



RE-VISITATION REPORT

To the University of Bologna, Bologna, Italy

On 5 – 7 March 2025

By the Re-Visitation Team

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Contents of the Re-visitation Report

Introduction

1. Correction of the Major Deficiencies
2. Correction of the Minor Deficiencies
3. ESEVT Indicators
4. Conclusions

Introduction

The VEE had an EAEVE Full Visitation 4 - 8 March 2024. The VEE was compliant with most ESEVT Standards. However, some areas of concern were identified, and on 24 May 2024, the ECOVE decision resulted in:

One Major Deficiency was identified:

- The VEE is not compliant with Standard 3.1.4. because of insufficient clinical training in individual ruminant medicine.

Seven Minor Deficiencies were identified:

- The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.3 because of suboptimal practical training in dentistry.
- The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.3 because of suboptimal pre-clinical and clinical training in rabbits, rodents, pet birds, and exotic pets.
- The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.4. because of suboptimal on-call service for ruminants.
- The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.8. because of suboptimal organisation of student transportation for extramural CCT.
- The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 5.1. because of suboptimal number of ruminant and pig necropsies.
- The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 7.5. because of suboptimal remediation procedures for students who do not progress within the expected timeframe for the degree.
- The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 8.5. because of a suboptimal quality control of the student logbooks.

The RSER was provided on time and written in agreement with the SOP 2023. The experts had no questions before the start of the Visitation.

The Liaison Officer did an excellent job before and during the visitation, adapting the Visitation schedule, searching for the requested information, organising relevant meetings and ensuring the health and safety of the visitors.

The RE-visitation was performed on 5 - 7 March 2025 in full accordance with the SOP 2023 guidelines.

The ESEVT SOP 2023 is valid for this Visitation

1. Correction of the Major Deficiency

1.1. Major Deficiency: The VEE is not compliant with Standard 3.1.4. because of insufficient clinical training in individual ruminant medicine.

1.1.1. Findings

The Veterinary Education Establishment (VEE) has promptly analysed the single major deficiency they had and recognised the insufficient number of diseased animals that students are encountering in their studies. Additionally, the VEE has identified the need to coordinate and harmonise teaching activities related to ruminants. To address these issues, they have established the “Buiatria Project,” which aims to:

- Recruit sick animals from local cattle farms, either through an on-call ambulatory clinic or for temporary hospitalisation at the BUIATRIA Service facilities, where these animals will be examined, treated, and utilised for student training.
- Allocate sufficient resources for the transportation, care, and management of hospitalised animals, as well as for improvements to the facilities and the involvement of support staff.
- Utilise housed animals for clinical training and teaching activities during the 3rd, 4th, and 5th year courses, including rotations at the Buiatria Service in the 5th year where students actively participate in the care and management of hospitalised patients.

To achieve these goals, a network of local farms has been established to refer patients to the Buiatria Service facilities. In the service, sick ruminants receive daily care from 5th year students. The animals are also available for practical classes in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th year courses. The aim is to admit 5 animals per month into the service (excluding August and December). The service has an annual operational budget of €46,000, €5,500 for a tutoring contract for clinical and teaching activities, and €29,000 has been used for facility upgrades.

Core clinical training has been reorganised to include rotations in Cattle and Small Ruminants. Since AY 2024-25 it has included four weekdays of clinical activities in ruminants, with Buiatria activities and on-call -service. During these days, students are also involved in goat farm activities. All students have four weekdays compulsory, along with four weekdays and one weekend off-hours call. All students spend three days in the ambulatory clinic with cattle practitioners.

Clinical training has also been reinforced at the Experimental Teaching Farm (ETF) and the National Institute of Artificial Insemination (NIAI). Furthermore, student exposure to common clinical cases during extramural training has been emphasised.

In the appendix, a three-month trial case increase has listed 17 calves and one goat indicating that the target of 5 animals a month has been achieved from the beginning. Most of the animals are young, and many of them at the end have been sent to the necropsy service as teaching material.

During the visitation, the VEE presented data for 29 internally seen very varied ruminant cases used for CCT for the first 2 months of 2025.

1.1.2. Analysis of the Findings/Comments

In the report issued by ECOVE on May 29, 2024, it is noted:

“3.1.4.3. Suggestions for Improvement: The VEE should find a strategy to enhance the individual clinical training in ruminants that all students receive.”

The VEE has been working successfully on building a new strategy. Although the number of hospitalised diseased animals is not massive, there is a marked increase in these cases.

Calculating the figures from the first 2 months of 2025 ends up with 174 cases per year, demonstrating an upward trajectory.

1.1.3. Suggestions

It is suggested to follow closely the number of ruminant patients available for student training delivered by the various parts of the strategy. Also, the amount and quality of the practical training with ruminants in total with increased patient number, on-call services, and with local cattle practitioners is reached.

1.1.4. Decision With the increase in ruminant patients, the VEE has rectified the deficiency.

1. Correction of the Minor Deficiencies

2.1. Minor Deficiency 1: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.3 because of suboptimal practical training in dentistry.

2.1.1. Findings

The VEE has addressed the deficiency by splitting up for dogs/cats and for horses.

For dogs and cats, it has been decided to open a small animal dentistry service at the VTH. An experienced, private practitioner specialised in this field has been identified, and she will perform clinical activity at the VTH at least twice a month. This initiative will give students the opportunity to participate in routine dental procedures as part of their CCT rotations in companion animals.

For horses, it has been decided to add dentistry activities in the CCT rotations. The mares housed at the National Institute of Artificial Insemination (NIAI) have been made available. A tutoring contract has been signed with an experienced practitioner to support educational activities in basic equine dentistry, to be carried out at the NIAI at least once a month year-round. The CCT rotations in equine clinics have therefore been expanded to include small group activities at the NIAI, aligned with the presence of the specialist and under the supervision of academic staff.

2.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

In the report issued by ECOVE on 29 May 2024, it is mentioned:

“It is also suggested that the VEE improve student opportunities for practical training in the dentistry of companion animals including cats, dogs and horses.”

The VEE has implemented the above suggestions and established a solid procedure for pre-practical and practical dentistry training in companion animals including cats, dogs, and horses, for all students.

2.1.3. Suggestions

None.

2.2. Minor Deficiency 2: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.3 because of suboptimal pre-clinical and clinical training in rabbits, rodents, pet birds and exotic pets.

2.2.1. Findings

The VEE has made a comprehensive review of the facilities, staff, and teaching activities related to exotic pet medicine. On-campus facilities to be used for housing healthy exotic pets, including rabbits, rodents, reptiles, and tortoises have been identified. An animal housing facility already equipped with suitable cages to accommodate rabbits and rodents will be available by mid-2025. An outdoor tortoise enclosure to accommodate healthy tortoises has been established in the external area of the Wildlife Veterinary Centre.

Currently, the staff dedicated to exotic pets includes a limited number of academic staff, with only one veterinarian specialised extensively in this field. To significantly support his activities, the VEE has designated a dedicated technician, who took office in June 2024. With the aim of exposing students to diseased exotic pets, advantage is taken up by the activity of the Wildlife Veterinary Centre, which saw an increase in the caseload of sick exotics during 2024 (62 patients in total, including mammals, birds, and reptiles). Some of these cases were filmed during examinations and archived as educational material alongside their medical records.

Based on the number and variety of recorded cases, the current CCT in avian diseases and wildlife and exotic animal diseases have been slightly modified to have each group of students spending at least half a day on exotic pets. Additionally, to ensure all students gain adequate exposure to medicine and surgery for these species, the current training activities at the extramural exotic animal hospital will be maintained for the ongoing academic year. The revision and optimisation of the CCT in the current curriculum will be completed in the AY 2025-26.

2.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

In the report issued by ECOVE on 29 May 2024, it is mentioned:

"It is suggested that the VEE increases practical exposure to exotic pets (especially rabbits and rodents) throughout the course, including handling, husbandry and CCT."

The VEE has implemented the above suggestions and established a solid procedure for pre-practical and practical exposure to exotics for all students. Further to this, the upcoming revision of the curriculum effective AY 2025-26 will include increased teaching activities dedicated to exotics, including a focus on the care and management of exotic pets.

2.2.3. Suggestions

None.

2.3. Minor Deficiency 3: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.4. because of suboptimal on-call service for ruminants.

2.3.1. Findings

The reorganisation of the large animals CCT now allows for:

On-call service offered to local farms and the Experimental Teaching Farm (ETF) on weekdays (8.00 am to 5.00 pm) with the involvement of students on rotation. Each student attends four shifts during the month.

Night on-call shifts (8:00 pm to 8:00 am) to respond to emergencies involving either cattle, whether from the ETF or hospitalised at the BUIATRIA Service, or horses hospitalised at the VTH. Each student attends a total of six night on-call shifts during the month (four weekdays and one weekend).

Ambulatory clinic on-call cases, available depending on the work schedule of hired bovine practitioners. Each student attends three ambulatory clinic shifts during the month. See also the major deficiency.

2.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

In the report issued by ECOVE on 29 May 2024 it is mentioned:

“It is suggested that the VEE review its provision of on-call services for production animals to ensure that it fully complies with the requirements of Standard 4.4.”

The VEE has reorganised the CCT of large animals including 3 different types of on-call services for large animals under the umbrella of the BUIATRIA Service.

See also the Major Deficiency.

2.3.3. Suggestions

It is suggested to follow the students' participation in the on-call services for LAs in the years to follow.

2.4. Minor Deficiency 4: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.8. because of the suboptimal organisation of student transportation for extramural CCT.

2.4.1. Findings

A reimbursement policy for travel expenses incurred by students to reach external facilities has been established.

To reduce travel expenses for students during extramural CCT activities, the CCT rotations in food safety and quality were reviewed starting from the AY 2024-25. The number of external visits with very small groups of students was reduced and replaced with internal activities, thereby maintaining the same number of training hours. Similarly, hired practitioners were informed and encouraged to plan ambulatory clinic activities with students at farms located closer to the VEE whenever possible.

The VEE is anticipating a complete reorganisation of Core Clinical Training within the new curriculum starting in the AY 2025-26

2.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

In the report issued by ECOVE on 29 May 2024 it is mentioned:

“It is suggested that the VEE review the provision of transport for students to ensure better coordination and support.”

The VEE has reorganised student transportation procedures at different levels.

2.4.3. Suggestions

In light of the planned reorganisation of the CCT within the new curriculum starting AY 2025-26 it is suggested to follow the reorganisation and implementation procedures related to transportation of students closely as part of the VEE's QA-procedures.

2.5. Minor Deficiency 5: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 5.1. because of suboptimal number of ruminant and pig necropsies.

2.5.1. Findings

The renovation of the necropsy room was completed in July 2024, becoming fully operational September 2024. At the same time, students were exposed to an increased number of necropsies carried out by the Pathology Service. During the last quarter of CCT rotations (September-November 2024), 47 necropsies were performed on food-producing animals, including 14 on ruminants and 33 on pigs. During January-February 2025, 29 necropsies have been performed on production animals (18 ruminants and 11 pigs).

The VEE has prolonged the agreement with the Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale della Lombardia e dell'Emilia Romagna (IZSLER) in Bologna. This allows students to increase their exposure to necropsy of wildlife.

Moreover, the organisation of the Pathology Service has been improved to align the daily activities of the duty pathologists with student rotations, enabling students to follow the cases through from the clinics and experience the routine work of the diagnostic service.

Students write the necropsy reports which are corrected/amended by the staff as part of the training both in pathology and professional reporting.

To increase the number of pig necropsies the VEE has made contact with pig farms offering necropsies for free.

During the AY 2024-25 the necropsy caseload is being monitored quarterly to confirm the positive trend in the indicators. At the end of the AY, the CCT Officer and the person responsible of the Pathology Service will review the caseload and report to the DPQAC to identify any necessary corrective actions, if required.

The pathology section is staffed with eleven pathologists out of whom 7 are diplomats.

2.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

In the report issued by ECOVE on 29 May 2024 it is mentioned:

"It is suggested that the VEE develop a strategy to increase the number of cattle and pig necropsies."

Each student participates in one day's work at the IZSLER, being involved in the cases present on a given day. The VEE has implemented extensive means of correcting the deficiency. And with a continued positive trajectory will end up with 174 production animal necropsies per year.

2.5.3. Suggestions

It is suggested to closely follow up on the implemented changes and identify further potential corrective actions.

2.6. Minor Deficiency 6: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 7.5. because of suboptimal remediation procedures for students who do not progress within the expected timeframe for the degree.

2.6.1. Findings

The following corrective actions have been implemented:

An 180-hour *ad hoc* tutoring contract has been established to provide individualised support to students at risk of exceeding the standard time required to complete their degree and out-of-course students, beginning from the AY 2024-25. Furthermore, three additional 140-hour tutoring contracts have been established to assist students during their career, including students with challenges in progressing with their studies, and two students have been appointed as their representatives. This issue is also supported by a project won by the VEE

within the "Plans for Guidance and Tutoring" initiative by the Italian Ministry for University and Research.

Seminars and workshops specifically dealing with the improvement of student study skills have been organised with the support (including financial support) of Unibo's (Università di Bologna) Guidance Services and have been offered by email correspondence to all students, including out-of-course students. In 2025, new workshops will be organised with a special focus for out-of-course students.

A comprehensive review of the curriculum, including examination of delays in student progression has been identified as a significant issue affecting the old curriculum. The revised curriculum is built on principles that aim to enhance continuity and integration across disciplines throughout the curriculum, reduce teaching hours per ECTS, and prioritise active, student-centred learning over traditional lecture-based approaches. These elements aim to better support students in achieving learning outcomes and progressing smoothly through their studies. Student representatives have been actively involved throughout the redesign process, offering insights and practical support to identify and address potential barriers to academic advancement. These efforts conducted over the past 18 months, have led to the Department Board's approval of a new curriculum in December 2024, which will be implemented in AY 2025-26.

Further initiatives together with Unibo have been launched and the initiatives are subject to the general QA-management in the VEE.

2.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

In the report issued by ECOVE on 29 May 2024 it is mentioned:

"It is suggested that a strategy be developed to provide individualised support to students who have exceeded (or are at risk of exceeding) the time required to complete their degree ("out-of-course" students)."

The VEE has implemented the above suggestion and established a wide range of initiatives and an active procedure for developing this area further. During meetings it was made clear that student representatives make up an important part of the whole process of identifying students with problems progressing in the curriculum and follow up and support these students with problems.

2.6.3. Suggestions

None.

2.7. Minor Deficiency 7: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 8.5. because of a suboptimal quality control of the student logbooks.

2.7.1. Findings

A number of corrective actions have been taken:

Update and improvement of the student logbook content, based on feedback from the responsible staff for each CCT module. A QA-controlled identification system has been added to keep track of the different versions of the logbook, providing evidence of the latest version in use. A dedicated SOP (see [Appendix 4](#)) was developed with the support of the VEE's Teaching Services to establish the complete cycle for the student logbook. This includes the logbook's collection by the student, its proper completion, validation, and return.

For QA purposes, starting from the AY 2024-25, the Degree Programme Quality Assurance Committee annually collects and analyses trends in student activities completion to ensure that students are meeting D1C standards and identify gaps to be addressed in the annual review of the Degree Programme (DP).

It has been made mandatory for students to achieve all the "core" skills listed for each CCT rotation and attend at least 80% of the activities. The final signature of the module organiser certifies the completion and fulfilment of the respective rotation. Upon completion and certification of all CCT rotations (including external practical training with private practitioners) by the respective module coordinators, students return their logbooks, and the proper validation of all rotations is verified by permanent staff members on the dedicated page.

The completed logbooks are collected monthly and securely stored by the Teaching Services. At the end of each academic year, they are delivered to the DPQAC for analysis of trends in student activities, including monitoring completion rates and identifying areas for future curriculum development, ensuring that all students achieve the D1C. Feedback from the DPQAC is shared with the DP Director, EAEVE, CCT, and Education Officers to identify corrective actions, which are incorporated into the annual review of the Degree Programme.

2.7.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

In the report issued by ECOVE on 29 May 2024 it is mentioned:

"It is suggested that the VEE review and improve its policies and procedures for recording and auditing clinical activity using a logbook system to improve quality assurance in this area.

To facilitate this, it is suggested that the VEE prioritise the implementation of their updated digital logbook, ensuring that activities monitored better facilitate the development of soft skills by students."

The VEE has established solid procedures to improve the logbook system.

2.7.3. Suggestions

None.

3. ESEVT Indicators

Name of the VEE:		VEE of the University of Bologna (Ozzano Emilia)				
Name & mail of the VEE's Head:		Pier Paolo Gatta (pierpaolo.gatta@unibo.it)				
Date of the form filling:		23-11-2024				
Raw data from the last 3 complete academic years		2023-2024	2022-2023	2021-2022	Mean	
1	n° of FTE teaching staff involved in veterinary training	103,9	106,4	100,9	103,7	
2	n° of undergraduate students	605	554	517	558,7	
3	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training	84,8	83,5	81,0	83,1	
4	n° of students graduating annually	66	62	79	69,0	
5	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training	90,1	77,3	76,3	81,2	
6	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	705	705	705	705,0	
7	n° of hours of Core Clinical Training (CCT)	800	800	800	800,0	
8	n° of hours of VPH (including FSQ) training	366	366	366	366,0	
9	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in VPH (including FSQ)	107	107	107	107,0	
10	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally	6827	6402	6517	6582,0	
11	n° of individual ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally	171	147	149	155,7	
12	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally	493	489	496	492,7	
13	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen intra-murally	62	28	48	46,0	
14	n° of companion animal patients seen extra-murally	0	0	0	0,0	
15	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extra-murally	1406	1785	412	1201,0	
16	n° of equine patients seen extra-murally	112	96	74	94,0	
17	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen extra-murally	137	229	91	152,3	
18	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds	175	226	92	164,3	
19	n° of visits to poultry and farmed rabbit units	9	13	21	14,3	
20	n° of companion animal necropsies	186	138	201	175,0	
21	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies	45	26	85	52,0	
22	n° of equine necropsies	16	6	14	12,0	
23	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies	132	85	94	103,7	
24	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training	35	33	30	32,7	
25	n° of PhD graduating annually	17	22	11	16,7	

Name of the VEE:		VEE of the University of Bologna (Ozzano Emilia)				
Date of the form filling:		23-11-2024				
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	0,186	0,150	0,126	0,060	
I2	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	1,204	0,840	0,630	0,574	
I3	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	1,177	0,880	0,540	0,637	
I4	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	705,000	953,500	700,590	4,410	
I5	n° of hours of Core Clinical Training (CCT)	800,000	941,580	704,800	95,200	
I6	n° of hours of VPH (including FSQ) training	366,000	293,500	191,800	174,200	
I7	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in VPH (including FSQ)	107,000	75,000	31,800	75,200	
I8	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	95,391	67,370	44,010	51,381	
I9	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	19,662	18,750	9,740	9,922	
I10	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	8,502	5,960	2,150	6,352	
I11	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	2,874	3,110	1,160	1,714	
I12	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds / n° of students graduating annually	2,382	1,290	0,540	1,842	
I13	n° of visits to poultry and farmed rabbit units / n° of students graduating annually	0,208	0,110	0,045	0,163	
I14	n° of companion animal necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	2,536	2,110	1,400	1,136	
I15	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0,754	1,360	0,900	-0,146	
I16	n° of equine necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	0,174	0,180	0,100	0,074	
I17	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	1,502	2,650	0,880	0,622	
I18	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	0,473	0,270	0,060	0,413	
I19	n° of PhD graduating annually / n° of students graduating annually	0,242	0,150	0,070	0,172	

3.1. Findings

All updated Indicators are above the minimal value.

3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

With the established changes in the curriculum and a changed focus on exotics and dentistry, the Indicators have changed positively.

3.3. Suggestions

The Indicators on exotics should be closely followed during the next years to make sure that the corrections have a permanent impact.

4. Conclusion

The Minor Deficiencies have been addressed and most of them rectified by the VEE, and actions are in place to rectify these permanently. The full effect of these actions will be visible in the current and coming academic years.

The Major Deficiency (Standard 3.1.4. because of insufficient clinical training in individual ruminant medicine, was identified after the full Visitation on 4 - 8 March 2024, and has been addressed extensively. With the means described, the Team proposes that the VEE has rectified the major deficiency.

The Team identified an ongoing process to correct the Minor Deficiencies.

Decision of ECOVE

The Committee concluded that the Major Deficiency identified after the Full Visitation on 4 – 8 March 2024 had been corrected.

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