

**European Association  
of Establishments for Veterinary Education**



**Association Européenne  
des Établissements d'Enseignement Vétérinaire**

## **RE-VISITATION REPORT**

**To:** Universidad Complutense Madrid

Facultad de Veterinaria

**On:** September 26, 2017 to September 27, 2017

### **By the Re-visitation Team:**

**Chair:** Robert J Huey, Chief Veterinary Officer for Northern Ireland

**Coordinator:** Philip Duffus, University of Bristol, United Kingdom

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### **Introduction**

The Veterinary Faculty of Madrid (FVM) was recently visited by a team of experts designated by the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) on 27-31 March 2017; operating through the European System of Evaluation of Veterinary Training (ESEVT) in accordance with the “Uppsala” SOP.

The team identified several areas that they felt deserved special mention of areas worthy of praise and which were described under “Commendations” within the report, examples of these areas would include:

- An excellent working atmosphere between administration, staff and students all of whom demonstrated a commitment and dedication to their Establishment.
- Compared to different Veterinary Teaching Establishments within Europe, an excellent number of international students either in full undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, as well as the involvement in Erasmus exchanges.
- Interdisciplinary research activities and successful PhD programmes.
- The development of an effective Quality Assurance system, implemented to ensure the monitoring and enhancement of the study programme.

The introduction to the Establishment’s “Re-Visitation Self-Evaluation Report” rightly points out such positive aspects identified by the visitation team in March 2017.

However, during the visitation, the ESEVT Visitation Team identified several deficiencies. Based on these observations, the Committee of the European Committee of Veterinary Education (ECOVE) concluded that one of these deficiencies was considered to be a Major Deficiency, leading to a Stage 1 Conditional Approval status for the FVM.

The major deficiency identified was: *“Insufficient number of hours of hands-on clinical training with real patients under the supervision of academic staff in both companion and food-producing animals in order to achieve Day One Competences for each individual student”*.

Furthermore, seven minor deficiencies were recognized and listed by ECOVE.

## **1. Correction of the Major Deficiencies**

1.1. Major Deficiency: **“Insufficient number of hours of hands-on clinical training with real patients under the supervision of academic staff in both companion and food-producing animals in order to achieve Day One Competences for each individual student”**

1.1.1. Findings

- The initial visitation team were aware of the excellent number of clinical cases, both first opinion and referrals, that came through the VTH. As a result it was felt opportune in correcting this major deficiency to increase the amount of time available within the intramural rotations, and also not to limit the clinical training to the second semester of Year 5. In addition, there was a need for hands-on training throughout the core curriculum.
- As a result, the Establishment has planned to significantly increase the number of hours of hands-on clinical training.
- In order to deliver these changes the Establishment followed their QA System to initially discuss the ESEVT report by a series of meetings with all the stakeholders responsible for delivering the clinical subjects of the Degree. These meetings set out to specifically plan how to increase the number of hours of hands-on clinical training within years 2-5 of the course.
- The proposals for change emanating from these meetings was then approved by the Committee for Assessment and Improvement of the Veterinary Degree Curriculum, then subsequently by the Quality Commission of the FVM and finally by the Faculty Council on July, 2017.
- The visitation team were reassured that all these committees involved in the above QA process were composed of representatives of academic staff, support staff, students and external stakeholders.

**Details of the implementation in increasing the number of hours of hands-on clinical training**

- In total, hands-on training has been increased by another 110 hours (5 additional weeks) per student. This increase has been distributed in the years 2-5 and has been designed to deliver a progressive approach, starting in year 2 through to year 5.
- Final year students are now involved in clinical rotations during their first semester as well as the allocated time during their second semester.
- It should be emphasised that this additional “clinical training” is in addition to the 12 existing weeks of the formal clinical rotations.
- The visitors were also aware of an increase in the training in the teaching involved in emergency care.
- Details of the implementation of these programmes are outlined in the re-visitation self-evaluation report (SER).
- Such implementation has been possible not only due to the efforts of the Establishment, but due to the involvement of the University which has agreed to the financial implication of hiring new academic staff specifically dedicated to delivering these extra tasks.
- Nine new Associate Teachers with different profiles have now been hired since the ESEVT Visitation. This is discussed later within this report – minor deficiency 7.

1.1.2. Comments

- This increase in “the number of hours of hands-on clinical training” has been planned to be implemented within years 2-5 of the course.
- The implementation of this training will be fully initiated for the 2017/2018 teaching year.

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- Although the ECOVE report was only received in May 2017, the Establishment has reacted with commendable speed and efficiency to firstly plan and then implement these changes.
- The FVM decided to extend the rotations to the first semester of Year 5 in order to optimise the high number of both first opinion and referral clinical cases attending the VTH now linked to the mandatory involvement of students.

### 1.1.3. Suggestions

- Although the plans have been formulated on how to correct this deficiency, they now have to be implemented utilizing the newly recruited additional staff. It will be important to continue monitoring the implementation in order to make any necessary changes.

### 1.1.4. Decision

The Major Deficiency has been fully corrected.

## **2. Correction of the Minor Deficiencies**

### 2.1. Minor Deficiency 1: *“Insufficient resources for maintenance of current facilities and purchase of new equipment”*

#### 2.1.1. Findings

- Following a series of meetings with the Rector and senior members of the University, the FVM has obtained a commitment to invest in the facilities of the FVM. In particular, the FVM has started to plan a project for a new multidisciplinary building that would include most Departments of the Establishment. This project would involve the demolition of some of the older buildings and the construction of a new ones, so providing a modern and functional workspace for staff and students.
- With more immediate effect the FVM has been granted a sum of 80,000 Euros towards the maintenance of clinical facilities. This sum is recurrent for the next three years and represents 10-12% of the maintenance budget for the FVM.
- During the visitation it was apparent that this new budget was already being utilized for improved isolation facilities for both companion animals and large animals.

#### 2.1.2. Comments

- Future expenditure on maintenance will have to be reflected in the budget of such new developments.

#### 2.1.3. Suggestions

**None**

### 2.2. Minor Deficiency 2: *“Insufficient transversal and collaborative approach between disciplines in some areas of the curriculum and imbalance in the curriculum between theoretical, practical and clinical training to the detriment of the latter”.*

#### 2.2.1. Findings

- The meetings with staff clearly demonstrated the evolutionary processes that have taken place in efforts to improve this minor deficiency.
- These meetings involved the coordinators of different subjects and were implemented following a proposal from the “Committee for Assessment and Improvement of the Veterinary Degree Curriculum”.
- For example, working meetings have been held:
  1. With the coordinators of Anatomy and Diagnostic Imaging
  2. With the coordinators of Pathology, Anatomy and Food Safety and Quality (FSQ)
  3. With the coordinators of Animal Production, Herd Health Management, and Clinics involving Food-Producing Animals.

#### 2.2.2. Comments

- There is no question that this suggestion from ESEVT has led to a reinvigorated approach to collaboration between departments to deliver the veterinary undergraduate teaching, in line with the policy described in their strategic plan.
- This extended approach to a collaborative approach has resulted in a more “clinical awareness” approach to teaching within the respective departments.

#### 2.2.3. Suggestions

**None**

### 2.3. Minor Deficiency 3: “*Insufficient hands-on training in post-mortem examination for FSQ*”

#### 2.3.1. Findings

- In order to increase the hands-on training in post-mortem examination, the FVM has advertised and now appointed a new position of Associate Teacher, linked to the subject "Hygiene, Inspection and Food Safety". This position is held by a veterinarian with a wide experience as an Official Veterinarian in a slaughterhouse
- This increase in practical training will be important, not only for a much better *in situ* learning of post-mortem inspection of animals, but also lead to an improvement of the "Day One Competences" of the students.

#### 2.3.2. Comments

- A new Agreement between the FVM and the Regional Administration for Food Hygiene and Safety is currently being discussed by both parties, in order to facilitate and extend the hands-on training of the veterinary students in a variety of official slaughterhouses within the Community of Madrid. It is important that this welcome initiative should be progressed.

#### 2.3.3. Suggestions

- The FSQ unit reported that it is committed to extend the concept of additional training of students in the post-mortem inspection for a larger number of animal species,

through the use by the students of alternative learning procedures e.g. video and on-line resources. This is an excellent approach which should be encouraged and developed.

2.4. Minor Deficiency 4: *“Absence of extinguishers within some large lecture rooms, unfinished isolation facilities and procedures for large animals, inadequate procedures for the storage of drugs in some clinical rooms and non-systematic implementation of biosecurity procedures in laboratories, VTH and teaching farm”*

#### 2.4.1. Findings

##### **Fire Extinguishers**

- Although the FVM was of the opinion that they were already compliant with Spanish Law regarding the presence of fire extinguishers, there has been a recent modification of the regulations pertaining to this area.
- The Spanish Regulation of Fire Protection Facilities has been modified (Royal Decree 513/2017, May 22), and being more restrictive is closer in agreement with the comments of the ESEVT visitation team.
- As a result, the FVM has now placed extinguishers in all the relevant classrooms.

##### **Isolation Facilities**

- The isolation facilities are now nearly completed and have been built to a high standard with walls and floors currently adequate for effective disinfection. Chain hoists have also been installed.
- Protocols have been developed for the removal of soiled bedding.
- Protocols also in place for the separate ingress and egress of personnel including staff and students. Disposable footwear and overalls also available.
- All the protocols (including an effective decontamination protocol) and other mandatory procedures for the isolation units have been published online.

##### **Storage of drugs**

- The FVM felt that the original comment from the ESEVT visitors about inadequate procedures for the **storage of drugs** in some clinical rooms (e.g. incorrect storage of narcotics and lack of marking of opening date on multi-dose vials), was an unfortunate event which could have been classified as an individual mistake rather than a lack of an adequate preventive measure.
- Currently, the VTH Pharmacy Service procedures have been authorised by the Ministry of Health of the Community of Madrid for the dispensation, storage, conservation and control of drugs.
- In order to underline the importance of these procedures, the FVM has now planned formal training for both students and staff at the start of each academic year. This training will be given by the individual responsible for Biosecurity at the FVM and the Head of the Pharmacy Service of the VTH. It includes the mandatory marking of opening date on multi-dose vials and the mandatory storage of narcotics in locked cupboards, with a registration system for their withdrawal.
- Further details on this important area are given in the re-visitation SER.

### **Biosecurity**

- This vital area for clinical facilities in Veterinary Establishments has been consistently upgraded in the FVM.
- This upgrading has been significantly improved and then implemented by an inspired leadership role within the Biosecurity Committee. This committee is set up to closely follow-up on the varying hazards previously identified in the training of different subject areas.
- To promulgate biosecurity information, the relevant website has been reorganised to make it simpler, and to contain the specific information about the Establishment, and to be fully accessible for both students and staff.
- Further details are within the re-visitation SER.

#### 2.4.2. Comments

- The re-visitation team were particularly impressed with two areas. Firstly, the implementation of a programme throughout the FVM which has resulted in imbedding an improved biosecurity culture. Secondly, the initiative of having students train students in this subject area, is a welcome and useful development.

#### 2.4.3. Suggestions

**None**

### 2.5. Minor Deficiency 5: *“Insufficient number of ruminants and pigs necropsy”*

#### 2.5.1. Findings

- There is a shortage of accessible material due to the urban setting of the FVM, but significant efforts are being deployed to correct this minor deficiency, including the consideration of porcine post-mortem on farm.
- In addition, two Associate Teachers specialising in food-producing animals will develop contacts with a variety of farms and the FVM will facilitate the transport of suitable cadavers having agreements with the Establishment back to the FVM for intramural necropsy.
- Also, the rotation of students on food-producing animals includes extramural training on farms with a significant number of animals, especially in swine farms. Starting from next academic year, all the students will be systematically trained in pig necropsies during these rotations, supervised by Academic Staff specialised in swine.

#### 2.5.2. Comments

- Training in necropsy is not usual in commercial farms, but it should be possible on large swine farms and if appropriate, should be implemented.

#### 2.5.3. Suggestions

- The FVM should ensure that these extramural necropsies are fully recorded especially when developing the Indicator table for future EAEVE visitations.



**2.6. Minor Deficiency 6: *“Insufficient autonomy of the Establishment to adapt the number of students to the available resources and to control their progression”***

**2.6.1. Findings**

- As expressed in the ESEVT Final Report, the autonomy of the Establishment to adapt the number of students to the available resources and to control their progression is somewhat limited.
- This is due to the fact that the year by year number of students admitted is strictly determined by the National Authorities. The actual number is decided on by La Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación (ANECA) resulting in the current intake of 165. Incidentally, ANECA is an ENQA member.
- In July 2017, the FVM was successfully accredited by the QA National Agency. This welcome development will now allow the FVM itself to modify the allocated number by plus or minus 10%.
- The Establishment (FVM) has decided to progressively decrease the number of new admissions in a three-year plan in order to adequate it to the financial resources of the FVM.

**2.6.2. Comments**

- The initial limitation by ANECA was designed to act as a control mechanism put in place to avoid an excess number of students in some other Establishments.
- The new freedom for the FVM to control student intake is in line with the overall strategy of the FVM which is focused on the quality of their teaching in relation to the available resources (human and physical).
- Over a three year period the FVM is planning to reduce the number of students joining the course to between 120 to 130. The visitation team were informed that while the actual intake number is a factor in the yearly budget calculation, it is a minor factor amongst 19 other factors.
- A reduction in the student intake will not have a detrimental effect on overall funding, as student numbers are only one of twenty factors taken into consideration for this calculation.
- One benefit of moving towards a more selective approach in the veterinary undergraduate intake, is that such students could be more academically gifted as well as more committed to a veterinary career.

**2.6.3. Suggestions**

**None**

**2.7. Minor Deficiency 7: *“Insufficient number of teaching staff specialised in clinical disciplines and services, insufficient formal training ‘to teach and to assess’ for practitioners involved with extra-mural clinical training, lack of support and recognition of teaching and clinical performances for progression in the career, insufficient number and qualification of support staff, especially in clinical services, and insufficient personal development opportunities for staff”***

**2.7.1 Findings**



### **Teaching Staff**

- In March 2017, at the time of the ESEVT visitation, the FVM had a total of 93 members of the academic staff specialised in clinical training, which the visitors felt was insufficient if the number of hours of “hands on clinical teaching” was to be significantly increased; hence the inclusion of the minor deficiency.
- Following up on this comment, there were successful negotiations with the Rector and other senior figures within the university, resulting in permission to significantly increase staff numbers. The number of teaching staff specialised in clinical training has now been increased by hiring 9 new Associate Teachers.
- This influx of new staff have a range of different profiles, specifically related to hands-on clinical training, and based on the observations reflected on the ESEVT Visitation Report: including emergency medicine, intramural and extramural training in small animals, equine and food-producing animals. The specific profiles of the new teachers are covered in the re-visitation SER.
- In addition to their clinical experience, all the new academic staff will be focused on the increase of hands-on clinical training, during both the first and second semesters of the academic year.

### **Training for extra-mural teaching staff**

- All the practitioners involved with extra-mural clinical training in the FVM are now full members of the academic staff.
- In order to improve the formal training of practitioners involved with the extra-mural clinical teaching, a new strategy of compulsory training on teaching and assessment directed to these practitioners has been formulated, and is due to implemented for next academic year. Meetings organised by the coordinators of the Clinical Rotations will be held at the start of the year, to unify clinical training criteria and to define the teaching objectives, especially those related to the acquisition of Day-One competences by the student. Subsequent meetings will be held during the year to monitor and evaluate the teaching activity to both correct possible problems, as well as formulating improvements for the following academic years.
- This training procedure for extra-mural practitioners has already been successfully trialled within the Animal Health Department, and as mentioned above will now be rolled out to the other departments involved in clinical teaching.
- In addition, there are several programmes for continuous training for all FVM staff. These programmes include courses on:
  - Quality Assurance and the need to develop a QA culture within the FVM
  - Definition and assessment of competences and learning results
  - Use of IT in virtual teaching procedures.

### **Support and recognition of teaching**

- A Royal Decree has recently established the criteria for accreditation involving the different academic positions in the Spanish Universities. This Royal Decree establishes the merits that should be evaluated for progression of staff during their University career. These merits include:
  - Research activities
  - Teaching activities
  - Professional experience
  - Experience in management and administration.

- All these activities are evaluated for progression with all the potential candidates. Clinical performance is evaluated as professional experience and as teaching activity.
- In May 2017, Complutense University introduced a new regulation stating that teaching activities accounting for 30-40% for most academic positions must have a specific profile; in the case of clinical teachers in the FVM, this profile is usually clinical and includes previous experience in the field.
- Thanks to programmes such as this, during the academic year 2016/2017, 29 members of the FVM academic staff have been promoted, including 5 teachers progressing from a temporary position to a permanent position, and 13 teachers progressing from Associate Professor to Full Professor.

### **Support staff**

- Regarding the insufficient number and qualification of support staff, especially in clinical services, the University is involved in a new process for the recruitment of support staff and the FVM expects to increase the number of support staff in clinical services once this process is finished, and is then committed to providing specific training to improve the skills of these new support staff.
- With regard to support staff, there are currently 59 people working on clinical services (Annex 6 in the re-visitation SER). Importantly, this number has been maintained, even in periods of economic crisis.

#### 2.7.2. Comments

- Academic practitioners (Associate Teachers) involved in extramural clinical training are full members of the academic staff. All of these new posts are recruited through official and public regulatory provisions for the selection processes which are used by the University, and are subjected to the same requirements as for the rest of the FVM teachers.
- In addition, as full members of the Department Council, they collaborate in the planning of the different teaching activities within the Department Council, including the skills and competences to be achieved by the student in every activity.
- As members of academic staff, they are also subjected to the evaluation of their teaching activity by the students each academic year, through the DOCENTIA official program (approved by ANECA).

#### 2.7.3. Suggestions

**None**

### ***Overall comments on minor deficiencies***

Improvements in the areas recognized by the first visitation team as minor deficiencies are documented above. In many aspects, this progressive approach by the FVM should avoid any potential problems related to EAEVE accreditation in the future. Also, these improvements/changes/additions have occurred within a commendably short time frame. The FVM should fully explain all these issues when preparing its first interim report based on the new (Uppsala) SOP.

### **3. ESEVT Indicators**

**Not applicable.**

### **4. Executive Summary**

#### **Brief history of the Establishment and its previous ESEVT Visitations**

Veterinary training began in Madrid during 1792. The current Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (FVM) became part of the Complutense University of Madrid (UCM) in 1943 and moved to the current campus, conveniently located near to Madrid city centre, in 1968. The FVM is rightly proud of its presence in the Top 50 of the QS World University Ranking by Subject (Veterinary Science) (2015).

It has already been positively evaluated by ESEVT twice. The last two Visitations were in 2006 and in March 2017. Between these two ESEVT visits, and despite the negative impact of the economic crisis on the funding of Higher Education in Spain, the FVM worked hard to implement the opportunities for improvement suggested by the 2006 Visitation team, to implement the 'One-Health' concept and the 'Day One Competences' proposed by ESEVT. Several new committees were established such as Quality Assurance, Biosecurity and Animal Ethics; in addition, a new curriculum was developed, a graduation thesis introduced and self-directed learning encouraged.

Following the visitation in March 2017 the team identified several areas worthy of praise (i.e. Commendations) many of which are laid out in the re-visitation SER.

The visitation team also identified several items of partial compliance (i.e. Minor Deficiencies) which have been outlined above in this report.

Finally, the Visitation team also identified one item of non-compliance (i.e. a Major Deficiency):

*Insufficient number of hours of hands-on clinical training with real patients under the supervision of academic staff in both companion and food-producing animals in order to achieve Day One Competences for each individual student.*

#### **Brief comment on the Re-visitation SER (R-SER)**

The re-visitation team congratulated the FVM on the R-SER which was set out in an understandable yet precise format. The visitation team also congratulated the FVM in firstly discussing the many positive areas reported on by the initial visitors within the R-SER, before moving onto the discussions pertaining to the single major deficiency and then the seven minor deficiencies.

As such, the team found the R-SER comprehensive with additional evidence then successfully clarified on site.

#### **Brief comment on the Re-visitation**

The programme was organised to firstly cover the single major deficiency followed by the seven minor deficiencies. All the relevant members of staff with an input into each of these

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areas was present at the meetings, including student representatives. As well as the formal meetings, the visitors visited a number of key teaching, and especially clinical, facilities. Finally, the visitors had asked to meet with a large group of students (from several years, but especially 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>) to discuss both their input into the changes since the March visitation, as well as their thoughts on utilising these extra hours of hands-on clinical teaching.

The overall atmosphere during the visitation was both friendly and constructive, with the whole visit conducted in an open and professional way

### **Commendations (areas worth of praise identified by the Team)**

The major commendation is one of congratulation to the Dean and his team on how quickly they have managed to plan and then implement all the areas associated with both the major deficiency and the minor deficiencies in such a short timeframe.

### **Correction of the Major Deficiency**

The Major Deficiency identified during the previous Visitation had been fully corrected.

**Decision of ECOVE**

The Committee concluded that the Major Deficiency, identified in 2017, had been rectified.

The 'Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the Complutense University of Madrid' is therefore classified as holding the status of: **ACCREDITATION**.