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FULL VISITATION REPORT

To the Veterinary Education Establishment of VetNorth Japan
Hokkaido University and Obihiro University, Japan

On 15 - 19 June 2026

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Introduction

Originally founded as Sapporo Agricultural College in 1876, Hokkaido University (HU) has 12 undergraduate and 25 graduate schools. Veterinary education at HU started in 1878. The Department of Veterinary Medicine was established in 1910 and grew into the School of Veterinary Medicine in 1952.

Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine (OU) was first established as the Obihiro Higher Technical School of Veterinary Medicine in 1941 and became the only national agricultural university in 1949 to provide education in agriculture, animal husbandry and veterinary medicine.

VetNorth Japan (VNJ) (called the VEE in this report) was established in 2012 to provide world-class veterinary education. The Cooperative Veterinary Education Programme joins the faculties of the two universities listed above (HU and OU). Both universities are approved as national universities within the Japanese higher education system under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT).

VNJ was evaluated by ESEVT in July 2019 and was granted the status of Full Accreditation.

The main features of VNJ are:
-) A six-year term of study, authorised by MEXT and led by the VNJ Council;
-) Cooperation between HU and OU, which has significantly strengthened the veterinary education and research fields;
-) A unique complementary clinical rotation to provide a sufficient caseload in all common animal species.

The main developments since the Last Visitation are:
-) Accreditation of Veterinary Education Evaluation from the Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) in 2023;
-) Additional financial resources;
-) Revision of the curriculum, with a stronger focus on ESEVT D1C;
-) Upgraded clinical facilities;
-) A residency programme accredited by the Asian College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (AiCVIM);
-) Digitalisation of teaching materials and development of additional e-tools;
-) Expanded skill labs.

The SOP 2023 is valid for the VNJ Visitation.

Area 1. Objectives, Organisation and Quality Assurance Policy

Standard 1.1: The VEE must have as its main objective the provision, in agreement with the EU Directives and ESG Standards, of adequate, ethical, research-based, evidence-based veterinary training that enables the new graduate to perform as a veterinarian capable of entering all commonly recognised branches of the veterinary profession and to be aware of the importance of lifelong learning.
The VEE must develop and follow its mission statement which must embrace the ESEVT Standards.

1.1.1. Findings

The VEE's mission and objectives align with providing adequate, ethical, research- and evidence-based veterinary education, comply with domestic accreditation standards and align with EAEVE accreditation standards to strengthen international quality assurance. The programme aims to produce entry-level graduates (Day One) competent, eligible for licensure, ethically grounded, and able to meet diverse societal needs, including One Health and global perspectives, with a commitment to lifelong learning. The VEE curriculum equips graduates for entry into all commonly recognised branches of the profession through a comprehensive core curriculum, adoption of competency-based education, hands-on clinical and practical training (during rotations, on ambulatory clinics, at meat inspection facilities), continuous curriculum review, regular external accreditation and quality assurance processes. It also aims to develop students' interdisciplinary and professional skills, including communication, teamwork and ethics, to enable graduates to adapt to different professional working environments.

1.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE's main objectives are to provide veterinary training that is compliant with national and ESEVT Standards and to produce graduates ready to enter the veterinary profession as Day One competent and adaptable veterinarians. The VEE adopts ethical, competency-based training and promotes the development of clinical and professional skills and lifelong learning.

1.1.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

1.1.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.1.

Standard 1.2: The VEE must be part of a university or a higher education institution providing training recognised as being of an equivalent level and formally recognised as such in the respective country.
The person responsible for the veterinary curriculum and the person(s) responsible for the professional, ethical, and teaching affairs of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) must hold a veterinary degree.
The decision-making process, organisation and management of the VEE must allow implementation of its strategic plan and of a cohesive study programme, in compliance with the ESEVT Standards.

1.2.1. Findings
The two schools collaborating to provide the VEE's Cooperative Veterinary Education Programme are both part of universities: School of Veterinary Medicine, Hokkaido University and School of Cooperative Veterinary Medicine, Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine. The Dean of the VEE is a veterinarian, and the position alternates between the Deans of the two schools biannually. Those responsible for leadership of the veterinary curriculum and of the veterinary teaching hospitals are veterinarians. Both universities are certified under the authority of the government ministry responsible for higher education, while the Japanese veterinary licence is administered by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.
The VEE's organisational structure, with membership from both schools, consists of a Council, the highest decision-making body, an Executive Board, which oversees strategic issues, and the Programme Executive Board, which in turn oversees and acts as the practical decision-making body responsible for teaching, learning and research related to the veterinary programme. There are joint committees on International Accreditation, Promotion, QA, Academic Affairs, Advanced Education, the Learning Management System, and the Veterinary Common Achievement Test (VCAT) Committee. Outputs from committees are shared at monthly school meetings and annually at the VEE's Joint Faculty Development meeting. There are also working groups and the student union representatives providing feedback and contributing to the overall quality assurance processes. An Advisory Panel was established in 2017 with membership including students, internal and key external stakeholders, which meets annually to provide additional feedback on the programme. The VEE meets twice a year with other Japanese veterinary schools, and both schools engage in extensive international educational and research exchanges.

1.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The VEE consists of two schools, both of which are part of universities recognised by the

government ministry responsible for higher education. The VEE's dean, leaders of the veterinary curriculum, and leaders of the VTHs are all veterinarians. The relevant boards and joint committees support the VEE's decision-making process, implementation of its strategic plan, and development and management of the veterinary programme in alignment with the ESEVT standards.

1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

1.2.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.2.

Standard 1.3: The VEE must have a strategic plan, which includes a SWOT analysis of its current activities, short- and medium-term objectives, and an operating plan with a timeframe and indicators for its implementation. The development and implementation of the VEE's strategy must include a role for students and other stakeholders, both internal and external, and the strategy must have a formal status and be publicly available.

1.3.1. Findings
The VEE's 2016-21 strategic plan was based on a SWOT analysis by the QA Committee and approved by the Programme Executive Board. The strategic plan period was extended until 2024 because of the pandemic. The 2025-2030 strategic plan was developed based on a SWOT analysis conducted by the QA Committee in 2024. A draft of the strategic plan was first discussed at faculty meetings at both schools, revised by the Programme Executive Board and finalised by the Executive Board, followed by approval by the VEE's Council. The two strategic plans and the SWOT analysis 2024 can be found on the VEE's website. The focus of the 2016 to 2024 plan has included a student-centred curriculum with practical training enhanced through implementation of 24/7 emergency veterinary services, QA aligned with national and international veterinary standards, enhanced research, societal contributions to veterinary services, including public health and food safety through training of skilled professionals, fostering globalisation of education, research and leadership through international exchanges and collaborations. Quality assurance is comprehensively embedded and aligned with the strategic plan, with an associated timeframe and progress against the activities supporting a continuous cycle of improvement (detailed in Appendices 1-10 and 1-11). Input from key stakeholders, internal (staff and students) and representation of external bodies, contributes to the quality assurance cycle and operationalisation of the plans.

1.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The VEE is commended for the effective combination of the complementary areas of expertise of the two universities.
The VEE has strategic plans (2016-2024 and 2025-2030) based on SWOT analyses (2017 and 2024). The relevant documentation is publicly available on the VEE's website. Activities are aligned with the plans and include indicative timeframes and progress

monitoring. The VEE includes input from staff, students and external stakeholders.

1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

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
There are defined and documented quality assurance systems at the VEE and at university levels, supported by university and national quality assurance frameworks. The VEE engages in internal, national and international evaluation processes supporting a culture of internal and external quality assurance and continuous improvement. The QA framework for Japanese higher education institutions is established by law, with results made publicly available. It consists of a ministry-level system, annual internal evaluation, annual national evaluation with accreditation every seven years, and the veterinary programme is evaluated by the Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) every seven years. The processes include site visits and self-study reports. The VEE's Cooperative Veterinary Education Programme obtained the Accreditation of Veterinary Education Evaluation from JUAA in 2023.

The VEE's Quality Assurance Committee, which is composed of members of local quality assurance committees at each university, oversees the quality of education and research with formally defined and documented policy and regulations. It integrates quality assurance activities from both universities and is responsible for overall quality assurance at the programme level. The committee undertakes a periodic review of policy, with any revisions subject to formal approval by the Programme Executive Board. The committee is responsible for assurance and enhancement of quality in education and research, monitoring achievement of intended learning outcomes, analysing internal and external evaluations, including feedback from students, staff and external stakeholders, implementing corrective and enhancement measures and the overall PDCA cycle. Students participate through course evaluations, programme surveys and input to committees, while academic staff (from both faculties and VTHs) are involved through faculty assemblies and committee membership. Consultation with external stakeholders includes the Asian Association of Veterinary Schools and the Advisory Panel. The Quality Assurance Committee is responsible for ensuring the monitoring, evaluations, and associated actions result in coordinated management of the joint

veterinary programme.

Recommendations from the Quality Assurance Committee are reviewed by the Executive Board and then operationalised through relevant committees that formulate and implement improvement plans (Plan and Do), outcomes are evaluated by the Quality Assurance Committee (Check) and result in corrective or enhancement measures, and if appropriate, recommendations for further improvement (Adjust), the cycle then repeats. Results are shared through the intranet and communicated to internal and external stakeholders via advisory structures and committees. Through the PDCA cycle, engagement with stakeholders and transparent communication, the VEE fosters a culture recognising the importance of quality assurance and continuous enhancement in education and research.

Academic integrity policies govern research ethics, misconduct, examination integrity and disciplinary procedures for both students and staff. Students are enrolled with the respective university and associated academic misconduct, suspension and expulsion are handled in accordance with the respective university's regulations. Academic and administrative staff participate in professional development programmes which help to foster a culture recognising the importance of integrity, quality and continuous enhancement in education and research.

1.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE has defined and documented policies and procedures that underpin the quality assurance of the veterinary programme, which is coordinated and overseen by the Quality Assurance Committee. Input is sought from students, staff and external stakeholders. There is a comprehensive approach to evaluation and improvements through the PDCA cycle, supporting a strong commitment to continuous enhancement of quality. The VEE has policies governing academic integrity in education and research for students and staff, and promotes a culture of integrity, quality and continuous enhancement.

1.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

1.4.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.4.

Standard 1.5: The VEE must provide evidence that it interacts with its stakeholders and the wider society. Such public information must be clear, objective and readily accessible; the information must include up-to-date information about the study programme.
The VEE's website must mention the VEE's ESEVT status and its last Self-Evaluation Report and Visitation Reports must be easily available to the public.

1.5.1. Findings

The ESEVT status, previous Self-Evaluation Report (2019) and Visitation Report are publicly available on websites. The VEE interacts with and consults its stakeholders in multiple ways, including through student and employer surveys, engaging in public activities such as Animal Appreciation Day and One Health Fair, and promoting outreach regionally and internationally through various collaborations. Associated information and details of the programme are available on the VEE's websites.

1.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE interacts with various stakeholders through university-level activities as well as specific veterinary-focused outreach and engagement with the public and international partners. The information is publicly available. The VEE provides information about the veterinary programme and clinical services via its publicly available webpages. The VEE's ESEVT status, previous Self-Evaluation and Visitation Reports are publicly available.

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

The VEE monitors and reviews its activities including strategic plans, organisational structure, educational provision and QA policy, to ensure that objectives are achieved and that the programme responds to the needs of students and society. The VEE provides a collaborative and coordinated programme which is supported through activities and communication processes at each university as well as at the programme level. The VEE's committee and board structure, together with consultation and communication with faculty, support staff and students, promotes transparency about its activities and encourages a shared responsibility. Decisions and evaluation results are made public on the website, as well as at university information sessions and with other stakeholders on the Advisory Panel.

The VEE operates PDCA cycles to support its monitoring and periodic review activities. Evaluation includes ESEVT indicators as well as additional quantitative and qualitative

indicators, including student progression and graduation rates, course and programme evaluations, participation in clinical and extramural training, surveys of faculty, graduates and employers, and feedback from the Advisory Panel and accreditation bodies. The data contribute to annual and longer-term cycles of quality assurance and programme development, followed by re-evaluation and further monitoring. The PDCA cycles are evidenced through associated documentation with key strategic plans and evaluation outcomes publicly available on the VEE's websites.

1.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The VEE monitors and reviews its activities via short-term and long-term quantitative and qualitative data collection and evaluation processes enabling the VEE to be responsive to the needs of students and society. The VEE has comprehensive quality assurance policies and processes to support the implementation of full Plan-Do-Check-Act cycles to support the programme's quality and ongoing enhancement. Information is collected from and communicated to staff, students and other key stakeholders through various methods including surveys, meetings, committees, documentation and on the website.

1.6.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

1.6.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 1.6.

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

1.7.1. Findings
The VEE underwent external review by EAEVE during a full visitation in 2019 resulting in accreditation. Progress in addressing three minor deficiencies (practical training in meat hygiene, insufficient teacher training, and unclear promotion criteria for staff) have been described in the interim report. Quality assurance processes for continuing monitoring and enhancement are detailed in previous sections of Area 1 and appendices.

1.7.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The VEE is commended for a well-written SER in full agreement with the guidelines and for the well-organised and implemented timetable for the visitation.
The VEE underwent external review through ESEVT with the last visitation in 2019. The interim report described progress in addressing three minor deficiencies, and the VEE’s quality assurance processes support the ongoing cycle of evaluation and enhancement.

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

In Hokkaido University, the VEE operates on an academic-year budget from 1 April to 31 March. Main funding comes from Government subsidies for national universities, research grants, clinical and service revenues. Budget requests are submitted by committees to the Dean. The Dean and Budget Committee prepare the draft budget, which is approved by the faculty meeting. Spending is monitored through faculty assemblies and committees. Research and project grants are mostly funded by Japanese ministries and agencies such as MEXT, MHLW, MAFF, AMED, and JICA. Principal researchers manage grant budgets and submit financial reports.
The university keeps 5% of VTH income and up to 30% overhead on research grants. The remaining VTH income is used for hospital operations.
Tuition fees at Japanese national universities are based on national standards. Current standard tuition is approximately €3,525 per year.
Average annual expenditures are €14.7 million, average annual revenues are €16.4 million, and annual financial surplus is €1.3–1.9 million.
Main revenue sources come from Government funding, clinical services, research grants and other services.
Central university funding supports buildings, utilities and maintenance. Utility costs include electricity, water and gas.

In Obihiro University, main revenue sources come from Government subsidies and external research grants.
Budget allocation is decided by HHERS executive members, University Executive Office, the management Committee and the Board of Directors
Financial management follows formal budget regulations, and financial reports are reviewed annually and published publicly.
The overhead rates are 30% on research funding and 0% on clinical and diagnostic services.
Average annual expenditures are €6.6 million, average annual revenues are €7.6 million, and annual financial surplus is €0.8–1.2 million.
Main revenue sources come from Government subsidies, tuition fees, clinical and diagnostic services and research grants.
Most building and maintenance costs are centrally funded and included in the university

budget.
Both universities consistently operated with a financial surplus during the three years reviewed.

2.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The team found detailed elements in the SER to observe that income and expenditures are well balanced and driven to a surplus during the last three years, which can be used for additional teaching activities, like funding residency programs or international exchanges.
Both sites do their best to collect donations and to develop collaboration for getting grants from the industry or pharmaceutical companies.

2.1.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

2.1.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 2.1.

Standard 2.2: Clinical and field services must function as instructional resources. The instructional integrity of these resources must take priority over the financial self-sufficiency of clinical services operations.
The VEE must have sufficient autonomy in order to use the resources to implement its strategic plan and to meet the ESEVT Standards.

2.2.1. Findings
In Hokkaido University, the VTH revenues are centrally managed. The VTH is financially self-sufficient. Hospital profits support equipment, education and faculty operations.

In Obihiro University, the VTH budget is based on previous-year revenue. Revenue from medical services is used for operating costs and educational activities.
Budget adjustments occur throughout the year.

Both universities have significant autonomy in deciding how to use government subsidies for education, research and strategic priorities. Deans play a major role in budget planning and allocation.

2.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The good management of finances by the two deans gives sufficient means to cover the needs of the VEE.

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
In Hokkaido University, current and planned investments include E-learning system upgrades, surgical video systems, research equipment and CT scanner and linear accelerator renewal.
Stable income is expected from University operating funds, VTH income, research grants and special educational programmes.
The school anticipates higher costs related to EAEVE accreditation maintenance.
Financial plans are created for six-year periods. Budgets are reviewed by committees and faculty meetings. Financial reports are publicly available annually.

At Obihiro University, investments include equine education facilities, MRI and electron microscope upgrades and planned CT system renewal.
Funding comes from MEXT, research grants, clinical income and external organisations.
Future income is expected to remain stable through Government support, tuition fees, clinical services and research funding.
Budget plans are coordinated through university leadership and HHERS. Annual financial reports are reviewed and published online.

2.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
In the VEE, both sites are planning investments according to their needs, and everything is transparent and available.

2.3.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

2.3.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 2.3.

Area 3. Curriculum

Standard 3.1: The curriculum must be designed, resourced and managed to ensure all graduates have achieved the graduate attributes expected to be fully compliant with the EU Directive 2005/36/EC (as amended by directive 2013/55/EU) and its Annex V.4.1. The curriculum must include the subjects (input) and must allow the acquisition of the Day One Competences (output) listed in the ESEVT SOP Annex 2. This concerns:

- **Basic Sciences**
- **Clinical Sciences in companion animals (including equine and exotic pets)**
- **Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals (including Animal Production and Herd Health Management)**

- **Veterinary Public Health (including Food Safety and Quality)**
- **Professional Knowledge (including soft skills, e.g. communication, team working skills, management skills).**

When part of the study programme cannot be organised because of imposed regulations or constraints, convincing compensations must be developed and implemented.

If a VEE offers more than one study programme to become a veterinarian, e.g. in different languages or in collaboration with other VEEs, all study programmes and respective curricula must be described separately in the SER. For each Standard, the VEE must explain if there are differences or not with the basic programme and all this information must be provided as a formal annex to the SER.
Similarly, if a VEE implements a tracking (elective) system in its study programme, it must provide a clear explanation of the tracking system in the SER.

3.1.1. General findings

3.1.1.1. Findings

The VEE delivers a six-year veterinary programme jointly implemented by Hokkaido University (HU) and Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine (OU). The curriculum was established in 2019 and consists of 195 credits, corresponding to 360 ECTS. It is organised as a cooperative curriculum between the two institutions, sharing their academic, clinical and research resources of both campuses. Also, it is aligned with the Japanese Veterinary Education Model Core Curriculum and includes the subjects listed in EU Directive 2005/36/EC, as amended by Directive 2013/55/EU. The curriculum is mapped against the Day One Competences. The first cohort trained under this curriculum graduated in March 2025. At the moment, a new version, “curriculum 2027”, is under preparation to align the programme with the new VNJ Day One Competences established in AY2024.
All core subjects are delivered in the two campuses under a unified syllabus. Depending on the subject, teaching is provided to all students either by the same faculty members or separately at each university by its own staff. In both cases, the two universities aim to coordinate content, learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Where joint delivery is required, teaching may be provided in a hybrid format or at one campus, with students travelling to the other location when necessary.
At the end of Year 4 and before entering hands-on clinical training, students must pass the national Veterinary Common Achievement Test, with multiple-choice questions to assess knowledge and an OSCE to assess basic clinical skills.
Clinical rotations in Years 5–6 are organised as a complementary system between the two universities. Hokkaido University provides a higher companion-animal caseload, whereas Obihiro University provides greater food-producing animal and equine training opportunities. For this reason, students must move between both locations.
Elective Practical Training (EPT) is available to students in Years 4–6. HU students must complete 0.5 credits in Practical English and 1 credit in One Health Seminars, while OU students must complete 0.5 credits in Attractive Veterinarians in Tokachi Region and 1

credit in One Health at Obihiro University. From 2025, students must also complete 1 credit in Meat Hygiene Inspection. In Year 4, students participate in the seminars Particular Veterinary Medicine I and II. In Year 5, each student selects a supervising tutor for Tutorial Research, a subject aimed at developing evidence-based scientific knowledge, critical thinking and soft skills, and leading to the defence of a graduation thesis. In addition to the mentioned seminars and compulsory courses, a wide range of Advanced Seminars is offered (Appendix 3-10), from which students must complete a total of 142.5 hours.
The VEE has a structured process for curriculum review based on curriculum mapping, syllabi and student feedback. The Academic Affairs Committee, which meets monthly, is the main body responsible for monitoring curriculum delivery and reviewing content.

3.1.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE has a six-year curriculum jointly delivered by Hokkaido University and Obihiro University, which at some stages includes the exchange of students between the two campuses. This cooperative model benefits students by leveraging the strengths of both institutions, particularly through the complementary organisation of clinical rotations in Years 5 and 6. The dual structure is effectively supported by robust coordination that ensures equivalence in teaching delivery and achievement of learning outcomes across the two campuses. This exceptional collaboration is commendable and underpinned by unified syllabi, clear curriculum mapping, the shared VetPortal e-media repository and a formal curriculum review process overseen by the Academic Affairs Committee. Nevertheless, teaching in Years 1-4 still relies mainly on traditional full-group modalities, leaving scope for further implementation of small group learning methods, particularly for the development of clinical reasoning skills.

3.1.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to continue to enhance small group learning methods allowing further development of clinical reasoning skills.

3.1.1.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.1.

3.1.2. Basic Sciences

3.1.2.1. Findings

General education subjects and specific Basic Veterinary Sciences are taught across Years 1–3 and extend into Year 4. The General Education curriculum comprises 462 hours, consisting of 327 lecture hours and 135 hours of laboratory and desk-based work. Key subjects include Medical Physics, Chemistry, Animal Biology, Zoology and Cell Biology, Feed Plants and Toxic Plants, and Biomedical Statistics.
The specific Basic Veterinary Sciences component accounts for 1,304.5 hours and covers core disciplines such as Anatomy, Histology and Embryology, Physiology, Biochemistry, General and Molecular Genetics, Pharmacology, Pharmacy and Pharmacotherapy, Pathology, Toxicology, Parasitology, Microbiology, Immunology,

Epidemiology, Information Literacy and Data Management, Professional Ethics and Communication, Animal Health Economics and Practice Management, Animal Ethology, Animal Welfare, and Animal Nutrition.
Teaching modalities comprise lectures (632.5 hours), seminars, supervised self-learning, laboratory and desk-based work, and non-clinical animal work (373 hours).
Through curriculum mapping, Basic Veterinary Sciences are aligned with the acquisition of Day One Competences. Since training is delivered separately on each campus, effective coordination and quality assurance mechanisms are utilised to ensure equivalence in delivery, outcomes and assessment.

3.1.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

There is a high level of commitment across the relevant academic bodies, including teaching staff, subject coordinators and the Academic Affairs Committee, to align syllabi, learning outcomes and assessment criteria in Basic Veterinary Sciences subjects. This close coordination supports the equivalence of delivery across the two campuses and helps ensure a robust basis for the progressive and harmonised acquisition of Day One Competences at the preclinical level.

3.1.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

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

The Core Clinical Training (CCT) at the VEE is fully integrated into the curriculum and prepares students for clinical practice through progressive, hands-on training in small groups. From Years 1–4, students acquire essential veterinary skills—including animal handling, clinical examinations, diagnostics and surgery—using healthy animals, cadavers, simulators and clinical data. It leads into structured clinical rotations and comprehensive veterinary medicine, supported by supervised daytime, night and emergency duties.
Clinical training is strengthened by high case volumes: HU's Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) has a high companion animal caseload, while OU's VTH has a high caseload for food-producing animals, as shown by the Indicators table.
Each student completes a total of 4,560 curriculum hours, including 819 hours dedicated to companion animals; of these, 484 hours involve direct clinical animal work. There is an eight-week rotation of intramural clinical training in dogs, cats and exotics covering internal medicine, surgery, diagnostic imaging, anaesthesia, oncology and emergency/critical care, including night and emergency duties. The clinical rotation in large animal practice comprises both production animals and equine, with equine cases constituting a relatively smaller component of the rotation. Initially, students participate

in 1 week of basic large animal clinical skills (4.5 days for production animals and 0.5 days for equine), followed by a three-week rotation, when students from OU are allocated 3 days dedicated to equine practice, whereas students from HU are allocated 2 days. This is partially compensated by morning horse care sessions where all students do the daily clinical examinations and procedures with in-patients, some simulators and videos of equine clinical cases.
Exposure to exotic animals is primarily provided through companion animal clinical services and diagnostic training at the VTHs, complemented by targeted visits to private veterinary hospitals specialising in exotic cases, ensuring students gain broad and well-rounded experience in this area.
During clinical rotations, students actively participate in all VTH activities under close supervision by veterinary faculty and staff, in accordance with the Guidelines for Student Activities in Participatory Clinical Rotation. Clinical tasks are categorised by invasiveness: low-invasive procedures may be performed after instruction, moderately invasive procedures only under direct supervision, and highly invasive procedures are restricted to assisting or observation.
In Year 4, students learn injection techniques (i.m., s.c., i.v.) and basic procedures using calf, dog and horse models supported by e-learning resources. They then progress to supervised practice with live animals, first observing and then performing simulated procedures to develop skills such as venipuncture and animal handling. Their competences are assessed via a vetOSCE exam. In Years 5 and 6, students perform injections and blood sampling on cattle and horses during clinical rotations.
In Years 5–6, the Elective Practical Training (EPT) programme allows students to gain more specialised knowledge and experience. Through Advanced Seminar courses (5.5 credits), students select faculty-led activities ranging from lectures to off-campus training, all fully supervised and assessed on a pass/fail basis. In Year 4, students explore focused interests through Seminar in Particular Veterinary Medicine I & II, while Tutorial Research develops research skills, critical thinking and evidence-based knowledge under individual faculty supervision, culminating in a thesis. Participation and performance are formally monitored through reports, oral presentations and/or logbooks, and all EPT activities are quality-assured with a clear complaint process.
Entry into clinical rotations is conditional upon passing the national Veterinary Clinical Aptitude Test (VCAT), which is conducted before Years 5–6 and consists of a computer-based knowledge examination (vetCBT; 300 multiple-choice questions) and an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (vetOSCE) assessing fundamental clinical skills.

3.1.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE must be commended for the outstanding Hokkaido University VTH, which is ideally built, equipped and organised for optimal clinical training in dogs and cats for both undergraduate and graduate students. There is a strong, well-integrated clinical training programme with a clear progression from basic skills to real clinical responsibility. Its major strengths include high caseload exposure, extensive hands-on learning, and a robust assessment system that ensures students are adequately prepared before entering clinical rotations.

The time allocated to core equine clinical training may be insufficient for students due to the limited exposure to equine patients during the large animal rotation. Such limited clinical exposure raises concerns as to whether students can achieve adequate competences in equine practice. This is partially compensated by daily morning rounds with equine in-patients and some simulators and case videos.

The training with exotic animals meets the requirements.

3.1.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to strengthen hours with equine patients by increasing time for core training intramurally and/or extramurally, i.e. in the Obihiro equine clinic and/or in private equine practices, complemented by additional simulation-based learning.

3.1.3.4 Decision

The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.3 because the number of hours spent by each student with equine patients is suboptimal, which may adversely affect the acquisition of some D1C by all students.

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

3.1.4.1. Findings

Clinical Sciences in FPA totals 647.5 hours covering obstetrics, diagnostic pathology, medicine, surgery, anaesthesiology, clinical practical training, infectious diseases, preventive medicine, diagnostic imaging, therapy, animal production, and herd health management.

Core Clinical Training (CCT) prior to clinical rotations is conducted in small groups (6-20 students) covering clinical diagnosis, diagnostic imaging, clinical pathology and necropsy. Pre-clinical skills training progresses from Year 1 (introductory veterinary medicine, animal handling, basic physical examinations for FPA) through Years 2-4 (progressive acquisition of pre-clinical skills across specialised disciplines).
Student training combines complementary education across campuses, with HU utilising affiliated farms for pre-clinical and clinical FPA training.
Clinical rotations include practice in comprehensive veterinary medicine (2 weeks), practice in farm animal medicine I at OU VTH (3 weeks) for 5-Y students of both VEEs, practice in farm animal medicine II at individual VTH (1 week - 6-Y), and practice in night times and emergency medicine at OU VTH (4 evenings). Clinical procedures are categorised into low-invasive, moderately invasive, and highly invasive, with appropriate supervision levels for student participation. Small groups (generally 6-8 students) are supervised by a veterinarian.

At OU, dedicated FPA medicine and reproductive medicine divisions provide both first-opinion and referral services. The facility maintains outpatient services Monday-Friday (9:00-17:00) with emergency coverage during evenings and weekends. Students are

engaged in extensive practical training in farm management in the main FPA species (cattle, pigs and chickens) and clinical reasoning.
Moreover, students can choose 30 elective hours from Animal Nutrition, Introduction to Fisheries, or International Studies for Agricultural Development.

3.1.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE is commended for the well-developed intramural and extramural training in Food-Producing Animals at Obihiro University.

Students acquire their D1C qualifications through a progressive teaching approach. They learn to master a range of technical procedures on the main livestock species (cattle, sheep, pigs and poultry) using manikins or videos. They have the opportunity to practise these procedures on live animals of these species in small groups (6 to 8 students) at HU and OU farms, such as milking practices, clinical examination, reproductive and post-partum examination. Group sizes range from 2 to 20 students, depending on the type of activity the students are undertaking, but the student-to-supervisor ratio does not exceed 5 students per supervisor.

The number of ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally (I9) and of visits to ruminant and pig herds per student (I12) are significantly higher than the expected minimum (and median) values. The number of visits to poultry, rabbit, fish and bee units per student (I13) is close to the expected minimum value.

Herd Health Management is taught through activities carried out at six commercial farms with which the VEE has signed contracts. Small groups of students (6-7) are supervised by academic staff and can perform hands-on.

Moreover, rotations include clinical case preparation and both written and oral presentations.

3.1.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.1.4.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.4.

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

3.1.5.1. Findings

Subjects related to VPH consist of all together 239,5 hrs. Among subjects related to VPH, there are: Veterinary legislation including official controls, regulatory veterinary services, forensic veterinary medicine and certification (41 hrs); Control of food, feed and animal by-products (25,5 hrs); Zoonoses and their prevention (62 hrs); Food hygiene and environmental health (80,5 hrs); Basic food technology (30,5 hrs). There is also a practical rotation: 2 days as a seminar on slaughtering, ante- and post-mortem

inspections (cattle and pigs) and 3 days as hands-on Meat Hygiene Inspection Training. From 2020 to 2024, off-campus meat hygiene practical training was offered as an elective programme due to the limited capacity of the meat hygiene inspection centre and slaughterhouse. From 2025, the programme has been made available to all VEE students and has been incorporated into Core Clinical Training (CCT).

Obihiro University provides practical training in meat hygiene and food processing through its on-campus Food Processing Practice Facility, which includes a slaughterhouse and is used by students from both Obihiro University and Hokkaido University. During this practical training, 40 students handle one slaughtered cow and pig and their internal organs. They also observe the slaughtering process. Additionally, each student spends at least 8 hrs in a public slaughterhouse for further practical teaching led by an official veterinary inspector and the teacher.

The legal requirement in Japan does not allow students to perform official meat inspections or handle commercial meat and edible offal intended for the food chain. Consequently, they can't perform inspections on animals or carcasses intended for the food chain. To compensate for this limitation, the VEE obtains condemned organs from an extra-mural slaughterhouse and uses them for practical training in a BSL2 room at Obihiro University.

As part of the Year 1 course *Seminar in Agriculture and Farm Animal Science*, students are introduced to pig slaughtering, post-mortem examination, and meat processing procedures. In Year 4, within the course *Practice in Food Hygiene*, students take part in cattle slaughtering sessions, ante- and post-mortem inspections, and examinations of diseased organs at a public slaughterhouse. The practical classes are conducted in the university slaughterhouse and in a BSL-2 teaching laboratory. In the “Hands-On Meat Inspection Training” course (30 hours), at least 8 hours are devoted to practical training at local slaughterhouses, while during the remaining 22 hours students are preparing for practical meat inspection.

The slaughtering procedures are performed by experienced workers from a private slaughterhouse, while meat inspections are carried out by Obihiro University academic staff who are officially qualified as meat inspectors following specialised professional training. This allows students to gain practical experience in accordance with current legal and regulatory requirements.

In addition, both locations offer practical poultry meat inspection training during pathology classes. Using spent hens, students learn systematic carcass and organ examination techniques and recognise pathological lesions. At Hokkaido University, a half-day practical training programme in poultry meat inspection was newly introduced at the university’s on-campus Agri-Food Centre, and a similar programme will be introduced at Obihiro University in AY2026.

The practical training on meat inspection became a compulsory course from AY2025, allowing all VEE students to get practical knowledge in this area. Before AY 2025 and during pandemic VEE provided compensation in the form of virtual slaughterhouses and videos.

Visits to poultry farms and slaughterhouses were temporarily suspended because of outbreaks of HPAI in Japan. To compensate for these limitations, specialists working in poultry production now provide online and face-to-face lectures on poultry at both universities. In addition, practical training has been provided in the Agri-Food Centre at

HU. For this purpose carcasses and internal organs are used. Under the supervision of the teacher, groups of 2 students are taught a post-mortem examination of poultry. The similar training will be provided at OU from AY2026.

3.1.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE ensures an appropriate level of education in the field of VPH and FSQ through theoretical and practical training of students in ante- and post-mortem examination of the main species of food-producing animals and technological processes, with the use of compensation measures where the physical presence of students is not possible due to various technical reasons (e.g. HPAI).

3.1.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to:
- Increase the number of pigs and cattle slaughtered for educational purposes at Obihiro University's on-campus slaughterhouse to further enhance students' practical skills in conducting post-mortem inspections of slaughter animals.
- Use more effectively the on-campus dairy processing plant at Obihiro University for hands-on training and practical classes to provide students with greater exposure to real-world dairy processing operations and help strengthen their practical skills.

3.1.5.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.5.

3.1.6. Professional Knowledge

3.1.6.1. Findings

The VEE's programme integrates professional competences, including soft skills, communication, teamwork, leadership, ethics, research, and management abilities, throughout its six-year veterinary curriculum.
The programme aims to develop veterinarians who demonstrate ethical and professional conduct, take responsibility as healthcare professionals, contribute to animal and public health and address global veterinary and food safety challenges.
Students are expected to apply logic and ethics in decision-making, to understand professional responsibilities and to develop international and societal awareness.
Professional ethics is formally included in the curriculum through subjects such as "professional ethics and communication", "veterinary communication", "clinical rotations", "public health and food safety training".
Communication training is embedded throughout the curriculum. In Year 4, students take a seminar in Veterinary Communication, and they practice client interviews, professional conversations, and communication with standardised clients with medical explanations.
During clinical rotations, students learn client communication, medical report writing, clinical discussions, case presentations and oral communication within veterinary teams.
Through Tutorial Research, students develop scientific writing, presentation skills,

discussion and debate skills through evidence-based communication.
The curriculum emphasises collaborative learning and professional teamwork in small groups during clinical rotations, in research groups, in case discussions and in emergency care teams.
During clinical rotations, students collaborate with veterinarians, veterinary nurses, faculty supervisors, public health veterinarians, meat inspection officers and researchers in order to develop interprofessional collaboration, shared decision-making, team communication and cooperative problem-solving.

3.1.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The team observed very good collaboration in all departments of the VEE, and especially in the VTH, where pet owners, technicians, veterinarians, and professors work and discuss in a particularly smooth ambience.
Even though in postgraduate surveys, some students are complaining about insufficient communication skills, the team confirms that enough lectures and practicals are given during the curriculum, and allow students to perform their professional duties.

3.1.6.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

3.1.6.4 Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.1.6.

Standard 3.2: Each study programme provided by the VEE must be competency-based and designed so that it meets the objectives set for it, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme must be clearly specified and communicated and must refer to the correct level of the national qualifications framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.
The VEE must provide proof of a QA system that promotes and monitors the presence of a teaching environment highly conducive to learning including self-learning. Details of the type, provision and updating of appropriate learning opportunities for the students must be clearly described, as well as the involvement of students.
The VEE must also describe how it encourages and prepares students for lifelong learning.

3.2.1. Findings
The VEE operates a competency-based approach to curriculum design. The programme qualification is aligned with national and, consequently, European frameworks for higher education. Students have access to online details about the syllabus and are made aware of course learning objectives, assessment methods and grading criteria, while teaching staff explain the relationship to the Day One Competences at the start of each course. The VEE promotes an environment conducive to learning through its courses, teachers and facilities, accompanied by monitoring through a comprehensive quality

assurance system. Student requests for improvements to the learning environment are presented by student representatives on committees and collected via suggestion boxes. The VEE supports student self-learning and development of lifelong learning skills in various ways, including through tutorials, workshops, seminars, internships and research. Further learning is supported through the university's libraries, specimen displays and the Skills Labs being open access for repeated practice.

3.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The programme is competency-based with courses designed to meet the learning objectives and mapped to the Day One Competences. The programme qualification is aligned with national and European frameworks for higher education. The VEE has QA systems with multiple stakeholder involvement, including students, staff and external input, to monitor, evaluate and enhance the education provided to students. Detailed information about courses, learning outcomes, assessments, the syllabus and relevant qualifications is provided online and complemented by in-person communication. The VEE provides opportunities for self-learning and fosters the development of professional and lifelong learning skills through a variety of learning activities and facilities.

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 VEE has established a 6-year integrated programme to support the educational goal of cultivating veterinarians who understand the diverse societal missions of veterinary medicine, possess a high regard for animal ethics, scientific thinking and judgement, an international perspective, and possess creativity and humanity. The education consists of general courses and four specialised subject groups (Basic Veterinary Medicine, Pathological Veterinary Medicine, Applied Veterinary Medicine and Clinical Veterinary Medicine). The objectives, learning outcomes, teaching plans and assessment criteria and methods for each subject are clearly stated in the information about the courses.
The curriculum is designed to achieve ESEVT Day One Competences, and each course

is mapped to the relevant Day One Competences, providing a comprehensive and concise overview of the entire programme. Day One Competences are explained during orientation at the start of each academic year, with specific Day One Competence targets for each course explained by teachers. Posters listing the Day One Competences are present at multiple sites on both campuses. In clinical rotations students complete a logbook enabling them to assess their progress in alignment with Day One Competence.

3.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The programme's learning outcomes are designed to ensure that teaching, learning and assessment activities are aligned and support the acquisition of the Day One Competences. Associated information, including statements of learning objectives, outcomes and assessment details are available online for each course and is communicated to students and staff. The quality assurance processes (detailed in Area 1) implemented by the VEE promote regular review and a PDCA that enables the VEE to manage and update the programme.

3.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.3.

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

- **determine the pedagogical basis, design, delivery methods and assessment methods of the curriculum**
- **oversee QA of the curriculum, particularly gathering, evaluating, making change and responding to feedback from stakeholders, peer reviewers and external assessors, and data from examination/assessment outcomes**
- **perform ongoing reviews and periodic in-depth reviews of the curriculum (at least every seven years) by involving staff, students and stakeholders; these reviews must lead to continuous improvement of the curriculum. Any action taken or planned as a result of such a review must be communicated to all those concerned**
- **identify and meet training needs for all types of staff, maintaining and enhancing their competence for the ongoing curriculum development.**

3.4.1. Findings

The VEE has a quality assurance system to oversee and manage the programme with relevant committees to perform associated activities. The Academic Affairs Committee makes systematic decisions and finalises the curriculum plan. The plan is approved by the Joint Education Programme Council and Board of Directors, while changes to course

content require approval from the Programme Executive Board. Meetings are minuted, and associated documentation is made available in hard copy and electronically.
When developing the original integrated programme ('Curriculum 2019') the major changes were discussed among relevant faculty members at both universities, incorporated student feedback, and included details about educational content, subject configuration, subject allocation, the ratio of lectures to practical sessions and timetables for each academic year and then discussed and finalised within academic committees at each university and for the joint programme. The proposed curriculum was presented and discussed at faculty meetings of each university and then at the joint VEE programme level.
As part of ongoing programme review and management, minor ongoing changes at the subject level are implemented during the academic year by the relevant teaching staff, and the subject coordinator is responsible for providing the latest information to students. The Academic Affairs Committee monitors and periodically reviews the overall programme with a new curriculum planned for 2027. The Quality Assurance Committee is responsible for information gathering and analysis including student evaluations, student course evaluations, stakeholder feedback from educational consultation meetings, graduate employment outcomes and the utilisation of self-study spaces and resources. Provision of staff training is adapted to support ongoing needs, and input is gathered via surveys. Programme information including revisions, is communicated via multiple channels to students and through direct announcements from teachers. Programme information is available on both universities' websites, in brochures and at open events for prospective students.

3.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The VEE has a committee structure to oversee and manage the joint integrated programme with clear reporting lines and documentation. Oversight of the programme design, delivery and review is provided by the Academic Affairs Committee, while data collection and analysis from multiple stakeholders and sources is the responsibility of the Quality Assurance Committee. The last major programme review led to Curriculum 2019 and the next review will result in a revised programme implemented in 2027. Multiple channels are used to communicate programme information and changes to students, staff and other stakeholders. Continuing education for staff is provided through university and local-level training courses, with ongoing needs informed by student and staff feedback.

3.4.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

3.4.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.4.

Standard 3.5: Elective Practical Training (EPT) includes compulsory training activities that each student must achieve before graduation to complement and strengthen their core theoretical and practical academic education, inter alia by

enhancing their experience, professional knowledge and soft skills. Like all elective activities, its contents may vary from one undergraduate student to another.
EPT is organised either extra-murally with the student being under the direct supervision of a qualified person (e.g. a veterinary practitioner) or intra-murally, with the student being under the supervision of a teaching staff or a qualified person.
EPT itself cannot replace the Core Clinical Training (CCT) under the close supervision of teaching staff (e.g. ambulatory clinics, herd health management, practical training in VPH (including Food Safety and Quality (FSQ)). A comparison between CCT and EPT is provided in Annex 6, Standard 3.5.

3.5.1. Findings

The "Advanced Seminar" courses (EPT) are led by faculty members and include a variety of formats, such as lectures and off-campus activities. Faculty oversee all aspects of the courses, including scheduling, teaching, supervision, and assessment.
Students in Years 5–6 choose elective courses worth 5.5 credits (142.5 hours) with guidance from EPT supervisors. These electives are designed to provide specialised knowledge and practical experience rather than replace CCT.
In Year 4, students participate in seminars focused on specific areas of veterinary medicine and select laboratories in basic, applied, or clinical sciences according to their interests.
In Year 5, each student is assigned a supervising instructor approved by the Academic Affairs Committee.
Through "Tutorial Research," students develop evidence-based scientific knowledge, critical thinking, research abilities, presentation skills, and other soft skills. (450 hours = 10 credits)
The curriculum includes EPT opportunities in areas such as Production animals (pre-clinical and clinical), Companion animals (pre-clinical and clinical), Veterinary Public Health (VPH), including Food Safety and Quality (FSQ) and many other specific fields.
"Hands-on Meat Hygiene Inspection Training," previously offered as an elective, became a compulsory course starting in AY2025.

3.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE must be commended for the elective practical training (EPT) provided, intra or extramurally, which covers a wide range of topics and is very diverse, and much appreciated by both students and teachers.

It consists of almost 90 different possibilities, including advanced courses of English, that students can choose to deepen their practical skills.

3.5.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

3.5.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.5.

Standard 3.6: The EPT providers must meet the relevant national Veterinary Practice Standards, have an agreement with the VEE and the student (stating their respective rights and duties, including insurance matters), provide a standardised evaluation of the performance of the student during their EPT and be allowed to provide feedback to the VEE on the EPT programme.
There must be a member of the teaching staff responsible for the overall supervision of the EPT, including liaison with EPT providers.

3.6.1. Findings
All EPT courses within the "Advanced Seminar" programme are conducted and supervised by academic staff who are formally trained in teaching and assessment.
Student performance is evaluated by course conductors using reports, examinations, and other assessment methods, with final grades awarded on a Pass/Fail basis.
Since AY2022, the "Hands-on Meat Hygiene Inspection Training" course has been delivered in collaboration with the Hokkaido Prefectural Government's Department of Health and Welfare. Parts of the training are supervised by public health veterinarians at inspection facilities.
The "Advanced Seminar" programme is coordinated by the Chair of the Advanced Education Committee.
"Tutorial Research" is supervised individually by faculty members in each student's laboratory or research area.

3.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
Currently, all the EPTs are organised intramurally and directly supervised by the teaching staff. As part of their career development education, students are required to undertake two extramural internships at different providers. They may choose internship providers from the VEE's approved list or propose other providers, provided that each provider has an agreement with the VEE.

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
In the "Advanced Seminar" programme, faculty members offer various courses, and students choose subjects according to their interests. The Chair of the Advanced

Education Committee reviews the course content and organisation.
Student participation is monitored through attendance records, and most courses require reports, oral presentations, and/or logbooks for assessment.
In "Seminar in Particular Veterinary Medicine I & II" and "Tutorial Research," students study scientific literature to deepen their understanding of specialised veterinary fields.
During "Tutorial Research," students complete research projects that help them develop specialised knowledge and practical skills.
Students must submit a final thesis, which is evaluated by their supervising instructor along with other faculty members.
The section also outlines the complaint process:
Students can contact the Academic Affairs Office if issues arise during EPT.
Anonymous feedback or complaints may also be submitted online or through a suggestion box.
Complaints are reviewed by the Academic Affairs Committee, while the Quality Assurance (QA) Committee oversees the process and requests the Dean to implement necessary actions.

3.7.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
Students must write reports of their activities and are evaluated by the teaching staff or by the EPT provider. They can also effectively give feedback on their EPT, which is taken into account by the VEE.

3.7.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

3.7.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 3.7.

Area 4. Facilities and equipment

Standard 4.1: All aspects of the physical facilities must provide an environment conducive to learning, including internet access at all relevant sites where theoretical, practical and clinical education takes place. The VEE must have a clear strategy and programme for maintaining and upgrading its buildings and equipment. Facilities must comply with all relevant legislation including health, safety, biosecurity, accessibility to people including students with a disability, and EU animal welfare and care standards.

4.1.1. Findings
The two campuses are located approximately 180 km apart and are connected by public transport, with campus maps publicly available for access to teaching, research, and clinical facilities. HU is located in central Sapporo within a defined area of the Hokkaido University campus, where veterinary facilities are concentrated around core academic, research, animal, and hospital buildings. OU is located on the outskirts of Obihiro City on a large campus in an agricultural region, with veterinary facilities distributed across

clinical buildings and a teaching farm.
Over the past decade, both HU and OU have undertaken facility renovation and construction in line with their university master plans, supported by funding from the University Reform Promotion Budget (2012–2017). Recent developments at OU focus on farm animal and equine education, including the redevelopment of the FCASA teaching farm (2021–2025) and ongoing construction of equine facilities. Facility maintenance and development are managed through committee-based governance at HU and routine administrative monitoring of space usage and equipment at OU. All facilities operate in compliance with relevant legislation, with regulated oversight of high-risk facilities and animal welfare standards; HU maintains continuous AAALAC International accreditation.

4.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The findings indicate that both VEEs operate within distinct but complementary campus settings, providing access to urban-based and agriculture-focused environments. Long-term, master-plan-aligned investment, supported by national funding, has enabled sustained development of facilities, with recent expansion at OU strengthening farm animal education. Governance arrangements for facilities differ between the institutions, but provide structured oversight. Compliance with legislative, safety, and animal welfare requirements is in place at both sites, with additional international accreditation at HU supporting external benchmarking of animal care standards. Working with large animals, the students can wear helmets if necessary.

4.1.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

4.1.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.1.

Standard 4.2: Lecture theatres, teaching laboratories, tutorial rooms, clinical facilities and other teaching spaces must be adequate in number and size, equipped for instructional purposes and well maintained. The facilities must be adapted for the number of students enrolled. Students must have ready access to adequate and sufficient study, self-learning, recreation, locker, sanitary and food service facilities.
Offices, teaching preparation and research laboratories must be sufficient for the needs of the teaching and support staff to support their teaching and research efforts.

4.2.1. Findings
The institution provides extensive and well-equipped facilities to support lecturing, group work, and practical training across both campuses (HU and OU).
HU has several lecture rooms and a lecture hall with advanced two-way systems enabling remote teaching and live field transmission. OU offers a larger capacity with 27 lecture rooms, upgraded audio-visual and IT systems, and attendance tracking via card

readers. A specialised clinical lecture theatre includes animal parturition simulators.
Both campuses provide numerous group rooms (11 at HU and 23 at OU), some equipped with modern tools such as touch displays and whiteboards, supporting collaborative learning.
Both institutions are strongly equipped for hands-on training.
HU includes practice rooms with histology virtual slides, biosafety labs for pathogen handling, and specialised animal practice rooms with surgical and diagnostic equipment. Facilities also include pathology and dissection areas meeting biosecurity standards.
OU features laboratories with sufficient microscopes and experimental equipment, secure biosafety labs, anatomy and necropsy facilities, and simulator-based training rooms. Advanced biosecurity measures and waste management systems are in place.
Both campuses provide 24/7-accessible Skills Labs with card authentication, supported by additional training equipment (notably expanded at OU), ensuring flexible, continuous practical skills development for students. Both Skills Labs are well equipped.
Both campuses provide accessible and well-equipped study spaces, including 24/7 self-learning areas and libraries, supporting independent study with digital and specialised veterinary learning resources.
Basic catering is available on both campuses, with HU offering multiple campus cafeterias and nearby food options, while OU provides limited on-site dining through a food court and coffee shop.
Both campuses provide adequate locker facilities, with HU offering dedicated locker rooms and shared facilities, while OU ensures individual lockers and gender-separated changing areas across training buildings.
On-call accommodation is available at both campuses, with HU offering small, shared rooms, while OU provides larger, well-equipped housing with multiple rooms.
Both campuses offer extensive leisure and extracurricular facilities, with OU providing particularly wide-ranging sports infrastructure and student activity support.
Adequate sanitary facilities are available on both campuses, with OU having a higher number of toilets and showers than HU. Two accessible toilets are found in the General Research Building I (OU) and one at the Large Animal Hospital and Clinical Research Building 1 floor (OU).
Both campuses provide adequate staff offices and research spaces, with HU offering larger, multi-room lab setups, while OU provides dedicated offices and shared laboratory facilities tailored to research needs.

4.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE is commended for its numerous, well-equipped, and well-maintained facilities. Both campuses demonstrate strong infrastructure, modern equipment, and appropriate safety standards to support comprehensive veterinary education in theoretical, collaborative, and practical domains.

4.2.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

4.2.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.2.

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

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

4.3.1. Findings

Both universities (HU and OU) have extensive and well-equipped facilities for housing animals, clinical training, research, and diagnostic services.

Animal housing:
Both institutions maintain facilities for a wide range of species (dogs, cats, livestock, poultry, rodents), supporting both teaching and research. OU generally has larger-scale livestock and breeding facilities, while HU has advanced high-containment (ABSL-3) laboratories.

Research and experimental facilities:
Both universities provide specialised animal research units, including biosafety-level laboratories and facilities for infectious and chemical exposure studies. All practical training involving live animals requires protocols to be prepared by faculty and approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), ensuring proper oversight.

Clinical and hospital facilities:
Each school has veterinary teaching hospitals with ICU units, operating theatres, imaging technologies (CT, MRI, ultrasound), and dedicated wards for different species.

Diagnostic services:
Comprehensive diagnostic capabilities are available, including imaging, laboratory testing, pathology, and necropsy services. OU also offers mobile diagnostic units and advanced reproductive technologies.
Necropsied carcasses are stored in sealed containers in a refrigerated room (5°C), while carcasses from other activities are autoclaved and stored frozen (−25°C) until weekly collection by an external contractor. For anatomical training, fresh specimens are kept at 4°C, and frozen specimens are stored at −25°C in restricted-access areas.

Education and training resources:
Facilities support hands-on training in clinical practice, animal handling, reproduction, and public health, including slaughterhouse and food-processing training (OU).

Equipment and infrastructure:
Both institutions are equipped with modern veterinary technology; HU additionally includes a radiotherapy linear accelerator, while OU has strong field-based and mobile services.

4.3.2Analysis of the findings/Comments
The VEE is commended for its excellent implementation of biosecurity procedures across all facilities. Both universities are well equipped to support veterinary education, clinical practice, and research, with HU excelling in advanced laboratory containment and imaging, and OU offering broader large-animal, field-service, and food-production training facilities.

4.3.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

4.3.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.3.

Standard 4.4: Core clinical teaching facilities must be provided in a veterinary teaching hospital (VTH) with 24/7 emergency services at least for companion animals and equines. Within the VTH, the VEE must unequivocally demonstrate that the standard of education and clinical research is compliant with all ESEVT Standards, e.g. research-based and evidence-based clinical training supervised by teaching staff trained to teach and to assess, availability for staff and students of facilities and patients for performing clinical research and relevant QA procedures. For ruminants, on-call service must be available if emergency services do not exist for those species in a VTH.
The VEE must ensure state-of-the-art standards of teaching clinics which remain comparable with or exceed the best available clinics in the private sector.
The VTH and any hospitals, practices and facilities which are involved with the core curriculum must be compliant with the ESEVT Standards and meet the relevant national Veterinary Practice Standards.

4.4.1. Findings
Both HU and OU operate well-structured veterinary teaching hospitals that support a broad range of clinical services and provide strong opportunities for hands-on student training. At both institutions, students are exposed to a combination of primary and referral cases across multiple disciplines, including internal medicine, surgery, diagnostic imaging, and specialised fields such as oncology and cardiology. Clinical rotations are carefully organised, with students actively participating in the full clinical process, from history-taking and examination to diagnostics and treatment planning. Supervision is ensured through close interaction with residents, interns, and academic staff, while structured tools such as logbooks and scheduled feedback guarantee consistent learning outcomes. In addition, the integration of ambulatory services—particularly at OU—enhances training by exposing students to real-life farm conditions,

herd health management, and reproductive work in the field. Both institutions demonstrate clear compliance with national veterinary practice standards, supported by qualified staff, ethical oversight, and continuous quality assurance systems.
In terms of out-of-hours and emergency services, both universities provide relevant clinical exposure, though their approaches differ. HU offers a comprehensive and continuous system, maintaining full 24-hour readiness for companion animals, including emergency and critical care, with uninterrupted inpatient monitoring. This ensures consistent access to emergency cases and reflects a highly structured in-hospital service. In contrast, OU operates a well-organised but partly on-call-based system, with emergency services available outside regular hours during nights and throughout weekends.

Emergency case exposure at HU VTH is limited due to its referral-based caseload, with most intensive care focused on inpatients. To enhance student experience, the curriculum includes training at a private emergency hospital. At OU, emergency services are supported by a dedicated hotline and are provided through both house calls and in-clinic visits.

4.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
Overall, both systems effectively support clinical training and meet expected standards, with HU offering stronger continuous hospital-based emergency coverage, and OU providing broader experience in ambulatory and field-based emergency care.

4.4.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

4.4.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.4.

Standard 4.5: The VEE must ensure that students have access to a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic facilities, including but not limited to clinical skills laboratory, diagnostic imaging, clinical pathology, anaesthesia, surgeries and treatment facilities, intensive/critical care, ambulatory services, pharmacy and necropsy facilities. Procedures and facilities should also be available for soft skills training, e.g. communication skills training through role-play.

4.5.1. Findings
Both HU and OU provide appropriate student access to facilities supporting clinical training. At HU, access to diagnostic and therapeutic facilities is controlled via IC cards and limited to specific training periods, ensuring structured use. In contrast, OU allows 24-hour access to the VTH during clinical placements, following initial guidance, enabling more continuous engagement.
At both institutions, students can use diagnostic and therapeutic equipment and have access to training tools for practical and communication skills, ensuring adequate hands-on learning opportunities.

4.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
Both institutions provide adequate and comparable access to clinical training facilities, though with different levels of flexibility. HU's controlled access supports structured and supervised use, promoting organisation and oversight, while OU's 24-hour access enables greater continuity and independence in learning.

4.5.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

4.5.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.5.

Standard 4.6: Appropriate isolation facilities must be provided to meet the need for the isolation and containment of animals with communicable diseases. Such isolation facilities must be properly constructed, ventilated, maintained and operated to provide for the prevention of the spread of infectious agents, animal care and student training. They must be adapted to all animal species commonly handled in the VTH. When permanent isolation facilities are not available in any of the facilities used for clinical training, the ability to provide such facilities and the procedures to use them appropriately in an emergency must be demonstrated during the visitation.

4.6.1. Findings
Both HU and OU have dedicated isolation facilities and clear procedures to ensure the containment of infectious animals. HU provides separate isolation rooms for dogs and cats located outside the main hospital area, supported by strict biosecurity measures such as multi-barrier systems, filtered cages, and mandatory use of protective clothing. Access is tightly controlled, and both staff and students receive regular training in infection control.
OU also has isolation rooms for both companion animals and large animals, supported by strict operating procedures for animal handling and transport. In cases of serious infectious disease, mobile clinics are used in coordination with external veterinary services to minimise contamination risks.

4.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
Overall, both institutions demonstrate appropriate isolation capacity and biosecurity protocols. However, not all species are equally covered at HU, as isolation facilities are explicitly described only for dogs and cats, whereas OU includes provisions for both companion animals and large animals.

4.6.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

4.6.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.6.

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

4.7.1. Findings
Students are introduced to practical herd health management in Year 4 through theoretical seminars. In Year 5, during advanced training, they visit private farms where they perform essential veterinary procedures such as dehorning, castration, and clinical examinations of animals during the peripartum and neonatal periods. OU has four vehicles (ten seats), one estate car (five seats), and two diagnostic imaging vehicles (three seats) for visiting mobile clinics.

4.7.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
There is a well-structured progression from theoretical to practical herd health training, with students gaining relevant hands-on experience in real farm settings. OU's dedicated vehicle fleet further strengthens this by enabling regular and organised access to field training.
Overall, the system effectively links classroom learning with practical application, with OU demonstrating strong logistical support for ambulatory teaching.

4.7.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

4.7.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 4.7.

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

4.8.1. Findings
There is sufficient public transport for students to access both VEEs. Animal and material transport are also adequately organised: HU uses livestock transporters and/or school-owned vehicles for farm animals and horses, and an eight-seater vehicle for small animals and exotics. OU operates a two-tonne lorry for cattle and horses and has two small pick-up trucks for carcass transport.

4.8.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
Both institutions have well-organised transport systems supporting clinical training and animal handling. HU demonstrates flexibility with a range of vehicles suited to different species, while OU provides more specialised transport, particularly for large animals and

carcass movement.

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
Both HU and OU have well-defined and structured processes for managing facilities, equipment, and biosecurity. Responsibilities are clearly allocated to specialised committees, with final decisions made at the senior management level (Dean at HU and President at OU). Implementation and maintenance are supported by administrative and facilities units.
Biosecurity, safety procedures, and compliance (including GLP/GCP-related practices) are overseen by dedicated committees, with mandatory approvals, regular inspections, and clearly defined SOPs. Both institutions ensure continuous assessment and revision through internal reviews, committee oversight, and feedback mechanisms.
Communication with staff and students is systematic and effective, using a combination of meetings, training sessions, written materials, and digital channels. Overall, both universities demonstrate robust governance frameworks ensuring safe, compliant, and continuously improving facilities and practices.

4.9.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
Both institutions show strong and well-organised governance, with clear responsibilities, effective oversight, and structured decision-making. Biosecurity, safety, and compliance are robustly managed through formal procedures and regular review. Communication is consistent and effective, supporting implementation. Overall, both systems ensure safe, compliant, and well-maintained training environments.

4.9.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

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 ensures diverse educational resources through a global strategy integrating complementary strengths of both universities.

OU and HU maintain established networks with local governments and farms, securing steady cadaver supplies. The VEE also provides extensive pre-clinical training assets for the main species (companion animals, ruminants, pigs, poultry), excluding exotics.

Regarding the Core Clinical Training, HU provides high-volume clinical cases (dogs, cats) with 24-hour clinical readiness typical of urban settings, while OU offers abundant cattle/horses cases and equine emergency services typical of livestock-producing regions.

The complementary education system enables Years 5-6 students to access diverse clinical environments at both campuses. HU VTH specialises in advanced referral cases while also accepting walk-in cases and providing spay/neuter surgery training through collaboration with Sapporo Animal Welfare Centre. OU collaborates with local welfare organisations for community practice programs.

Both universities implement strict animal welfare policies adhering to 3Rs principles and Five Freedoms, with IACUC oversight and AAALAC International accreditation for HU since 2007.
Student progress is monitored using logbooks, case records, and self-assessment sheets.

5.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

Except for I14, which is slightly below the minimum values, all the quantitative indicators of activities (I7, I8, I9, I10 and I11) are above.

Student mobility between HU and OU, and agreements with private organisations (farms, abattoirs, a private clinic dedicated to emergency care), enable students to gain clinical experience in different contexts (first opinion, referral cases, emergency) across all species including exotics.

Supervisors systematically check that paper logbooks are complete. This is a condition

for the validation of students' CCT.

5.1.3. Suggestions for improvement
It is suggested to continue to encourage owners to donate their companion animals for necropsy and to strengthen the collaboration with public institutions.

5.1.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 5.1.

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

5.2.1. Findings
The VEE utilises both on-campus teaching farms and external affiliated facilities providing diverse practical training under university faculty supervision. HU operates the Field Science Centre (FSC) Experiment Farm housing 44 cattle, 3-5 adult and 30 growing pigs, 27 sheep, and 278 chickens within a 10-minute walk from the faculty. OU operates FCASA facility (54,400 m^2) located a 15-minute walk from campus, housing approximately 110 dairy cows, 20 beef cattle, and 40 horses, with a milk processing plant certified under FSSC 22000.
The VEE collaborates with 11 external farms (1 affiliated with HU, 10 with OU) providing diverse clinical training opportunities. Both universities utilise sheep farms for participatory training in handling, blood sampling, and parasitological examination. OU partners with 4 cattle production farms and 5 horse breeding farms, plus Obihiro Agricultural High School for swine and poultry practice. Moreover, OU houses an officially approved on-campus slaughterhouse for practical meat inspection training, while both universities collaborate with major external facilities (Obihiro, Hayakita, Higashimokoto), providing massive-scale resources for hands-on VPH training.

5.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The VEE is commended for his excellent collaboration with extramural stakeholders, e.g. bovine farms in Obihiro and Sapporo Veterinary Emergency Hospital.
HU and OU are highly complementary in terms of facilities and the caseload for each species. Student mobility makes it possible to capitalise on the strengths of each site for the benefit of students' pre-clinical and clinical training. Furthermore, both faculties are fully engaged in establishing partnerships with external organisations (farms, abattoirs, etc.) with the aim of increasing students' clinical experience.

5.2.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

5.2.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 5.2.

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

5.3.1. Findings

The VEE teaches nursing skills systematically from the pre-clinical stage using simulators initially. During clinical rotations in companion animals, students actively participate in inpatient/outpatient care, ICU, and night-time care under faculty and resident supervision with certified animal nursing staff support. For large animals (horses and FPA), years 3-4 students practice restraint and blood sampling using mannequins, progressing to hands-on exercises with live animals in years 5-6 in small groups (6-8 students).

The VEE emphasises case-based discussions and reflective learning through PBL opportunities. HU implements a structured preparation-practice-reflection cycle for companion animal rotations with case assignments, clinical reasoning discussions, and mandatory case reports with presentations. OU operates a distinctive comprehensive diagnosis programme for cattle using diseased animals donated by farmers, involving investigation, pathological correlation through necropsies, and written reports with presentations.

5.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The organisation of the VTH allows active participation of the students in a wide variety of activities, including nursing care and diagnostic decision-making. Small group sizes are conducive to the supervised acquisition of clinical skills.

5.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

5.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 5.3.

Standard 5.4: Medical records for patients seen intra- and extra-murally under Core Clinical Training (CCT) must be comprehensive and maintained in an effective retrieval system to efficiently support the teaching and learning, research, and service programmes of the VEE.

5.4.1. Findings

Both HU and OU manage clinical data through fully digitalised electronic medical record (EMR) systems on independent networks. All records, diagnostic imaging, and surgical videos synced with anaesthetic monitoring data are digitally stored and text-searchable. Students access EMR systems exclusively within the university network environment, enabling review of examination results and images, with surgical archives accessible

anytime for self-study. OU integrates mobile clinic records from cattle and horse examinations into EMR system, while pathobiological diagnostic cases are recorded by faculty on standalone computers with selected data provided to students for case discussions, PBL, and research activities.

5.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
Two different commercial EMR systems efficiently support VTH activities at HU and OU. Students are trained in the use of the EMR before they begin their clinical rotations. They play an active role in drafting clinical reports and receive regular feedback on their work.

5.4.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

5.4.4. 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
VEE systematically develops learning resources, including books, electronic materials, e-learning tools, and Skills Labs, to support educational objectives and ensure Day One Competences (D1C). Simulators and video materials are continuously improved and widely used to support the principle of "never the first time on a live animal." Learning resources are regularly updated based on feedback from committees, students, and staff. Additional educational support is provided through VPN and Wi-Fi access, as well as 24/7 learning spaces.
At HU, the Skills Lab is available to students 24/7 throughout the year using card access. Its use is monitored through usage logs and annual statistics. Students receive instruction on the use of the Skills Lab at the beginning of Year 2 and additional guidance during pre-clinical training in Year 3.
At OU, the Skills Lab is managed by the Skills Lab Steering Committee, which supports self-directed learning through integration with e-learning content. Access and equipment use are monitored to improve the facility. Online guidance videos are available for students and staff, and detailed in-person instruction is provided in Year 3.

6.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE demonstrates access to adequate, up-to-date learning resources, databases, and facilities supporting veterinary education, research, and professional development. The resources enable implementation of the "never the first time on a live animal" concept, and students receive training in bibliographical searches and database use.
Regarding the internationalisation of the VEE, there is still room to improve the English proficiency of some staff and students.

6.1.3. Suggestions for improvement

It is suggested to provide additional English courses for staff and students who need it.

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

At HU there are two main libraries (Central Library: 18,381 m^2; North Library: 6,250 m^2) and 17 branch libraries attached to individual faculties. The Veterinary Library is one of the branch libraries of the Hokkaido University main library.
OU has a university library that serves all educational units, providing access and resources to all students, including those on the veterinary programme. The library is a two-story building adjacent to the General Research Building I and the Lecture Building, with a total floor area of 2,161 m^2. It includes a reading room (196 seats, 1,125 m^2) with three bibliographic search terminals and an audiovisual material corner, stacks (1st floor: 342 m^2; 2nd floor: 130 m^2), an office and a PC room with 16 PCs.
Students receive guidance on library use during enrolment, and librarians regularly provide training and support for literature and database searches. An Online Public Access Catalogue enables efficient access to library collections.
At HU, the e-learning platform and ICT infrastructure are managed by the Veterinary Medical Education Reform and ICT Support Committee together with IT staff. Students mainly use personal computers, while additional PCs are available in a 24/7 computer room. The campus is widely covered by Eduroam and LAN/wireless access points. The Information Initiative Centre (IIC) oversees the university network system, providing high-speed internet access and licensed academic software, including Microsoft Office, Adobe applications, and statistical tools.

At OU, IT services are managed by the Agri-information Technology Centre (AITC), which operates the campus network, ensures cybersecurity, and provides IT training and support. The campus benefits from high-speed fibre-optic connections and extensive wireless LAN coverage. AITC also supplies students and staff with licensed academic software and secure remote access to the university network and e-learning systems. In addition, over 200 PCs are available for student use across campus learning spaces.
The VEE uses several e-learning platforms to support education. VetPortal, developed by VEE, provides timetables, announcements, and learning materials for all students and staff at both universities. At HU, the ELMS platform supports course delivery, sharing of teaching materials, and access to recorded lectures and self-study videos, many of which are created by faculty members. At OU, Moodle and Webtube are used for online teaching, examinations, assignment submission, and distribution of recorded lectures, allowing students to access course materials and on-demand videos remotely.

6.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The VEE provides staff and students with full access to a professionally managed academic library, qualified IT support, an e-learning platform, and the necessary resources for the development and use of teaching materials. Electronic information resources, databases, and intranet services are available both on-site through Wi-Fi and remotely via a secure connection.

6.2.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

6.2.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 6.2.

Standard 6.3: The VEE must provide students with unimpeded access to learning resources, internet and internal study resources, as well as facilities and equipment for the development of procedural skills (e.g. clinical skills laboratory). The use of these resources must be aligned with the pedagogical environment and learning outcomes within the programme and have mechanisms in place to evaluate the teaching value of changes in learning resources.

6.3.1. Findings
HU provides extensive library resources, including over 3.7 million books, with more than 10,000 related to animal science and veterinary medicine, as well as a large collection of specialised journals, e-books, and e-journals. OU also offers substantial learning resources, including over 219,000 books, thousands of journals, veterinary-related materials, e-books, e-journals, and audiovisual resources.
E-learning at both institutions is mainly delivered through the HU ELMS and OU Moodle platforms. Digital tools are widely used for teaching activities such as sharing materials, conducting examinations, and submitting assignments. Lectures are recorded and available on demand throughout the semester. A key example is the Companion Animal Clinical Skills Videos used at the VEE, which demonstrate practical procedures such as

restraint, suturing, blood collection, aseptic techniques, and diagnostic methods using simulators and biological materials.
The Skills Labs at both locations enable students to practise a wide range of clinical and practical skills using simulators and diagnostic equipment. Training includes procedures such as physical examination, injections, suturing, ultrasonography, endoscopy, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Learning is supported by instruction sheets and on-demand video materials accessible through QR/2D codes on mobile devices, encouraging self-directed learning and continuous skills development. Additionally, OU uses AI in the mock clinic as a tool for practical training in communication skills.

6.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The VEE ensures that students have unimpeded access to learning resources, internet services, study materials, and facilities supporting the development of procedural skills (e.g. clinical skills laboratories). These resources are aligned with the programme's learning outcomes, and the VEE implements mechanisms to evaluate their educational value.

6.3.3. Suggestions for improvement
It is suggested that all learning resources (including videos) are available on the Moodle platform to allow unimpeded access for students

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
Information about the VEE's educational programme, including the admission policy, programme outlines, progression, qualifications, future career options and campus life, is available in brochures issued by HU and OU and on publicly accessible websites, as is information about cooperations with other Japanese and international VEEs. The two universities of the VEE run separate admission systems. Both offer annual campus tours for prospective students as well as events in other cities in Japan. Information about the admission procedures is also communicated through faculty meetings, official notices, minutes, emails and as part of faculty development seminars.

7.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE provides publicly available information about student admissions, progression and certification. Information about the educational programme is available to prospective students. Information about cooperation with other VEEs is publicised.

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
Both HU and OU admit approximately 40 students each. Nearly all students complete the programme without requiring extra years. The VEE has postgraduate students, including interns, residents and many PhD students.

7.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The available resources are currently consistent with the number of students in the programmes.

7.2.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

7.2.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.2.

Standard 7.3: The selection and progression criteria must be clearly defined, consistent, and defensible, be free of discrimination or bias, and take into account the fact that students are admitted with a view to their entry to the veterinary profession in due course.
The VEE must regularly review and reflect on the selection processes to ensure they are appropriate for students to complete the programme successfully. If the selection processes are decided by another authority, the latter must regularly receive feedback from the VEE.
Adequate training (including periodic refresher training) must be provided for those involved in the selection process to ensure applicants are evaluated fairly and consistently.

7.3.1. Findings
The VEE has a two-step process for applicants. The Common Test for University Admissions is administered by the National Centre for University Entrance Examinations,

in which each university specifies the required subjects within categories: Japanese language and literature, social studies, a foreign language, mathematics, sciences and informatics. The VEE requires a Common Test score of at least 85-88%, which is more than 20% above the average test score. Each university has additional paper-based examinations and an interview. The VEE provides information on the profile and roles within the veterinary profession for applicants via websites, events and during admissions processes. At HU, a two-step selection process is adopted for returnee applicants, including a high school evaluation report and a recommendation, an essay and records of social activities. If successful, the applicant takes an examination and attends an interview. The VEE does not have full fee-paying students. The selection criteria for paper-based examinations and interviews are publicly available. The VEE also provides points of contact for questions, and its websites includes FAQs.

For applicants with disabilities and health conditions, the VEE has policies in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act issued by the Japanese Government to avoid disadvantaging students during the admission process. Applicants can attend a consultation to discuss any required adjustments.

Both HU and OU have committees with responsibility for the admission processes at several levels, which are comprised of senior-level academics and professors. The committees have responsibilities for policy on the entrance examination, approval of enrollees, the development of examination questions and scoring, and public relations for examinees. Confidential systems are used to select committee members. Training for faculty involved in admissions and quality assurance processes are in place. There is no appeals process for selection at national universities in Japan. However, test scores can be provided upon request. The admission guidelines are revised annually.

The maximum number of students admitted by the VEE is set at a quota of 80 (40 at each university) based on Article 18-2, Chapter V of the Standards for the Establishment of Universities (Admission Capacity). There is some autonomy to increase admission (by approximately 5% at HU and 10% at OU) based on entrance examination results. Typical application rates are five to six times the enrolment limit. The number of students currently enrolled is set to align with available resources (staff, facilities, equipment and other educational factors). The number of students is expected to remain at about 80 for the next three academic years.

7.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE admits approximately 80 students annually in accordance with the government quota. Selection is based on a national common test and university specific examinations and an interview with criteria publicly available to applicants. The admission processes and examinations are overseen by committees at each university. The VEE reviews information related to admissions and adapts processes accordingly. The VEE has policies for applicants with disabilities and health issues. Faculty involved in admissions receive training. Admissions processes are reviewed annually.

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
Applicants with disabilities can consult the VEE during the application process about their specific requirements. Students who need special support for learning or for physical or mental disabilities and conditions can consult with the staff at the relevant counselling, accessibility/disability services at each university, which provide services and implement reasonable adjustments to provide equality of educational opportunity for all students. These activities are undertaken in consultation with other relevant sections and health care and counselling staff. The latest information and services are available to students as well as to staff to update their knowledge.

7.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The VEE has clear policies and procedures for applicants and students with learning support needs, disabilities and health issues, with information about associated services available to students and staff. Accommodations are made where appropriate while still ensuring attainment of Day One Competences.

7.4.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

7.4.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.4.

Standard 7.5: The basis for decisions on progression (including academic progression and professional fitness to practise) must be explicit and readily available to the students. The VEE must provide evidence that it has mechanisms in place to identify and provide remediation and appropriate support (including termination) for students who are not performing adequately.
The VEE must have mechanisms in place to monitor attrition and progression and be able to respond and amend admission selection criteria (if permitted by national or university law) and student support if required.

7.5.1. Findings
The progression requirements are explicit in relation to the number of credits required to progress to the next year of study and are strictly enforced. Students are required to pass

the final evaluations at the end of each semester to obtain course credits. Failed examinations can usually be retaken during the designated examination period. Students who do not meet the credit requirements cannot advance and must repeat the year. Information on professional fitness to practise is provided to students and incidents are monitored and followed up by the provision of appropriate support and action if required. Programme completion rates are high (>95%). There is an appeals process for grades, but progression decisions cannot be appealed. All regulations and procedures are explained to students during Year 1 orientation and associated information is available on university websites and in student handbooks.

The VEE uses multiple indicators, including academic performance and attendance records to identify underperforming students. For such students, class instructors, course coordinators, or other faculty members may initiate informal or formal consultations to provide support. If necessary, meetings with the Dean and/or the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee may occur to discuss the issues and identify appropriate solutions. Various support mechanisms are in place, including access to on-campus counselling and physicians. There is also a peer learning system to provide technical or academic support. The VEE collects information from students regarding learning and support services in multiple ways, which are reviewed by relevant committees and changes or improvements are made where necessary. Multiple channels of communication are used to ensure students are aware of changes to support services.

An annual admission procedure plan is prepared at each university and any proposed revision of admission procedures and criteria is discussed by relevant groups and then approved by the President of each university. The selection process and criteria are reviewed at least twice a year and admission committees may recommend improvements or modifications to the process. Further information on student progress and attainment of learning outcomes is analysed and may result in further revisions.

7.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The information about academic requirements, criteria for progression and professional fitness to practise is explicit and available to students. The VEE has mechanisms around remediation and exclusion and provides student support and associated services. The VEE has low attrition, has mechanisms to monitor student performance and progression and has processes in place to adapt admission criteria if required.

7.5.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

7.5.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.5.

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

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

7.6.1. Findings
Students are permitted a maximum enrolment period of 12 years to complete the six-year programme and are notified of the maximum period if they are unable to progress to the next academic year. Failing to pay tuition fees can lead to exclusion. Decisions regarding exclusion are made by the Programme Executive Board and must be approved by the VEE's VNJ Council. The VEE's policies for managing appeals against decisions, including admissions, academic and progression decisions and exclusion, are publicly available on each university's website.

7.6.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
Mechanisms for exclusion of students for any reason and the procedures around appeals related to decisions, including admissions, academic and progression decisions and exclusion are transparent and publicly available.

7.6.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

7.6.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.6.

Standard 7.7: Provisions must be made by the VEE to support the physical, emotional and welfare needs of students. This includes but is not limited to learning support and counselling services, career advice, and fair and transparent mechanisms for dealing with student illness, impairment and disability during the programme. This shall include provision for disabled students, consistent with all relevant equality, diversity and/or human rights legislation.
There must be effective mechanisms for the resolution of student grievances (e.g. interpersonal conflict or harassment).

7.7.1. Findings
The VEE provides a wide range of services for students and associated information is disseminated through multiple channels, electronically and in-person. Students participate in orientation and guidance on learning how to approach the courses required to complete the programme. There are academic advisors for each year group and support staff can assist with course registration. Counselling rooms are available for advice on various aspects of campus life as well as a peer support system for learning.

There is a Career Centre at each university which can provide advice on CVs, mock interviews and career guidance. There are job-seeking seminars and advice on corporate research opportunities, internships and roles within the veterinary profession.

The VEE's students and staff have access to healthcare services and counselling through each university's on-site facilities. For students, the support provided addresses emotional or personal issues in relation to studies or daily student life. All students must enrol in an affordable student health insurance plan offered by the universities to cover injuries and accidents that may occur during the programme. Students also have access to support related to learning difficulties, physical or mental disabilities and conditions. The associated offices collaborate with relevant departments and health and counselling staff to promote equal educational opportunities and implement reasonable adjustments. All staff are regularly provided with training about supporting students with special needs. There is a tuition waiver system for students facing financial difficulties and information about scholarships is communicated via multiple channels.

There are many student clubs, organisations and groups for sport, cultural and recreational activities. Activities are managed by the Extracurricular Activities Offices within the Student Services Divisions. Each club is supervised by at least one staff advisor and club leaders are required to attend accident prevention seminars. Campus facilities also include dormitories, cafeterias, shops, club buildings and sports facilities. OU provides a residential training facility for HU students when undertaking clinical training.

For grievance resolution, regular official meetings are held and attended by Student Union representation and faculty from the Academic Affairs Committee. Depending on the complaint, these may be escalated to other relevant meetings or committees and measures to address the complaint are proposed in collaboration with the relevant administrative staff.

7.7.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

There is support for physical, emotional and welfare needs of students provided by HU and OU services, on-site campus facilities, staff and student representatives. Provisions are made to support students with disabilities. Students can raise complaints and there are processes for consideration and resolution of grievances.

7.7.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

7.7.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 7.7.

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

7.8.1. Findings

Students can convey their needs and wishes to the VEE through formal and informal channels. These include formal communication opportunities via committees and meetings between the Dean and student representatives. These mechanisms allow students to make suggestions, comments, and complaints regarding the operation of the VEE and its educational programme. There are representatives of Student Unions on the VEE's Advisory Panel. Students can anonymously submit suggestions, comments and complaints online and through suggestion boxes and via end-of-semester surveys, which are overseen by the Quality Assurance Committee.

7.8.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
There are multiple and effective ways by which students can convey their needs and wishes to the VEE. There are formal, informal and anonymous mechanisms to make comments, suggestions and complaints regarding the operation of the VEE, the educational programme and its compliance with the relevant regulations and the ESEVT Standards.

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 VEE has a structured student assessment strategy organised at subject level by the teaching staff. Responsibility is shared between the subject coordinator, with oversight by the Academic Affairs Committee and the Programme Executive Board. The assessment system uses a Grade Point framework with 11 grades, in which grade C is the minimum pass level.
Student progression is monitored through subject-based assessments, minimum credit requirements before entry into Years 2, 4 and 5 (“barriers”), the national Veterinary Common Achievement Test (VCAT), the clinical rotations, the Tutorial Research thesis and, ultimately, the Veterinary National Examination. These sequential assessment points are intended to ensure that students acquire sufficient knowledge, skills and competence before progressing to more advanced stages of the programme.
Before entering the clinical training in Years 5-6 the VCAT provides a comprehensive assessment of theoretical knowledge and fundamental clinical skills acquired during pre-clinical training. During clinical training, students are assessed using clinical training records, logbooks and competency evaluation records. The quality of case reports and

presentations is also assessed.
Professional and soft skills such as history taking, teamwork, presentation skills and scientific discussion are assessed through communication training, VCAT, clinical rotations, laboratory seminars and Tutorial Research.

8.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The assessment strategy is well managed, with a clear line of responsibilities established across different levels, from the subject coordinators to the Programme Executive Board. The existence of sequential assessment points, including subject examinations, progression barriers, the Veterinary Common Achievement Test (VCAT), logbook and the Tutorial Research provide a coherent framework to monitor students' progressive development of Day One competences.

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
Assessment criteria and procedures are made available to students through the online syllabus system, which specifies course requirements, assessment methods, assessment criteria and minimum requirements for each subject. Examples of course syllabi are provided in Appendix 3-5.
Assessment is conducted using an 11-point GPA-based scale. Grades from A+ to C constitute a pass and lead to a credit award, with C representing the minimum pass level. Students graded D, D− or F fail the subject.
For lectures and practical sessions, students must attend at least 70% of sessions and obtain a mark of 60% or above to pass.
Assessment results are documented online, allowing students to check their credit status at any time.
If students require clarification, they may first contact the subject coordinator. Where justified, grades may be corrected. If the issue is not resolved, students may submit a formal appeal during the one-week appeal period established each semester. At HU, appeals are handled through the Academic Affairs Section and reviewed by a Grade Review Subcommittee before final consideration by the Academic Affairs Committee. At OU, appeals are submitted to the Educational Affairs Section and reviewed by a Grade

Review Subcommittee under the Office for Student Support in the University Education Centre.

8.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The assessment process is managed in accordance with the requirements of the Standard. Assessment tasks and grading criteria are available to students in advance and are consistently applied. Results are provided online, and students may request clarification or correction within a defined period and, when necessary, submit a formal appeal at a higher level.

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 student assessment strategy is proposed, reviewed and managed through the Academic Affairs Committee and the Programme Executive Board. The assessment policy is communicated to faculty members through Faculty Meetings and the VNJ Joint Faculty Development activities.
Syllabi specify course requirements, learning outcomes and assessment criteria, and are available online to students and teaching staff. Subject coordinators review syllabi annually, taking into account the learning outcomes and also the student feedback, which is collected every semester, analysed and finally shared and published online by the QA Committee.
Assessment design is linked to learning outcomes through subject assessments, progression barriers (minimum required credits, as defined in Standard 7.5), the Veterinary Common Achievement Test (VCAT) and the Veterinary National Examination. For the lectures and practical sessions, a minimum attendance of 70% and a pass mark above 60% is required.

8.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The VEE has an appropriate process to review assessment outcomes and assessment strategies overseen by subject coordinators, the Academic Affairs Committee, the Programme Executive Board and the QA Committee. Assessment design is linked to learning outcomes at different levels of progression, including individual subjects, the Veterinary Common Achievement Test (VCAT), the clinical rotations and the graduation thesis (Tutorial Research). Students' feedback is collected and considered in the annual

review of syllabi and assessment criteria.

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
The VEE certifies student achievement of learning objectives at subject, year and programme levels. Achievement in each subject is assessed using different methods and graded on the 11-point scale from A+ to F, under the responsibility of the subject coordinator. Progression is regulated through defined requirements for advancement to Years 2, 4 and 5.
Students are involved in the learning and quality improvement processes through formal representation and feedback mechanisms. Student representatives participate in Academic Affairs Committee meetings held every two months at each university, where they present opinions gathered from each year group. At OU, student representatives also participate in monthly consultation meetings with the Dean.
The QA Committee conducts open-ended student questionnaires twice per year, including questions on the learning system. Issues raised by students are addressed by the Academic Affairs Committee and by the Dean and Vice Dean of the VEE. Survey results are communicated to relevant departments and staff, and feedback is provided to students.

8.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The assessment strategy allows the VEE to certify student achievement of learning objectives at different levels, including subject, academic year and programme. Students contribute to the improvement of the assessment strategies through representation in academic committees and regular feedback mechanisms.

8.4.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

8.4.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 8.4.

Standard 8.5: Methods of formative and summative assessment must be valid and reliable and comprise a variety of approaches. Direct assessment of the acquisition of clinical skills and Day One Competences (some of which may be on simulated patients) must form a significant component of the overall process of assessment. It must also include the regular quality control of the student logbooks, with a clear distinction between what is completed under the supervision of teaching staff (Core Clinical Training (CCT) or under the supervision of a qualified person (EPT). The clear distinction between CCT and EPT ensures that all clinical procedures, practical and hands-on training planned in the study programme have been fully completed by each individual student. The provided training and the global assessment strategy must provide evidence that only students who are Day One Competent are able to graduate.

8.5.1. Findings

The VEE uses a range of formative and summative assessment methods to evaluate knowledge, practical skills, clinical competence, soft skills and Day One Competences. These include paper-based and computer-based examinations, e-learning-based tasks, essays, reports, oral examinations, oral presentations, practical tests, learning logs, case reports, case presentations, logbooks, case logs, self-assessment records, and VCAT assessment.

The achievement of Day One Competences is supported by a correspondence table mapping core subjects to Day One Competences, provided in Appendix 3-3. Appendix 3-6 documents practical courses and acquired clinical skills, while Appendix 3-11 provides the logbook, case-log and self-assessment templates used during clinical placements.

Clinical competences are assessed during clinical placements through logbooks, case logs and self-assessment records. The logbook includes assessment items defined by instructors and is used for direct assessment of students' clinical competence. After each clinical placement, students submit their personal records to the subject coordinator, who determines whether the minimum required level of competence has been achieved.

Students who do not achieve the required level of competence during clinical placements must undertake additional placements. Clinical placements continue until the minimum level is achieved.

All students must pass the VCAT in Year 4 before entering clinical placements. In Year 6, students take the Veterinary National Examination for the veterinary licence. The SER reports an average pass rate over the previous five years of 88.8% for HU and 86.7% for OU, compared with a national average of 75.6%.

8.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE uses a broad range of methods appropriate to assess knowledge, practical skills, clinical competence and professional attributes. Direct assessment of clinical skills and Day One Competences is effectively monitored through manual logbooks, case logs and clinical placements. Individual student self-assessment is complemented by a supervisor evaluation with the identified signature, both for CCT and EPT. This ensures and provides evidence that each student achieves the required level of competence before graduation.

8.5.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

8.5.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 8.5.

Area 9. Teaching and support staff

Standard 9.1: The VEE must ensure that all staff are appropriately qualified and prepared for their roles, in agreement with national and EU regulations and must apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of staff.
A formal quality-assured programme of teacher training (including good teaching and evaluation practices, learning and e-learning resources, use of digital tools education, biosecurity and QA procedures) must be in place for all staff involved with teaching. Such training must be mandatory for all newly appointed teaching staff and encouraged on a regular basis for all teaching staff.
Most teaching staff (calculated as FTE) involved in core veterinary training must be veterinarians. It is expected that more than 2/3 of the instruction that the students receive, as determined by student teaching hours, is delivered by qualified veterinarians.

9.1.1. Findings
Both HU and OU ensure qualified staff with veterinarians holding licenses and doctoral degrees. At the VEE, 99% of full-time academic staff hold doctoral degrees and 87% hold veterinary licenses. Recruitment requires both a veterinary license and a doctoral degree for academic positions. Mandatory training within one year covers induction, biosecurity, animal welfare, teaching methods, and QA procedures. From 2025, training extends to non-academic staff, part-time lecturers, and external personnel. Annual update training is provided, and the VEE's Joint Faculty Day facilitates educational discussions and competency enhancement for teaching staff across both institutions.

9.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The VEE has sufficient staff to provide efficient training to students, as shown by I1 and I3. The recruitment of both academic and support staff is conducted independently by HU and OU in accordance with their own regulations and policies, through a transparent process. Following the strategic plan, measures to promote recruitment, retention, and career advancement are implemented. Particular attention is being paid to increasing the number of women on the teaching staff: some positions are advertised with "women-only" or "women-preferred" conditions and a dedicated Career Path Programme has been implemented.
Newly appointed teaching staff are trained through a three-level (university, VEE and individual) system that includes online and face-to-face training, as well as mentoring.
Lastly, as shown by I2, students are mostly trained by veterinarians.

9.1.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

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
Approximately 100 FTE academic teaching staff cover veterinary education: 57 for basic sciences, 10 for VPH/FSQ, 26 for companion animal clinical sciences, and 10 for FPA and horses. The VTH employs 22 academic staff for companion animals and 10 for food-producing animals. Five faculty are international speciality college diplomates, with additional domestic certifications. Three WOAH Reference Laboratories operate with expert staff. Non-academic staff include interns, residents, PhD students, and clinical veterinarians. HU plans to increase staff for AiCVIM and AiCVS residency programmes. OU develops five-year personnel plans with approximately 3 FTE academic staff increases planned over three years.

9.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
Qualifications and skills of all staff are sufficient (as shown by I1 and I3) and appropriate to deliver the study programme. The institution has a multi-year recruitment plan drawn up in line with the needs identified following consultation with several committees. Its implementation is monitored on a regular basis.

9.2.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

9.2.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 9.2.

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

Teaching positions must offer the security and benefits necessary to maintain the stability, continuity, and competence of the teaching staff. Teaching staff must have a balanced workload of teaching, research and service depending on their role. They must have reasonable opportunities and resources for participation in scholarly activities.

9.3.1. Findings

At VEE level, annual joint academic staff development (FD) provides 8 hours of training covering teaching methods and QA topics with on-demand access.

At HU, FD programmes for first-year faculty, with continuing education requirements, are mandatory. Performance evaluation includes educational contributions reflected in salary increases. The President's Award recognises educational excellence.

OU participates in university and external FD programmes. Multifaceted performance evaluation leads to incentives and salary increases. A Good Teacher Award was established in 2025 based on year 6 student nominations. Both schools provide full-time employment with balanced workloads and support systems for work-life balance.

9.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE gives opportunities to develop and extend teaching and assessment skills by means of compulsory training programs for newly appointed staff and by promoting continuing education of the staff**.**

The VEE has implemented a transparent multifaceted performance evaluation (described in 9.4) that leads to incentives and salary increases. Teaching excellence is awarded through annual prizes.

9.3.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

9.3.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 9.3.

Standard 9.4: The VEE must provide evidence that it utilises a well-defined, comprehensive and publicised programme for the professional growth and development of teaching and support staff, including formal appraisal and informal mentoring procedures.

Staff must have the opportunity to contribute to the VEE's direction and decision-making processes.

Promotion criteria for teaching and support staff must be clear and explicit. Promotions for teaching staff must recognise excellence in and (if permitted by the national or university law) place equal emphasis on all aspects of teaching (including clinical teaching), research, service and other scholarly activities.

9.4.1. Findings

HU provides seminars for academic and support staff covering English proficiency, teaching, leadership, and research ethics. A Mentoring Programme was introduced in

2022 for doctoral students. The VTH established a staff support team in 2022 for work-life balance. Annual performance evaluation covers education, research, social contribution, and clinical services, with promotion criteria communicated during appointment ceremonies.
At OU, a university-wide mentoring system assigns mentors to new assistant professors. FD participation is recorded in the performance evaluation. Multifaceted evaluation considers education, research, administration, and social contribution. Career development is supported through individual interviews. Assistant professors have tenure-track positions with balanced first three years focused on research development.

9.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
Academic staff are evaluated comprehensively based on two different multiple criteria, including research achievements, educational achievements, clinical caseloads (if relevant), and service activities. Both academic and support staff are encouraged to actively contribute to VEE's decision-making through involvement in its numerous committees.

9.4.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

9.4.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 9.4.

Standard 9.5: A system for assessment of teaching and teaching staff must be implemented on a cyclical basis and must formally include student participation. Results must be communicated to the relevant staff and commented upon in reports. Evidence must be provided that this system contributes to correcting deficiencies and to enhancing the quality and efficiency of education.

9.5.1. Findings
At HU, a web-based course evaluation system provides anonymous student feedback each semester. Results are fed back to students by faculty and used for quality improvement. Strategic planning incorporates junior faculty perspectives through an advisory working group. VNJ Advisory Panel integrates stakeholder and student feedback into strategic planning.
At OU, anonymous web-based student surveys evaluate faculty performance and course content, with results published on the UAEC website. Student association surveys and Student Union participation in the Academic Affairs Committee ensure student input. Graduation surveys assess knowledge acquisition satisfaction. Personnel plans are communicated through Faculty Meetings, with regulations available online.

9.5.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
In both HU and OU, a system for the assessment of staff is implemented through different grids provided by the VEE. For the academic staff, evaluation is really multicriteria and transparent, including education, research, clinical service, social

contribution and management activities. Students evaluate each course anonymously, and the results serve as inputs to consider making changes in the educational content.

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
All academic staff are actively involved in independent research projects and regularly publish their results in peer-reviewed scientific journals. They have many national and joint grants (e.g. 84 grants in 2024) and very valuable scientific publications (e.g. 116 published papers in 2024).

10.1.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The VEE conducts broad research activities among teaching staff, covering veterinary basic and clinical sciences. Research activities are integrated into the study programme through research-based teaching, and the majority of academic staff are actively involved in research projects, including grants, scientific publications, and conference contributions.

10.1.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

10.1.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.1.

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

10.2.1. Findings
Evidence-based medicine plays a central role in the VEE curriculum, preparing students for future careers as researchers and veterinary professionals. During Years 5 and 6,

students participate in Tutorial Research and complete a compulsory graduation thesis, which helps them develop critical thinking, evidence evaluation, and analytical skills essential for clinical decision-making and assessment of scientific literature. Clinical rotations, case studies, diagnostic training, internships, and lectures from veterinary practitioners further emphasise the importance of evidence-based practice and lifelong professional development.
Students are introduced to bibliographic research, scientific methods, and academic writing through dedicated seminars and supervised laboratory work. After being assigned to research laboratories based on their interests and academic achievements, they gain practical experience in research techniques and scientific communication while preparing their theses. Some students also present their findings at scientific conferences or publish in international peer-reviewed journals.
Completion of a graduation thesis and an oral presentation is mandatory. The thesis is evaluated by the supervisor together with two academic staff members, who jointly determine the final grade.

10.2.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The VEE trains students in scientific methods and research techniques relevant to evidence-based veterinary medicine and provides opportunities for them to participate in research activities.

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
HU offers two graduate schools: the Graduate School of Veterinary Medicine and the Graduate School of Infectious Diseases, both closely linked with the “One Health Frontier Graduate Programme for Excellence.” The programmes maintain stable enrolment numbers and provide students with financial support through scholarships, fellowships, and research or travel grants. OU established its doctoral and master’s programmes in AY2018 and continues to attract students in veterinary and animal sciences, with enrolment levels expected to remain stable in the coming years.
At both institutions, postgraduate students contribute to undergraduate clinical education. At HU, graduate students, interns, and residents assist in supervising clinical rotations and supporting undergraduate training under academic supervision. At OU, clinical responsibilities are clearly separated between interns and undergraduate students according to professional qualifications, while graduate students in farm

animal and equine practice mainly support teaching activities as teaching assistants.
Both institutions also emphasise continuing professional development. HU provides advanced postgraduate education in areas such as zoonotic diseases, chemical hazard management, and veterinary clinical sciences, alongside regular workshops and seminars for veterinarians. OU, located in a major livestock and horse-breeding region, offers continuing education programmes focused on food-producing animals, equine medicine, and food safety to meet regional and professional needs.

10.3.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments
The VEE provides postgraduate education, including PhD programmes, internships, residencies, and continuing education activities that support the veterinary profession and societal needs.

10.3.3. Suggestions for improvement
None.

10.3.4. Decision
The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.3.

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

10.4.1. Findings
Starting in Year 4, students take part in laboratory seminars and are introduced to research activities through the courses Seminar in Particular Veterinary Medicine I and II. In Year 5, they join a laboratory aligned with their research interests and carry out supervised research projects as part of the 10-credit Tutorial Research course. The laboratories are engaged in internationally recognised research covering basic, applied, and clinical sciences. Research outcomes are published on the university website and are annually reviewed by the QA Committee.
At HU, graduate education programmes are organised and supervised by dedicated committees responsible for academic affairs, international student support, and student communication. Each postgraduate student is guided by one primary and three or more secondary supervisors throughout their doctoral research. Information about programmes and activities is shared through multiple communication channels, including email, websites, and printed materials, which supports communication and monitoring of student progress. Final decisions regarding postgraduate education are made by the Faculty Meeting, while staff of the VTH also contribute to internship and residency programmes.
At OU, graduate programmes are developed through discussions among senior faculty members and require approval from the University Research and Education Council. Each doctoral student is supervised by one primary and two secondary supervisors. Programme information is distributed through email, printed documents, the academic portal, and the university website. Staff of the VTH participate in planning and delivering

postgraduate education, while continuing education programmes are regularly reviewed and updated by faculty members and administrative staff to ensure their relevance and quality.

10.4.2. Analysis of the findings/Comments

The VEE has in place a quality assurance system that evaluates research activities, supports student training and staff development, and ensures the integration of research methods and results into the study programme.

10.4.3. Suggestions for improvement

None.

10.4.4. Decision

The VEE is compliant with Standard 10.4.

ESEVT Indicators

Name of the VEE:		VetNorth Japan/Hokkaido & Obihiro			
Name & mail of the VEE's Head:		Yoshihiro SAKODA, sakoda@vetmed.hokudai.ac.jp			
Date of the form filling:		April 10, 2026			
Raw data from the last 3 complete academic years		AY2024	AY2023	AY2022	Mean
1	n° of FTE teaching staff involved in veterinary training	127.8	126.5	122.5	**125.6**
2	n° of undergraduate students	494	491	497	**494**
3	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training	118.5	115.8	112.5	**115.6**
4	n° of students graduating annually	78	78	86	**80.7**
5	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training	73.6	80.3	79.3	**77.7**
6	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	986	986	1082	**1018**
7	n° of hours of Core Clinical Training (CCT)	790	925	733	**816**
8	n° of hours of VPH (including FSQ) training	237.5	237.5	237.5	**237.5**
9	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in VPH (including FSQ)	40	40	26	**35.3**
10	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally	13734	14685	13320	**13913**
11	n° of individual ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally	144	156	140	**146.7**
12	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally	278	166	283	**242.3**
13	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen intra-murally	9	17	19	**15**
14	n° of companion animal patients seen extra-murally	806	754	921	**827**
15	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extra-murally	2350	2159	1924	**2144.3**
16	n° of equine patients seen extra-murally	840	1019	422	**760.3**
17	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen extra-murally	365	301	243	**303**
18	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds	264	265	245	**258**
19	n° of visits to poultry, farmed rabbit, fish and bee units	6	5	5	**5.3**
20	n° of companion animal necropsies	109.0	136	93	**112.7**
21	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies	116	103	114	**111**
22	n° of equine necropsies	30	27	42	**33**
23	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies	393	244	245	**294**
24	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training	5	6	6.2	**5.7**
25	n° of PhD-students graduating annually	24	9	25.0	**19.3**

Name of the VEE:		VetNorth Japan/Hokkaido & Obihiro			
Date of the form filling:		April 10, 2026			
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	**0.254**	0.150	0.126	**0.128**
I2	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	**1.433**	0.840	0.630	**0.803**
I3	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	**0.964**	0.880	0.540	**0.424**
I4	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	**1018.000**	953.500	700.590	**317.410**
I5	n° of hours of Core Clinical Training (CCT)	**816.000**	941.580	704.800	**111.200**
I6	n° of hours of VPH (including FSQ) training	**237.500**	293.500	191.800	**45.700**
I7	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in VPH (including FSQ)	**35.333**	75.000	31.800	**3.533**
I8	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	**182.727**	67.370	44.010	**138.717**
I9	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	**28.401**	18.750	9.740	**18.661**
I10	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	**12.430**	5.960	2.150	**10.280**
I11	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic seen intra-murally and extra-murally/ n° of students graduating annually	**3.942**	3.110	1.160	**2.782**
I12	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds / n° of students graduating annually	**3.198**	1.290	0.540	**2.658**
I13	n° of visits to poultry, rabbit, fish and bee units / n° of students graduating annually	**0.066**	0.110	0.045	**0.021**
I14	n° of companion animal necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	**1.397**	2.110	1.400	**-0.003**
I15	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	**1.376**	1.360	0.900	**0.476**
I16	n° of equine necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	**0.409**	0.180	0.100	**0.309**
I17	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	**3.645**	2.650	0.880	**2.765**
I18	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	**0.071**	0.270	0.060	**0.011**
I19	n° of PhD-students graduating annually / n° of students graduating annually	**0.240**	0.150	0.070	**0.170**

Findings

All Indicators are above the minimal values, except Indicator 14, which is slightly below.

Analysis of the findings/Comments
The VEE is conducting active public awareness activities to help society understand the important contribution of companion animal donations to veterinary education, and to encourage more owners to give their consent for necropsy.

Suggestions for improvement
None.

ESEVT Rubrics (summary of the decisions 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		
Standard 2.2: Clinical and field services must function as instructional resources. The instructional integrity of these resources must take priority over the financial self-sufficiency of clinical services operations. The VEE must have sufficient autonomy in order to use the resources to implement its strategic plan and to meet the ESEVT Standards.	X		
Standard 2.3: Resources allocation must be regularly reviewed to ensure that available resources meet the requirements.	X		
Area 3. Curriculum			
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)	X		

• **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**			
3.1.2. 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		
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.**	X		
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.**	X		
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.**	X		
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.**	X		

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.**	X		
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.	X		
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.	X		
Standard 4.2: Lecture theatres, teaching laboratories, tutorial rooms, clinical facilities and other teaching spaces must be adequate in number and size, equipped for instructional purposes and well maintained. The facilities must be adapted for the number of students enrolled. Students must have ready access to adequate and sufficient study, self-learning, recreation, locker, sanitary and food service facilities. **Offices, teaching preparation and research laboratories must be sufficient for the needs of the teaching and support staff to support their teaching and research efforts.**	X		
Standard 4.3: The livestock facilities, animal housing, core clinical teaching facilities and equipment used by the VEE for teaching purposes must: **● 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		
Standard 4.4: Core clinical teaching facilities must be provided in a veterinary teaching hospital (VTH) with 24/7 emergency services at least for companion animals and equines. Within the VTH, the VEE must unequivocally demonstrate that the standard of education and clinical research is compliant with all ESEVT Standards, e.g. research-based and evidence-based clinical training supervised by teaching staff trained to teach and to assess, availability for staff and students of facilities and patients for performing clinical research and relevant QA procedures. **For ruminants, on-call service must be available if emergency services do not exist for those species in a VTH.** **The VEE must ensure state-of-the-art standards of teaching clinics which remain comparable with or exceed the best available clinics in the private sector.** **The VTH and any hospitals, practices and facilities which are involved with the core curriculum must be compliant with the ESEVT Standards and meet the relevant national Veterinary Practice Standards.**	X		
Standard 4.5: The VEE must ensure that students have access to a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic facilities, including but not limited to clinical skills laboratory, diagnostic imaging, clinical pathology, anaesthesia, surgeries and treatment facilities, intensive/critical care, ambulatory services, pharmacy and necropsy facilities. Procedures and facilities should also be available for soft skills training, e.g. communication skills training through role-play.	X		
Standard 4.6: Appropriate isolation facilities must be provided to meet the need for the isolation and containment of animals with communicable diseases. Such isolation facilities must be properly constructed, ventilated, maintained and operated to provide for the prevention of the spread of infectious agents, animal care and student training. They must be adapted to all animal species commonly handled in the VTH. When permanent isolation facilities are not available in any of the facilities used for clinical training, the ability to provide such facilities and the procedures to use them appropriately in an emergency must be demonstrated during the visitation.	X		
Standard 4.7: The VEE must have an ambulatory clinic for production animals or equivalent facilities so that students can practise field veterinary medicine and Herd Health Management under the supervision of teaching staff.	X		
Standard 4.8: The transport of students, live animals, cadavers, materials from animal origin and other teaching materials must be done in agreement with national and EU standards, to ensure the safety of students and staff and animal welfare, and to prevent the spread of infectious agents.	X		
Standard 4.9: Operational policies and procedures (including biosecurity, good laboratory practice and good clinical practice) must be taught and posted (in different languages if the curriculum is taught in them) for students, staff and visitors and a biosecurity manual must be developed and made easily available for all relevant persons. The VEE must demonstrate a clear commitment for the delivery and the implementation of biosecurity, e.g. by a specific committee structure. The VEE must have a system of QA to monitor and assure clinical, laboratory and farm services, including regular monitoring of the feedback from students, staff and clients.	X		

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,	X		

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).**			
Standard 7.8: Mechanisms must be in place by which students can convey their needs and wants to the VEE. The VEE must provide students with a mechanism, anonymously if they wish, to offer suggestions, comments and complaints regarding the compliance of the VEE with national and international legislation and the ESEVT Standards.	X		
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.	X		
Standard 8.2: The assessment tasks and grading criteria for each unit of study in the programme must be published, applied consistently, clearly identified and available to students in a timely manner well in advance of the assessment. Requirements to pass must be explicit. **The VEE must properly document the results of assessment and provide the students with timely feedback on their assessments.** **Mechanisms for students to appeal against assessment outcomes must be explicit.**	X		
Standard 8.3: The VEE must have a process in place to review assessment outcomes, to change assessment strategies and to ensure the accuracy of the procedures when required. Programme learning outcomes covering the full range of professional knowledge, skills, competences and attributes must form the basis for assessment design and underpin decisions on progression.	X		
Standard 8.4: Assessment strategies must allow the VEE to certify student achievement of learning objectives at the level of the programme and individual units of study. **The VEE must ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.**	X		
Standard 8.5: Methods of formative and summative assessment must be valid and reliable and comprise a variety of approaches. Direct assessment of the acquisition of clinical skills and Day One Competences (some of which may be on simulated patients) must form a significant component of the overall process of assessment. It must also include the regular quality control of the student logbooks, with a clear distinction between what is completed under the supervision of teaching staff (Core Clinical Training (CCT)) or under the supervision of a qualified person (EPT). The clear distinction between CCT and EPT ensures that all clinical procedures, practical and hands-on training planned in the study programme have been fully completed by each individual student. The provided training and the global assessment strategy must provide evidence that only students who are Day One Competent are able to graduate.	X		
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.**	X		
Standard 9.2: The total number, qualifications and skills of all staff involved with the study programme, including teaching, technical, administrative and support staff, must be sufficient and appropriate to deliver the study programme and fulfil the VEE's mission. **A procedure must be in place to assess if the staff involved with teaching display competence and effective teaching skills in all relevant aspects of the curriculum that they teach, regardless of whether they are full or part-time, teaching or support staff, senior or junior, permanent or temporary, teachers. Guidelines for the minimum training to teach and to assess are provided in Annex 6, Standard 9.1.**	X		
Standard 9.3: Staff must be given opportunities to develop and extend their teaching and assessment knowledge and must be encouraged to improve their skills. Opportunities for didactic and pedagogic training and specialisation must be available. The VEE must clearly define systems of reward for teaching excellence in operation. **Teaching positions must offer the security and benefits necessary to maintain the stability, continuity, and competence of the teaching staff. Teaching staff must have a balanced workload of teaching, research and service depending on their role. They must have reasonable opportunities and resources for participation in scholarly activities.**	X		
Standard 9.4: The VEE must provide evidence that it utilises a well-defined, comprehensive and publicised programme for the professional growth and development of teaching and support staff, including formal appraisal and informal mentoring procedures. **Staff must have the opportunity to contribute to the VEE's direction and decision-making processes.** **Promotion criteria for teaching and support staff must be clear and explicit. Promotions for teaching staff must recognise excellence in and (if permitted by the national or university law) place equal**	X		

emphasis on all aspects of teaching (including clinical teaching), research, service and other scholarly activities.			
Standard 9.5: A system for assessment of teaching and teaching staff must be implemented on a cyclical basis and must formally include student participation. Results must be communicated to the relevant staff and commented upon in reports. Evidence must be provided that this system contributes to correcting deficiencies and to enhancing the quality and efficiency of education.	X		
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).	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		
C: (total or substantial) compliance; PC: partial compliance; NC: non-compliance			

Executive Summary

VetNorth Japan (VNJ) was established in 2012 to provide world-class veterinary education. The Cooperative Veterinary Education Programme joins the veterinary faculties of Hokkaido University (HU) and Obihiro University (OU).
Both universities are approved as national universities within the Japanese higher education system under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT).

VNJ was evaluated by ESEVT in July 2019 and was granted the status of Full Accreditation.

The SER was provided on time and written in full agreement with the SOP 2023. Replies to the pre-visitation questions from the experts were provided before the start of the Visitation.
The Liaison Officers did an excellent job adapting the Visitation schedule, searching for the requested information, organising relevant meetings and ensuring the health and safety of the visitors. The ESEVT SOP 2023 is valid for the Visitation.

Several areas worthy of praise have been identified, i.e.:
- Well-written SER in full agreement with the guidelines
- Well-organised and implemented timetable for the Full Visitation
- Exceptional collaboration between Hokkaido University and Obihiro University
- Effective combination of the complementary areas of expertise of the two universities
- High number and variety of electives offered to undergraduate students
- Excellent collaboration with extramural stakeholders, e.g. bovine farms in Obihiro and Sapporo Veterinary Emergency Hospital
- Well-developed intramural and extramural training in Food-Producing Animals at Obihiro University
- Outstanding Hokkaido University VTH, which is effectively devoted to optimal clinical training in pets for both undergraduate and graduate students
- Excellent implementation of biosecurity procedures in all facilities
- Numerous and well-equipped facilities, which are well maintained
- Friendly campuses for the welfare needs of students.

Additional commendations are described in the Visitation Report.

VNJ is compliant with most ESEVT Standards for both study programmes. However, one minor deficiency has been identified.
- **Minor Deficiency:** VNJ is partially compliant with Standard 3.1.3 because the number of hours spent by each student with equine patients is suboptimal, which may adversely affect the acquisition of some Day One Competences by all students.
- **Major Deficiency:** None.

Additional suggestions for improvement are described in this Visitation Report.

Decision of ECOVE

The Committee concluded that no Major Deficiency had been identified.

The Veterinary Education Establishment (VEE) of the University of VetNorth Japan, Hokkaido University and Obihiro University, is therefore classified as holding the status of: **ACCREDITATION**.

Glossary

CCT: Core Clinical Training
D1C: ESEVT Day One Competences
EAEVE: European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education
EBVS: European Board of Veterinary Specialisation
ECOVE: European Committee on Veterinary Education
EPT: Elective Practical Training
ESEVT: European System of Evaluation of Veterinary Training
ESG: Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
FSQ: Food Safety and Quality
FTE: Full-Time Equivalent
HU: Hokkaido University
IT: Information Technology
MEXT: Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology
OU: Obihiro University
OSCE: Objective Structured Clinical Examination
PDCA: Plan Do Check Adjust
QA: Quality Assurance
SER: Self-Evaluation Report
SOP: 2023 Standard Operating Procedure
VEE: Veterinary Education Establishment
VNJ: VetNorth Japan
VPH: Veterinary Public Health
VTH: Veterinary Teaching Hospital