maintenance and upgrading of the VEE facilities is the responsibility of the Vice-Rector for Infrastructure and Campus. During the last two years, the VEE was settled in the main building, the Teaching Farm, and the VTH. There is a strategic plan to improve the learning experiences and opportunities of students by infrastructure provision for research and the addition of new devices such as newer diagnostic imaging machines for the VTH. Additionally, the staff members of specific areas are responsible for biosecurity and animal welfare conditions also in relation to the ULE Ethics Committee. The ULE has a Risk Prevention Service which is responsible for compliance with all relevant legislation in the VEE facilities. There is ongoing renovation of different parts of the Teaching Farm.

### **4.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The Office of the Vice-Rector for Infrastructure and Sustainability has an Engineering and Infrastructure Area, which is responsible for the maintenance of the facilities. Any user of the



facilities (teaching and support staff) can request repair or maintenance using the CAU application (<https://cau.unileon.es/>). For improvement of the facilities, it is the Dean's Office that is in charge of making a request to the Vice-Rector's Office, which will attend to it according to the budget available for these actions.

The VEE has an agreement with 427 companies and in most cases, the VEE has first-hand knowledge of the facilities. The facilities used, such as slaughterhouses, farms or clinics, are subject to control and auditing processes governed by national or local legislation, ensuring that they are in good condition.

#### **4.1.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

#### **4.1.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.1.

**Standard 4.2: Lecture theatres, teaching laboratories, tutorial rooms, clinical facilities and other teaching spaces must be adequate in number 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**

In the main building there are 12 lecture rooms (36-266 seats; 1,531 in total) as well as more of them are in University Aulario. All of them are equipped with all the needed devices. Additionally, there are 27 smaller rooms (5-40 seats, 401 in total) and 43 laboratories (3-40 seats, 732 total). For self-learning, there are 174 places in the library. There are two cafeterias and vending machines. Lockers are available in VEE, VTH, and the Teaching Farms. VEE has a regular basis housing system for students as well as on-call during their 12-hour shifts.

The recreational area consists of several indoor facilities (Hansi Rodríguez Pavilion, Multipurpose Room, Fronton) as well as outdoor facilities (two indoor soccer fields, a soccer field, an athletics track, four tennis courts, two paddle courts, and a beach volleyball court).

There is the University of León Language Centre where foreign language programs such as German, Chinese, French, English, Italian, and Portuguese are available for students, teachers and the general public.

#### **4.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

It is commendable that the VEE rewards academically excellent Students as well as athletes helping them with housing issues. Also, the free ULE Bicycle Loan Program is noteworthy.

#### **4.2.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

#### **4.2.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.2.

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

- **be sufficient in capacity and adapted for the number of students enrolled in order to allow safe hands-on training for all students**
- **be of a high standard, well-maintained and fit for the purpose**
- **promote best husbandry, welfare and management practices**
- **ensure relevant biosecurity**
- **take into account environmental sustainability**
- **be designed to enhance learning.**

#### **4.3.1. Findings**

The VTH (4,370 m<sup>2</sup>) has a reception desk in the waiting area with a separate dog and cat-friendly area. There is an administration and maintenance area, small and exotic animal units separate from equine, and food production animals, a reproduction area, an infectious disease, and necropsy area, a hospitalisation area, and a teaching area. For horses, there are 17 boxes, an ICU and neonatal area and two ICU boxes and three ICU paddocks.

All rooms are equipped adequately for their purpose (e.g. in the diagnostic imaging ward there is ultrasound equipment, x-rays, MRI, CT etc.).

The teaching farm which is 1.5 km away from the VEE has places for cattle, small ruminants, and pigs.

There is an animal house dedicated to housing laboratory animals such as rodents and lagomorphs and fish farming.

There is an Ethical Committee ensuring that welfare practices are promoted.

The cotton clothes are used as well as rubber boots which are carefully cleaned, disinfected and washed at the University.

#### **4.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The space is adequate for the number of students and staff enrolled.

All users, including teaching staff and students, must wear clothing and footwear for the exclusive use of the farm, as well as disposable gloves, which are provided before starting the activity on the premises. There are changing rooms in the central building. Clothes are washed and dried in the VEE laundry, located in the Teaching Hospital. The awareness and biosecurity procedures in some research laboratories are not working correctly.

#### **4.3.3. Suggestions for improvement**

Final exam after implementing biosecurity training at the beginning of the programme may be beneficial for evaluating students' skills in this area.

#### **4.3.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.3.

**Standard 4.4: Core clinical teaching facilities must be provided in a veterinary teaching hospital (VTH) with 24/7 emergency services at least for companion animals and equines. Within the VTH, the VEE must unequivocally demonstrate that 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**

The VTH is open 24/7/365. The small animal clinic as well as the equine clinic offer internal medicine service, dermatology service, reproduction service, ophthalmology service, traumatology, orthopaedics, and neurosurgery services, oncology, shared diagnostic services, genomic diagnosis and therapy service and cellular therapy service.

The farm animal training is based mostly on ambulatory clinics and 24/7/365 on-call service is present. The training is supervised by the academic staff. Additionally in both the small animals and horse hospital Journal Clubs for students are performed every week during which newest publications as well as present clinical cases are discussed. The students are supervised by the academic teaching staff during their work at the clinic as well as support staff. If they have any doubts they can reach the help from academic staff. Students have a special system where they have access to all clinical files excluding owner data.

#### **4.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Small groups of students in rotations are commendable. The designed system where all clinical patient files are stored specially for the students is commendable.

The VTH meets modern standards for premises. The VTH provides a 24/7 emergency service for small animals as well as for horses. For cattle, there is an on-call service. The teaching standard is comparable with standards in the private sector.

#### **4.4.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

#### **4.4.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.4.

**Standard 4.5: The VEE must ensure that students have access to a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic facilities, including but not limited to 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**

VTH is equipped with an anaesthesia machine, gas outlet, surgical aspirator, a flexible endoscope for digestive procedures and bronchoscopies, a microscope, a rigid endoscopy tower (Arthrex®), a monopolar and bipolar electrosurgical scalpel, and an arch for interventional radiology, as well as in the emergency room there are a crash cart, oxygen supply, multiparametric monitor, ultrasound, gas analysis, aspiration and suction system, 8 cages, an incubator, and an ICU crib, two multiparametric monitors, and a telemetry monitoring system, ultrasound, infusion pumps. The hospitalisation area has 8 places for small dogs and 10 boxes for medium to large dogs, and 5 cat-friendly cages.

Thus, there is standard equipment for routine examination and surgery, in addition to a state-of-

the-art imaging system as well as in vitro laboratory for reproduction. The reproduction service is highly equipped (micromanipulator, binocular loupes; sperm motility analysis system; automated biofreezer; liquid nitrogen thermos; spectrophotometer; centrifuges; thermic control plates; ultrasonic straw sealer).

The large animal area is equipped in a similar manner as a small animal clinic (a horse stock, a storage cabinet, an ultrasound, an arthroscope, fluoroscope).

Clinical pathology laboratory, for haematology, biochemistry, basic microbiology, and immunofluorescence analysis.

During the PPT, 5-year students spend at the VTH for a total of 22 days during clinical rotation (9 ECTS) under academic staff supervision. However, during 1st year students perform eight hours of regulated practices in the subject of Introduction to the Veterinary Profession.

#### **4.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Clinical procedures such as surgery are transmitted live and also recorded and are available for review and discussion with students. There is an extracurricular voluntary program for students in the VEE VTH which is supervised by the VEE.

#### **4.5.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

#### **4.5.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.5.

**Standard 4.6: Appropriate isolation facilities must be provided to meet the need for the isolation and containment of animals with communicable diseases. Such isolation facilities must be properly constructed, ventilated, maintained and operated to provide for 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**

In the small animal clinic, the isolation area is a separate room consisting of 2 large boxes, 2 medium cages, 5 small cages for dogs, and 5 cages for cats, and is equipped with individual devices.

In the equine area, there is a separate part of the building that consists of 2 boxes, a central corridor, and a storage room as isolation.

In the Teaching farm two quarantine buildings are available, but not used.

In TFULE there is one enclosed cattle shed and 2 of them for small ruminants.

In SAEX there are 2 quarantine rooms for rodents and rabbits and one aquatic system for aquatic species.

#### **4.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

There are specific biosecurity protocols for each species. The isolation facilities are properly designed and adapted to the prevalent species. The access and the procedures for small animals and equine clients bringing patients with potential disease is also handled in the isolation facility.

#### **4.6.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

#### **4.6.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.6.

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

#### **4.7.1. Findings**

The ambulatory clinic is carried out on private farms in species such as dairy or beef cattle, dairy or meat sheep, swine, poultry, and rabbits and its on-call service is available 24/7 (also for horses). Teaching staff together with students (1:1 or max. 1:4 ratio) visit the animal farms as an ordinary activity. They are using vehicles that belong to the contracted veterinarians. The vehicles are equipped with the necessary tools including electronic identifier readers, sample collection equipment, ultrasound scanners, sperm storage equipment etc. for field practice. Herd Health Management includes 159.5 hours in the curriculum.

#### **4.7.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Students prepare reports which contain patients' history, examination results, diagnostic procedures, diagnosis as well as treatment protocols. During visits, students are wearing special clothing to adhere to biosecurity regulations. There are adequate facilities for examination, which are also secure for the students in the hospital for production animals.

#### **4.7.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

#### **4.7.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.7.

**Standard 4.8: The transport of students, live animals, cadavers, materials from animal origin and other teaching materials must be done in agreement with national and EU standards, to ensure the safety of students and staff and animal welfare, and to prevent the spread of infectious agents.**

#### **4.8.1. Findings**

To the Teaching Farm and the slaughterhouse, students are transported by a bus company (ALSA) or other private transportation companies.

The ambulatory clinic service is performed with vehicles owned by the veterinarians.

The cadavers/organs are transported by a dedicated company (REBISA). Biohazard fluids are temporarily stored in special containers and then collected by the company CONSENSUR, S.A. Chemicals and other biological residues are adequately stored and then collected by a specialised company (BIOTRAN).

Live animals are mainly transported by owners however the VEE owns two vans for that.

#### **4.8.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Students are transported to most places by the VEE.

#### **4.8.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

#### **4.8.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.8.

**Standard 4.9: Operational policies and procedures (including 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 to 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**

There is a special department (Risk Prevention Service) in the ULE which is responsible for biosecurity and health protection procedures. A comprehensive biosecurity manual is available on the VEE website targeting teaching and research staff as well as research fellows and third cycle students. Pictograms and QR codes leading to on-line biosecurity procedures are regularly present in the VEE facilities.

The VTH has a specific biosecurity manual including e.g. procedures for handling notifiable and transmissible diseases.

The VEE has developed a Biosecurity Plan that includes the necessary safety measures to reduce risk in teaching and care activities. Specific procedures have been generated by the Occupational Risk Prevention Unit (under the Office of the Vice-Rector for Infrastructures and Sustainability) for teaching, research and support staff, including an annual programme of training courses and reinforcement of safety at work.

Biosecurity signage, equipment and PPE are present in areas for students and staff. Students are regularly trained in various subjects in biosecurity procedures at the beginning of practical activities.

Despite the Laboratory Safety and Good Practice Manual has to be acknowledged by everyone entering the laboratory facilities, during the visitation the Team found that biosecurity measures were not fully implemented in some of the visited research areas. The Team noted that there were irregularly stored reagents (e.g. outside specific designated areas, or flammables in regular shelves in corridors/rooms and not in dedicated cabinets), non-updated laboratory equipment control labels including hoods and widespread presence of empty or unused boxes. Some staff were not wearing a lab coat during laboratory procedures. Laundry procedures for students' and staff laboratory coats are not regularly applied.

#### **4.9.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The VEE staff relies on ULE procedures for delivery and implementation of biosecurity measures and a specific committee structure is not present at the VEE level. While sufficient biosecurity measures are fully implemented for teaching, VTH and ambulatory clinic activities, a biosecurity issue in a research lab became clear when visiting research areas.

#### **4.9.3. Suggestions for improvement**

It is suggested that the VEE focuses on assessment of the procedures related to biosecurity

procedures as laid down in the Biosecurity Plan and other places to certify that the VEE adheres to all biosecurity procedures in all areas where students and staff have access and/or potential access.

#### **4.9.4. Decision**

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.9. because biosecurity procedures are not fully implemented in all areas.

## **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**

The SER tables 5.1.1 to 5.1.6. give detailed information on the number of animals, cadavers and material of animal origin regarding ESEVT indicators. None of the indicators I8-I17 shows a negative balance for the listed academic years.

Compared to the academic year 2020-21, where there were fewer patients available for students due to COVID-19, a significant increase in intramural companion animal patients and extramural livestock patients was observed in the academic year 2022-23.

The anatomy collection comprises a broad array of anatomical specimens from all animal species. The dissections are primarily carried out on canine cadavers, adhering to the prescribed formaldehyde limits. Additionally, mounted skeletons are also available for anatomy training. The number of necropsies in ruminants, pigs, companion animals and exotic pets are adequate with material coming from slaughterhouses, VTH, farms and private veterinarians who send the material for post-mortem inspection.

For preclinical training a number of healthy animals (cattle, small ruminants, pigs, beagles, poultry and rabbits, turtles, exotic pets and others) are available in the VEE without any overuse of the animals (SER Table 5.1.2). All procedures concerning practical training with healthy live animals are approved by the institutional Animal Welfare and Ethics Committee and finally by the competent authority except procedures below the threshold such as those involving moderate animal handling.

The coordination of using various animal species for training purposes is managed by the Dean's office. The number of animals used in clinical training depends on the clinical cases at the VTH and the number of animals from farms visited under agreements with the VEE for food-producing species. Both preclinical activities and clinical placements are systematically integrated into the educational program, in line with the curriculum content. These integrations necessitate approval from the Council of Faculty Departments, the Degree Evaluation Committee, and the Faculty Board. The development of alternative teaching resources using various training models to support 3R activities has commenced.

The vast majority of patients seen are first opinion cases, even though in the companion animal sector, 80% of patients exhibit chronic conditions, and VTH serves as a referral centre for nearby veterinarians.

Student exposure to farm animal medicine takes place at VTH and mainly through the

Outpatient Clinic Unit, which has been operating since 2010 as the "Support for External Farm Animal Practices at VEE Programme" coordinated by the Dean's office. For this purpose, 11 veterinarians hired by the university at the beginning of the academic year are available to supervise students in small groups (1-4), primarily in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> academic years. They are responsible for a population of around 100,000 large animals (cows, sheep, goats, horses, sows and piglets, breeding rabbits (including growing kittens), broilers), providing the students with access to a diverse range of patients. Each student is responsible for scheduling appointments with the veterinarians over a period of 8 days (4 in the 4<sup>th</sup> year and 4 in the 5<sup>th</sup> year). In total, the veterinarians contribute approximately 800 days of work with the student cohort each academic year. Patient registration is done based on the reports prepared by the students annually.

### **5.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

None of the indicators I8-I17 shows a negative balance for the listed academic years. The Support for External Farm Animal Practices at the VEE Programme is well-managed. Veterinarians are employed by the university and considered to be staff, and students are responsible for scheduling appointments and actively participating in the daily activities of the veterinarians. The veterinarians train and supervise students in each clinical activity, including emergency situations. Students are required to perform all activities under supervision, and veterinarians assess various competencies such as attitude, teamwork, knowledge, and learning. At the end of each semester, students must submit a report detailing the animals they were involved with and their activities, which is then evaluated by the Professor.

The number of extramurally presented ruminant patients to the students is extraordinarily high. This can be attributed to the substantial number of animals the 11 veterinarians work with. Over approximately 800 days, they engage students in numerous tasks typically performed on a large scale, such as reproductive control in dairy cattle, diagnosis of pregnancy in sheep, and numerous necropsies (on-site) in rabbit and poultry farms.

### **5.1.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **5.1.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 5.1.

**Standard 5.2: In addition to the training provided in the VEE, experience can include practical training at external sites, provided this training is organised under the supervision of teaching staff and follows the same standards as those applied in the VEE.**

### **5.2.1. Findings**

Practical training at external sites is conducted under the supervision of teachers in various courses. Specifically, in the Farm Animal Medicine Programme of the outpatient clinic unit, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>-year students accompany veterinarians in small groups to visit diverse farms. During these visits, they actively engage in the anamnesis, diagnosis, and treatment of animals, strictly adhering to biosecurity protocols.

The FVULE is an integral part of practical training within the curriculum, regularly visited by all students for various practical training courses. These courses include ethology and welfare, review of production aspects, physical examination, reproduction training (including the castration of piglets), training in preventive medicine, and herd health management.

Additionally, students interact with various experienced professionals during their practicum,



involving visits to different public and private institutions following a structured schedule. These interactions are regulated by framework agreements between the ULE and each participating institution. Currently, there are 427 such agreements in place. In every activity conducted by the students within the companies, a faculty tutor is present to guide the students and receive their reports.

### **5.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The VEE has a large number of collaborating companies that accept the students. Students are guided by faculty tutors who receive the students' reports.

During the clinical rotations, students have to record their activities, with the date and signature of the supervising veterinarian.

Students who want to take the rotations must have passed at least 210 ECTS and taken the subjects of the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the Degree.

The VEE provides practical training on external sites under the supervision of academic staff and extracurricular clinical training within the veterinary hospital.

### **5.2.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **5.2.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 5.2.

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

### **5.3.1. Findings**

Nursing care skills are integrated into the curriculum and taught to undergraduate students from their first year, beginning with the course 'Introduction to the Veterinary Profession,' and continuing through to the final year. In the 5<sup>th</sup> year, practical clinical training is provided through rotations at FVULE. This includes emergency services, work at the Teaching Farm, and rotations in the outpatient clinic. The teaching staff imparts nursing care skills during these various clinical services.

Training in a problem-oriented diagnostic approach and diagnostic decision-making is facilitated through student participation in daily rounds with both senior and junior VEE staff (VTH academic staff). This process also involves active communication with students to assess and develop their deductive reasoning in case management. To ensure effective learning, group sizes are kept small throughout the clinical training, with a maximum of 3-4 students per service or per senior clinician/VTH academic staff. The student-to-teacher ratio is maintained at a maximum of 10 in clinical settings and 20 in laboratory settings.

Students are guaranteed hands-on involvement and exposure to a problem-oriented diagnostic approach, including diagnostic decision-making, through active participation in all clinical procedures, both intra- and extramurally. Core aspects of this involvement include first-opinion and specialty consultations, participation in hospitalisation and emergency services, involvement in the diagnosis and treatment of patients across various disciplines, assistance in large animal reproduction and herd health management, and engagement in population medicine.

Students regularly meet with their instructors to discuss their diagnostic decisions and planned

actions. They are also required to present reports on their clinical activities within VTH, the outpatient clinic, and their analysis of necropsies from clinical cases.

### **5.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

During clinical rotations and professional practical training, students participate in the clinical workup of patients, including nursing skills, problem-oriented diagnostic approach together with diagnostic decision-making. Continuous assessment during practical examinations is well-established. Students are required to prepare reports or essays for each practical training session, which must be presented and discussed with the tutors, especially during the clinical rotation in the 5<sup>th</sup> year. Additionally, students work independently on their final degree project and are supported and challenged during its completion, often resulting in collaboration with their supervisor for publication.

### **5.3.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **5.3.4. Decision**

The VEE 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**

Medical records in the VTH are administered in a record system called GestorVet®. The software is accessible through computers located at the clinical facilities, but also via mobile phones and personal computers.

GestorVet® is additionally used for billing, pharmacy control, and appointments at the VTH and is managed by the staff of the reception area. Outside of regular hours, on-call intern veterinarians oversee the opening of new files.

All GestorVet® data are in the cloud, along with X-ray and ultrasound images, however, digital images are managed using RadiAnt DICOM Viewer® software. The imaging service regularly backs up the RadiAnt® database.

Staff members can access patient histories for teaching, research and learning purposes at any time. Students can access reports upon request under supervision.

The extramural, individual patients are recorded based on the students' report.

### **5.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

It is commendable that a separate system containing anonymised patient information from the GestorVet system is provided to students for self-study. This access is available both on and off-campus for one year after requesting an account (<https://historiasclinicas.unileon.es/>).

### **5.4.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

## **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**

The ULE employs a comprehensive strategy for learning resources in the digital era. Beyond traditional sources, students access information through electronic platforms and virtual libraries.

The VEE ensures resource availability, adequacy, and improvement through the ULE Library, Moodle, and SICULE. The library focuses on developing information skills, providing access to various resources. The University Library Catalogue includes printed/electronic docs and an Institutional Repository. Students receive instructions on resource usage in the first academic year. The University Library offers training courses, online guides, and webinars. Acquisitions are managed through the "Acquisitions and Management Unit," considering recommended bibliographies and user suggestions. Academic staff also acquire resources using allocated funds. Selection of journals and databases is based on relevance, impact factor, consultation frequency, and subscription cost.

The Veterinary Faculty Library is situated in the main building of the Faculty, spanning 728 m<sup>2</sup> across two floors. It features reading and consultation rooms with 174 seats, a Journals archive, and a basement area for book storage accommodating 5,000 books. A separate room for preserving antique books was established in 2022. Access is restricted to university staff and students, but external users can request access. The primary users are students, professors, scholarship recipients, and researchers. The library has 10 onsite desktop computers, 11 laptops for loan (free of charge), and online catalogue access. The annual budget for books and journals in 2022-23 was €15,316. The library staff consists of 1 official, 2 technicians, and 1 subordinate, working full-time. Operating hours are 12 hours on weekdays during the academic year and six hours daily in July and August. During exams, the ULE Central Library operates 24/7. The ULE Central Library, located on the university campus, has 19 qualified staff, group study rooms, classrooms, and an annual budget of €729,300 in 2023.

The SICULE oversees IT services at ULE, managing servers, networks, security, and user support. It provides e-learning platforms like Institutional Moodle and a non-regulated education platform. VEE has ten computer labs with 55 computers for teaching. The library offers training courses on database searches and bibliographic management. Students and staff have Wi-Fi access across campus and can use a Virtual Private Network (VPN) for secure remote connections using institutional email.

### **6.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The University library offers many places for studying alone, or in isolated cabins for small groups.

### **6.1.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

#### **6.1.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 6.1.

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

There is Wifi access in all the facilities for students and staff.

6,380 references and 61,000 electronic references are available through the library website.

The IT management is done by the ULE, it is organised in the SICULE covering the different areas of IT systems.

#### **6.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments.**

Moreover, the loan system of laptops available in the faculty library is commended as it is very used by students without equipment.

#### **6.2.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

#### **6.2.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 6.2.

**Standard 6.3: The VEE must provide students with unimpeded access to learning resources, internet and internal study resources, 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**

Physical access to learning resources is granted during opening hours. Opening hours of libraries are widened during the exam period. A VPN and a strong wifi network are providing access from everywhere. The clinical skills lab is located in the teaching hospital and is only accessible during predefined supervised periods. A more frequent and or free access to it is being considered.

#### **6.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

In order to comply with the objective: never the first time on live animals, expensive mannequins and models have been bought during the last years.

### **6.3.3. Suggestions for improvement**

Defining a strategy in the use of the skills lab as part of practical courses could be helpful for optimal and efficient use of the acquisitions. Benchmarking which equipment could be self-built by technicians in other veterinary faculties could be considered.

### **6.3.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 6.3.

## **Area 7. Student admission, progression and welfare**

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

**In relation to enrolment, the VEE must provide accurate and complete information regarding 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**

Prospective students are informed about the veterinary programme at ULE by a website and by an Open Day event in the months prior to student admission. Occasionally, arrangements are made for groups of students from interested high schools to visit and learn about the veterinary degree program. Additionally, informational brochures are produced and distributed, and video recordings for the presentation of the Veterinary Bachelor's degree are being created.

The university decides on the maximum number of students to be admitted every year. For '23-'24, this number was set to 100. This number is determined based on the available educational resources (facilities, staff, healthy and sick animals, and biosecurity and welfare standards). Out of the 100 places, a number of places must be reserved for students over 25 years old (3), students with disabilities (5), high-level athletes (3) and graduates from other degrees (2). In addition, foreign students (EU residents, after accreditation of their high school studies and non-EU residents, after accreditation of their previous studies) can be admitted. The total number of students admitted can be exceeded by 5%.

Students must pass a general university admission test, called 'Evaluación de Bachillerato para el acceso a la Universidad' or in short EBAU.

The VEE participates in Erasmus and Amica programmes for which it accepts additional students.

Depending on the degree obtained by the student and the available places in the course, the Dean, authorised by the Rector, may admit students from other Spanish or foreign universities. The places for foreign students (EU or non-EU) are counted in addition to the number of 100. The deadline for enrollment in the academic year is September 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **7.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Each academic year, Open Days are conducted for a week, comprising on-site visits, attendance at workshops and organised events, as well as online sessions featuring video conferences led by the Faculty's Dean.

If the 13 reserved places are not taken, they can be filled by regular students.

Erasmus and Amica students can, in consultation with their mobility coordinator at home, establish a “learning agreement” outlining the courses they will pursue in León. Ultimately, this agreement is signed by the Dean of the Faculty. An average of 30 placements are offered annually, with 50% of them filled, and an average duration of 6 months.

To access the Veterinary Degree in Spain, there are no unified applicant lists from all public institutions. The lists of admitted students are published on different dates at each faculty, so the number of students cannot be accurately adjusted until the deadline date. Although the waiting lists used in recent years have improved, there is usually a variation of +5% or -5% regarding the quota of students entering the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of León.

### **7.1.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **7.1.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.1.

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

### **7.2.1. Findings**

Tables on general data on the number of students can be found in the SER (p. 90).

### **7.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The number of students to be admitted is determined annually based on the resources available at the VEE for staff, buildings, equipment, healthy and diseased animals, and materials of animal origin (see also 7.3.1).

### **7.2.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **7.2.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.2.

**Standard 7.3: The selection and progression criteria must be clearly defined, consistent, and defensible, be free of discrimination or bias, and 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**

Admission criteria and procedures are publicly and transparently advertised, mainly via the

website. Admission to the veterinary course is regulated at the national level (without any involvement of the FVM), through a standardised procedure elaborated by several political bodies of the region Castilla y Leon and is the same for all students who wish to enter the 'Public Universities of Castilla y Leon'.

After completing High-School, a 'University Entrance Exam' (EBAU), consisting of a general part and a specific part, (with fixed final score calculation) has to be passed. An appeal procedure against the EBAU outcome is in place.

The number of yearly admitted students is established by ULE's regulations and is decided to take into consideration the annual follow-up self report of the VEE (with relevant data on the available educational resources (facilities, staff, healthy and sick animals, and biosecurity and welfare standards)) which has to be submitted to the Agency for the Quality of the University System of Castilla y León (ACSUCYL) (see also 1.4 & 7.2.2).

No significant changes in the number of students to be admitted are expected in the next 3 academic years.

### **7.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

There is an Organizing Committee for the EBAU in Castilla y León with the participation of both the educational administration and the public universities of Castilla y León (Vice-Chancellors of Student Affairs). This Committee establishes certain aspects of the EBAU related to registration and the determination of evaluation boards.

The number of students who pass the EBAU and apply for admission to the Faculty of Veterinary of León is close to 1000. Only the first 100 best-ranked students are admitted.

### **7.3.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **7.3.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.3.

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

### **7.4.1. Findings**

The 'Support Service for People with Disabilities or Specific Needs' at the university level initiates protocols to implement methodological adaptations to the educational program of students with disabilities, once they are admitted and ensures the full inclusion of disabled students, establishing specific guidelines for each student and promoting the "Student Helper Program" to facilitate the integration of disabled individuals.

### **7.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

There is a clear policy in place at the university level to include students with disabilities in the programme. The VEE is informed about student's options for following the program.

### **7.4.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **7.4.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.4.

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

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

#### **7.5.1. Findings**

All regulations considering progression can be found on the faculty's website.

Full-time students must enrol for a minimum of 30 ECTS and a maximum of 90 ECTS. Students taking less than 30 ECTS are considered 'part-time students'. To continue the study, first-year students must obtain a minimum of 12 ECTS, if not, they can not continue the study. The maximum period of study to obtain the diploma is 10 years.

Teaching staff must provide 6 hours per week for personalised tutoring (assistance and academic guiding) of students with problems.

Under certain circumstances, students can submit an application for a compensatory assessment in order to successfully complete a course. It is the 'Degree Monitoring Committee' that determines, in accordance with the rules drawn up by the university, whether or not the student can use this facility.

Attrition percentages are below 15% and are mostly due to academic or personal challenges.

#### **7.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

If a student obtains less than 12 ECTS, he/she can continue in any other university programme, except in the Degree of Veterinary Medicine of the ULE.

Besides tutoring by the Professor him/herself, students can rely on the Tutorial Action Plan (PAT), which assists students in their academic progression and intervenes to solve any possible study-related problem. Additionally, the dean's team directly engages with students facing difficulties and works towards resolving them.

Compensation assessment is implemented in response to situations where a student's failure to pass a course (the last course remaining in addition to the FDP) due to specific difficulties might disproportionately impede or delay their completion of studies and attainment of the corresponding degree. This occurs when the student's academic trajectory enables a comprehensive evaluation of their knowledge and competencies.

#### **7.5.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

#### **7.5.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.5.

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

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



available.

#### **7.6.1. Findings**

A disciplinary procedure defined by law is in place and can be initiated by the Rector, for (major or minor) misconduct of students and can lead to a temporary expulsion from the university for a period ranging from two months to three years.

The regulatory framework for the Coexistence Law at ULE is still under development. Currently, the "Coexistence Commission" has been formed, and it is anticipated that in the upcoming months, the "Coexistence, Rules of ULE" and the "Disciplinary Regime Regulation for ULE's Student Body" will be issued. These new regulations will outline the procedure for appealing against a student's exclusion from the program.

The appeal procedure for students who wish to dispute a final score or the inclusion of a subject in their curriculum is clearly described in the last paragraph of 8.2 of the SER.

#### **7.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The faculty is in full compliance with the standard.

#### **7.6.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

#### **7.6.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.6.

**Standard 7.7: Provisions must be made by the VEE to support the physical, emotional and welfare needs of students. This includes but is not limited to learning support and counselling services, career advice, and fair and transparent mechanisms for dealing with student illness, impairment and disability during the programme. This shall include provision 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**

Students can use a number of facilities such as a university website with all available scholarships, a psychological support programme organised by the university, an Internship & Employability Office and accommodation services. Recently enrolled students can rely on the Tutorial Action Plan. In addition to the mandatory 6 hours per week that each teacher must provide for extra tutorials, students can also request an appointment with a teacher outside of class hours by email or via the electronic learning platform Moodle. Furthermore, the students have an official delegation, the DAV, that represents them in the faculty.

Finally, there is an ombudsman at the university level to whom students who believe that their rights have been violated can go.

The Cultural Activities Department at the ULE is dedicated to fostering, coordinating, developing, and sponsoring cultural or artistic events for the university community.

The ULE Sports Service provides facilities for students and organises sports and leisure activities.

Activities of the latter two can be consulted via the website.

### **7.7.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The promotion of students' personal development and social integration has been especially emphasised in recent years, through global initiatives at ULE, primarily coordinated by the social responsibility department. Some of these actions include: Promotion of gender equality, through the Equality Unit, ULE Volunteering Program, Intergenerational Outreach Program, involving shared accommodation between students and elderly individuals, University debate league, Drug Prevention Program, Individual or group psychological support program and Promotion of student associationism.

### **7.7.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **7.7.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.7.

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

### **7.8.1. Findings**

The university's Office of Evaluation & Quality organises yearly student satisfaction surveys in which students can assess the teaching activity of professors in the different subject courses and postgraduate students are able to assess the entire veterinary course. Students can also express their suggestions, comments and complaints via the Tutorial Action Plan (PAT) (cfr. 3.4).

Courses are evaluated every year.

### **7.8.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

If the student surveys reveal a problem with a teacher, the Degree Monitoring Committee will review the potential causes and measures to address them. The dean's team is also involved, and ultimately, the Quality Committee of the VEE proposes and approves the actions to be implemented.

### **7.8.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **7.8.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.8.

## **Area 8. Student assessment**

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

### **8.1.1. Findings**

The assessment strategy of VEE is managed under the framework of the ULE provisions; the "Reglamento de Evaluación y Calificación del Aprendizaje de La ULE" and the University Student Statute establish assessment methods/criteria. The exam calendar is approved by the Faculty Board and made available before the beginning of the academic year on the VEE website. The degree coordinator meets three times per year with the study course councils (one study course includes representatives of teaching staff and students involved in one year of the program); during these meetings, the findings of the previous cohort of students (including assessment results) are examined and constitute the basis for the planning of activities for the new cohort of students.

Different methods are used, as specified in the syllabi, to assess theoretical knowledge, preclinical and clinical practical skills: theoretical knowledge is mainly assessed by written exams, while a different approach is used to assess preclinical, clinical and soft skills. The assessment of practical skills is specifically made through problem-solving essays, written reports of practical exercises, assessment of supervised work, presentations and practical exams. Clinical skills are assessed via case discussions, or specific procedures for assessing the clinical rotation activities. These latter may involve EPT providers and support staff involved with teaching or non-academic teaching staff for the evaluation of student attitudes. Oral examinations and the Final Degree Project constitute the basis for soft skill assessment. The Faculty board is responsible for the definition of the exam schedule.

### **8.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The VEE management has a determinant role in defining the VEE strategy for educational activities including assessment issues. This task is accomplished with the involvement of different committees with not clearly identified roles in the process: study course councils independently meet three times per year with the degree coordinator to analyse past findings (monitoring activities) and to plan new activities that are then harmonised by the degree coordinator and finally approved by the faculty board. Student representatives are involved in course councils and are thus actively participating in the monitoring of the overall strategy.

### **8.1.3. Suggestions for improvement**

The VEE may consider clarifying the PDCA loop related to assessment strategy by specifically identifying committees/responsibilities for each step of the process.

### **8.1.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 8.1.

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

**The VEE must properly document the results of the 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**

Assessment tasks and grading criteria, including barrier exams, are regularly published on the subject syllabuses available on the VEE website.

Requirements to pass are explicit: the final grades for each subject are presented on a scale from 0 to 10, with one decimal, accompanied by a corresponding qualitative scoring system: 0 - 4.9: Fail (SS); 5.0 - 6.9: Pass (AP); 7.0 - 8.9: Notable (NT); 9.0 - 10.0: Distinction (SB). The minimum passing grade is 5.0.

Grades are regularly reviewed, students first access a provisional grade that is accepted or appealed after a review session. A specific mechanism for students to appeal against assessment outcomes is described in the "Reglamento de Evaluación y Calificación del Aprendizaje de La ULE".

### **8.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The VEE is commended for the communication of assessment criteria/methods that can be easily found in the subject syllabuses on the website.

There is a review board for each subject, which is included in the teaching guide and is chosen and approved by the relevant Department, the Teaching Committee, the Faculty Board and the Governing Council of the University of León.

Students can appeal the assessment results within 20 days. Appeals are addressed to the Dean and the members of the appeal board are independent from the teaching subject that had been appealed.

### **8.2.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **8.2.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 8.2.

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

### **8.3.1. Findings**

Assessment criteria are reviewed by the subject responsible teacher and changed if needed in coordination meetings within the teaching area and then approved by the Department council. Following this, they are reviewed by the degree coordinator and the Teaching Committee before approval from the faculty board.

The entire degree programme is monitored through the activity of the Course Councils: they make it possible to identify relevant issues for the development of each subject (from the definition of learning objectives to assessment methods and criteria) and adopt possible solutions. Assessment outcomes are considered in the process and student representatives are involved.

### **8.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The VEE provided examples of some of the measures that have been adopted after the monitoring activity performed by the Course Councils had pointed out potential issues: one example is the introduction of mid-term exams in some subjects to optimise student progression. Numerous committees are involved in the process (sometimes with overlapping functions) that is finally directly handled by the VEE management.

### **8.3.3. Suggestions for improvement**

See suggestion 8.1.3

### **8.3.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 8.3.

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

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

#### **8.4.1. Findings**

Learning objectives as well as assessment criteria and methods are clearly stated in the teaching guide of each subject and communicated via website publication well in advance. All the different competencies included in a study subject are specifically assessed via different assessment methods when relevant.

The annual self-report on degree monitoring includes a specific section on assessment strategies. The VEE analyses cohort data in order to propose changes/improvements in the assessment strategy. Students are involved in decision-making bodies such as the Course councils, the Teaching Committee and the Quality Committee.

#### **8.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The VEE is commended for the definition of single assessment sessions for practical activities that are thus specifically registered. The dedication and involvement of the teachers supervising students during hands-on sessions ensure the acquisition of practical skills.

#### **8.4.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

#### **8.4.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 8.4.

**Standard 8.5: Methods of formative and summative assessment must be valid and reliable and comprise a variety of approaches. Direct assessment of 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**

As specified above, students are assessed for the different activities included in a study subject.

Specific assessment documents are provided by teachers responsible for the individual units of the study program. The acquisition of clinical skills and D1Cs is assessed when included into the CCT and Clinical Rotations: specifically, clinical rotations are assessed via shared Excel files filled by the academic staff involved in clinical training. Also, at the end of the clinical rotation, each student produces a comprehensive report that is assessed by the clinical academic staff. EPT is assessed by qualified persons for attitudes and behaviours of students; students produce comprehensive documentation of the EPT activities and acquired skills are then certified by academic staff on the basis of students' reports.

The provided training and the global assessment strategy provides evidence that only students who are Day One Competent are able to graduate.

### **8.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The DVM program provided by the VEE shows the full presence of activities linked with the acquisition of D1Cs fully made explicit in annex 5.3 of the SER and evident in the study subjects syllabi. Also, as explained above, practical activities are efficiently individually assessed in each individual unit of the study program thus ensuring a regular quality control of the acquisition of D1Cs.

### **8.5.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None

### **8.5.4. Decision**

The VEE 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**

All academic teaching staff must be accredited by ANECA or a regional agency, each adhering to specific criteria relevant to their field. The vice-rectorate for teaching staff oversees not only the planning of teaching personnel but also their training and evaluation. To ensure faculty members meet the necessary skills and competencies, departments may add specific requirements in their job descriptions.

For permanent positions, a competitive selection process is conducted, open exclusively to accredited candidates. Impressively, over 84% of the teaching staff possess a degree in Veterinary Medicine, predominantly in areas like pre-clinical and clinical studies, animal production, and food science. Around 70% of academic teaching staff are permanent and full-time and take part in both teaching and research activities. Several associate teachers are

engaged part-time in crucial fields such as food hygiene in slaughterhouses, public health, and animal health, enhancing practical training within the intramural curriculum. Additionally, professionals for extramural clinical training in large animal care are appointed.

Many veterinarians from the academic staff are active members of various national and international boards, committees, and agencies. This involvement underscores their professional recognition and expertise. Within the teaching staff at the Hospital, there are members who are Diplomats of the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation and other accredited specialists in diverse fields.

### **9.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Academic staff recruitment is conducted in accordance with national and EU regulations. The vice-rectorate for teaching staff oversees the planning of teaching personnel, including their training and evaluation. Additionally, several practitioners are appointed as Associate Professors to enhance practical training within the intramural curriculum, with a specific focus on clinical sciences, veterinary public health, and food safety.

However, while it is evident that teachers are highly engaged and actively supervise newly appointed young teachers, and many teachers are actively participating in teaching innovations groups, and there is a training system for pedagogical training in place there is currently no mandatory minimum training requirement to teach and assess in veterinary education according to the EAEVE Guidelines for all types of teachers (esp. for newly appointed teaching staff).

### **9.1.3. Suggestions for improvement**

It is suggested to consider establishing a mandatory training programme according to EAEVE Guidelines for all types of teachers within the veterinary curriculum, including practitioners and qualified veterinarians (e.g. official veterinarians) acting as Associate Professors/teachers to make certain that all teachers have gone through mandatory pedagogical training to teach and to assess.

### **9.1.4. Decision**

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 9.1. because mandatory pedagogical training to teach and assess is not fully implemented.

**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**

VEE maintains a workforce that is both qualified and sufficient in number to effectively deliver the veterinary program and achieve the VEE's mission. This staffing stability, influenced by factors like the economic crisis and COVID-19 pandemic, has balanced teaching loads and capacities. To address an ageing staff and upcoming retirements, strategies have been introduced, including hiring younger, often temporary, professors and promoting some to permanent positions. This approach helps in maintaining workforce stability and lowering the

average age of teaching staff. However, forecasting exact FTE academic and support staff numbers for the next three years remains complex due to uncertain factors. The university is focused on replacing retiring staff and adding younger educators, but significant increases in FTE staff are not expected due to hiring policies and the progressive ageing of the workforce. The recruitment and promotion of both academic and non-academic staff are transparent and adhere to national regulations, ensuring high qualifications. The training of veterinary teachers and researchers begins at the doctoral level, with supervised teaching involvement. Additional courses covering research and teaching skills are available during doctoral studies. All staff members have access to continuous education at the ULE Training School on various subjects, including teaching methodologies, diversity, gender equality, and risk prevention.

Teaching groups, comprising at least four Professors with financial support, drive teaching quality and innovation. The Teaching Innovation Support Plan further promotes innovative teaching projects, with active participation from VEE teachers.

Support staff, including Technical, Management, Administration, and Services Staff, are either civil servants or contract employees. The university handles their funding, selection, and appointment. While the university budget typically covers these costs, temporary research support staff may be funded through external contracts and projects. Post-hire, support staff benefit from specialised training opportunities provided by the ULE Training School, enhancing their professional development.

Full-time staff are prohibited from engaging in practice or similar activities outside the university. They may only serve as consultants through contracts established between the external company and the university. Consequently, the ULE has implemented a policy of incompatibility between academic staff Professors and external clinical activities, specifically concerning the VEE. However, part-time lecturers are permitted to hold additional employment outside the university.

### **9.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Qualified Practitioners are hired as Associate Professors, especially to work within the VTH, meeting the requirement for teaching experience. Continuous further education contributes to a positive evaluation of Professors, which in turn leads to a salary increase. Many of the teachers are involved in teaching innovation groups.

### **9.2.3. Suggestions for improvement**

It is suggested to consider establishing a mandatory training programme according to EAEVE Guidelines for all types of teachers within the veterinary curriculum, including practitioners acting as Associate Professors (see Standard 9.1).

### **9.2.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 9.2.

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

At ULE, all permanent and non-tenured academic teaching staff and assistant teachers are full-time, working 37.5 hours per week. Their maximum teaching load is 24 credits (240 hours) per year, which can be reduced for activities like research or management, to a minimum of 16 credits. The Academic Dedication Plan for Teaching and Research Staff (PDA) at ULE mandates at least one-third of the workload for research, with specific hours allocated for tutorials, management, and other teaching activities.

Teaching staff, including practitioners, assistant teachers, PhD students (under supervision), and postdoctoral researchers, have defined teaching hour limits per year. Every five years, teaching excellence is evaluated through the "quinquenio" system, based on the DOCENTIA model, which includes self-evaluation, faculty and department reports, and student satisfaction questionnaires. Positive evaluations lead to salary increases.

ULE encourages research through the PDA system, reducing teaching hours and providing specialised support services. The "Sexenios" programme evaluates research excellence every six years, except for Assistant Professors, offering salary increases for positive evaluations. Most VEE staff participate and receive positive evaluations in this programme.

Additionally, ULE fosters staff development through national and international exchanges, mainly via the Erasmus+ program. The university's Internationalisation Office assists in facilitating these exchanges, enhancing teaching and research skills. This has led to several professors from VEE spending time in other universities and hosting international professors in León.

### **9.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Academic and support staff have opportunities for participation in continuous education courses and scholarly activities. ULE offers a broad spectrum of continuous education training courses, which are available for academic and support staff to improve their skills.

Each teacher has a fixed teaching load, which can be reduced for activities such as research or management, to a minimum of 16 credits. Teaching excellence is evaluated every five years, and positive evaluations result in salary increases. At least one-third of the workload is allocated to research. Research activities are encouraged, leading to a reduced teaching load and the potential for salary increases with positive evaluations.

### **9.3.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

### **9.3.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 9.3.

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

The VEE, while there is no official formal program for professional development or mentoring, all staff members receive guidance and assistance from both internal (e.g., departmental, dean's office) and external (e.g., professional associations, ANECA) groups and associations. Comprehensive information about professional advancement, performance evaluation, and promotional pathways is readily accessible to all staff. In the realm of decision-making, both teaching and support staff actively participate at various organisational levels – Department, Faculty, and University (as detailed in SER Table 9.4.1). Academic staff members have the opportunity to stand for election to different positions, serving four-year terms upon election. Promotion criteria for academic staff are governed by ANECA and are communicated through the ANECA website. The promotion process for academic staff involves a publicly transparent competition, initiating a call with various requirements. Similarly, support staff (PTGAS) promotions adhere to the regulations outlined in Spanish legislation.

#### **9.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Academic and support staff express that they are involved. Transparent and competitive promotion procedures are in place for academic and support staff.

#### **9.4.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

#### **9.4.4. Decision**

The VEE 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**

The teaching activity assessment at ULE is integrated into the DOCENTIA program, managed by ANECA. This evaluation process includes a self-evaluation report prepared by each teacher, the results of an electronic survey assessing teaching quality completed by students, and a report for each teacher compiled by academic officials.

The surveys are conducted electronically. Annually, students are asked to complete an anonymous questionnaire for each teacher they have encountered during the academic year. The results are analysed by the Evaluation and Quality Office, which may propose improvement measures that are discussed and approved by the Faculty Board. Positive assessments of teachers are essential for their further accreditation by ANECA.

#### **9.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Student assessment of teaching is utilised for continuous improvements in teaching. Furthermore, students have the opportunity to directly communicate any teaching-related issues with the relevant individuals.

Each teacher who has instructed the students is evaluated by them once per academic year, and the results undergo assessment. Following this, improvement measures based on the evaluation outcomes are discussed and approved by the FBFVULE. Individual assessment results, along with the median performance values of the department to which the individuals belong, are

then directly provided to the teachers.

**9.5.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

**9.5.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 9.5.

**Area 10. Research programmes, continuing and postgraduate education**

**Standard 10.1: The VEE must demonstrate significant and broad research activities of 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**

The 19 research groups at the VEE published more than 700 scientific publications in the period 2020-2023. Most of them in Q1 journals. This research is applied and transferred during practical and theoretical sessions to students. Also the VEE celebrates research activities like seminars and congresses during the academic year open for students. Ongoing and foreseen research projects are planned and executed at the VEE. Funding agencies are the State Research Agency, the Junta de Castilla Leon and the European Union. In SER table 10.1.1 only 1 project so far is mentioned by the VEE which starts in 2024. The research staff of the VEE is made aware of the benefits of scientific disseminations.

**10.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The VEE supplied updated information on projects ongoing in 2024. National, regional and European projects with a total amount of about 6 million Euros are carried out. Research cooperation between departments of the VEE is encouraged and most research groups are multidisciplinary. Further to this the VEE has strong cooperation with the Leon University Hospital (The ULE does not have a medical school) on more One Health-related research projects.

**10.1.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

**10.1.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.1.

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

**10.2.1. Findings**

Students participate in research by visiting academic events and scientific dissemination activities. Furthermore students practise their research competences in the Final Degree

Project. In this subject they initiate bibliographic search activities, research techniques and scientific writing and presenting actions. Undergraduate students can apply for research scholarships. Limited students do this e.g. only 7 Collaborations Scholarships were awarded in the last 3 years. Undergraduates can also choose internships at research centres during the extracurricular practices or in their 5<sup>th</sup> year of the study. This is done by about 10 students per year in the last 3 years.

#### **10.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The quality of the Final Degree Project is commendable, they often result in published articles in peer reviewed journals.

Competencies related to bibliographic search and the search related to evidence based veterinary medicine are worked on mainly during the final degree project. But also in writing assignments in other parts in the curriculum.

#### **10.2.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

#### **10.2.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.2.

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

#### **10.3.1. Findings**

The VEE states that 53 PhD students are active. A Doctorate Programme is developed: PhD Programme in Veterinary and Food Sciences. This programme includes a compulsory Doctoral School in which several aspects of research e.g. bibliographical review are included. This school also organises courses for PhD students. Also attendance to conferences and seminars are compulsory. A stay in a different research institute or centre is voluntary. The VEE offers several courses for continuing education. An example is The One Health Platform. In total around 43 attendees per year follow continuing education at the VEE.

#### **10.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

Interns are selected through an open call by the VTH. The interns follow a specialised and supervised training plan including e.g. attending courses, seminars and meetings. The PhD thesis consists of an introductory part and three accepted papers in peer reviewed journals. Overall quality of the PhD thesis is high. At the moment there are only 4 EBVS specialists working at the VEE. It is the intention of the VEE to increase this number. In total 25 of the 50 PhD students are veterinary graduates. All PhD students follow courses, in the first PhD year this is 12 ECTS. PhD students have teaching obligations but are not trained in teaching methods or assessment methods. When PhD students want to visit a conference or work in another research institute abroad financial means can be requested and most often granted. Post graduate training is offered by the VEE but because this training is not compulsory for graduated veterinarians, enthusiasm to follow courses is not high. The VEE is thinking of developing new postgraduate courses and are discussing subjects.

#### **10.3.3. Suggestions for improvement**

It is suggested to consider establishing tailor-made postgraduate courses taking advantage of the many highly qualified staff members as teachers. This might include an increased focus on the EBVS residency system.

**10.3.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.3.

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

**10.4.1. Findings**

At the VEE 2 committees are actively related to PhD evaluation. The Master Academic Committee and the PhD Program Committee. Both are involved in the review process of the Thesis every year. Periodically regional and national Quality Agencies evaluate the official postgraduate programmes.

**10.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments**

The official postgraduate programmes are evaluated by the ULE every five years for the Doctorate Programs and every three years for the Master Programs. Evaluation aspects are e.g. learning outcomes, academic staff and satisfaction and performance. In the strategic plan 2020-2024 a design of a Master's degree in Ruminant Production and Health is written. This has not started yet.

**10.4.3. Suggestions for improvement**

None.

**10.4.4. Decision**

The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.4.

# FINAL REPORT AS ISSUED BY ECOVE ON 29 MAY 2024

## 11. ESEVT Indicators

Name of the Establishment		Facultad de Veterinaria, Universidad de León			
Name & mail of the VEE's Head:		María Teresa Carbajo Rueda, fvedec@unileon.es			
Date of the form filling:		December, 2023			
Raw data from the last 3 complete academic years		2022-2023	2021-2022	2020-2021	Mean
1	n° of FTE teaching staff involved in veterinary training	109	108	103	106,67
2	n° of undergraduate students	629	627	620	625,33
3	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training	92	97	87	92,00
4	n° of students graduating annually	103	99	93	98,333
5	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training	63	62	60	61,667
6	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	1.068,60	1.068,60	1.068,60	1.068,60
7	n° of hours of Core Clinical Training (CCT)	716	716	716	716
8	n° of hours of VPH (including FSQ) training	227,5	227,5	227,5	227,5
9	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in VPH (including FSQ)	42	42	42	42
10	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally	6.376,00	4.896,00	4.036,00	5.102,67
11	n° of individual ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally	625	613	561	599,667
12	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally	266	299	208	257,667
13	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen intra-murally	641	783	541	655,0
14	n° of companion animal patients seen extra-murally	48	47	14	36,3
15	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extra-murally	28.937,00	15.338,00	1.522,00	15.265,67
16	n° of equine patients seen extra-murally	41	35	28	34,7
17	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen extra-murally	432	418	0	283,3
18	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds	270	200	275	248,3
19	n° of visits to poultry and farmed rabbit units	65	75	95	78,3
20	n° of companion animal necropsies	210	179	286	225,0
21	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies	224	266	294	261,3
22	n° of equine necropsies	16	16	26	19,3
23	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies	264	186	256	235,3
24	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training	12	12	12	12,0
25	n° of PhD graduating annually	5	13	6	8,0

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

Name of the VEE:		Facultad de Veterinaria, Universidad de León			
Date of the form filling:		December, 2023			
Calculated Indicators from raw data		VEE values	Median values <sup>1</sup>	Minimal values <sup>2</sup>	Balance <sup>3</sup>
I1	n° of FTE teaching staff involved in veterinary training / n° of undergraduate students	0,17	0,15	0,13	0,04
I2	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,94	0,84	0,63	0,31
I3	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,63	0,88	0,54	0,09
I4	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	1068,60	953,50	700,59	368,01
I5	n° of hours of Core Clinical Training (CCT)	716,00	941,58	704,80	11,20
I6	n° of hours of VPH (including FSQ) training	227,50	293,50	191,80	35,70
I7	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in VPH (including FSQ)	42,00	75,00	31,80	10,20
I8	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	52,26	67,37	44,01	8,25
I9	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	161,34	18,75	9,74	151,60
I10	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	2,97	5,96	2,15	0,82
I11	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	9,54	3,11	1,16	8,38
I12	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds / n° of students graduating annually	2,53	1,29	0,54	1,99
I13	n° of visits to poultry and farmed rabbit units / n° of students graduating annually	0,80	0,11	0,04	0,75
I14	n° of companion animal necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	2,29	2,11	1,40	0,89
I15	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	2,66	1,36	0,90	1,76
I16	n° of equine necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0,20	0,18	0,10	0,10
I17	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	2,39	2,65	0,88	1,51
I18	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,12	0,27	0,06	0,06
I19	n° of PhD graduating annually / n° of students graduating annually	0,08	0,15	0,07	0,01
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					

### 11.1. Findings

The Indicators' spreadsheet was delivered on time.

### 11.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The raw data was controlled and found correct. No changes were added before or during the visitation.

### 11.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

**12. ESEVT Rubrics** (summary of the Decision 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))

Area 1. Objectives, Organisation and Quality Assurance Policy	C	PC	N C
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	C	PC	N C
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	C	PC	N C
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"> <li>• Basic Sciences</li> <li>• Clinical Sciences in companion animals (including equine and exotic pets)</li> <li>• Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals (including Animal Production and Herd Health Management)</li> <li>• Veterinary Public Health (including Food Safety and Quality)</li> <li>• Professional Knowledge (including soft skills, e.g. communication, team working skills, management skills).</li> </ul>	x		

## FINAL REPORT AS ISSUED BY ECOVE ON 29 MAY 2024

<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"> <li>• ensure the effective alignment of all content, teaching, learning and assessment activities of the degree programme to form a cohesive framework</li> <li>• include a description of Day One Competences</li> <li>• form the basis for explicit statements of the objectives and learning outcomes of individual units of study</li> <li>• be communicated to staff and students</li> <li>• be regularly reviewed, managed and updated to ensure they remain relevant, adequate and are effectively achieved.</li> </ul>	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"> <li>• determine the pedagogical basis, design, delivery methods and assessment methods of the curriculum</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• identify and meet training needs for all types of staff, maintaining and enhancing their competence for the ongoing curriculum development.</li> </ul>	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> <p>There must be a member of the teaching staff responsible for the overall supervision of the EPT, including liaison with EPT providers.</p>	X		
<p>Standard 3.7: Students must take responsibility for their own learning during EPT. This includes preparing properly before each placement, keeping a proper record of their experience during EPT by using a logbook provided by the VEE and evaluating the EPT. Students must be allowed to complain officially and/or anonymously about issues occurring during EPT. The VEE must have a system of QA to monitor the implementation, progress and then feedback within the EPT activities.</p>	X		
Area 4. Facilities and equipment	C	PC	N C



## FINAL REPORT AS ISSUED BY ECOVE ON 29 MAY 2024

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"> <li>• be sufficient in capacity and adapted for the number of students enrolled in order to allow safe hands-on training for all students</li> <li>• be of a high standard, well maintained and fit for the purpose</li> <li>• promote best husbandry, welfare and management practices</li> <li>• ensure relevant biosecurity</li> <li>• take into account environmental sustainability</li> <li>• be designed to enhance learning</li> </ul>	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
<b>Area 5. Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin</b>	C	PC	N C
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		
<b>Area 6. Learning resources</b>	C	PC	N C

**FINAL REPORT AS ISSUED BY ECOVE ON 29 MAY 2024**

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		
<b>Area 7. Student admission, progression and welfare</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>PC</b>	<b>N C</b>
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 complaints regarding the compliance of the VEE with national and international legislation and the ESEVT Standards.	X		
<b>Area 8. Student assessment</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>PC</b>	<b>N C</b>
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	X		

## FINAL REPORT AS ISSUED BY ECOVE ON 29 MAY 2024

covering the full range of professional knowledge, skills, competences and attributes must form the basis for assessment design and underpin decisions on progression.			
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		
<b>Area 9. Teaching and support staff</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>PC</b>	<b>N C</b>
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		
<b>Area 10. Research programmes, continuing and postgraduate education</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>PC</b>	<b>N C</b>
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).	x		
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>			

## **Executive Summary**

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of León (FVULE = the VEE) is the oldest centre at the University of León. It was founded in 1852 as a Subaltern School of Veterinary Medicine, transformed into the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, in 1943. The University of León (ULE) was created in 1979. The FVULE was the first Veterinary Faculty in Spain to be evaluated by the European Union's Advisory Committee for Veterinary Education in May 1989. The last visit took place in 2014, with an ECOVE decision of three category 1 deficiencies: 1. Lack of strategic plan for the Establishment and especially for its Veterinary Teaching Hospital; 2. Insufficient caseload in all species and as a consequence, insufficient compulsory hands-on clinical training; 3. Insufficient exposure to emergency cases.

A strategic plan was approved in 2015 and after a revisitation in 2017 the VEE achieved Approved status by EAEVE.

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of León is the only veterinary training centre in Castilla y León, which is the largest region in Spain (94,226 km<sup>2</sup>). The main productive sectors of this region are agriculture and livestock, together with the agri-food industry and tourism.

In 2019 the VEE obtained the "Certificate of Implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System", followed by the "Institutional Accreditation" of the VEE, granted by the Spanish Ministry of Universities.

The Veterinary Forum of Castilla y León was constituted in 2018, with the participation of the General Council of Veterinary Associations of Castilla y León, the Union of Veterinarians of Castilla y León and the VEE

The financial management of the Veterinary Hospital does not lie at the VEE administration, but is carried out by the General University and Business Foundation (FGULEM), although there are members of the VEE on the VTH Management Committee. This situation has caused some difficulties in meeting the demands of teaching and clinical activity.

The VEE does not have a conventional ambulatory clinic, and is not depending on the Veterinary Hospital in this matter. Instead, it has established a "farm animal medicine programme", which has largely addressed this deficiency in recent years.

The SER was written in accordance with the principles laid down in the ESEVT SOP 2023. Some minor issues were discussed with the VEE and corrected in a final version of the SER. The Team didn't identify any major deficiencies.

The visitation was carried out in a friendly and effective atmosphere.

## **Commendations**

### **1.4.**

The university and the VEE are commended for their extensive QA system with clearly written procedures and defined areas of responsibility for both participants.

### **3.1.3.**

It is commendable that VEE ensures Students are introduced to the veterinary practice in the first year, initially by nursing care skills and then starting science in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year by introducing students to small animal internal medicine consultation.

### **4.2.**

It is commendable that VEE rewards academically excellent Students as well as athletes helping them with housing issues.

**4.4.**

Small groups of students in rotations are commendable.

The designed system where all clinical patient files are stored specially for the students is commendable.

**5.4.**

It is commendable that a separate system containing anonymised patient information from the GestorVet system is provided to students for self-study.

**6.2.**

The loan system of laptops available in the faculty library is commended.

**8.2.**

The VEE is commended for the communication of assessment criteria/methods that can be easily found in the subject syllabuses in the website.

**8.4.**

The VEE is commended for the definition of single assessment sessions for practical activities that are thus specifically registered.

**10.2.**

The quality of the Final Degree Project is commendable, they often result in published articles in peer reviewed journals.

**List of items of potential partial compliance with the ESEVT Standards identified by the Team**

- The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 1.3. because of suboptimal QA strategy in the VTH.
- The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.9. because biosecurity procedures are not fully implemented in all areas.
- The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 9.1. because mandatory pedagogical training to teach and assess is not fully implemented.

## **Glossary**

<b>ACA</b>	Active Collaboration Agreement
<b>ACSUCYL</b>	Agency for the Quality of the University System of Castilla y León
<b>AHS-OVS</b>	Animal Health's Official Veterinary Service
<b>ANECA</b>	National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation
<b>APHR</b>	Animal Production and Health Rotation
<b>BOCYL</b>	Castilla y León Region Official Bulletin
<b>BOE</b>	Spanish Official Bulletin
<b>CCT</b>	Core Clinical Training
<b>CRAI-TIC</b>	Learning and Research Resources Centre
<b>DIC</b>	Day One Competences
<b>DMCFVULE</b>	Degree Monitoring Committee of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of León
<b>EAEVE</b>	European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education
<b>EBVS</b>	European Board of Veterinary Specialisation
<b>ECTS</b>	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
<b>EEPT</b>	Extracurricular External Practices
<b>ENQA</b>	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
<b>EPC</b>	External Practices Committee
<b>EPT</b>	Elective Practical Training
<b>ESEVT</b>	European System for the Evaluation of Veterinary Education
<b>ESG</b>	Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
<b>FAMP</b>	Farm Animal Medicine Programme
<b>FBFVULE</b>	Faculty Board of the Faculty of Veterinary of León
<b>FDP</b>	Final Degree Project
<b>FGULEM</b>	General University and Business Foundation
<b>FPP</b>	Pilot Plant of food Technology
<b>FTE</b>	Full Time Equivalent
<b>FVULE</b>	Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of León
<b>GID</b>	Teaching Innovation Groups
<b>HACCP</b>	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
<b>HISA</b>	Hygiene Inspection and Food Safety
<b>IQAS</b>	Internal Quality Assurance System
<b>LOSU</b>	Organic Law on Universities
<b>OEC</b>	Quality and Evaluation Office
<b>OIE</b>	World Organisation for Animal Health
<b>OVS</b>	Official Veterinary Service
<b>PAID</b>	Teaching Innovation Support Plan of the Universidad de León
<b>PDA</b>	Academic Dedication Plan for Teaching and Research Staff
<b>PDI</b>	Teaching and Research Staff
<b>PH-OVS</b>	Public Health's Official Veterinary Service
<b>PPE</b>	Personal Protection Equipment
<b>PTGAS</b>	Technical, management and administration and service staff
<b>QCFVULE</b>	Quality Committee of the Faculty of Veterinary of León

<b>RHTA</b>	Food Hygiene and Technology Rotation
<b>RUCT</b>	Registry of Universities, Establishments and Titles
<b>SAEX</b>	Animal Experimentation Service
<b>SEPT</b>	Supervised External Practical Training
<b>SER</b>	Self-evaluation Report
<b>SICULE</b>	Informatics and Communications Service of the ULE
<b>SOP</b>	Standard Operating Procedures
<b>SOVS</b>	Slaughterhouse Official Veterinary Service
<b>SPFVULE2015-20</b>	Strategic Plan 2015-2020
<b>SPFVULE2022-24:</b>	Strategic Plan 2022-2024
<b>TFULE</b>	Teaching Farm of the University of León
<b>TG</b>	Teaching Guides
<b>TPT</b>	Tutored Practical Trainings
<b>ULE</b>	University of León
<b>VHULE</b>	Veterinary Teaching Hospital
<b>VTH</b>	Veterinary Teaching Hospital

## **Decision of ECOVE**

The Committee concluded that no Major Deficiency had been identified.

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