



FULL VISITATION REPORT

To the University of Firat, Elazig, Türkiye

On 10 - 14 March 2025

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Introduction

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (hereafter called VEE in this report) was established in 1970. In 1975, the Firat University (FU) was formally founded, embracing all higher educational institutions in Elazig, including the VEE. The VEE is mainly located at the Rectorate campus of the university, which is a walking distance from the city centre. The Veterinary Teaching Farm (VTF) is located 15 km away from the university campus.

The VEE was first approved by EAEVE in 2013 and was granted Accreditation status by an ECOVE decision in 2021 for the period 2018-2025. The reason for the gap between 2018 and 2021 was both an earthquake in 2020 and the Covid-19 pandemic. The VEE achieved national program accreditation by the National Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Veterinary Education Institutions and Programs (VEDEK) in 2021.

The VEE is one of 11 VEEs in Turkey that are either full or candidate members of EAEVE.

The National Veterinary Core Program (VUCEP-2021) serves as a critical framework for standardizing veterinary education across Turkey. The framework was developed with input from veterinary faculty deans, academic staff, professional organisations, and stakeholders, and provides a roadmap for harmonising veterinary curricula with national and international standards.

The VEE emphasises the One Health approach that integrates animal, human, and ecosystem health. They aim to provide veterinary training, research programmes and communication about the importance of veterinary medicine at a high international level.

In 2024, a total of 178 veterinary students were admitted to the VEE, while 120 graduated.

The main developments since the last Visitation are:

- A new curriculum from 2024 promoting interdisciplinary training and strengthening the connection between theory and practice has been introduced.
- The new curriculum includes a mandatory “internship” year in the fifth year.
- Implementation of the 2024-2028 Strategic Plan.
- Upgrading of teaching facilities
 - Expansion of the Small Animal Clinic
 - Modernised VTF facilities

- Establishment of new laboratories
- Upgrading of the Skills lab
- Renovation of the student canteen.
- Certification of several diagnostic units

Devastating earthquakes hit the Elazig region in 2023, which significantly affected the education at the VEE, and delayed the implementation of the VUCEP.

The Visitation was completed in accordance with the ESEVT SOP 2023. The SER was provided on time to the Visitation Team along with extended Appendices. The description of some of the Areas and Standards needed clarification and/or raised questions; answers to those were provided by the VEE ahead of or during the Visitation. Further information and corrections were provided on-site upon request from the Visitation Team.

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 vision of the VEE is to educate creative veterinary graduates, equipped for a modern profession, through high-quality education, research, and quality veterinary services.

The VEE is subject to, and must conform with, national accreditation standards (see below) and national quality assurance bodies such as the Turkish Higher Education Quality Control (YOKAK) and the National Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Veterinary Institutions and Programmes (VEDEK) that are enshrined in Turkish Law. The VEE developed a new Strategic Plan, 2024-2028, following external stakeholder consultation with National veterinary bodies, animal owners, food- and pharmaceutical businesses and veterinary practitioners. The Strategic plan aligns with national veterinary education standards as well as the ESEVT Standards. The VEE's Strategic Plan is supported by an Action Plan (Implementation Plan); both of these are national, mandatory requirements and are written in the legally prescribed format. The Strategic Plan is publicly available and describes the consultation process in producing the Strategic Plan. Both it and the Implementation Plan are reviewed annually by the Faculty Board, and reports are provided to the Rector for official approval. To accompany the Strategic and Implementation Plans, the VEE publishes a Risk Register and Business Continuity Plan. These are also legal requirements and are reviewed annually.

1.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE's main objectives are in agreement with the EU directives and ESG Standards. The format of the Implementation Plan indicates the target annual percentage achievement in realising longer-term objectives rather than actual target figures.

1.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE should prepare a version of the Implementation Plan that gives target

figures for internal use and greater transparency of progress to a more clearly quantified objective.

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 VEE is a part of FU, which comprises 17 faculties, four institutes, three colleges, nine vocational schools, one state conservatory and 24 research centres. The Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) and Firat University Experimental Research Station (FUDAM) – which also includes the Veterinary Teaching Farm (VTF) – are part of the overall state-funded University.

The main management structure of FU follows the requirements of a national law that governs universities in Turkey (YOK Law 2547), including academic and administrative activities, that applies to all Turkish universities, and to the VEE.

The University Senate is responsible for academic policies while the University Administrative Board focuses on administrative and financial matters. The Dean, Professor Kazim Sahin, is responsible for the veterinary curriculum. He is a qualified veterinary surgeon and the VEE's only international Diplomat. The Dean is appointed by YOK from a short-list of three internal or external professors proposed by the Rector following consultation with senior academic staff of the VEE. The Dean is appointed for a three-year period and can be reappointed. He is responsible for overseeing the efficient use and development of teaching resources, maintaining security, ensuring student well-being, and supervising academic, research and publication activities.

The Dean is supported by a management structure shown in Figure 1.2.2 in the SER. In the VEE's structure, "commissions" is the term used by the VEE to denote committees.

The two Vice-Deans, chosen by the Dean from the VEE's academic staff, serve for a maximum term of three years. Both the current Vice-Deans are qualified veterinarians. In accordance with the objectives and principles established by FU, their role is to assist the Dean in implementing all activities necessary to achieve the VEE's vision and mission in education and training, as well as to act as the Dean's deputy in their absence. Each of the Vice-Deans usually has distinct areas of responsibility to support both academic and administrative functions – one Vice-Dean normally focuses on academic affairs, including overseeing curriculum development, research initiatives, and educational quality, while the other Vice-Dean's duties typically relate to administrative duties, such as managing financial operations, student services, and the overall administrative framework of the VEE. Each Vice-Dean is supported by a management board.

The Faculty Secretary oversees all non-academic administrative functions and is Secretary to both the Faculty Board and Faculty Administrative Board. The Faculty Board is chaired by the Dean and its membership comprises of the Heads of Department, elected representatives from

each of the professors, the assistant academic staff, the administrative and technical staff, and the students. It is the primary decision-making body within the VEE, sets the principles, plans, and programmes for the educational, research, and publication activities of the VEE. The Faculty Board aims to ensure coordination of teaching, research, and strategic planning by Departments; it is also responsible for overseeing curriculum development, research activities and the VEE's overall strategic direction.

The Faculty Executive Board is elected by the Faculty Board and chaired by the Dean. It is responsible for the more immediate oversight of administrative tasks (day-to-day running of the VEE) such as implementing the curriculum, managing student admissions, and coordinating examinations.

The 20 academic departments of the VEE are organised into five Divisions, each with multiple departments. Heads of Department are appointed by the Dean, based on elections held within the respective departments. The Head of Division is agreed by the Heads of Department in that Division; the duties of a Head of Division are specified in YÖK Law No. 2547, which requires a Head of Division to ensure that teaching, learning, and research are carried out systematically and efficiently throughout their departments.

The person responsible for the professional, ethical and teaching affairs of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) is the VTH Director, Professor Seyfettin Gur. The VTH Director chairs the VTH Management Council of which a Vice-Dean and departmental representatives appointed the VTH Director are also members. There is a "Business Chief" for the more commercial, out-facing clinics and animal units at the VTH. The VTH has its own Regulations that govern its organisational and functional framework and is subject to national and international guidelines. Separately, the Veterinary Teaching Farm (VTF) is managed by a VTF Management Council, based on Article 9 of the Firat University Agricultural and Animal Husbandry Application and Research Centre Regulations. The VTF Management Council (Management Board) consists of the VTF Director (as chair), and eight other members drawn from the Departments of Animal Production, Animal Nutrition, Clinical Sciences, Food Hygiene and Technology, Preclinical Sciences and Basic Sciences. Members of the VTF Board are selected by the Rector from a list of nominations, drawn up by the VTF Director, that is equal to twice the number of board members. This list is submitted to the Rector, who selects the eight members, each of whom normally serves for a three-year term. Members may be reappointed through the same process after their term expires. Regular meetings of the Management Board are scheduled every two months and other, extraordinary, meetings may be convened at the request of the Director or more than half of the Board's members. Decisions are made by an absolute majority vote. The funding stream for the VTF is separate from that of the VEE and comes directly from the FU Rectorate.

1.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The roles and remits of the VEE's Commissions were revised/restructured in 2024, following external advice and recommendations. This restructuring included the separation of the previous Strategic Planning and Quality Assurance Commission, to create a separate, distinct Quality Assurance Commission. The current list of Commissions is listed on the VEE's website (<https://veterinerf.firat.edu.tr/en/page/21020>) and differs from that provided in the SER. There is student representation on some, but not all, of the relevant Commissions. Although there is a Commission responsible for biosecurity and another for waste management, there is no other safety committee.

1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE should establish a more overarching Safety Committee to oversee all aspects of health and safety for all its activities and ensure that trained personnel act as local safety officers in different facilities of the VEE.

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 VEE's Strategic Plan is written in a format suggested in the state's "Strategic Plan Preparation Guide for Universities". It is prepared by the Strategic Planning and Quality Assurance Commission and is submitted to FU's Rectorate, to form part of FU's overall Strategic Plan, on which it is dependent. Strategic Plans at the VEE have a 4-year projection (national legal stipulation) and are renewed every 4 years. Implementation of the VEE Strategic Plan is a responsibility of the Faculty Administrative Board that reports biennially.

Strengths identified in the VEE's 2023-24 SWOT analysis included: high potential of the region for agriculture and animal raising; a functional VTF with a high livestock caseload; student access agreements with local feed plants and slaughterhouses; a diagnostic laboratory; location of the VTH within the university campus and its student facilitates; high ranking of certain departments within Turkey's Higher Education; national accreditation; and location in an economically (affordable) and social (high employment rate) favourable region of (eastern) Turkey. Some of the weaknesses were directly related to the after-effects of the 2019 Covid pandemic and a devastating earthquake in 2023; the continuing absence of autonomy in designing the budget or controlling student admissions (and therefore the size of student groups in clinical and practical training sessions; low caseload in certain species (equine, exotic species – and pigs [although the latter not mentioned in the SWOT analysis]); and some outdated equipment and "systems".

Perceived opportunities included government recognition of prioritising funding in the Elazig area and financial support for agriculture development; personal development of students and staff due to participation in exchange programs (Erasmus, Farabi, Mevlana); and the potential to provide further services to the public in areas of animal and human health. The main threats concerned the absence of autonomy in managing student numbers and therefore the ability to provide high educational standards when the numbers of students admitted are greater than the budgetary allowance and intended capacity of physical resources; recruitment and retention of skilled, qualified personnel in an academic environment of increasing numbers of veterinary schools in Turkey; current agricultural economic downturns; and lost opportunities through inadequate communication with the VEE's alumni.

1.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The Strategic Plan is reviewed annually by the Strategic Plan Committee at a dedicated Strategic Plan Review Meeting held at the end of each year during which progress is assessed against the agreed KPIs and milestones. Challenges that have been encountered in implementing the

Operational Plan are discussed and necessary adjustments are made to ensure that the overall Plan remains aligned with the strategic goals of the VEE.

In addition, the success rates of performance indicators are evaluated and priorities for the coming year are outlined to increase the effectiveness and impact of the plan. Documentary records of the Review Meetings are maintained, including progress reports, adjustments made during the review period, KPIs/milestones achieved and input from internal and external stakeholders, and the Minutes detail the agreed forward actions.

1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE should provide a clearer indication of prioritisation for each of the item lines in the Operating Plan, milestones, clearer quantification of target performance indicators and evidence that those objectives already achieved have been monitored.

It is suggested that the Unit Activity Report that accompanies the Strategic Plan on the VEE's website should be completed and kept up to date.

It is suggested that the annual monitoring reports on progress made against these documents are made available in the same folder on the VEE website.

1.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.3.

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

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

1.4.1. Findings

The VEE is legally obligated to follow the FU's Quality Assurance System Directive and regards strategic planning, stakeholder participation and internationalisation as key elements within their QA framework. It created a separate Quality Assurance and Accreditation Commission in 2024 (separating the functions of the previous Strategic Planning and Quality Assurance Commission) following external consultation. The Quality Assurance and Accreditation Committee is chaired by the Dean and includes student representation. It receives analyses of feedback from different sources and examination result data. It reports to the Faculty Board and then to the FU Rector. There is a specific QA Action Plan with targets and milestones; these are incorporated into the VEE's overall Strategic Plan and progress against these is reviewed annually. Details of the VEE's QA policies and practices are outlined/detailed in its Quality Performance Guide, are aligned with standards set by YOKAK, VEDEK and EAEVE, and aim to promote academic integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility among staff and students.

There are a number of short-loop and long-loop feedback systems in place, including: satisfaction surveys distributed to students, staff, external stakeholders; teaching evaluations (student feedback); complaint and suggestion boxes; institutional data on academic performance, research outcomes and administrative efficiency. The VEE has a culture of "continuous improvement" through addressing feedback and sector trend-based evidence to

inform curriculum updates, staff training and development, research excellence and animal/public/societal health initiatives.

All QA activities are reviewed and approved by the Faculty Administrative Board, which also produces the local policies. These are shared via a website with regular updates given to students, staff and stakeholders. An annual internal evaluation report is submitted to YOKAK's Institutional External Quality Commission, which may make recommendations for further improvement.

All veterinary students enrolling at the VEE swear an oath of academic honesty and commitment to academic integrity, ethical responsibility, and professional conduct throughout their studies in a formal ceremony held within the first 15 days of their first year, in the presence of all academic staff and under the guidance of a deontology teacher.

1.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE is commended for its positive attitude and approach to robust, multi-layered QA processes. It has a culture of “continuous improvement” through feedback and sector trend-based evidence to inform curriculum updates, staff training and development, research excellence and animal/public/societal health initiatives. Several international partnerships with European universities and participation in student mobility programmes support the VEE's ambitions to achieve and maintain global standards, advances and competitiveness in veterinary education and research.

1.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE should include a “Leavers Survey” and an “Employer Satisfaction Survey” in its feedback processes

It is suggested that within the QA and feedback loops, current ‘informal’ meetings initiated by individuals should be replaced by a more organised structure of regular meetings of a “Staff-Student Liaison Commission”, with a clearly defined role, remit and meeting schedule.

It is suggested that there should be a written record of a student's commitment to their conduct, behaviours and attitudes. Students should be required to sign their oath at the start of their studies and reminded of their professional behaviours and conduct by signing an agreement as they begin their clinical studies. The signed document should incorporate issues related to client confidentiality

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

The VEE interacts and collaborates with the local municipal dog shelter, the hippodrome, slaughterhouses and farmers in the delivery of the curriculum. Multiple stakeholders from the veterinary and companion/equine/production animal sectors contribute to the VEE's strategic planning, its annual reviews of progress, and satisfaction surveys.

The VEE actively engages in in-person outreach events aimed at public education, professional collaboration, and student admissions. It also organises events to enhance community engagement, strengthen industry relations, and attract referrals from general veterinary practitioners. The VEE collaborates with the municipal canine shelter and is building a neutering centre for stray dogs – evidence of further interaction with wider society locally.

The VEE and VTH provide extensive information on their activities on their websites and engage actively with the public and stakeholders through a range of social media platforms. The VEE's Strategic Plan is publicly available, online, and FU's website provides information on students' admissions, student demographics and graduate employment statistics (YOK Atlas). The VEE's ESEVT status and its last Self-Evaluation Report and Visitation Reports are available to the public via its website.

1.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE engages with stakeholders, provides accessible information about its programs, and makes evaluation reports readily available on its website, as requested in ESEVT standard 1.5.

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

In accordance with Turkish Law, FU has a published QA System Directive, and the VEE follows its determined procedures. The VEE's Quality Assurance Commission comprises the Dean, Vice-Deans, five academic staff, a student representative and secretarial support. All inputs to the QA system are evaluated by this Commission; any proposals submitted to Details of progress on subsequent quality improvement are subsequently provided directly to the Commission.

As required by Turkish Higher Education Law, the VEE's Strategic Planning Commission (formerly the Strategic Planning and Quality Assurance Commission), Education Commission and Quality Assurance and Accreditation Commission hold a specific annual meeting to monitor and review progress against agreed objectives, receive input from internal and external stakeholders, and agree milestone targets for the coming year. The Faculty Administrative Commission, which is responsible for the implementation of agreed quality improvements/quality enhancement within the PDCA cycle, submits its annual report to the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Commission. The Faculty Advisory Board also makes an evaluation at the end of the academic year. Their reports are submitted to the Faculty Board for approval following which an annual

report is sent to FU's Rectorate, who then submits detailed reports to the government ministry. The VEE conducts an annual graduate survey; 67 % of the returns to the 2024 survey were from alumni who graduated from 2020 onwards. The VEE also conducts an annual high-level survey of external stakeholders, and annual Satisfaction Surveys of its academic staff and its administrative staff; "complaint" boxes (with complaint forms in hard copy) are present throughout the VEE for anonymous comments and feedback. For all of these feedback routes, the QA assistant conducts an initial analysis which is then shared with the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Commission.

1.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

Reports, including descriptions of the internal and external consultation processes followed in compiling and evaluating the input data, are made available to staff and students and are published on the VEE's website.

There is evidence that QA loops are closed to improve the quality of education.

1.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE could produce and publish, annually, a specific 'you said – we did' document to promote transparency of VEE responses to feedback and suggestions related to quality improvement of teaching, learning, assessment and student experience.

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

ESEVT first evaluated the VEE in 2007 with the first accreditation visitation conducted in March 2011; deficiencies identified in that assessment were addressed with the VEE gaining accreditation in 2013. The VEE was evaluated again in 2018 at which time seven major deficiencies were identified resulting in a non-accreditation status. Subsequently, the VEE initiated a programme of extensive corrections and implemented a continuous QA process; a detailed Re-Visitation SER was submitted in 2021 and the evaluation by a hybrid format re-visitiation conducted (during the Covid-19 pandemic) led to award of Full Accreditation Status, valid to 2025. One of the major deficiencies identified in 2018 included those of QA processes; the VEE implemented QA policies and practices that satisfied the 2021 EAEVE Re-Visitation – these processes have been maintained.

1.7.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

In Turkey, QA processes are now a legal obligation. Consequently, the VEE has implemented a more structured and systematic approach to quality management, including defining processes and interactions under the Strategic Plan 2024-28 and an emphasis on improving management processes. One element of this more structured approach was the creation of a specific Quality Assurance Commission within the VEE's committee structure.

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 VEE is a faculty of Firat University (FU), which is a publicly funded university. Once allocated, the university budget is distributed to faculties based on assessed needs. Within the VEE, the Dean oversees the allocation process, prioritising educational activities according to departmental demands. Over 90 % of current expenditure is funded by the Turkish Government. The public funds cover most operational and salary expenses. The funding has been increased substantially over the past 3 years. This period does, however, include 2024, the year following the earthquake (SER Table 2.1.2).

Within the university the FU's financial process is governed centrally, with the FU Director of Finance coordinating the annual budget in collaboration with accounting secretaries from all faculties.

Within the VEE, the Dean oversees the allocation process, prioritising educational activities according to departmental demands. Other sources of funding for the VEE include those coming from VTH services, VTF operations, and diagnostic units, from research grants both national and international, and tuition fees from international students. The VEE and VTH contribute a portion of their revenues from services and research grants to the overarching authority, adhering to financial regulations. However, the Rectorate directly covers the main expenses of the VEE, including heating, water, electricity, magazine subscriptions, telephone, and internet services. Capital grants for specific projects are funded by private, local, and central government funds. These include the Firat University Scientific Research Projects Coordination Unit and the Republic of Türkiye, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

2.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The vast bulk of the VEE funding is provided by the Central Government. The fund is largely controlled centrally by the University.

2.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE should get additional autonomy over the budget and more control over the intake of students, which would offer more financial stability.

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

Clinical and field services which include the VTH and the VTF are key instructional clinical resources. The financial management of clinical and field services at the VEE operates within the framework of the university's centralised financial system, overseen by the RTMTF. The university's central administration collects revenues generated through clinical and field services such as VTH fees, diagnostic tests, and VTF services. A portion of these revenues is subsequently allocated back to the VEE to cover essential operational costs, including the procurement of materials, equipment, and maintenance.

Table 2.1.3 in the SER shows a positive balance for 2022, 2023 and 2024. During the visit, it became clear that these funds to a large degree represent research funds that have been granted as bulk money for the whole project period and are thus not a real surplus that can be freely disposed of by the VEE.

Within the VTH, the director manages the operational budget to ensure the efficient use of resources to maintain high-quality clinical services. The Faculty Board collaborates on decisions regarding major investments, such as acquiring new equipment or renovating facilities. Ultimate approval comes from the university administration.

2.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

While the VEE has to return 10 % of income coming from clinical services to the University, it has autonomy over the residual funds. The income however does not represent a large portion of the VEE's revenue.

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

Annual reviews are carried by the VEE of its resource allocations. This review prioritises investment which must align with the VEEs Strategic Plan. Smaller investments and renovations are managed by the University Administrative Directorates following requests from the Dean's Office. Larger-scale projects are implemented through a master financing plan approved by the university administration.

2.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

As explained in Area 7, Standard 7.2, the VEE has no control over student admittance numbers and is required by YOK to take more students each year than its facilities were planned for. This

expanded student population is not being adequately supported financially.

2.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

See Standard 7.2.

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 curriculum complies with EU Directive 2005/36/EC, as amended by Directive 2013/55/EU, with a detailed list of subjects included in Appendix 2. In 2019, the VEE began developing a new curriculum following the guidelines of VUÇEP. However, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021 and an earthquake in 2023 slowed this process. As a result, the curriculum was approved by the Academic Senate in 2024. Therefore, no significant changes were made to the 2007 curriculum before 2024, except for an update of the elective courses.

The veterinary training program at the VEE spans five years and offers a comprehensive mix of theoretical, practical, and clinical studies. Full-time students must complete a total of 300 ECTS credits throughout this structured program, which is divided into ten semesters. The academic year is split into two semesters, each lasting 14 weeks (except the tenth semester that lasts 16

weeks): the fall semester and the spring semester. Each semester includes courses amounting to 30 ECTS credits. Currently, the study program comprises two curricula. The first curriculum is for students enrolled from the academic year 2015-2016 through 2023-2024, while the second curriculum is designed for students starting in the academic year 2024-2025. Consequently, the first two semesters are organised according to the new curriculum, while the remaining semesters adhere to the old curriculum.

Out of a total of 4,268 compulsory hours (SER Table 3.1.1), 1,996 hours (46.7 %) are allocated to lectures, while 2,059 hours (48 %) are dedicated to practical activities. Clinical core rotations may cover 362 hours.

Additionally, 252 hours (5.8 %) are spent on EPT, and 260 hours (5.9 %) are assigned to elective courses. Seminars comprise 106 hours (2.4 %), all of which take place in the final year. Furthermore, supervised self-learning consists of 250 hours, with the majority (160 hours) occurring during the first two years.

The first three semesters focus on basic subjects and basic sciences. However, in the first and second semesters, students are also required to study Turkish literature, Atatürk's Principles, the History of Revolution, and a second language, all of which are mandatory according to Law 2547 for all university programs in Turkey. From the fourth to the sixth semesters, students delve into preclinical sciences such as pathology, pharmacology, toxicology, microbiology, virology, and parasitology, which serve as a foundation for clinical practice. The seventh to ninth semesters are primarily geared towards clinical knowledge, veterinary public health, and food safety and quality skills. Finally, the last semester is dedicated to professional training (called "internship" by the VEE), which completes the Day One Competences acquisition. In the final four semesters, students participate in EPT through training at private clinics, a summer placement, and working on their graduation thesis.

Students enrol in two elective courses each semester, allowing them to delve deeper into topics of personal interest. None of the elective courses include practical activities related to clinical animal work, and only two of the courses offer seven hours of non-clinical animal work each.

Students are informed about biosecurity protocols during practical courses before the beginning of the practical activities. The table of learning outcomes indicates high levels of relationship (levels 4 and 5) to Program 28 (related to biosecurity, SER Appendix 2) across several courses, including anatomy, parasitology, surgery, radiology, internal medicine, pathology, and obstetrics. First-year students complete mandatory risk prevention training, and fifth-year students participate in biosecurity sessions before rotation. In December 2024, a conference on "Biosafety and Risk Management" was held at the VEE. Students' adherence to biosecurity protocols is evaluated during clinical and food safety and quality exams.

The VEE holds the necessary authority to enhance its curriculum within the legislative framework. When adjustments are required, the department head presents proposals to the Education Planning Commission, which then forwards its recommendations to the Faculty Board. Upon approval, these changes must also secure final approval from the University Senate before they can be implemented.

The Education Planning Commission reviews the course syllabi annually to check for overlaps and ensure consistency. Additionally, feedback from online student evaluations collected at the end of each semester helps identify any redundancy or inconsistencies in the curriculum.

The performance of clinical activities is monitored through a web-based system called KBTS. Many exams, particularly for students in their fourth and fifth years, include a practical component where students must demonstrate their understanding of biosecurity principles and the skills they have acquired. Additionally, students complete a logbook for their EPT activities.

3.1.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The curriculum covers all subjects listed in Annex 2 of the ESEVT SOP 2023 and allows for the acquisition of the D1C listed in the same SOP. The Bologna Information System on the VEE website provides clear and detailed information about the course structure and learning outcomes. Almost 50 % of the compulsory teaching hours are lecture-based.

3.1.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE aims for a balanced spread of theoretical lectures over years 1-4, with any theoretical teaching in the “intern” semester (semester 10 in the old curriculum, semesters 9-10 in the new curriculum) kept to a minimum and delivered in small groups.

3.1.1.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.1.

3.1.2. Basic Sciences

3.1.2.1. Findings

All basic subjects and basic sciences specified in the EU Directive and the SOP 2023 are taught in the VEE as compulsory subjects. Of the total of 1,996 lecture hours, 84 (4.2 %) are allocated for basic subjects and 843 (42.2 %) for basic sciences. Out of 2,015 practical total hours, basic subjects include 84 hours (4.2 %) of lab desk work, and basic sciences form a total of 784 hours (33.4 %) of lab desk work. Curriculum hours taken by each student (SER Tab.3.1.2) in these subjects correspond to the required curriculum hours indicated in the SER Appendix 2. Students focus on foundational veterinary medical sciences, including comparative anatomy (including topographic anatomy), histology, biochemistry, and physiology during the first three semesters. The first semester of the new curriculum included anatomy, medical biology, biophysics, organic and inorganic chemistry. From the fourth to the sixth semester, the curriculum shifts to preclinical sciences (pathology, microbiology, and parasitology). All the courses related to these disciplines comprise practical activities consisting in microscopical observation, description and interpretation of bacterial colonies and parasites, and macroscopical and histological lesions. Pharmacology, toxicology, nutrition, and animal welfare are also included. All the information is reported on the VEE website in the Bologna Information System in which the topics’ syllabi are reported. Students can acquire competences in the “Anatomy of laboratory animals” as an elective course.

3.1.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

Although a lot of teaching is lecture-based, students have access to skeletons, bones, plastinated materials, and fresh organs from various domestic species for their anatomy studies. However, specimens of aquatic animals and exotic pets are not provided.

3.1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE should aim at increasing the number of cadavers and organs for anatomy teaching, which would provide a better understanding of anatomy from the first semester. The introduction of aquatic animals and exotic pets among the materials used in practical anatomical training would be recommended.

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

Students complete clinical hours in the third year (14 weeks, 6 hours/week during spring semester), fourth year (28 weeks, 8 hours/week), and ninth semester (14 weeks, 8 hours/week), along with a 7-week internship in clinics during the tenth semester. The VTH includes small and large animal clinics where students rotate in groups of approximately 15-17 for training (surgery, internal medicine, obstetrics and gynaecology, reproduction and artificial insemination). Attendance at clinical training is required twice a week (a session of 4 hours).

‘Introduction to Internal Medicine’ and ‘Introduction to Veterinary Surgery’ (sixth semester) focus on clinical examination skills and common diseases as preparation for clinical rotations. Clinical practice is started in the skills lab at the VTH, including the biosecurity SOPs.

The number of live companion animals (including equines and exotics) used for pre-clinical training is shown on Table 5.1.2 of the SER.

Practical rotations in the VTH are organised in the fourth and fifth year (number of days shown in Table 3.1.3 of the SER).

Clinical sciences and animal production in companion animals (including equine and exotics) are organised in the last two years. Clinical knowledge and skills for small animals and equines include internal medicine, surgery (342 hours), obstetrics and gynaecology, reproduction and artificial insemination (45 hours) using two - to three-days rotations weekly. Students are divided into two subgroups (one small animal, one large animal). Fifth-year students spend a 24-hour shift in the emergency room.

The VTF provides animals for rectal examination of horses, reproductive techniques (oestrus synchronisation, artificial insemination in the ninth and tenth semester), examination of pregnancy, etc.

“E-vet Professional Veterinary” is used in the VTH as a patient registration system since 2022, allowing access to academic staff and students.

The number of patients of the VTH in companion animals (including equine and exotics) is represented on Table 5.1.2 of the SER.

In the years 2022 and 2023, there was a notable decline in the number of animals examined in the ambulatory clinics (due to COVID-19 pandemic followed by earthquakes) (see Table 5.1.4 SER).

More than 70 % of the companion animals, equines and exotics of the VTH and ambulatory clinics are first opinion cases (see Table 5.1.5 SER).

The number of companion animals, equines and exotics for necropsy is represented in Table 5.1.6 of the SER.

Summer placement training (Law [2547](#) for all university students) occurs in the summer between eighth and ninth semesters ([Directive for Summer Stage of the VEE](#)). Students contact themselves EPT providers (clinics, slaughterhouses, poultry facilities, official laboratories, inspection offices).

Extramural training also occurs at the “Animal Shelter and Rehabilitation Centre of Elazığ Municipal” (treatment, sterilisation of stray dogs), the “Elazığ Hippodrome” (equines) and the “Elazığ Governorship Wildlife Protection Directorate” (wildlife animals). Agreements have been made with military bases (Elazığ, Malatya, Tunceli) for canines (vaccinations, health checks, treatment) and the Elazığ Province Gendarmerie Command (equines).

EPT in private clinics is done from the eighth semester on (fourth and fifth year) using an

agreement signed between the Dean and the practitioner. The EPT coordinator informs the students. Students in the EPT-Triage group are subdivided into two subgroups (EPT and triage). The number of hours spent on EPT is represented in Table 3.5.1 of the SER.

The tenth semester is dedicated to the so-called “internship”.

The clinical progression of the students is monitored through a web-based “*Clinical Skill Monitoring System*”. Students keep the records of the cases seen in private clinics in an EPT logbook and submit it to the EPT commission.

3.1.3.2. Analysis of the Findings/Comments

The VEE has a VTH, ambulatory clinics and VTF where different animal species are treated by students under the supervision of the staff. The clinics have the essential equipment (except for a CT scanner). Students see a variety of animal species in the VEE. The number of patients including dogs and equines seen in the VTH is, however, low.

More than 70 % of the cases in the VTH and ambulatory clinics are first opinions (companion animals almost 95 %). There is a lack of specialists inside the VTH and ambulatory clinics (only 1 EBVS diplomate). There are no EBVS internships/ residencies.

The EPT is assured by private clinics and by agreements with other institutes (shelter and military for dogs, racetrack for equines, wild animal institute).

Soft skills, resilience, time management, mental strength, or entrepreneurship in the scope of clinical activities of the students are not sufficiently addressed.

Elective courses do not include practical or clinical training.

The triage of external patients is done at the entrance of the VTH; however, there are no clear protocols for infectious diseases, zoonoses etc.; also, there are few possibilities for disinfection of students and staff handling the incoming animals including their clothing, booths etc.

Students have to provide their own clothing for the VTH and take it home for washing etc.

3.1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE increases the number of patients in the VTH, especially the small animals and equines (certainly because of the high number of students)

It is suggested to provide enough tools for disinfection of people handling the triage at the entrance of the VTH (similar to the entrance of the VTF where adequate disinfection possibilities are present).

It is suggested that the VEE provides personal protective clothing for the students in the VTH that can be washed/disinfected inside the VTH.

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

Clinical animal work for all species represents 56 hours (year 3), 224 hours (year 4), and 400 hours (year 5) (SER Table 3.1.1.). The clinical progression of the students is monitored through a web-based monitoring system called KBTS (Clinical Skill Monitoring System). The VTH includes small and large animal clinics where students rotate in groups of approximately 15–17 students for training (surgery, internal medicine, obstetrics and gynaecology, reproduction and artificial

insemination). Group size can be subdivided into 7-9 students, who can be assigned to tasks such as triage. Attendance at clinical training is required twice a week (for a total of eight hours) in semesters seven to nine.

For clinical sciences in food-producing animals (SER Table 3.1.2.), the total of curriculum hours per student is divided as follows:

- lectures: 438
- seminars: 33
- supervised self-learning: 33
- laboratory and desk-based work: 76
- non-clinical work: 100
- clinical work: 392

The total hours for each discipline are as described in Table 3.1.2 of the SER.

The practical rotations in clinic at the VTH last 47 days (large animals), seven days of herd health management (small ruminants and poultry), seven days in ambulatory clinics (horse, ruminants, companion animals), and 18 days in the emergency clinic (all species) (SER Table 3.1.3).

The number of healthy animals used for pre-clinical training at the VTF is 450 cattle, 110 small ruminants, and eight pigs (figures from 2024 in SER Table 5.1.2).

The number of individual food-producing animal patients seen intramurally and extramurally at the VTH is 1922 cattle, 569 small ruminants, two pigs, and 11 rabbits (figures from 2024 in SER Table 5.1.3 and Table 5.1.4). The VTH operates to a large degree as an outpatient clinic, and very few animals are hospitalised. The percentage of first-opinion patients of food-producing animals is 90-100 % (figures 2024, SER Table 5.1.5).

Curriculum hours taken as electives in the form of lectures per student are as follows: clinical sciences for food-producing animals: three options (prevention and control in dairy farms, animal vaccination programs, preventive medicine in nutritional animal diseases), 14 hours lectures each.

3.1.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

All listed subjects in food-producing animals are taught at the VEE (including swine, bees, and aquatic animals).

Pre-clinical training is mainly provided with animals from the VTF (all species including swine).

A total of 392 hours is devoted to clinical work in food-producing animals, but the rotations are not well-detailed, and it is difficult to check what is the real work each student performs and how many food-producing animals are handled by each student for hands-on learning.

The number of individual patients in food-producing animals seen at the VTH has decreased by approximately 37 % since 2022.

Most of the patients are not hospitalised, as the VTH does not have the capacity to welcome more than 4 small ruminants and 4 cattle at the same time. Consequently, hospitalisation is devoted to post-surgical recovery and extended care. Most of the time patients are welcome for a consultation and immediate treatment, and they are mainly first-opinion patients.

The equipment of the VTH for food-producing animals is minimal (analysers, imaging).

The biosecurity at the entrance (“triage”) is suboptimal, whether by personnel or health checks carried out.

The size of the groups of students versus the number of patients does not allow extended hands-on work.

The clinical training, if started in semester seven in the curriculum, is heavily concentrated on year five (“internship”), with an apparent balance between food-producing animals and companion animals.

Lectures, seminars, self-learning, lab work and non-clinical work represent roughly $\frac{2}{3}$ of the hours dedicated to “clinical sciences in food-producing animals”.

3.1.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to open the fields of EPT (today only three for food-producing animals), and to make them more practical than theoretical.

It is suggested that the VEE increases the hands-on work by the students to offer more possibilities to have extramural training in selected practices under the supervision of the teaching staff of the VEE. The summer placement training could therefore be more oriented on practice (large or small animals), and it could have an extended duration.

It is suggested that the VEE finds compensatory measures to reverse the decline of ruminants seen at the VTH (even if the calculated indicators are still good, and assuming part of this decline is due to the sanitary situation, the earthquake, and the competition with practitioners).

It is suggested that the VEE reviews, revises and reinforces the sanitary rules and controls at the “triage” of the VTH.

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

Regarding VPH and FSQ the presented curriculum contains (Annex 2 of the SER):

- in semester seven: theoretical education and laboratory training for milk hygiene and dairy technology,
- in semester eight: food hygiene and technology practical training, veterinary public health in veterinary medicine theoretical education,
- in semester nine: theoretical and practical work for food hygiene and control,
- in semester ten: theoretical and practical training regarding food hygiene and technology.

In years four and five, altogether 87 hours are dedicated to lectures, 23 hours to laboratory and desk-based work, and 81 hours to non-clinical work. The non-clinical works relate to meat inspection, food technology, and the examination of microbiological and chemical analyses of selected foods of animal origin. These activities are performed in slaughterhouses and department laboratories.

The VEE has a practical rotation under academic staff supervision. According to SER Table 3.1.3, 9 days (eight bovine and small ruminants, one poultry) are spent in slaughterhouses, and eight days regarding milk hygiene are spent in the VEE laboratory in year four. The ruminant slaughterhouse accepts students four days a week during the entire spring semester. The teaching area is comfortable for groups of 15-17 students, but the food business operator does not make efforts to be fully compliant with the national hygiene requirements. It is possible to see cattle and sheep being slaughtered on the same day. Teachers from the VEE educate students and focus specifically on ante-mortem and post-mortem inspection.

Under practical rotation, two days are available for food hygiene and control, and it takes place at the university’s food services in year five, semester nine. Students in the tenth semester go to the slaughterhouse for a four-hour/day visit in order to refresh their ante-mortem and post-mortem knowledge. No activity related to official control, HACCP or traceability is practised

during this visit.

In the poultry slaughterhouse, the main focus is on hygiene, but students deal with some aspects of the official control and the HACCP. In 2024, there were 61 visits to slaughterhouses, 55 to ruminants, six to poultry slaughterhouses, and 14 visits were recorded to a meat processing plant (SER Table 5.1.8). The meat processing plant visits were not confirmed this year or last year and there was no visit in 2023 due to the earthquake.

The VEE uses a logbook for recording every slaughterhouse visit. It is planned to be computerised next year to ensure that all the different types of training are fulfilled by every student, and all of them have the same practical opportunities.

In 2023, students were prevented from visiting the slaughterhouses due to the earthquake that struck the region.

An exam for meat inspection is organised in the slaughterhouse at the end of the spring semester in year four, where students are required to perform ante-mortem, post-mortem inspection, and evaluate pathological alterations in line with national and EU standards. To pass the Food Hygiene and Control course, students must complete both a written exam and a practical skills assessment conducted in the specially prepared teaching laboratory. This teaching laboratory has supplies from the university's food services and milk comes from the VTF. In connection with fish processing, different fishes are purchased from the local market, and students can assess and test their suitability for human consumption.

There are bilateral agreements between the VEE and the slaughterhouses. Copies of eight signed agreements in force were provided, two relating to ruminant slaughterhouses (El-Kas and El-Et). One agreement (El-Kas) was provided in English signed on 11/01/2024 and valid for two years. It contains four very general articles; that the VEE should provide the transportation of students and selected trainers to the slaughterhouse, and the slaughterhouse should accept the students and provide a suitable environment for education purposes. The last paragraph is that: "if one of the parties fails to fulfil the provisions of the protocol, this protocol will be terminated". However, according to the last paragraph, the fact that the meat processing plant (El-Et) did not accept students would invalidate the agreement, it is still in effect on the current VEE website.

Two theoretical elective courses (14 hours each) regarding fermented milk products in semester 8, and advanced food legislation and certification in semester nine are available.

EPT as a summer placement training is compulsory between the eighth and the ninth semesters and the basis is a bilateral agreement between the VEE and the provider (included in the eight available on the VEE website). According to the new definition (SOP 2023), students can freely select the academicians to work with intramurally. One example of this is the graduation thesis. In the last two academic years, 15 students received a graduation thesis from the Department of Food Hygiene and Technology.

The Department of Food Hygiene and Technology has four laboratories including food microbiology, food chemistry, serology, and food hygiene-practical training (teaching laboratory).

Teaching videos were downloaded mostly from YouTube (e.g. Chinese, Japanese films) and were presented as compensation for missing pig, horse, rabbit, or game slaughter.

3.1.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

Nine days of practical work in slaughterhouses and eight days in the teaching laboratory to produce yoghurt and carry out some tests on raw milk is not the best balance in terms of acquiring the necessary knowledge. There is still no possibility to visit a dairy establishment, thus students could not be familiar with hygiene, and official control during milk processing.

FSQ education is generally unbalanced in relation to food hygiene and control:

- In the ruminant slaughterhouse students have no opportunity to be familiar with practical aspects of HACCP, Traceability, and Official controls.
- Theoretical and practical work regarding Food Hygiene and Control takes place at the University's food services in semester 9. The question arises regarding the sequences of teaching subjects as it would be more favourable to combine the ante-mortem and post-mortem exercises, meat processing and dairy processing if any will be available in the future, with food hygiene and control activities.
- There have been no meat processing plant visits since 2023, and the teaching laboratory's supplies have not been able to effectively compensate for food hygiene and control activities in meat processing plants.

Due to the unavailability of slaughter and production of animals other than bovine, ovine, caprine animals or poultry, the compensation is limited to videos mostly downloaded from the YouTube channel (e.g. Chinese, Japanese films).

The content of agreements with the external providers only stipulates very minimal conditions and do not follow the SOP 2023 Standard 3.6.

3.1.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that, to compensate for unavailable slaughter or a slaughterhouse that does not fully comply with national hygiene rules, the VEE has the possibility (well-equipped main library and IT department in the university) to use the virtual slaughterhouse technique.

It is suggested that the VEE makes additional efforts to ensure that students can visit regionally accessible establishments, with particular attention to milk and meat processing.

It is suggested that the VEE includes the teaching laboratory in the distribution of some materials related to the anatomy and pathology departments, and obtains materials from meat processing establishments to compensate for the missing opportunities arising from in-house necropsies.

It is suggested that, in cooperation with the IT department, the VEE selects good quality videos and ensures they have either narration or Turkish subtitles, to better compensate for the regional limitations.

3.1.5.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.5 because of an imbalance between topics (meat and milk) and the inadequate availability of materials, detailed agreement, official control and traceability exercises in the ruminant slaughterhouse.

3.1.6. Professional Knowledge

3.1.6.1. Findings

The main educational aim of VEE is to train competent veterinarians who have successfully achieved DOC, which means they are ready to begin their professional careers immediately after graduation. Graduates will have a solid foundation in evidence-based veterinary practice and the scientific method, as well as strong professional, communication, and technical skills.

There is a commitment to academic integrity and ethical commitment. Policies promote a culture of integrity and Ethical guidelines are emphasised in research, teaching, and administrative tasks. Awareness programmes assure responsible behaviour among teachers and staff. Posters of the Core Principles of Animal Welfare hang on the walls of the VTH. The Veterinarian's Oath which was prepared by the Turkish Veterinary Association is also hung on various places of the VTH to keep students alert about the values of our profession, including respecting and practicing animal welfare principles.

In the preclinical years under the heading of Basic Sciences students receive 14 lecture hours on Animal Health Economics and practice management. They also receive during this period 17 hours on Veterinary legislation, including official controls and regulatory veterinary services, forensic veterinary medicine, and certification. Entrepreneurship is also provided as an elective as well as Community relations in veterinary medicine. In the clinical years under the VPH students have 14 hours of lectures on advanced food legislation and certification.

The Regional Veterinary Chamber is a member of the Faculty Advisory Board. The Board meets once a year to review the performance of the VEE for continuous improvement and makes recommendations for a higher quality of education. The VEE collaborates closely with the Veterinary Chamber on various matters, including selecting practitioners and signing bilateral agreements with private clinics in Elaziğ. In terms of preclinical training the students attend “Introduction to Internal Medicine” and “Introduction to Surgery” courses in the sixth semester. Each course includes two hours of clinical training per week, and the instructor teaches the examination methods on demonstration animals consisting of cattle, sheep and horses. Students prepare for their clinical rotations in the clinical skills laboratory at the VTH, where students are introduced to the facility’s biosecurity SOP’s.

In the clinical skills laboratory, students learn and practice IM, SC, IV, IP and epidural injection techniques on animal models and apply suturing techniques to some abattoir materials such as rumen and uterus in the fourth and fifth years and also in internship education.

Over 90 % of full-time teaching staff are veterinarians, which ensures continuous access to professional knowledge for students throughout the programme. Clinical activities are conducted in accordance with ethical and professional codes set by relevant veterinary chambers and associations. Communication skills are honed through role-playing and simulation activities integrated into the curriculum during clinical rotations. The main aim of clinical training is to enable students to examine more small and large animals and thus to achieve DOC with more experience. The VTF plays a critical role in providing hands-on education in animal production, preclinical, and clinical disciplines. Students rotate through the VTF during training in animal husbandry and nutrition, obstetrics, gynaecology, reproduction, and artificial insemination. Practical activities include reproductive examinations, rectal palpation, semen collection, and artificial insemination using the ruminant, equine, poultry, and pig units. These experiences bridge theoretical knowledge with practical application, preparing students for professional veterinary practice. Students visit private farms and participate in health monitoring, disease prevention, and routine treatment practices. Conducted in small groups of 15-17 students, these sessions provide real-life working conditions and are supervised by experienced university instructors. Extramural training is also a very important source of professional knowledge. A varied experience is provided for students through the provision of experience in private farms, the Animal Shelter and Rehabilitation Centre of Elaziğ Municipal (ASRC) and Elaziğ Hippodrome.

3.1.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The students start developing their professional knowledge early in the preclinical years. They have frequent encounters with the veterinary profession on a daily basis. This includes veterinary teachers, private veterinary practitioners, the manager of the poultry plant and the veterinarians at the dog shelter. This frequent interface with the profession helps to nurture professional knowledge.

3.1.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.1.6.4 Decision 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 VEE's curriculum mapping documentation lists Intended Learning Outcomes for all of its courses, linked to specific EASEVT DOCs. Evaluation of students during their EPT and Semester 10 ("intern") is clearly linked to specific, required, clinical practical competences. Both the overall veterinary programme and its intended outcomes, and course descriptions with their respective learning objectives are available online via the FU's Bologna information system.

In Turkey, the veterinary programme requires the completion of five years, which includes ten semesters of education in Veterinary faculties. Graduates are awarded the professional qualification of Veteriner Hekim Diploması (equivalent to a master's degree in the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area) allowing them to register and apply for a Practice licence from a local Veterinary Chamber. Graduates swear their professional oath, in front of representatives of the national veterinary chamber in their graduation ceremony (Veterinary Medicine is one of the professions restricted to Turkish citizens by law – see Article 2 of the Law on the Execution of the Veterinary Medicine Profession).

The importance of lifelong learning is highlighted to students throughout their training at VEE. They are encouraged to participate in extracurricular workshops and certified training before graduation. Student interactions with external practitioners raise awareness about, and illustrate the importance of, lifelong learning.

Although the VEE provides postgraduate academic opportunities in all departments, including MSc and PhD programmes (see Area 10 of the SER and Table 4.2.10 of the Strategic Plan, 2024-2028), there is currently no national veterinary specialist training system in place in Turkey.

3.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE's study programme incorporates a blend of teaching and learning modalities – lectures, practical and clinical training, EPT including compulsory placement training, and a graduation thesis – to support different learning styles and to ensure that students meet the stated objectives. Self-learning is an integrated component of the curriculum, and the importance of lifelong learning is highlighted throughout their training at VEE. Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular workshops and certified training before graduation and there are several veterinary-related student societies. Veterinary organisations and businesses representing different sectors of the profession contribute to both core and elective aspects of

the curriculum, including graduation thesis projects, and are consulted as stakeholders. Student representatives are members of the VEE's Quality Assurance and Accreditation Commission (see above) that oversees the QA of the veterinary curriculum, facilities, teaching resources, and promotes a positive student experience within a supportive learning environment.

The VEE / FU is commended on the excellence of its information available on its Bologna Information Package

(<https://obs.firat.edu.tr/oibs/bologna/index.aspx?lang=enandcurOp=showPacandcurUnit=5andcurSunit=1300#>)

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

The educational aims and learning outcomes of VEE are based on, and guided by, published standards set by ESEVT and by the national authorities/regulating body, VEDEK, with additional input from VUÇEP for the core veterinary curriculum. The VEE also consults with relevant stakeholders on their competency requirements as part of the annual QA review cycle. The list of DOCs outlined in the ESEVT SOP's and national competency requirements are available to students, online. For each course (individual units of study) within the curriculum, learning outcomes, encompassing both knowledge and skills (the cognitive and psychomotor domains of Bloom's Taxonomy) are designed to align with specific competency levels of Miller's Pyramid, relevant to the position and stage of the subject within the overall veterinary programme – theoretical and practical assessments are aligned with these. The course-level outcomes are systematically integrated throughout the curriculum and contribute to the overall programme outcomes to varying and appropriate extents. The detailed relationships between course-specific outcomes and programme outcomes are outlined in the VEE's curriculum document, available to students and staff online. The learning outcomes of different courses and phases of the curriculum are published on FU's Bologna Information System and students, staff and the public are notified.

3.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

Programme learning outcomes are available as well as the DOCs. However, there is a need to review and revise the curriculum documentation and mapping. For example, intended learning

outcomes for each teaching session needs to be written as outcomes for each teaching session. There is also a need to align these to the assessment framework.

3.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE should review and revise its curriculum documentation and mapping. Intended learning outcomes for each teaching session, course and overall programme should be written as outcomes that are directly accessible. The assessment framework should be aligned to the intended learning outcomes and use modalities that are valid, reliable, authentic, objective and relevant to the learning outcome concerned

3.3.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.3 because the VEE needs to review its curriculum documentation so that Intended Learning Outcomes are written as outcomes that are directly accessible, and in a format by which ILOs and assessments are directly aligned and relate to specific DOC(s).

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 Faculty Advisory Board holds a specific meeting each year to review the performance of the VEE and makes recommendations regarding continuous improvement in the quality of education. Membership of the Faculty Advisory Board includes a student representative and external membership in the form of the chair of the Regional Veterinary Chamber and two private practitioners.

Recommendations made by the Faculty Advisory Board are considered by both the Education Planning Commission and, from 2024, the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Commission (formerly it was the Strategic Planning and Quality Assurance Commission) which considers the recommendations alongside them with ESEVT and VEDEK standards, VUÇEP guidelines and any feedback from internal and external stakeholders in revising the core curriculum. Their draft proposals are submitted to the Faculty Board for approval and the final curriculum is submitted to the University Senate for official validation. The final curriculum is then published on the FU website and staff, students, and stakeholders are notified. A major review of the 5-year programme was conducted in 2023 and incorporated feedback and constructive suggestions from the student body as a major consideration in producing a new curriculum, launched in

October 2024. Details of the new curriculum and the consultation process are publicly available via the VEE's website.

The VEE conducts an annual training event, the subject matter of which reflects the current relevant curriculum developments or identified training needs. Compulsory attendance is normally expected but presentation slides or video recordings are not available for staff unable to attend. Within the VEE, PhD students are required to deliver some teaching (lectures) before they can submit their thesis; training for this is provided through three courses on teaching, learning and assessment delivered by FU's Higher Education Faculty, and their teaching subsequently evaluated by a professor. Post-doctoral researchers applying for an Assistant Professor position (an official faculty position) give a presentation on a designated topic to the appointments committee in the form of a "lecture to be given to students". Thereafter, the only training provided is by the annual event (above); there are no post-graduate qualifications in teaching, learning or assessment provided by FU for VEE staff. The contribution of excellence in teaching and/or in clinical performance is normally negligible in cases for progression from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor, or from Associate Professor to Professor – criteria for promotion are based on research performance. The only ongoing evaluation of teaching is through course feedback.

3.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE has a formal committee structure with student representation and fulfils the specified requirements of Standard 3.4 conducting regular and periodic reviews. Staff pedagogical training is not given high priority.

3.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE should review and consider alternative methods of teaching and learning that complement the current series of lectures and practicals, to provide a broader spectrum of learning opportunities and styles.

It is suggested that the VEE should consider the incorporation of more objective forms of assessment of practical competences (e.g., OSCEs, DOPS) at appropriate stages of the curriculum

It is suggested that the VEE should consider forming a more structured Staff-Student Liaison Commission, with regular scheduled meetings, for constructive, two-way dialogue of issues affecting the quality of student education and experience.

It is suggested that the VEE should organise and deliver a regular series of training events for all levels of staff relevant to their roles in student education (teaching, learning and assessment), to foster an environment of quality improvement and innovation in education practices, and a record of attendance maintained.

It is suggested that the resources from each of these training events (including video recording) should be made available to staff via an online archive.

It is suggested that the VEE considers introducing a "Peer Observation of Teaching" scheme, to promote and share ideas and best practice in teaching, and to stimulate discussions that promote concepts such as student-centred learning

3.4.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.4 because the VEE should incorporate other forms of assessment (e.g. OSCEs, DOPS) at appropriate stages of the curriculum; a review of staff training is also needed.

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

The EPT is based on three components: Private Clinics, Summer placement training and the Graduation Thesis. However, EPT at private clinics is an integral part of the clinical rotations program at the VEE. The VEE collaborates closely with the Veterinary Chamber on many issues, including the selection of practitioners for the provision of EPT. The VEE signs bilateral agreements with private clinics in Elaziğ. Students are insured against accidents while participating in off-campus EPT. This Vice Dean with responsibility for students' affairs is also the EPT coordinator. This Vice Dean is also a member of the Education Planning Committee. The EPT provider and the students are required to independently fill out a performance evaluation form at the end of the EPT.

3.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

There is a clear system of EPT provided as a summer placement of students. This is done in collaboration with the Veterinary Chamber. Other areas described are Clinical rotations in private clinics and the completion of a Graduation Thesis.

3.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE clearly distinguishes between EPT that is part of the clinical rotation and EPT that is part of the summer placement.

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 VEE and the practitioners sign an annual agreement (Appendix 9 of the SER). The agreement

sets out the requirements for both students and the EPT provider. One of the Vice-Deans is responsible for the EPT activities and chairs the EPT Commission.

3.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The relationship between the EPT providers and the VEE is regulated through formalised agreements, being overseen by one of the Vice-Deans.

3.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

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 are required to fill out and return the EPT logbook and evaluation form from the EPT provider. The evaluation of a student's hands-on clinical work must be deemed successful. Those who fail due to a lack of sufficient involvement in the clinical work or absenteeism have to repeat the EPT.

3.7.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

An evaluation system of students' EPT placements is in place; however, it is a basic paper-based system.

3.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE adopts a real-time online evaluation system that would help in demonstrating student progression.

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 campus of Firat University is divided into two campuses (rectorate and engineering, 1 km from each other). The VEE is located in the rectorate campus and has one main building and a Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) (10 buildings). The VTF is 15 km away from the campus. A description of the VEE buildings is provided in Table 4.1.1 of the SER.

Several adaptations had been made in the VTH since the last visitation:

- extra rooms in the small animal clinic: two examination rooms, three hospitalisation rooms (dogs, cats and exotics) and one patient observation room
- renovation of the small animal emergency and a building to sterilise stray dogs
- new student laboratory in the Department of Reproduction and Artificial Insemination

An overview of the premises and capacity for housing of animals is represented in Table 4.3.1 of the SER. The number of places for hospitalised animals is represented in Table 4.3.2 of the SER. The isolation units of the VEE include areas for small animals (one for dogs, one for cats) and large animals (one for horses, one for ruminants).

4.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

No large animal anaesthetic device is present; anaesthetic monitoring was not used during the visitation; no scavenging of anaesthetic gasses is done.

There is insufficient fire alarm system; there are no signs for emergency exits; there are few to no emergency kits for humans (referral to central pharmacy during working hours).

The skills lab has no large animal models (replaced by live tissue).

There is a problem for people with a disability e.g. access to the building of the VTH (little ramps, no elevator in buildings with multiple stores).

4.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

Biosecurity must be respected at all times, even by a visitation team member.

It is suggested that a large animal circle system can be purchased for the equine surgical room, which can be connected to the existing anaesthetic machine.

The available monitoring devices must be used properly, and scavenging of anaesthetic gasses must be done (e.g. a hose on the pop-off valve of the anaesthetic machines connected to the outside).

The health and safety legislation must be followed: advice has to be gained to start up a fire alarm system (e.g., smoke detectors), the emergency exit signs must be present in the VTH and essential human emergency sets must be present in the VTH.

It is suggested the VEE includes models for large animals in the skill labs (e.g., an artificial equine head adapted for blood sampling in the jugular vein, equine front and hind leg models for placing bandages or suturing wounds at awkward heights, home-made cotton intestines to familiarise students with the equine intestinal anatomy).

All buildings should be adapted for access of people with a disability (e.g. ramps for wheelchairs).

4.1.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.1 because the VEE does provide suboptimal facilities to ensure the safety and accessibility for people with a disability.

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

See also the data in 4.1

There are 16 premises for practical training (number of seats ranging from 15 to 100 seats).

The skills lab at the VTH provides pre-clinical, simulation-based training using a range of models, mannequins, and fresh organs. Four high-quality cameras are installed in the necropsy room and clinic operation rooms (recordings available for one month for the students).

There are three rooms for on-call students and veterinarians, staff, and security personnel in the emergency service in the VTH. Seven locker rooms are present (one in the main faculty building, two in the VTH, two at the VTF, two in the necropsy rooms).

The main building provides office spaces for academic and support staff, PhD students, and temporary personnel. A total of 46 laboratories are distributed across the VEE and the VTH.

The university's main library (1,153 seats) offers study space for students and has printed books, e-books, e-periodicals and e-theses (open from 08:30 till 24:00 on weekdays, 09:00 till 23:00 on weekends, 24/7 access during examination periods). The VEE has a small library (100 m², 52 seats). Both libraries are equipped with computers and Wi-Fi.

There is a student cafeteria (200 m²) and a university restaurant (2,000 m²).

According to the SER, all physical facilities comply with the relevant legislation (regular inspection and maintenance). Wi-Fi is available throughout the campus for students allowing access to digital learning resources.

4.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE has experienced a sustained increase in the number of students without an increase in facilities, which can cause problems for the education of all students.

4.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

Several suggestions for improvement are outlined in 4.1.3.

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

An overview of the premises and capacity for housing of animals is represented in Table 4.3.1 of the SER. The number of places for hospitalised animals is provided in Table 4.3.2 of the SER. The isolation units of the VEE include areas for small animals (one for dogs, one for cats) and large animals (one for horses, one for ruminants).

4.3.2 Analysis of the findings/Comments

The capacity in the VEE including the VTH and VTF is not adapted for the increasing number of students without an increase in staff/resources.

4.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

Several suggestions for improvement are outlined in 4.1.3.

4.3.4. Decision

The VEE is not compliant with Standard 4.3 because the clinical teaching facilities and equipment for teaching purposes are insufficient in capacity and not adapted for the number of students.

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

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

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

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

4.4.1. Findings

A description of the VTH and the VTF buildings is provided in Table 4.1.1 of the SER.

The VEE ensures that students have access to diagnostic and therapeutic facilities, (skill lab, diagnostic imaging, pathology, anaesthesia, surgery and treatment rooms, ambulatory services, pharmacy, necropsy facilities).

The pathology service carries out different tasks (necropsy, cytology, immunohistochemistry, andrology, histopathology), and has scanning and transmission electron microscopy. The necropsy complex consists of two necropsy rooms (one small animal in the main building and one large animal in the VTH).

There are different fully equipped laboratories (parasitology, virology, microbiology, food microbiology, food chemistry, serology, food hygiene, and practical training laboratories). The clinical pathology of VTH is carried out by an express laboratory in combination with humane medicine.

4.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VTF is a very good teaching facility that makes up for many of the deficiencies in large animal teaching at the VTH. Even while the municipal shelter for stray dogs serves more dog patients and is well-equipped for its purpose, these two facilities do not totally compensate for the VTH's shortcomings.

It is not clear how students are involved in research, how the staff is trained to teach this subject and how and QA procedures are conducted, including the clinical research.

4.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

Several suggestions for improvement are outlined in 4.1.3.

4.4.4. Decision

The VEE is not compliant with Standard 4.4 because the VEE does not ensure state-of-the-art standards of teaching clinics comparable with or exceeding the best available clinics in the private sector.

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

See also 4.1.

All clinical services have a variety of diagnostic, treatment, surgical, anaesthetic, and physiotherapy equipment. There is no CT scanner. The VTH provides 24/7 emergency services for all animal species. The VEE has an ambulatory clinic with the necessary equipment for production animals.

Training in FSQ and VPH is assured by agreements between the VEE with food processing plants and slaughterhouses.

The necropsy complex consists of two necropsy rooms: one for small animals at the main building and one for large animals at VTH. Both facilities have a sewage system that complies with biosecurity regulations. The necropsy room for small animals includes a designated entrance for cadavers that connects directly to the outside. This room also features a preparatory area equipped with all necessary disposables to maintain biosecurity, as well as a separate exit that leads to the histopathology laboratory. In this necropsy room, there are four necropsy tables designed for companion animals and small ruminants, in addition to one table for large animals (such as calves, swine, and small ruminants). The facility also includes a refrigeration room maintained at 4°C, dissection sets, and three oscillating necropsy saws.

The necropsy room for large animals at the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) has two separate entrances: one for students and staff and another specifically for cadavers, facilitating the loading and unloading process. This room utilises the same preparatory area as the exit. It contains a single table for large animals and a dissection set.

4.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

It is unclear how soft skills training, e.g., communication skills training through role-play, are done.

In the small animal necropsy room, organisation and biosecurity are satisfactory. In contrast, in the large animal room, biosecurity procedures need to be implemented.

The skills lab is relatively simple and focuses more on items related to small animals, while models for the training of clinical procedures on large animals are missing.

4.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE establishes a separation between the dirty and clean areas in the large animal necropsy room.

Provision of models for training of clinical procedures on large animals must be implemented in the skills lab.

4.5.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with the Standard 4.5 because of the absence of fully developed clinical skill labs securing the “never first time on a live animal”-approach.

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

The isolation units of the VTH include areas for small animals (one for dogs, one for cats) and large animals (one for horses, one for ruminants).

4.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The number of isolation facilities is relatively low. It is not clear what happens if a small animal arrives in the clinic and needs to be isolated in another building. Exotic animals have no separate isolation facilities.

4.6.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to ensure that the isolation facilities are properly used.

4.6.4. Decision 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 VTH provides 24/7 emergency services for all animal species. The VEE has an ambulatory clinic with the necessary equipment for production animals.

The ambulatory clinic for ruminants is operational during working hours.

4.7.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The ambulatory clinic of the VEE functions as an outpatient clinic for large animals, meaning that farmers bring their animals to the VTH. Animals can be received 24/7. The VEE is not allowed to compete with other practising veterinarians in the area for clinical services, but herd health management is being taught at private farms supervised by teaching staff, as well as on the VTF. The VEE has one vehicle that is used as an “ambulatory” practice for small animals, so that small animal clinical services can be provided, on pre-determined days, to remote villages and places.

4.6.3. 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

Transport of students, live animals, cadavers, materials from animal origin and other teaching materials in the VEE are done in agreement with national and EU Standards, ensuring the safety of students and staff and animal welfare and preventing the spread of infectious agents.

4.8.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

There is no specific vehicle for the ambulatory services for large animals (replaced by university vehicles transporting students and material when required).

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 for the delivery and the implementation of biosecurity, e.g. by a specific committee structure. The VEE must have a system of QA to monitor and assure clinical, laboratory and farm services, including regular monitoring of the feedback from students, staff and clients.

4.9.1. Findings

'Introduction to Internal Medicine' and 'Introduction to Veterinary Surgery' (sixth semester) focus on clinical examination skills and common diseases as preparation for clinical rotations. Clinical practice is started in the skills lab at the VTH, including the biosecurity SOP's. A biosecurity manual is available on the website of the VEE for students and staff.

4.9.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

Most of the buildings have a QR code referring to the biosecurity manual on the VEE website. Biosecurity must be respected at all times, even during the tour of the visitation team in the VTH

4.9.3. Suggestions for improvement

The rules of biosecurity have to be respected at all times.

4.9.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.9.

Area 5. Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin

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

Evidence must be provided that these data are regularly recorded and that procedures are in place for correcting any deficiencies.

5.1.1. Findings

The VEE incorporates live animals, non-clinical animal materials, dummies, and simulators in its training across various disciplines, including basic sciences, zootechny, food hygiene, and preclinical and clinical departments. In the clinical skills laboratory, students learn and practice IM, SC, IV, IP and epidural injection techniques on animal models and apply suturing techniques to some abattoir materials such as rumen and uterus in the fourth and fifth years and also in the last year of education ("internship"). Similarly, in the fifth year, artificial insemination (trans-cervical catheterisation) applications are performed on cow uteri brought from the abattoir. There is also an elective course in suturing techniques in the seventh semester.

For zootechnical and nutritional purposes, to teach students about the healthy animal and its breeding and to teach handling and physical examination, the VTF is the main tool for all species (except bees and fish). This facility is made up of a dairy unit, beef unit, pig facilities, new horse stables and a poultry house under construction. There are also laboratories attached and accommodation facilities for students and conference attendees. It stands on a farm of 1000 hectares (orally) where all the grain for animal feed is produced. The dairy unit consists of a herringbone parlour and a milk storage room. The cows are Brown Swiss. These cows are very docile and are ideal for student training.

Students are involved in the mastitis control programme. This programme is supported by an in-house laboratory where analysis of SCC, TBCs, milk protein and total solids are carried out; students are able to perform California Milk Tests and conduct fertility examinations, including

ultrasound. The VTF has a closed beef cattle herd and therefore does not buy in any stock. Bull calves are retained for the beef herd. They are moved to the beef unit after weaning at 8 weeks and are kept until they reach slaughter weight. Calves are fed on whole milk and are introduced to solids with rations designed by the Department of Nutrition. New modern horse stables and an exercise area welcome more horses. These are available for students training throughout the training programme. Some students volunteer to exercise and help with the management of the stables. The sheep herd is important. There is a student accommodation attached to the facility where students can stay overnight during the lambing season. Students are involved in vaccinations and in sheep dipping. There are 2 pig houses, one for boars and another for sows and gilts. The poultry unit is a new unit and will house broilers in a broiler house and laying hens in a house containing enriched cages and another with free-range birds. There is also an egg incubation house.

Necropsies of large animals that died at the VTH are performed in the large animal necropsy room, and necropsies of small animals are performed in the small animal necropsy room at the main building. The current strategy of the VEE has a specific aim to increase the number of companion animal necropsies (horses and pets).

The clinics for internal medicine, surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology, reproduction, and artificial insemination are available at the VTH on a 24-hour basis throughout the year. Students have the opportunity to practice on live animals, especially in the fourth and mostly in the fifth year, as they participate in clinical training in small groups (7-9) with rotation.

Live animals are introduced in the sixth semester. The students attend “Introduction to Internal Medicine” and “Introduction to Surgery” courses in the sixth semester. Each course includes 2 hours of clinical training per week, and the instructor teaches the examination methods on demonstration animals consisting of cattle, sheep and horses.

Cadavers and organs for anatomical training are listed in Table 5.1.1 of the SER (same figures for the last 3 years).

Healthy live animals used for pre-clinical training are listed in Table 5.1.2 of the SER. The number of cadavers used in necropsy is described in Table 5.1.6 of the SER. The number of patients seen intramurally in the VTH is listed in Table 5.1.3 of the SER (see also chapter 3 of the report). The number of patients seen extramurally in the ambulatory clinics is described in Table 5.1.4 of the SER.

The calculated indicators for necropsies indicate that two of them are below the minimal values (ESEVT indicators, SER page 121):

- n° of companion animal necropsies / n° of students graduating annually: 0.539 (minimal value 1.40)
- n° of equine necropsies / n° of students graduating annually: 0.038 (minimal value 0.10)

The calculated indicators for the live patients are above the minimal values, except for equine patients seen intramurally and extramurally:

- n° of equine patients seen intramurally and extramurally / n° of students graduating annually: 1.713 (minimal value 2.15)

5.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The number of cadavers used for anatomy, if it is a reflection of an annual use, is extremely low. Students do not perform entire dissections (regardless of the species); they attend demonstrations by the teaching staff. The same comments can be made at a lower level for necropsies: students work mainly on isolated organs, but compensatory measures have been set up (videos and other self-learning tools).

The number of live animals for pre-clinical training is constant or increasing, except for cattle (-

18 % between year 2022 and year 2024).

The VTF is a vast and modern tool for pre-clinical training. Its management, its facilities, its coaching and the involvement of the teaching and non-teaching staff of the VEE are significant. The VTF as a pre-clinical tool for teaching purposes is commendable.

The number of cadavers used in necropsy is very low for cattle, extremely low for equine, pigs and poultry, and decreasing for small ruminants. Indicators for equine necropsies and companion animal necropsies are under the minimal values, and compensation procedures are not described.

The number of patients seen intramurally at the VTH is decreasing for all ruminants, and is extremely low for pigs (as expected, with no pig herds nearby). The number and diversity of live patients are adequate (dogs and cats at the level of the minimal expected values) or above average (ruminants). In spite of an increasing number of equines over the considered period, the calculated indicator for equine patients is below the minimum values.

The number of patients seen extramurally is increasing for all species, including horses (multiplying their number by a 41 factor during the last four years) correlated to the efforts made to correct the calculated indicator for this topic. Agreements with the Hippodrome and the Gendarme command were fruitful. In spite of a suboptimal calculated indicator for this species, this strategy is commendable.

5.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE explores more sources of cadavers for anatomy (contracting with practitioners, with slaughterhouses, with rendering plants, etc., following biosecurity rules to be established).

It is suggested that the VEE continues efforts to increase the numbers of live patients and cadavers in horses.

5.1.4. Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 5.1 because of the low number of necropsies for horses and companion animals (dogs, cats) with insufficient compensation.

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

All students are involved in mandatory off-campus training, during the first years at the VTF and in extramural practices afterwards. For this purpose, animal species such as horses, cattle, small ruminants, pigs and poultry are bred at the VTF for undergraduate and postgraduate education. Students are present and receive training at the VTF during the third, fifth, sixth and tenth semesters. The farm management is composed of academic staff from different departments of the VEE. The VTF also provides animals for rectal examination of ruminants and horses, assisted reproductive techniques (in particular during the ninth and tenth semester), examination of pregnancy, and udder health. In addition to the VTF, ruminant, and poultry slaughterhouses, the Elaziğ Hippodrome and the ASRC are used for training purposes.

5.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

Familiarisation with the diagnostic and therapeutic approach outside the VEE cannot be

achieved by the unique training at the VTF. As the management of the VTF is performed by VEE teachers, there is no problem with supervision standards. The VTF is a very valuable tool. Very little data is given on external practical training sessions, how they are organised and by whom they are managed, and how the VEE staff supervise them.

5.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE reinforces extramural training and establishes a system of formal contracts with trained practitioners.

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 given to undergraduate students every semester starting from the sixth semester. They acquire practical nursing care skills through practical training in the following clinical courses (internal medicine, surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology, reproduction and artificial insemination) and animal examinations in VTH. Academic staff at VTH teaches these skills. Clinical training is conducted in small student groups with rotations in the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth semesters, with seven - nine students in each group (seventh, eighth semester). Students who will attend the Surgery, Internal Medicine, and Obstetrics and Gynaecology Clinics are divided into two subgroups for each clinic, one for small animals and one for large animals. Students in the EPT-Triage group are subdivided into two subgroups, namely EPT and triage. The ninth semester grouping of students incorporates the Reproduction and Artificial Insemination group in lieu of the EPT-Triage group. In the tenth semester, clinical training is provided within the scope of the "internship".

In the VTH, from admission to discharge, time is allocated each day to discuss the case, focusing on clinical examination findings, data recording, differential diagnosis, diagnostic procedures, treatment and prognosis. During the clinical rotations in the fourth and fifth years and internship in the fifth year, in addition to patient examinations, dialogues between instructors and students in a question-and-answer style about the procedures contribute significantly to students' understanding of the cases. Students frequently have the chance to engage in discourse with PhD students regarding cases. They are encouraged by their clinical instructors to review the literature on the cases via numerous scientific platforms.

5.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The active participation of students in the clinical workgroups is facilitated by the smaller group size for clinical training and encouraged by their teachers, but when the activity is low, there are few alternatives to clinical hands-on work. The acquisition of hands-on clinical skills may be difficult to achieve in clinics with a low case log; the existence of compensatory procedures must be checked.

5.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE continues its efforts to increase the case log in companion animals

(including horses).

It is suggested that the VEE increases the active participation of the students with clinical cases.

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

The “E-vet Professional Veterinary” software, which is utilised in a number of universities in Türkiye and represents a more comprehensive patient registration system, has been employed since 2022. All information related to the clinical examination, diagnostic procedures, and treatment plan is entered into the system by PhD and undergraduate students under the supervision of the clinic supervisor. The system also allows for the secure access of academic staff and all students to PACS images and other pertinent information.

5.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

Medical records for patients seen intra- and extramurally under Core Clinical Training (CCT) are comprehensive and they daily support the activities of the VEE. The use and accessibility of the “E-vet Professional Veterinary” software are commendable.

5.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

5.4.4. Decision Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 5.4.

Area 6. Learning resources

Standard 6.1: State-of-the-art learning resources must be adequate and available to support veterinary education, research, services and continuing education. 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

Students and staff of the VEE have unlimited access to all learning resources from the central as well as from the subsidiary library and courses are regularly organised to ensure their ability to use them. The curriculum incorporates English and occupational English lectures.

The main library of the university has a total area of 14,247 m² and this large multi-storey building

offers various study spaces for independent study and group work. It is open from 8.30 to 24.00 during weekdays, from 9.00 to 23.00 on weekends, and during the examination period it has 24 opening hours every day. At the VEE a subsidiary library operates on 100 m².

The Clinical Skills Laboratory was created to support hands-on learning experiences, and it offers for students a variety of opportunities to develop competences on models. Details about identified deficiencies in the laboratory can be found under Standard 4.5.

Printed and electronic media, course materials, are easily accessible for students, staff, and in special cases for stakeholders too. There is an internal service among universities to borrow books from other universities or research institution's libraries if they are not available locally.

Via a Turkish document supply system, restricted thesis documents are accessible in the central library.

The Education Commission operates under the FU and the Education and Planning Commission of the VEE responsible for developing and implementing learning resources. Major issues regarding the curriculum, or the assessment and evaluation system are presented to the Faculty Board, and the proposal is submitted to the University Senate for approval. Consultations and surveys regarding learning resources are also taken into account.

6.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The main library provides appropriate conditions and learning opportunities for students.

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

The main library within the main campus, a five minutes' walk from the VEE, is the largest library building in the region and the multi-storey building houses different kinds of learning tools, printed and electronic media, and archives. A canteen, study rooms, conference and audio-visual halls support students and staff to perform their tasks. The library has an automated cataloguing system accessible via dedicated kiosks or through the library website. Self-checking for lending and returning materials can be used independently by all eligible users.

Forty-one desktop computers and 2306 connections are available for users. The total number of staff in the main library is 31 of which nine computer operators organise the technical background. Two librarians and one database manager support the ability of users in searching learning resources. The library staff's salaries are funded by the general state budget, and other

expenses, including invoices, maintenance, and overhead costs, are covered by the central FU budget.

The FU has an IT department, and the number of staff is 11. The department has six laboratories, and altogether 316 computers.

Distance education is the focus of the university, and there is an e-learning platform in operation. Cutting-edge technology and trained staff ensure the smooth operation of online education.

Wireless network connection assists students and staff in accessing databases and learning resources in and off-campus. The Distance Education Centre of the FU provides training, webinars, and instructional videos to enhance students' proficiency.

The subsidiary library of the VEE has a capacity of 52 seats, 6 computers and 18 electrical connections. Books, periodicals, encyclopaedias, theses, and lecture notes and videos are available. Taking into consideration the number of students in the VEE further development of the subsidiary library is needed.

Annual budget of the central library in 2024 was 152,532.03 Euro and it is nearly twice as big as in 2022. This amount was allocated to obtain special learning resources.

The general state budget funds the personnel costs in the subsidiary library, and other expenses are covered by the general budget of the VEE. In light of the existing economic circumstances in Turkey, the Presidency has imposed a three-year moratorium on new investments, with the exception of cases considered essential. Thus, VEE does not plan to allocate resources to building a new subsidiary library or comprehensively expanding the existing one.

6.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The main library provides the necessary learning resources, is well-equipped, and its infrastructure creates a comfortable learning opportunity for students.

6.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

Developing the subsidiary library in line with the number of students can be done, although students have access to the main library of the university.

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

There are 2,993 veterinary books, 271 e-books, and there are 26 printed journals, 141 veterinary e-journal in Turkish and in other languages. The main library has a total of 117,528 printed books, 1,150 printed periodicals, 9,923 printed theses, 661,944 e-books, 44,668 e-periodicals, and 5,896,910 e-thesis.

The subsidiary library has a total of 785 books, 2037 periodicals, 20 encyclopaedias, 1,125 theses, and 667 lecture notes.

Students follow the Basic Information Technology Usage lectures in the second semester (178

students in 2024) as part of the curriculum. The Basic Information Technologies course, a compulsory course of the curriculum (two hours theoretical and two hours practical per week), and conducted by the FU Department of Informatics. The content of the lectures is the following: - MS Word, MS Excel, MS PowerPoint, navigation on the internet. To enhance skill in databases and searching for resources, lectures are provided by the central library and by the distance education centre of the university (FUDEC) through monthly webinars announced on the central library's website and via email.

English is compulsory in the first four semesters, consisting of two hours per week generally during 14 weeks per semester. VEE offers two hours of "Occupational English" lectures per week for nine semesters. Like other courses, the English and Occupational English courses also have mid-term and final exams. The English courses in the curriculum are administered via the Distance Learning Portal "Collaborate". This system enables the online utilisation of a wide range of educational materials, including video, slides, images, and smart board systems. The Occupational English courses are conducted in VEE classrooms by the teaching staff of the VEE. Furthermore, instructional videos were prepared and made available by the VEE.

With the help of the course instructors, students can gain clinical skills on fresh materials, models and plastinates in the Clinical Skill Laboratory (see the full evaluation under Standard 4.5), before performing interventions on live animals. These opportunities are provided and organised by the clinical science departments from the sixth semester onward.

6.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

Most of the students have a good level of English (some of them are excellent) and computer skills.

6.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

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

General information on educational opportunities at Turkish universities for national and international students is available via the YOK Virtual Fair Platform. The VEE conducts outreach through career programmes and visits to state and private schools for trainee students/prospective applicants. Opportunities for admission of both national and international students at FU, including scholarship opportunities, are detailed on the FU Student Affairs Office website, together with details of the veterinary course and the course coordinator. Further

academic details, including university procedures, regulations and information regarding internships is provided via the FU's OBS system. The VEE's own website gives more detailed information concerning veterinary studies together with the VEE's veterinary programme objectives, the curriculum, teaching schedules, assessment schedules and progression criteria, the veterinary academic calendar, and details of formal cooperation with other VEEs. Updates and information are also shared via social media platforms (Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, X) and brochures distributed at the VEE and affiliated veterinary institutions.

Progression of students through VEE's structured, five-year veterinary programme is based on full-time study over 10 semesters and successful attainment of 300 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits. The criteria and procedures for academic progress and professional qualifications and related essential information are documented and available to students online. The VEE also uses WhatsApp groups, emails, and student representatives to notify students about announcements and updates.

The FU's International Relations Office provides support, guidance, and advice for students, and oversees bilateral agreements for national and international (ERASMUS+) mobility programmes – these schemes are discussed with students and the VEE has a formal committee to support (and monitor) applicants. There is a national programme that accepts applications, supported by the Rector of the student's university, to provide financial support for students undertaking international externships; the VEE's veterinary students have a good record of success in securing these scholarships

7.1.2 Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE applies regulations on student admission, progression and certification, publishes information on its website and attracts potential students through various platforms and initiatives.

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

The VEE's capacity and infrastructure (including clinical facilities, laboratories, healthy and sick animals, clinical caseload in the different species and ethically-sourcing adequate quantities of animal-derived materials for practical training) have been designed for a student cohort of 120 and the VEE submits a proposal for a maximum student intake to the YÖK every year. However, the actual number of enrolled students is ultimately determined by state policies.

7.2.2 Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE has no control on student admissions numbers and is required, by YÖK, to accept more students per year than its facilities (including animal resources) were designed. This situation affects the current quality of the education and severely hampers future planning for structural

facilities, animal facilities and staffing to ensure appropriate staff: student ratios and the quality of veterinary education. This has had significant negative impacts on staff mental wellbeing. The recurrent situation was exacerbated by the force majeure of the 2023 earthquake in Turkey and the severe infrastructural damage it caused at other veterinary schools' premises, and the subsequent diverting of national funding away from higher education and to construction and renewal projects following the earthquake.

7.2.3 Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE and FU should continue to interact with competent authorities to resolve this issue/provide additional resources including technical and support staff, possibly also in collaboration with other Turkish VEEs that are in the same situation.

7.2.4. Decision

The VEE is not compliant with Standard 7.2 because the total number of students exceeds the VEE's desired capacity, placing additional strain on its resources and infrastructure.

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

The admission procedures, selection criteria, and quotas for admission to the VEE's veterinary programme are determined through the Faculty Board with final approval from YÖK (see also above). Applications are processed through the OBS. Within the VEE, one of the Vice-Deans oversees student services, while the Faculty Board ensures compliance with policies and regulations. Decisions are communicated through the VEE website, YÖK portals, and social media, The admissions process is regularly reviewed and revised based on feedback.

7.3.2 Analysis of the findings/Comments

The Higher Education sector in Turkey is highly regulated by national Law, and although the criteria that potential applicants must follow, and relevant regulations, are readily available on FU's and the VEE's websites, the admissions process itself is conducted by central Turkish governmental authorities and therefore outside direct control of any of the Turkish VEEs. Undergraduate education at public universities in Turkey is free; there is no separate admission process for scholarship students. International (full fee-paying) students wishing to study in Turkey must meet the criteria set by the YÖK. Every year, the VEE submits a proposal for a maximum student intake to the relevant central Turkish governmental authority (YÖK), but this number is regularly exceeded

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 FU Centre for Research and Practice for Individuals with Disabilities within the Faculty of Clinical Medicine provides a clinical service and support to all FU students with disabilities or chronic illnesses. The VEE has a Disability Support Commission that is responsible for implementing necessary adjustments based on students' requests when needed and students on the veterinary programme can then contact the VEE unit coordinator if they encounter any issues.

7.4.2 Analysis of the findings/Comments

Policies and procedures on how to accommodate individuals with disabilities or illnesses are in place. Currently, there are no students on the VEE's veterinary programme who meet the published disability criteria.

7.4.3 Suggestions for improvement

The VEE's Disability Support Commission webpage should include its role, remit VEE's (similar recommendation for all of the VEE's Commissions on its website).

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

Progression through the programme is dependent on the successful completion of specific 30 ECTS-credit courses in a specified sequence. The maximum length of time over which a student may complete the VEE's 5-year veterinary programme is normally 8 years. In 2024, 59.7 % of students graduated within the standard period and a further 23.7 % after 6 years. Each course has examinations in the middle and end of each semester; there are prerequisite attendance criteria for the end-of-semester exams. There is no bar to progression from first to second year but students must achieve a minimum grade point average of 1.8 out of 4.0 in order to transition

from the second to the third year. Re-sits for the end-of-semester examinations are held within 7-10 days of the first attempt, as required by Turkish Law. Students are required to register for each semester and may, subject to approval by the Faculty Board, intermittent (“freeze”) their registration for one or two semesters. Turkish Law also allows those students unable to graduate within this eight-year period to re-register provided they meet certain conditions.

7.5.2 Analysis of the findings/Comments

Progression of each student is monitored by the advisor appointed to each year group by the VEE. Students with poor performance can be referred to various support services within FU, including support for students facing financial difficulties; students with health issues are referred to FU’s Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry which provides free psychological counselling and guidance. However, there is no single point of contact or disability resource centre for students with immediate mental wellbeing conditions or concerns.

7.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

The VEE should discuss (with FU/Rectorate) the provision of a more formal and robust mental wellbeing support system for students in order to assist them with their progression and completion of the veterinary program within five years.

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

The procedures for excluding a student are regulated and clearly prescribed in Turkish Law. The procedures and key indicators leading to disciplinary actions or legal rulings that can result in expulsion are outlined in FU’s Student Discipline Regulations which are provided to students. Students may be excluded from the veterinary programme if, after review of the specific circumstance by an investigator appointed by the Dean, a student is found to have violated the FU university regulations. The Faculty Executive Committee has the authority to approve, reject, or modify the Investigator’s proposed sanctions. A student has a fifteen-day period in which to submit an appeal. If the student still disagrees with the VEE’s decision, they can submit a formal appeal to the university administration if they have evidence suggesting that legal and institutional regulations have not been followed. If the university administration upholds the original decision, students have the further right to seek judicial review by legal recourse through the courts under applicable administrative procedure laws.

7.6.2 Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE’s policies for managing appeals are transparent and publicly available. There are explicit processes in place for the exclusion of students from the programme.

7.6.3 Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE should establish an independent “Fitness for Practice” panel to

investigate cases of student breaches of discipline presented to them, rather than appointing a single investigator. This panel should include experienced practitioners/employers that have not been directly responsible for the teaching and assessment of students.

It is suggested that information about excluded students is shared between the Turkish VEEs, to avoid these students being enrolled by other veterinary schools

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

The VEE, and the parent FU, provides academic support, career guidance, and free health services (the latter through the FU University Hospital); detailed information on what may be provided is available on FU's website. The elected Student Council of FU has a stated primary mission to protect students' rights and to meet their educational, health, sports and cultural needs. Within the VEE, the Vice-Dean responsible for student affairs serves as a primary contact for grievances related to academic, physical, emotional, or well-being needs. An orientation session for new students is held at the beginning of the academic year to familiarise students with the VEE and available services and an academic advisor is assigned to each registered year cohort to provide guidance to students experiencing personal and/or academic difficulties, and to assist students in planning their academic and professional paths. Each year group class elects two student representatives and ten of these are the "Student Delegation" whose responsibilities include coordinating with class representatives, supporting students and advising on academic matters. One of the Student Delegation members acts as the VEE representative on the broader university Student Council. Other routes by which students at the VEE can raise a grievance include written submission or verbal representation to relevant committees or the Dean's Office, or via an anonymous complaints mailbox for confidential submissions. If students are dissatisfied with the outcome at the level of the VEE, they may appeal or file formal complaints or inquiries to higher university authorities or escalate their concerns through external bodies such as CIMER, which is a national platform that acts as an external channel for addressing unresolved issues.

7.7.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

There is no central resource centre staffed by qualified specialists in mental health assessment and support to which students have immediate access. Instead, they must rely on the routine appointment system provided by the local hospitals. During the meetings with students and other staff categories, all groups expressed a desire for greater emphasis and assistance for mental health.

7.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

The VEE should discuss the provision of a more formal and robust mental wellbeing support for students and staff.

7.7.4. Decision

The VEE is not compliant with Standard 7.7 because there is no single point of contact for students (or staff) with mental wellbeing, health concerns or issues, to facilitate immediate and appropriate assessment, care and support.

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

Multiple channels are available at the VEE for students at any stage of the curriculum to express their needs, complaints, comments, and suggestions, covering academic performance, interpersonal issues, and compliance with national and international standards, including ESEVT. Included in these feedback mechanisms are “complaint boxes” located in the VEE buildings through which students can submit comments anonymously.

Other routes by which students can provide feedback / comments / suggestions are written or verbal communication directly with the Dean, Vice-Deans, academic mentors, or VEE staff. Additionally, each academic year has an elected student delegate who represents their peers and conveys collective concerns to the VEE administration. These five-year representatives collectively form the Student Delegation which has one member on the Faculty Board. Students and or their year representatives/Student Delegation can also contact the OBS to submit complaints, suggestions, and requests.

All feedback for Student and Academic Affairs is reviewed by the Dean, Vice-Dean (student affairs) and the QA Commission. Where necessary, actions are taken in collaboration with the Faculty Board Student Committee, academic mentors, and lecturers. The VEE’s QA system further analyses this feedback to identify opportunities for improvement, with the aim of ensuring continuous development of educational quality and compliance with standards.

7.8.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

This comprehensive framework creates a transparent and inclusive environment that values and acts upon students’ input.

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 Faculty Senate approves the exam policy. Each course includes a midterm exam between the fifth and 12th week of each semester, and a final exam at the end of each semester (mid-January and mid-June). The exam schedule is presented to the Faculty Administrative Board for approval, following consultations with the Education Planning Commission and student representatives, and it must be published at least 15 days prior to the start of the exams. Most exams consist of both a theoretical part, which may be assessed through oral or written format, most of which include multiple-choice, short answer, matching essay, or fill-in-the-blank questions, and a practical part. Even if the weight of each part can vary by course, the final scores are composed of 20-30 % of practical parts and 70-80 % of theoretical ones. For instance, practical assessments in clinical courses are conducted in the Skill lab or involve direct interactions with healthy or patient animals at the VTH. These practical exams cover areas such as anamnesis, clinical examinations, diagnoses, treatments, and prognosis interpretations. Pre-clinical practical skills are assessed through oral exams and/or portfolios using different materials such as cadavers, healthy animals, organs or archive materials.

Clinical practical skills developed during core clinical rotations are documented in the KBTS system, whereby an academic teacher logs each clinical procedure to update student records. Completion of the KBTS is essential for graduation. Clinical skills acquired during EPT at private clinics and during summer training are tracked in an EPT logbook. The Food Hygiene and Control exam is performed in a specially prepared laboratory and Meat Inspections exam occurs at slaughterhouses and biosecurity is an important part. Lastly, soft skills are evaluated through various exams over the course and during clinical rotations, as well as during the EPT.

8.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

Because the window reserved for exams is only two weeks, the students are forced to take at least one exam every day. This could negatively affect the student's success. Students who need to take a resit attempt at an end-of-semester examination have only a few days in which to remediate their revision. While this follows national law, it may impact on, and be reflected in, the percentage of students completing the program in five years (see 7.5.1)

The exams are composed of a mid-term and a final exam, which may be exonerative to facilitate the study. Summer training is carried out according to the procedures and principles in the FUFVM Summer Internship Directive.

8.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

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 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

The assessment criteria and procedures are regulated by the Academic Senate. Each course reports the assessment criteria as well as the correspondence with the learning outcomes. The total grade is made up of 40 % of the midterm and 60 % of the final exam. The exam is considered passed if 50 % of the total score is exceeded. Students who pass all the exams in a semester and have a General Grade Point between 3.00 and 3.50, with no letter grades of “FF,” are classified as “Honour Students.” Those with a General Grade Point of 3.50 or above are designated as “High Honour Students.” Students can fill out a questionnaire to evaluate a course and the corresponding exam, providing feedback on the lecturer and their evaluation methods. There is also a procedure for students applying for an exam, which must be submitted to the Dean’s Office.

8.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A reward mechanism for students and the option for extended exam times for disabled students are commendable. However, there do not appear to be specific provisions for pregnant or working students.

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

The Faculty Board is responsible for reviewing assessment results, adjusting assessment strategies as needed, and ensuring the effectiveness of the assessment processes. If necessary, the Faculty Board may request recommendations for changes to the assessment strategies from the Education Planning Commission and the Quality Assurance (QA) Commission based on the data collected. Every learning outcome is connected to at least one program outcome, which outlines the skills and competences that all students are expected to acquire (SER Appendix 2).

8.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The relationship DOC – Learning Outcomes – and learning Objectives are clearly defined and reported in the *Bologna Information System* on VEE website.

8.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

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

Students can access their course curriculum and outputs from the VEE website. They can also document their transcripts using their passwords from OBS or via e-government with barcodes. For students to take an active role in the learning process, topics are repeated in theoretical courses in the form of questions and answers.

8.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

It is not easy to understand how students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process and how the assessment of students can reflect this approach.

8.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

A variety of tools and settings should be applied to encourage students to develop a personal strategy focused on the improvement of their knowledge and soft skills. These should include clinical case-study exercises, clinical rounds, and seminars. The assessment strategy should emphasise the problem-solving method.

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

The level of competence achieved by the students is assessed by their performances on KBTS, clinical skill exams, practical exams, performance reports from summer internships and EPTs, and on preparing and presenting their Graduation Thesis. The fulfilment of KBTS is mandatory for

graduation. EPT logbook is submitted together with the filled Evaluation Form to the EPT Coordinator who in turn sends the documents to the Education Planning Committee. The graduation thesis is carried out according to the *Directive for Internship and Graduation Thesis* on the website. KBTS system and oral exams are crucial methods for assessing the student's progression in practical and clinical activities. The oral exams are considered key indicators of the practical/clinical training quality (standard 3.1.9).

8.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

No information about the final graduation exam has been provided in the SER and it is not sufficiently clear how the graduation thesis preparation is evaluated and recorded.

The current logbook is not suitable to provide evidence of progression in competences as part of the quality control processes.

8.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

The current logbook should be improved for giving evidence of students' competence progression.

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

The selection, recruitment, and promotion of academic staff are conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Education Law No. 2547, the YÖK Personnel Law No. 2914, and the Appointment and Promotion Criteria and Application Principles for VEE Academic Staff Positions. Each year, the Dean gathers the requirements from the departments, and the requests are submitted to YÖK.

Candidates apply to the FU Rectorate by preparing a file containing scientific studies for the announced positions, and then the files of the candidates whose applications are accepted are sent to expert juries. All teaching staff must hold a PhD degree. Exceptions include a few mandatory service courses such as Turkish Literature, Foreign Language, and Atatürk's Principles and History of Revolution; nearly all courses are taught by veterinary professors. Support staff are employed under Articles 4/A, 4/B, and 4/C of the Civil Servants Personnel Law

No. 657. Administrative and support staff are required to possess competences relevant to the duties they will perform. Support staff working at the VEE receive basic training (first aid and occupational health and safety, and biosecurity training). The completion of this basic training is mandatory for their transition to permanent civil service status. Newly appointed staff are subject to a probationary period of one to two years.

9.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The recruitment process for permanent teachers is clear. The composition of the expert juries is not specified (how many people, elected by whom? Who ensures the competences – professional skills, pedagogy – of the candidates?).

The recruitment process for non-academic, research, and support staff could be more precisely described.

9.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE should formalise those processes of recruitment that are not directly connected to the statutory and legal provisions.

It is suggested that the VEE should formalise a training programme in veterinary education for all staff, especially those involved in teaching.

9.1.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 9.1.

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

The teaching staff involved with the core veterinary programme includes 121 FTE (3 % more than in 2022), including 28 PhD students, 5 practitioners, 1 certified specialist, and 5 “others” (Table 9.2.1). All have received training to teach and to assess undergraduate students. Seminars about assessment methodologies and pedagogical approaches are usually provided once a year to the teaching staff. 94 % are vets.

The support staff is 98 FTE (18 % more than in 2022). Over the next three years, the goal is to achieve a 10 % increase in the number of academic staff and a 5 % increase in support staff.

The research staff is 111 FTE (4 % more than in 2022).

The rules regarding the consultancy services or other work to be carried out outside of the personnel working within FU are regulated. In addition, the opportunity to establish and work in a part-time company within the “FIRAT TEKNOKENT” is also provided.

9.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The major concern is the negative impact the total number of students has on the delivery and achievement of the VEE's mission statement.

Indeed, the focus on support staff and on clinical teaching teachers is reflected by the orientation of the positions managed by the VEE, and by the increase in recruitments in recent years. The increase of recruitments is a necessary strategy, but the number is still too low. The situation at the time of visitation is that, taking in consideration the number of students admitted to the VEE, the total number, qualifications and skills of all staff are at a critical level.

Other points to take into consideration are:

- The nature of the training (“seminars”) for the teaching staff is not well defined
- 28 PhD students are considered as FTE teaching staff.

9.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the number of students admitted to the VEE be in line with the number of staff, technical means and patients and the educational objectives, see Standard 7.2.

It is suggested that continuing training of staff become a priority. Moreover, the continuing training should be clear and formalised and the education for new young teachers be more extended.

9.2.4. Decision

The VEE is not compliant with Standard 9.2, because the total number of the teaching, technical, administrative and support staff is not sufficient to deliver the study programme and ensure an optimal functioning of the VEE.

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

Academic staff work 40 hours per week, dedicating at least 10 hours to teaching, with the remainder focused on research, service, and administrative duties. Each of the VEE members is required to fulfil various evaluation criteria, such as carrying out projects, obtaining patents, and publishing in indexed journals. All academic performances of academic staff; research projects completed in the previous year, research, national and international scientific publications, national and international citations to scientific publications, awards, and patents are evaluated to be awarded and scored. FU calculates the "Academic Staff Performance Score" every year. For publications, the incentive amounts are determined based on the journal's score, calculated using a specific methodology. Within the scope of research and career projects supported by TÜBİTAK, Project Incentive Premium is paid to project managers, researchers, and consultants in the project team.

9.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The opportunities to develop and extend the teaching and assessment knowledge of the teaching staff are not defined, as well as the way to encourage them to improve their skills. Emphasis is on research, not in didactic, pedagogic and professional training and specialisation.

9.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

See 9.2.3.

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) equal emphasis on all aspects of teaching (including clinical teaching), research, service and other scholarly activities.

9.4.1. Findings

Professional growth and development programs for teaching and support staff are structured in alignment with national and international standards under the framework of the YÖKAK. For teaching staff, development, and promotions are governed by the YÖK Law No. 2547 and university-specific criteria. Academic promotions at the VEE are determined based on well-defined criteria that encompass teaching, research, and scholarly contributions. Academic staff work full-time and permanently in departments related to their fields of expertise. New academic staff benefit from informal mentoring provided by senior colleagues.

Support staff development follows the "Civil State Personnel Law" No. 657 and the "General Regulation on Promotion and Title Change Principles in Public Institutions and Organisations" No. 3601. The promotion of support staff is subject to the "Promotion Exam". Promotions are based on success in periodic exams, disciplinary scores, and seniority.

Both academic and support staff are actively involved in the governance and decision-making processes of the VEE, and participate in various commissions and boards, enabling them to play a significant role in shaping policies, procedures, and initiatives within the VEE.

9.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE uses a well-defined, comprehensive and publicised programme for the professional growth and development of teaching and support staff, based on national and local rules. Promotions are ensured by well-defined procedures too.

9.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to formalise mentoring between colleagues and newly recruited staff.

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

Staff performance is regularly evaluated. Surveys to evaluate the educational performance of academic staff are conducted at the end of each semester. They assess both course content and teaching performance with an additional section for students to provide comments and suggestions. Completing the survey is mandatory for students to access their final grades. All responses are anonymous. The results are shared with relevant departments to guide evaluation and improvements. Regular reviews by the QA Committee include feedback from stakeholders to ensure continuous improvement.

9.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

A permanent and continuous system for assessment of teaching and teaching staff is implemented. Students participate anonymously. The feedback is regularly assessed.

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

In the VEE there is no formal research-based undergraduate veterinary education, but students are involved in research activities on a compulsory (thesis writing) and voluntary (research projects) basis. In the final year following successful exams, students must prepare their thesis under the supervision of academic staff. It generally consists of experimental research, historical studies and/or critical reviews.

Students may voluntarily work in research projects which activity has become more and more common in recent years.

The academic staff published 264 research articles, and the list of publications is provided in Appendix 5 of the SER.

The total number of projects ongoing in the last academic year is 34. These projects assigned by the Research Coordination Unit of the FU (FÜBAP) relate to basic, preclinical and clinical sciences, as well as to animal production, food hygiene and technology.

There are projects prepared by VEE academic staff, and in 2024, FÜBAP allocated a total of 83,000 Euros for this purpose.

The guiding principle of the VEE staff is to share their scientific knowledge and skills with students in order to highlight the importance of evidence-based veterinary medicine and scientific research.

10.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

Apart from the graduation thesis, there is no formal research-based undergraduate veterinary education although the VEE is very active in research. However, students can apply to TÜBİTAK for specific students' projects, in which they can act as project leaders with advisors from the VEE staff.

10.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

The VEE should seek to increase further the number of funded research programs and the number of students involved.

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 are involved in research activities according to the following: 1. Graduation thesis, 2. Voluntarily in research projects, 3. As a fellow in large-scale funded research projects.

The VEE provides opportunities and supports students to participate in conferences and to give presentations in different student associations and societies. Opportunities to gain global perspectives and international experiences are also provided in student exchange programs. A total of 44 students had the opportunity to study abroad in the last three academic years through exchange programs such as ERASMUS.

In 2023 and 2024 a significant number of students participated in "Introduction to Academic Skills" and project preparation training (TÜBİTAK 2237-A programme) through theoretical lectures and interactive applications. At the end of the training each participant received a certificate.

Nevertheless, the main opportunity to gain knowledge and competences in scientific research is the compulsory thesis writing. The academic staff of the VEE thoroughly supervise the activity of students and support their thesis work. The assessment of the minimum requirements includes two steps. First – preparation of the thesis at the level of academic standard, with clear communication of the scientific findings. Second – students have to defend the thesis in front of a Graduation Commission.

Students are offered to participate in non-compulsory research programmes. There is an ongoing program (TÜBİTAK-2209) providing opportunities for undergraduate students to lead 37 projects. The VEE submitted (deadline was in November 2024) 19 additional projects to broaden the research-oriented environment.

In recent years, an increased number of undergraduates (21 in 2024) were involved as fellows in large-scale funded projects and received monthly scholarships paid by the University.

10.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

Students actively participate in different research programs and the opportunities are continuously increasing.

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

There are no EBVS internships and residencies in Turkey. At the VEE, the word “Interns” is used to denote undergraduate students in the last semester. Regulations concerning the residency program have already been issued and are awaiting implementation. Postgraduate research training includes PhD programmes and MSc programmes and is coordinated by the Health Science Institute of FU. The number of postgraduate students registered in 2023 was 196 and in 2024 it was 88. The number of PhD students graduated in 2023 was 24 out of 92, and in 2024 it was 26 out of 82.

The Diplomate title is not officially recognised within the national academic promotion and specialisation system. However, there is a Diplomate veterinarian specialised in Poultry Veterinary Science at the VEE who actively contributes to both education and research. In addition, national efforts are ongoing to establish a veterinary specialisation system.

The continuing education programmes for veterinarians and stakeholders are organised by the Continuous Learning Centre of FU (FÜSEM) and VTF was cut in 2023 due to the earthquake in the region. This resulted in funds diverting away from Higher Education to support infrastructure recovery. VEE is working to restore training numbers and standards to pre-disaster levels.

10.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

Using the terms of interns and internship programs for undergraduate students causes confusion and makes it difficult to distinguish from EPT.

10.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested that the VEE should revise its terminology used for undergraduate students in their final semester in accordance with the definitions provided in Area 9 of ESEVT SOP 2023.

The VEE/FU should enact existing plans to introduce EVBS-level Internship and Residency programs and create new opportunities to increase the number of specialised veterinarians in the VEE.

10.3.4. Decision

It is suggested that 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

Postgraduate education programmes and the number of students are proposed by the VEE to the Health Science Institute of the FU (FUHSI) and coordinated jointly. Postgraduate students are registered by the FUHSI, and the VEE executes the programmes on behalf of the FUHSI. Requirements for the postgraduate program of the VEE are determined by the Administration Board of the FUHSI. The members are the director, vice director, heads of all departments of the VEE, and elected members.

Some criteria have also been established by the university for postgraduate students to be appointed as academic staff and for academic staff to be promoted (as associate professor or professor). The most important of these criteria is to take part in research projects as either a project leader or researcher. Academic staff who have research activities (projects, scientific publications, etc.) have the advantage of getting promoted.

10.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE does not have a specific mechanism for integrating research activities into the educational program, but it has a number of specific practices (see previous chapters) that provide opportunities to integrate it into the student training and the educational program. From this perspective, the most relevant program is thesis writing.

Supervised research and student participation in research projects support the VEE's commitment to research-based education.

10.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

10.4.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.4.

11. ESEVT Indicators

Name of the VEE:		Firat University Faculty of Veterinary Medicine				
Name & mail of the VEE's Head:		Prof. Dr. Kazım ŞAHİN & ksahin@firat.edu.tr				
Date of the form filling:		January 02, 2025				
Raw data from the last 3 complete academic years		2022	2023	2024	Mean	
1	n° of FTE teaching staff involved in veterinary training	117	117	121	118,33	
2	n° of undergraduate students	796	821	852	823,00	
3	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training	110	110	114	111,33	
4	n° of students graduating annually	112	113	120	115	
5	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training	83	86	98	89	
6	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	1220	1220	1220	1220	
7	n° of hours of Core Clinical Training (CCT)	779	779	779	779	
8	n° of hours of VPH (including FSQ) training	208	208	208	208	
9	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in VPH (including FSQ)	64	64	64	64	
10	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally	4879	4896	5145	4973,33333	
11	n° of individual ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally	2414	1683	1545	1880,66667	
12	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally	24	25	48	32,3333333	
13	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen intra-murally	523	476	257	418,7	
14	n° of companion animal patients seen extra-murally	0	118	150	89,3	
15	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extra-murally	369	341	948	552,7	
16	n° of equine patients seen extra-murally	11	34	449	164,7	
17	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen extra-murally	0	5	0	1,7	
18	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds	118	102	174	131,3	
19	n° of visits to poultry and farmed rabbit units	50	42	56	49,3	
20	n° of companion animal necropsies	51	50	85	62,0	
21	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies	215	203	179	199,0	
22	n° of equine necropsies	4	3	6	4,3	
23	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies	123	94	286	167,7	
24	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training	1	1	1	1,0	
25	n° of PhD graduating annually	12	24	26	20,7	

Name of the VEE:		Firat University Faculty of Veterinary Medicine				
Date of the form filling:		January 02, 2025				
Calculated Indicators from raw data		VEE values	Median values ¹	Minimal values ²	Balance ³	
I1	n° of FTE teaching staff involved in veterinary training / n° of undergraduate students	0,131	0,15	0,13	0,005	
I2	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,743	0,84	0,63	0,113	
I3	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,774	0,88	0,54	0,234	
I4	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	1220,000	953,50	700,59	519,410	
I5	n° of hours of Core Clinical Training (CCT)	779,000	941,58	704,80	74,200	
I6	n° of hours of VPH (including FSQ) training	208,000	293,50	191,80	16,200	
I7	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in VPH (including FSQ)	64,000	75,00	31,80	32,200	
I8	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	44,023	67,37	44,01	0,013	
I9	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	21,159	18,75	9,74	11,419	
I10	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	1,713	5,96	2,15	-0,437	
I11	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	3,655	3,11	1,16	2,495	
I12	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds / n° of students graduating annually	1,142	1,29	0,54	0,602	
I13	n° of visits to poultry and farmed rabbit units / n° of students graduating annually	0,429	0,11	0,04	0,384	
I14	n° of companion animal necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0,539	2,11	1,40	-0,861	
I15	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	1,730	1,36	0,90	0,830	
I16	n° of equine necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0,038	0,18	0,10	-0,062	
I17	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	1,458	2,65	0,88	0,578	
I18	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,009	0,27	0,06	-0,051	
I19	n° of PhD graduating annually / n° of students graduating annually	0,180	0,15	0,07	0,110	

11.1. Findings

As described under Standards 4, 7 and 9, the VEE is in a challenging position due to the devastating earthquake in 2023 and the subsequent diverting of national funding away from higher education. The several disruptions of teaching and subsequent decreases in caseloads and necropsy numbers this has caused, combined with the fact that the VEE has no control over student intake and that the total number of students exceeds the VEE's desired capacity, has placed additional strain on its resources and infrastructure. This situation is mirrored in some of the corresponding indicators, as I10, I14 and I16 are below the minimal values, and I8 is just above. The number of hours of non-clinical training is very high compared to the median value. Indicator I18 is below the minimal value. This is due to the fact that there are no EBVS internships and residencies in Turkey, and no national specialist system.

11.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE has not yet been in a position to fully compensate for the situation at the VTH. Indicator I3 related to the number of support staff is above the minimal value. However, it became clear during the visit that technical staff is not available in, for example, laboratories where students do their research projects due to legislative issues. Thus, students are paid as technicians to do the laboratory work for their project analysis in order to replace the missing laboratory staff. These students are on a payroll supported by the research grants. Postgraduate research training at the VEE includes PhD programmes and MSc programmes. However, the Team was told that legislation to pave the way for EBVS internships and residencies is in a national pipeline, although the progress is slow.

11.3. Suggestions for improvement

The VEE lists several suggestions for the improvement of indicators, including collaboration with other VEEs in Turkey, extended partnerships with private and public animal services and other stakeholders, and planning of a comprehensive contingency plan. These suggestions are supported.

12. ESEVT Rubrics (summary of the proposal from the Full Visitation Team 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	NC
Standard 1.1: The VEE must have as its main objective the provision, in agreement with the EU Directives and ESG Standards, of adequate, ethical, research-based, evidence-based veterinary training that enables the new graduate to perform as a veterinarian capable of entering all commonly recognised branches of the veterinary profession and to be aware of the importance of lifelong learning. The VEE must develop and follow its mission statement which must embrace the ESEVT Standards.	X		
Standard 1.2: The VEE must be part of a university or a higher education institution providing training recognised as being of an equivalent level and formally recognised as such in the respective country. The person responsible for the veterinary curriculum and the person(s) responsible for the professional, ethical, and teaching affairs of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) must hold a veterinary degree. The decision-making process, organisation and management of the VEE must allow implementation of its strategic plan and of a cohesive study programme, in compliance with the ESEVT Standards.	X		
Standard 1.3: The VEE must have a strategic plan, which includes a SWOT analysis of its current activities, short- and medium-term objectives, and an operating plan with a timeframe and indicators for its implementation. The development and implementation of the VEE's strategy must include a role for students and other stakeholders, both internal and external, and the strategy must have a formal status and be publicly available.	X		
Standard 1.4: The VEE must have a policy and associated written procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of its programmes and awards. It must also commit itself explicitly to the development of a culture which recognises the importance of quality, and QA within the VEE. To achieve this, the VEE must develop and implement a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality. The VEE must have a policy for academic integrity, i.e. the expectation that all staff and students act with honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.	X		
Standard 1.5: The VEE must provide evidence that it interacts with its stakeholders and the wider society. Such public information must be clear, objective and readily accessible; the information must include up-to-date information about the study programme. The VEE's website must mention the VEE's ESEVT status and its last Self-Evaluation Report and Visitation Reports must be easily available to the public.	X		
Standard 1.6: The VEE must monitor and periodically review its activities, both quantitative and qualitative, to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. The VEE must make public how this analysis of information has been utilised in the further development of its activities and provide evidence as to the involvement of both students and staff in the provision, analysis and implementation of such data. Evidence must be provided that the QA loops are fully closed (Plan Do Check Adjust cycles) to efficiently enhance the quality of education. Any action planned or taken as a result of this data analysis must be communicated to all those concerned.	X		
Standard 1.7: The VEE must undergo external review through the ESEVT on a cyclical basis. Evidence must be provided of such external evaluation with the assurance that the progress made since the last ESEVT evaluation was linked to a continuous quality assurance process.	X		
Area 2. Finances			
Standard 2.1: Finances must be demonstrably adequate to sustain the requirements for the VEE to meet its mission and to achieve its objectives for education, research and services. The description must include both expenditures (separated into personnel costs, operating costs, maintenance costs and equipment) and revenues (separated into public funding, tuition fees, services, research grants and other sources).	X		

<p>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.</p>	X		
<p>Standard 2.3: Resources allocation must be regularly reviewed to ensure that available resources meet the requirements.</p>	X		
Area 3. Curriculum			
<p>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.</p> <p>This concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Basic Sciences ● Clinical Sciences in companion animals (including equine and exotic pets) ● Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals (including Animal Production and Herd Health Management) ● Veterinary Public Health (including Food Safety and Quality) ● Professional Knowledge (including soft skills, e.g. communication, team working skills, management skills). <p>When part of the study programme cannot be organised because of imposed regulations or constraints, convincing compensations must be developed and implemented.</p> <p>If a VEE offers more than one study programme to become a veterinarian, e.g. in different languages or in collaboration with other VEEs, all study programmes and respective curricula must be described separately in the SER. For each Standard, the VEE must explain if there are differences or not with the basic programme and all this information must be provided as a formal annex to the SER.</p> <p>Similarly, if a VEE implements a tracking (elective) system in its study programme, it must provide a clear explanation of the tracking system in the SER.</p> <p>3.1.1. General findings</p>	X		
3.1.2. Basic sciences	X		
3.1.3. Clinical Sciences in companion animals (including equine and exotic pets)	X		
3.1.4. Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals (including Animal Production and Herd Health Management)	X		
3.1.5. Veterinary Public Health (including Food Safety and Quality)		X	
3.1.6. Professional Knowledge (including soft skills, e.g. communication, team working skills, management skills)	X		
<p>Standard 3.2: Each study programme provided by the VEE must be competency-based and designed so that it meets the objectives set for it, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme must be clearly specified and communicated and must refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.</p> <p>The VEE must provide proof of a QA system that promotes and monitors the presence of a teaching environment highly conducive to learning including self-learning. Details of the type, provision and updating of appropriate learning opportunities for the students must be clearly described, as well as the involvement of students.</p> <p>The VEE must also describe how it encourages and prepares students for lifelong learning.</p>	X		
<p>Standard 3.3: Programme learning outcomes must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ensure the effective alignment of all content, teaching, learning and assessment activities of the degree programme to form a cohesive framework ● include a description of Day One Competences ● form the basis for explicit statements of the objectives and learning outcomes of individual units of study ● be communicated to staff and students ● be regularly reviewed, managed and updated to ensure they remain relevant, adequate and are effectively achieved. 		X	
<p>Standard 3.4: The VEE must have a formally constituted committee structure (which includes effective student representation), with clear and empowered reporting lines, to oversee and manage the curriculum and its delivery. The committee(s) must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● determine the pedagogical basis, design, delivery methods and assessment methods of the curriculum ● oversee QA of the curriculum, particularly gathering, evaluating, making change and responding to feedback from stakeholders, peer reviewers and external assessors, and data from examination/assessment outcomes ● perform ongoing reviews and periodic in-depth reviews of the curriculum (at least every seven years) by involving staff, students and stakeholders; these reviews must lead to continuous improvement of the curriculum. Any action taken or planned as a result of such a review must be communicated to all those concerned ● identify and meet training needs for all types of staff, maintaining and enhancing their competence for the ongoing curriculum development. 		X	

<p>Standard 3.5: Elective Practical Training (EPT) includes compulsory training activities that each student must achieve before graduation to complement and strengthen their core theoretical and practical academic education, inter alia by enhancing their experience, professional knowledge and soft skills. Like all elective activities, its contents may vary from one undergraduate student to another.</p> <p>EPT is organised either extra-murally with the student being under the direct supervision of a qualified person (e.g. a veterinary practitioner) or intra-murally, with the student being under the supervision of a teaching staff or a qualified person.</p> <p>EPT itself cannot replace the Core Clinical Training (CCT) under the close supervision of teaching staff (e.g. ambulatory clinics, herd health management, practical training in VPH (including Food Safety and Quality (FSQ)). A comparison between CCT and EPT is provided in Annex 6, Standard 3.5.</p>	X		
<p>Standard 3.6: The EPT providers must meet the relevant national Veterinary Practice Standards, have an agreement with the VEE and the student (stating their respective rights and duties, including insurance matters), provide a standardised evaluation of the performance of the student during their EPT and be allowed to provide feedback to the VEE on the EPT programme.</p> <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			
<p>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.</p>		X	
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	X		
<p>Standard 4.3: The livestock facilities, animal housing, core clinical teaching facilities and equipment used by the VEE for teaching purposes must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● be sufficient in capacity and adapted for the number of students enrolled in order to allow safe hands-on training for all students ● be of a high standard, well maintained and fit for the purpose ● promote best husbandry, welfare and management practices ● ensure relevant biosecurity ● take into account environmental sustainability ● be designed to enhance learning 			X
<p>Standard 4.4: Core clinical teaching facilities must be provided in a veterinary teaching hospital (VTH) with 24/7 emergency services at least for companion animals and equines. Within the VTH, the VEE must unequivocally demonstrate that 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.</p> <p>For ruminants, on-call service must be available if emergency services do not exist for those species in a VTH. The VEE must ensure state-of-the-art standards of teaching clinics which remain comparable with or exceed the best available clinics in the private sector.</p> <p>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.</p>			X
<p>Standard 4.5: The VEE must ensure that students have access to a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic facilities, including but not limited to 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.</p>		X	
<p>Standard 4.6: Appropriate isolation facilities must be provided to meet the need for the isolation and containment of animals with communicable diseases. Such isolation facilities must be properly constructed, ventilated, maintained and operated to provide for 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.</p>	X		
<p>Standard 4.7: The VEE must have an ambulatory clinic for production animals or equivalent facilities so that students can practise field veterinary medicine and Herd Health Management under the supervision of teaching staff.</p>	X		
<p>Standard 4.8: The transport of students, live animals, cadavers, materials from animal origin and other teaching materials must be done in agreement with national and EU standards, to ensure the safety of students and staff and animal welfare, and to prevent the spread of infectious agents.</p>	X		
<p>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</p>	X		

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.			
Area 5. Animal resources and teaching material of animal origin			
Standard 5.1: The number and variety of healthy and diseased animals, first opinion and referral cases, cadavers, and material of animal origin must be adequate for providing the practical and safe hands-on training in all relevant areas and adapted to the number of students enrolled. Evidence must be provided that these data are regularly recorded and that procedures are in place for correcting any deficiencies.		X	
Standard 5.2: In addition to the training provided in the VEE, experience can include practical training at external sites, provided this training is organised under the supervision of teaching staff and follows the same standards as those applied in the VEE.	X		
Standard 5.3: The VTH must provide nursing care skills and instruction in nursing procedures. Under all situations students must be active participants in the clinical workup of patients, including problem-oriented diagnostic approach together with diagnostic decision-making.	X		
Standard 5.4: Medical records for patients seen intra- and extra-murally under Core Clinical Training (CCT) must be comprehensive and maintained in an effective retrieval system to efficiently support the teaching and learning, research, and service programmes of the VEE.	X		
Area 6. Learning resources			
Standard 6.1: State-of-the-art learning resources must be adequate and available to support veterinary education, research, services and continuing education. Learning resources must be suitable to implement teaching facilities to secure the 'never the first time on a live animal' concept. When the study programme is provided in several tracks/languages, the learning resources must be available in all used languages. Timely access to learning resources, whether through print, electronic media or other means, must be available to students and staff and, when appropriate, to stakeholders. State-of-the-art procedures for bibliographical search and for access to databases and learning resources must be taught to undergraduate students, together with basic English teaching if necessary.	X		
Standard 6.2: Staff and students must have full access on site to an academic library administered by a qualified librarian, an Information Technology (IT) unit managed by a qualified IT person, an e-learning platform, and the relevant human and physical resources necessary for the development of instructional materials by the staff and their use by the students. The relevant electronic information, database and other intranet resources must be easily available for students and staff both in the VEE's core facilities via wireless connection (Wi-Fi) and from outside the VEE through a hosted secured connection, e.g. Virtual Private Network (VPN).	X		
Standard 6.3: The VEE must provide students with unimpeded access to learning resources, internet and internal study resources, as well as facilities and equipment for the development of procedural skills (e.g. clinical skills laboratory). The use of these resources must be aligned with the pedagogical environment and learning outcomes within the programme and have mechanisms in place to evaluate the teaching value of changes in learning resources.	X		
Area 7. Student admission, progression and welfare			
Standard 7.1: The VEE must consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student "life cycle", e.g. student admission, progression and certification. In relation to enrolment, the VEE must provide accurate and complete information regarding the educational programme in all advertisements for prospective national and international students. Formal cooperation with other VEEs must also be clearly advertised.	X		
Standard 7.2: The number of students admitted must be consistent with the resources available at the VEE for staff, buildings, equipment, healthy and diseased animals, and materials of animal origin.			X
Standard 7.3: The selection and progression criteria must be clearly defined, consistent, and defensible, be free of discrimination or bias, and take into account the fact that students are admitted with a view to their entry to the veterinary profession in due course. The VEE must regularly review and reflect on the selection processes to ensure they are appropriate for students to complete the programme successfully. If the selection processes are decided by another authority, the latter must regularly receive feedback from the VEE. Adequate training (including periodic refresher training) must be provided for those involved in the selection process to ensure applicants are evaluated fairly and consistently.	X		
Standard 7.4: There must be clear policies and procedures on how applicants with disabilities or illnesses are considered and, if appropriate, accommodated in the programme, taking into account the requirement that all students must be capable of meeting the ESEVT Day One Competences by the time they graduate.	X		
Standard 7.5: The basis for decisions on progression (including academic progression and professional fitness to practise) must be explicit and readily available to the students. The VEE must provide evidence that it has mechanisms in place to identify and provide remediation and appropriate support (including termination) for students who are not performing adequately. The VEE must have mechanisms in place to monitor attrition and progression and be able to respond and amend admission selection criteria (if permitted by national or university law) and student support if required.	X		
Standard 7.6: Mechanisms for the exclusion of students from the programme for any reason must be explicit. The VEE's policies for managing appeals against decisions, including admissions, academic and progression decisions and exclusion, must be transparent and publicly available.	X		
Standard 7.7: Provisions must be made by the VEE to support the physical, emotional and welfare needs of students. This includes but is not limited to learning support and counselling services, career advice, and fair and transparent mechanisms for dealing with student illness, impairment and disability during the programme. This			X

<p>shall include provision for disabled students, consistent with all relevant equality, diversity and/or human rights legislation.</p> <p>There must be effective mechanisms for the resolution of student grievances (e.g. interpersonal conflict or harassment).</p>			
<p>Standard 7.8: Mechanisms must be in place by which students can convey their needs and wants to the VEE. The VEE must provide students with a mechanism, anonymously if they wish, to offer suggestions, comments and complaints regarding the compliance of the VEE with national and international legislation and the ESEVT Standards.</p>	X		
<p>Area 8. Student assessment</p>			
<p>Standard 8.1: The VEE must ensure that there is a clearly identified structure within the VEE showing lines of responsibility for the assessment strategy to ensure coherence of the overall assessment regime and to allow the demonstration of progressive development across the programme towards entry-level competence.</p>	X		
<p>Standard 8.2: The assessment tasks and grading criteria for each unit of study in the programme must be published, applied consistently, clearly identified and available to students in a timely manner well in advance of the assessment. Requirements to pass must be explicit.</p> <p>The VEE must properly document the results of assessment and provide the students with timely feedback on their assessments.</p> <p>Mechanisms for students to appeal against assessment outcomes must be explicit.</p>	X		
<p>Standard 8.3: The VEE must have a process in place to review assessment outcomes, to change assessment strategies and to ensure the accuracy of the procedures when required. Programme learning outcomes covering the full range of professional knowledge, skills, competences and attributes must form the basis for assessment design and underpin decisions on progression.</p>	X		
<p>Standard 8.4: Assessment strategies must allow the VEE to certify student achievement of learning objectives at the level of the programme and individual units of study.</p> <p>The VEE must ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p>	X		
<p>Area 9. Teaching and support staff</p>			
<p>Standard 9.1: The VEE must ensure that all staff are appropriately qualified and prepared for their roles, in agreement with national and EU regulations and must apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of staff.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>			X
<p>Standard 9.3: Staff must be given opportunities to develop and extend their teaching and assessment knowledge and must be encouraged to improve their skills. Opportunities for didactic and pedagogic training and specialisation must be available. The VEE must clearly define systems of reward for teaching excellence in operation.</p> <p>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.</p>	X		
<p>Standard 9.4: The VEE must provide evidence that it utilises a well-defined, comprehensive and publicised programme for the professional growth and development of teaching and support staff, including formal appraisal and informal mentoring procedures.</p> <p>Staff must have the opportunity to contribute to the VEE's direction and decision-making processes.</p> <p>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.</p>	X		
<p>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.</p>	X		
<p>Area 10. Research programmes, continuing and postgraduate education</p>			

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 (the VEE) was established in 1970. In 1975, the Firat University was formally founded, embracing all higher educational institutions in Elazig, including the VEE.

The VEE became a full member of the EAEVE in 1994 and received “Approved” status by ECOVE in 2013 until 2018. Accreditation status was granted in 2021 for the period 2018-2025.

The SER was provided on time to the Visitation Team along with extended Appendices. The description of some of the Areas and Standards needed clarification and/or raised questions; answers to those were provided by the VEE ahead of or during the Visitation. Further information and corrections were provided on-site upon request from the Visitation Team.

The Visitation was well prepared, well organised and carried out in a cordial and professional atmosphere. The Liaison Officer was very efficient, diligent and always helpful. The programme of the Visitation was designed in advance and in agreement with the Chairperson and the Coordinator. It was easily adapted when requested by the Visitation Team who had full access to the information, facilities, and individuals they asked for.

Several areas worthy of praise have been identified by the Visitation Team:

- Highly committed staff
- Excellent VTF for student education
- Very good collaboration with the small animal shelter, the horse racetrack and the poultry slaughterhouse to provide practical training
- Excellent supportive atmosphere of staff towards students
- Excellent Department of Animal Husbandry and Animal Nutrition

Additional commendations are described in the Visitation Report.

Recommendations:

Six **Minor Deficiencies** were identified by the Visitation Team:

- Partial Compliance with **Standard 3.1.5** because of an imbalance between topics (meat and milk) and the incomplete availability of materials, adequately detailed agreement, official control and traceability exercises in the ruminant slaughterhouse
- Partial Compliance with **Standard 3.3** because of the VEE needs to review its curriculum documentation so Intended Learning Outcomes are written as outcomes directly accessible, and ILO's and assessments are directly aligned and relate to specific DOC
- Partial Compliance with **Standard 3.4** because the VEE should incorporate other forms of assessment (e.g. OSCEs, DOPS) at appropriate stages of the curriculum; a review of staff training is also needed
- Partial Compliance with **Standard 4.1** because the VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.1 because the VEE does provide suboptimal facilities to ensure the safety and accessibility for people with a disability
- Partial Compliance with **Standard 4.5** because of the absence of fully developed clinical skill labs securing the “never first time on a live animal”-approach
- Partial Compliance with **Standard 5.1** because of the low number of necropsies for horses and companion animals (dogs, cats) with insufficient compensation

Five **Major Deficiencies** were identified by the Visitation Team:

- Non-Compliance with **Standard 4.3** because of the clinical teaching facilities and equipment for teaching purposes are insufficient in capacity and not adapted for the number of students
- Non-Compliance with **Standard 4.4** because the VEE does not ensure state-of-the-art standards of teaching clinics comparable with or exceeding the best available clinics in the private sector
- Non-Compliance with **Standard 7.2** because the total number of students exceeds the VEE's desired capacity, placing additional strain on its resources and infrastructure
- Non-Compliance with **Standard 7.7** because there is no single point of contact for students (or staff) with mental wellbeing, health concerns or issues, to facilitate immediate and appropriate assessment, care and support
- Non-Compliance with **Standard 9.2** because the total number of the teaching, technical, administrative and support staff is not sufficient to deliver the study programme and ensure an optimal functioning of the VEE

Additional suggestions for improvement are described in the Visitation Report.

Glossary

- AC:** Ambulatory Clinic
ASRC: Animal Shelter and Rehabilitation Centre of Elazığ Municipal
AYT: Field Proficiency Test
CCT: Core Clinical Training
CT: Computerised Tomography
CİMER: Türkiye's Presidential Communication Centre
DOC: Day One Competences
EAEVE: European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education
EBVS: European Board of Veterinary Specialisation
ECOVE: European Committee of Veterinary Education
ECTS: European Credit Transfer System
EDUROAM: Education Roaming
EPT: Elective Practical Training
ERASMUS: European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students
ESEVT: European System of Evaluation of Veterinary Training
ESG: European Standards and Guidelines
EU: European Union
FSQ: Food Safety and Quality
FU: Firat University
FUDEC: Firat University Distance Education Centre
FUHSI: Firat University Health Sciences Institute
FULDD: Firat University Library and Documentation Department
FÜBAP: Firat University Scientific Research Projects Coordination Unit
FÜDAM: Firat University Experimental Research Centre
FÜHADYEK: Firat University Animal Experiments Local Ethics Committee
FÜSEM: Firat University Continuous Learning Centre
FTE: Full-Time Equivalent
GHPs: Good Hygiene Practices
GMPs: Good Manufacturing Practices
IVSA: International Veterinary Students Association
HACCP: Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
ILL: Inter Library Loan
IT: Information Technology
KBTS: Clinical Skill Monitoring System
OBS: Student Information System
ÖSYM: Student Selection and Placement Centre
PDCA: Plan-Do-Check-Adjust
QA: Quality Assurance
RTMAF: Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
RTMTF: Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Treasury and Finance
SER: Self-Evaluation Report
SOP: Standard Operating Procedure
SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TAGEM: General Directorate of Agricultural Research and Policies
THE: Times Higher Education
TÜBESS: Türkiye Document Supply System

TÜBİTAK: Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye

TYT: Basic Proficiency Test

VEDEK: National Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Veterinary Education Institutions and Programs

VEE: Veterinary Education Establishment (Firat University Faculty of Veterinary Medicine)

VTF: Veterinary Teaching Farm

VTH: Veterinary Teaching Hospital

YKS: Higher Education Institutions Exam

YÖK: Turkish Council of Higher Education

YÖKAK: Turkish Higher Education Quality Council

VPH: Veterinary Public Health

VPN: Virtual Private Network

YÖS: International Student Exam

VUÇEP: National Veterinary Core Education Program

Decision of ECOVE

The Committee concluded that five Major Deficiencies have been identified.

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