SELF-EVALUATION REPORT 2026

VetNorth Japan

The Cooperative Veterinary Education Programme between Hokkaido University School of Veterinary Medicine and Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine

Location of VetNorth Japan



Hokkaido University

Kita-18, Nishi-9, Kita-Ku, Sapporo, Hokkaido 060-0818, Japan

https://www.google.co.jp/maps/@43.0797048,141.3359474,3259m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en

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https://www.google.co.jp/maps/@42.8893239,143.1935388,2041a,35y,221.7h,44.42t/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en

Foreword and Acknowledgments

This Self-Evaluation Report (SER) has been prepared in strict accordance with the ESEVT SOP 2023, as approved by the Leipzig Assembly on June 8, 2023. It represents the culmination of a collective effort by the faculty, staff, students, and stakeholders of the Joint Veterinary Education Programme (VetNorth Japan: VNJ), which is collaboratively offered by the School of Veterinary Medicine at Hokkaido University (SVM/HU) and the School of Cooperative Veterinary Medicine at Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine (SCVM/OU).

Since the previous Full Visitation in 2019, when VNJ was granted accreditation by ECOVE, we have dedicated ourselves to addressing identified challenges and continuously enhancing the quality of our education. Importantly, we successfully navigated the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic without slowing our commitment to improvement. Rather than hindering our progress, the pandemic served as a catalyst for the rapid digitalization of teaching materials and the establishment of a resilient hybrid teaching environment, which ultimately strengthened the systematic management and implementation framework of educational activities and risk-management mechanisms. This SER highlights these developments, alongside the further evolution of our 'Complementary Education'.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all contributors who provided accurate data and invaluable insights. Special recognition is due to the International Accreditation Promotion Committee for their tireless efforts in consolidating and coordinating the vast amount of documentation required for this report. We also wish to express our profound gratitude to the VNJ Council, composed of the Presidents of both universities, for their steadfast leadership and unwavering support as our highest decision-making bodies.

We are deeply honoured to welcome the EAEVE Visitation Team. We are confident that the expert evaluation and recommendations provided will serve as a vital guide for VNJ to further advance its international-standard veterinary education and to cultivate the next generation of global veterinarians.

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Note on the Reporting Period and Data

Please note that the Japanese Academic Year (AY) commences on 1 April and concludes on 31 March. Due to the submission deadline for this SER (15 April 2026) occurring shortly after the start of AY2026, the data for AY2025 could not be fully integrated or verified at the time of writing.

Consequently, to ensure the highest level of accuracy and consistency, the descriptive content and ESEVT indicator values presented throughout this SER are based on the data from AY2022, AY2023, and AY2024. Where specifically relevant, the most current information as of AY2025 has been included to provide the Visitation Team with the latest developments.

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Introduction



Introduction

VetNorth Japan (VNJ) was established in 2012 with the aim of providing world-class veterinary education. The Cooperative Veterinary Education Programme joins the faculties of two national universities: the School of Veterinary Medicine at Hokkaido University (SVM/HU) and the School of Cooperative Veterinary Medicine at Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine (SCVM/OU).

Both universities are in Hokkaido, the largest and northernmost prefecture in Japan. Both 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).

Brief History of SVM/HU and SCVM/OU before the VNJ Establishment

Originally founded as Sapporo Agricultural College in 1876, Hokkaido University (HU) is one of the oldest, largest and most prestigious universities in Japan, and it now has 12 undergraduate and 25 graduate schools. The basic philosophies guiding HU's education and research include Frontier Spirit, Global Perspectives, Well-Rounded Education, and Practical Learning. Veterinary education at HU started in 1878, and professional veterinary education began in 1880. The Department of Veterinary Medicine was established in 1910. In 1952, it grew into the School of Veterinary Medicine.

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 a world-class education in agriculture, animal husbandry and veterinary medicine. OU is in the centre of the Tokachi District, which is called 'Japan's food production base' and consists of the largest field crop and livestock zones in Japan. OU's basic philosophy is to nurture its characteristics through the creation and practical use of knowledge and to contribute to regional and international communities by developing human resources to support and protect food safety, animal health and people's livelihoods.

The SVM/HU has actively engaged in research on zoonotic diseases, life sciences, ecosystem preservation and companion animal medicine, while the SCVM/OU has focused on farm animal medicine and production, food safety and security and protozoan diseases.

Brief History of the VNJ

The societal need for veterinary medicine education has become more diversified and advanced, not only for clinical practice but also for life sciences, worldwide infection control, public health and environmental hygiene. Providing high-quality of education, which forms the basis of veterinarians' qualifications, is essential. To address these needs effectively and provide a comprehensive, international-level education, the SVM/HU and the SCVM/OU established, and MEXT approved, the VNJ programme in 2012. Combining the advantages of the two veterinary schools, the VNJ formulated an educational framework for internationally acceptable veterinary professionals with an up-to-date curriculum with financial support from MEXT (2012–2017).

Since 2012, we have visited VEEs that are approved/accredited by European Association of Establishments for EAEVE and invited experts from these VEEs for informal consultations to improve our own veterinary education. The VNJ received a consultative visitation by ESEVT experts in July 2017 in accordance with the Uppsala SOP of May 2016. Then, in July 2019, we received a full visitation, which led to the VNJ being certified as an accredited establishment by ECOVE.

Main Features of the VNJ

The VNJ programme, with a six-year term of study, was authorised by MEXT and is led by the VNJ Council, which consists of both universities' presidents. The VNJ is governed by the VNJ Executive Board and an organisational structure comprising various committees (Standard 1.2).

The defining feature of the VNJ's veterinary education system is the cooperation between the two veterinary schools, which has significantly strengthened the veterinary education and research fields.

The two veterinary schools, the SVM/HU and the SCVM/OU, mutually utilise each other's outstanding educational resources to develop a rich curriculum that neither school could have formulated independently. A unique complementary clinical rotation has been introduced to provide a sufficient caseload in various animal species.

Main Developments Since the Last Visitation

Area 1 (Organisation and QA): The VNJ obtained the Accreditation of Veterinary Education Evaluation from the Japan University Accreditation Association (JUAA) in 2023. Furthermore, our QA system actively addressed the minor deficiencies identified at the last FV in 2019.

Area 2 (Finances): Both universities secured significant funding to ensure the sustainability of our educational programmes. The SVM/HU integrated the 'International Vet Exchange Programme (IVEP)' grant into its main budget in AY2023. The SCVM/OU secured Facility Development Subsidies for the development of the Field Centre of Animal Science and Agriculture (FCASA) spanning AY2021–2025.

Area 3 (Curriculum): The curriculum was revised in AY2019 (Curriculum 2019). The first cohort under Curriculum 2019 graduated in March 2025 (AY2024). In Curriculum 2019, the pre-clinical training was moved earlier, and the duration of clinical rotation was extended to strengthen the clinical training compared with the previous curriculum (Curriculum 2012). The curriculum is currently being revised for AY2027 to align with the new VNJ Day One Competences (D1C) established in AY2024.

Area 4 (Facilities): Significant facility upgrades include the accreditation of the SCVM/OU's on-campus facility as a public slaughterhouse in 2024. Additionally, new equine education facilities at OU are under construction, with completion scheduled for March 2026.

Areas 9 & 10 (Staff and Veterinary Teaching Hospital): HU's Veterinary Teaching Hospital (VTH) launched its accredited Asian College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (AiCVIM) residency programme in AY2024. The programme increases the involvement of diplomates and residents in clinical teaching, thereby improving supervision and enhancing the quality of clinical training for veterinary students.

Other Significant Developments

Areas 3 & 6 (Curriculum & Learning Resources): In response to COVID-19, we accelerated the digitalisation of teaching materials and successfully established hybrid teaching utilising Zoom and Webex, significantly reducing the travel and time burdens for both students and staff. Additionally, practical meat hygiene training (pigs and cattle) has been made mandatory from AY2025.

Area 5 (Animal Resources): To reduce the use of live animals in pre-clinical training, both universities expanded their Skills Labs. Clinical training was also enhanced through an advanced animal welfare course and a new shelter medicine programme.

Area 9 (Staff): Following a 2022 national act, the VNJ successfully assisted its veterinary technicians in obtaining national qualifications.

Major Problems Encountered by the VEE

Area 3 & 5 (Curriculum & Animal Resources): Due to severe outbreaks of classical swine fever

(CSF) and highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in Japan, access to pig and poultry farms for on-farm practical training has been completely suspended. Additionally, cultural values in Japan limit owner consent for companion animal necropsies, creating nationwide educational challenges.

Ongoing Challenges

Areas 2 & 4 (Finances & Facilities): The gradual decline in MEXT subsidies to national universities requires continuous efforts to secure internal and external funds. This is critical for maintaining high educational standards and executing necessary facility upgrades.

Areas 3 & 5 (Curriculum & Animal Resources): We must secure alternative training methods, such as expanding simulations, to compensate for the suspension of farm access due to livestock diseases, while also sustaining efforts to secure companion animal necropsy cases through collaborations.

Area 6 (Learning Resources): We will advance our educational Digital Transformation (DX) by expanding the use of e-learning and enhancing AI-powered support.

Area 8 (Assessment): We are continuously reviewing our assessment methods to enable teaching staff to monitor student learning progress effectively and provide timely and constructive feedback.

Area 9 (Staff): To make teaching excellence more visible and enhance motivation, the SCVM/OU introduced a ‘Good Teacher Award’ in 2025, complementing HU's existing award. We will continue exploring effective ways to evaluate and reward teaching performance across the VNJ.

Version and Date of the ESEVT SOP Which Is Valid for the Full Visitation

Leipzig SOP 2023, which was approved by the EAEVE at the General Assembly on 8 June 2023.

Objectives, Organisation and Quality Assurance Policy



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.*

Mission

Our mission is to benefit society and the environment by providing veterinary professionals who have a solid foundation of knowledge, skills and ethics and who will contribute to the promotion of the health and welfare of both animals and humans. Accordingly, in addition to domestic standards, the EAEVE accreditation standards will be adopted to further enhance the quality of veterinary education at the VNJ. This is essential for quality assurance (QA) in veterinary education at the international level.

Objectives

The primary objectives of the VNJ are to provide, in agreement with the QA Framework of Higher Education in Japan, adequate, ethical, research- and evidence-based veterinary training, and to produce new graduate veterinarians who:

1. Meet a competency threshold for entry-level professionals, including licence eligibility.
2. Have a foundation with high ethical standards to address the growing and diversified societal needs of veterinary medicine and the ability to contribute to the promotion of population health by improving animal health and welfare through a multidisciplinary approach.
3. Possess a global perspective with the 'One Health' concept to respond to and prevent environmental issues and infectious diseases, including transboundary animal diseases, zoonoses and foodborne diseases, which threaten animal and human health.
4. Understand the importance of lifelong learning and the need to obtain up-to-date information about evidence-based veterinary medicine through research-based education.

VEE's Assurance of Veterinarians' Multidisciplinary Competence

The VNJ ensures that its core curriculum equips all new graduates with the necessary skills and knowledge to enter any commonly recognised branch of the veterinary profession through the following key mechanisms.

Comprehensive Curriculum Design: The core curriculum is designed to cover all fundamental areas of veterinary science, including introductory, basic, pathological, applied and clinical subjects. This broad foundation ensures that graduates are well-prepared for diverse professional pathways.

Competency-Based Education: The curriculum is structured around essential competencies identified by EAEVE. These competencies ensure that graduates can perform clinical, diagnostic and preventive tasks relevant to various branches of veterinary medicine.

Clinical and Practical Training: Students gain hands-on experience through pre-clinical training, clinical rotations in the VTH, including ambulatory clinics, and training in meat inspection facilities. This exposure prepares them for the realities of different veterinary roles.

Continuous Curriculum Review and Updates: The VNJ regularly reviews and updates its curriculum in response to advances in veterinary science, changes in industry standards, and feedback from stakeholders. This ensures that the education remains relevant and current.

Accreditation and QA: The VNJ undergoes regular accreditation by a third-party committee in the context of veterinary medical education in Japan. This evaluation assesses whether the curriculum meets

the standards required for graduates to practise competently across all major branches of the profession.

Interdisciplinary and Professional Skills Development: In addition to technical knowledge, the curriculum emphasises communication, teamwork, ethics and professional skills. These are critical for success in any veterinary career and enable graduates to adapt to various professional environments.

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 academic 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.*

Details of the VEE

Official Name: VetNorth Japan (VNJ), the Cooperative Veterinary Education Programme between Hokkaido University and Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine.

Address, Telephone Numbers:

- School of Veterinary Medicine, Hokkaido University (SVM/HU): Kita 18, Nishi 9, Kita-ku, Sapporo, Hokkaido 060-0818, Japan. Phone. +81-11-716-2111
- School of Cooperative Veterinary Medicine, Obihiro University of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine (SCVM/OU): Inada-cho Nishi 2-11, Obihiro, Hokkaido 080-8555, Japan. Phone. +81-155-49-5216

Websites:

- VNJ: https://www.vetmed.hokudai.ac.jp/en/study/vnj/
- SVM/HU: https://www.vetmed.hokudai.ac.jp/en/
- SCVM/OU: https://www.obihiro.ac.jp/en/

Dean and Vice Dean of the VEE

Dean of VNJ:

- Yoshihiro Sakoda, D.V.M., Ph.D., Dean of the SVM/HU
- Phone: +81-11-706-5207, Email: sakoda@vetmed.hokudai.ac.jp

Vice Dean of VNJ:

- Motoki Sasaki, D.V.M., Ph.D., Dean of the SCVM/OU
- Phone: +81-155-49-5352, Email: sasakim@obihiro.ac.jp

The Deans of SVM/HU and SCVM/OU shall serve as the Dean and Vice Dean of VNJ, alternating every two years. The VNJ Dean oversees and is responsible for all the programmes related to the professional, ethical and academic affairs of the education programme, and is supported by the Vice Dean and Directors of the VTHs in the two schools.

Official Authority Overseeing the Establishment

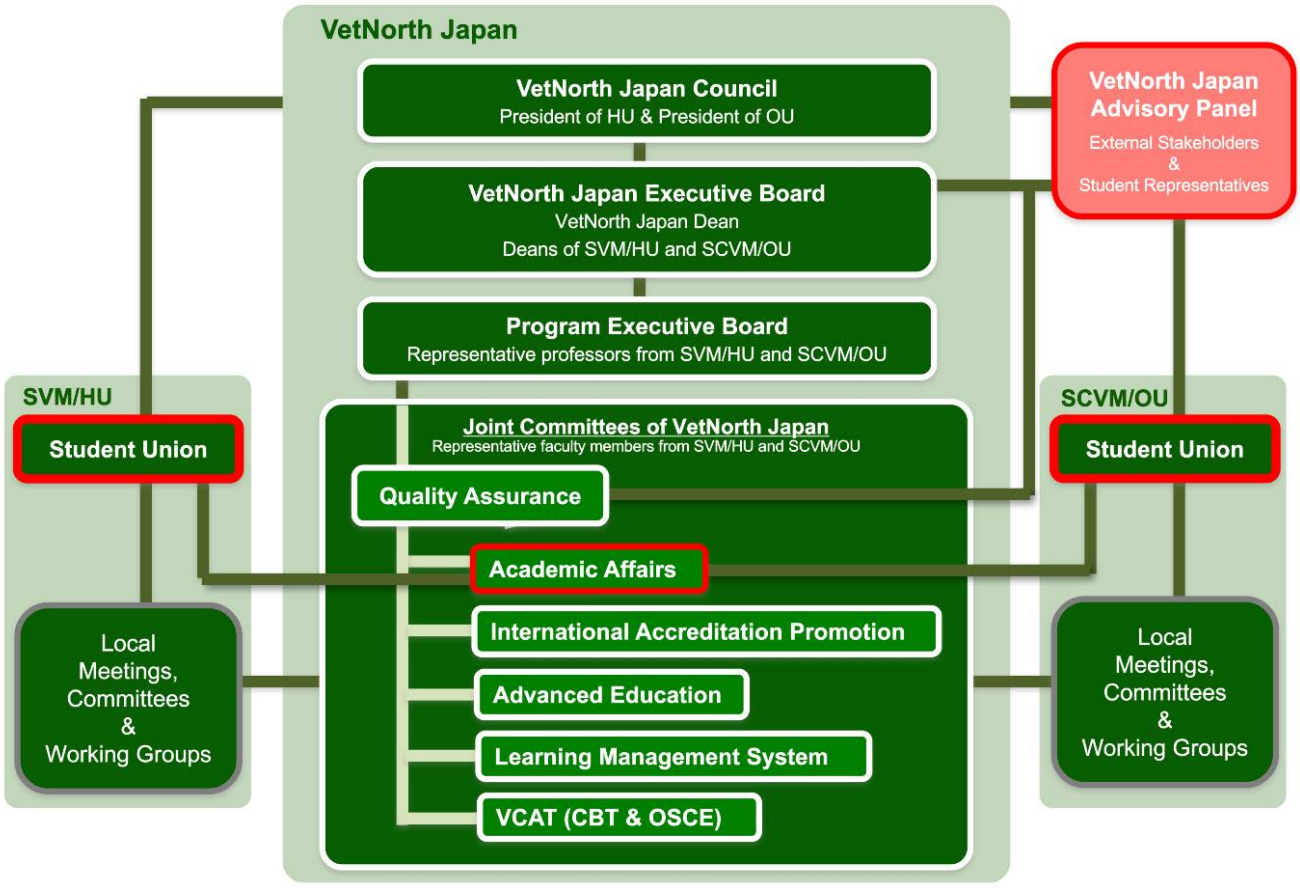
The VNJ is not a separate legal entity but a jointly delivered programme under the respective institutional responsibility of OU and HU. Both universities are certified as National University Corporations (NUCs) under the authority of the MEXT, which is responsible for higher education in Japan. In addition, OU has been operated as one of the constituent universities under the Hokkaido Higher Education and Research System (HHERS), a single NUC. The veterinary licence in Japan is administered nationally by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF).

A Diagram of the Organisation

A diagram of the organisation of the VNJ is shown in Figure 1.2.1. The VNJ Council, which consists of the two universities' presidents (Kiyohiro Houkin, M.D., Ph.D., President of HU, and Hideyuki Nagasawa, D.V.M., Ph.D., President of OU), serves as the highest decision-making body and ensures efficient financial support for the operation of the VNJ programme. The VNJ Executive Board consists of deans from the two schools, and it decides most strategic issues. It must approve all items submitted by the Programme Executive Board. The members of the Programme Executive Board are appointed by the VNJ Executive Board.

The Programme Executive Board is a practical decision-making body, which is responsible for all issues relating to the teaching, learning and research carried out in the VNJ programme. The board comprises ten professors from each location and directs the whole VNJ programme. Established in AY2017, the VNJ Advisory Panel comprises key internal and external stakeholders, including students, representatives from the public health and animal health sectors, graduates and members of local veterinary associations and private companies. The panel meets annually to provide feedback from diverse perspectives, which is used to enhance the quality of the programme.

Figure 1.2.1. Organisational Diagram of the VNJ



Divisions, Departments and Clinics

SVM/HU (Appendix 1-1): Briefly, the SVM/HU consists of two divisions; one is the Division of Veterinary Medicine, and the other is the VTH. The Division of Veterinary Medicine comprises six departments: Basic Veterinary Sciences, Disease Control, Environmental Veterinary Sciences, Applied Veterinary Sciences, Preventive Veterinary Medicine and Clinical Sciences. The teaching staff at the

VTH consists of academic staff members and residents in the Department of Clinical Sciences and the VTH Division.

Important issues in the faculty are deliberated and decided in monthly Faculty Meetings. The members of the Faculty Meetings include the SVM/HU dean, vice dean, professors, associate professors and lecturers. Assistant professors are also able to attend the Faculty Meeting on an application basis. To enhance feedback from junior faculty members, the Dean of the SVM/HU administers the Dean Supporting Committee, which consists of several professors along with several junior associate and assistant professors. In addition, the SVM/HU dean convenes the Faculty Assembly several times a year, where all academic staff, including assistant professors, discuss the annual budget of the faculty among other agendas.

SCVM/OU (Appendix 1-2): The VNJ education programme at the SCVM/OU is developed and delivered primarily by the academic staff of the Research Division of Veterinary Sciences and the Research Division of Clinical Veterinary Medicine, together with the academic staff of the National Research Centre for Protozoan Diseases (NRCPD). Faculty members of the Division of Clinical Veterinary Medicine are concurrently affiliated with the Veterinary Medical Centre (VMC), which functions as the VTH, and some faculty members from both divisions are also affiliated with the Diagnostic Centre for Animal Health and Food Safety.

The faculty members of OU also assemble at the monthly Faculty Meeting. They include all academic staff (professors, associate professors, lecturers and assistant professors) who are responsible for the core subjects of the VNJ education programme. They deliberate on educational matters and research-related issues during these meetings, where all information and results are shared.

Committees and Student Unions

The educational programmes of the VNJ are managed and overseen by the following 6 joint committees and organisations for handling and operating important common issues: the International Accreditation Promotion Committee (IAPC), QA Committee, Academic Affairs Committee, and Advanced Education Committee, Learning Management System (LMS) Committee and Veterinary Common Achievement Test (VCAT) Committee. These joint committees coordinate ideas and discussions from relevant local committees to reach mutual agreements. Besides these joint committees, there are independent committees in each of the SVM/HU and SCVM/OU. The decisions and issues addressed by each committee are shared with and discussed among academic teaching staff through the monthly Faculty Meetings at each school and the annual VNJ Joint Faculty Development (FD), in which all faculty members at both schools participate. The Student Unions also represent the student body and communicate their feedback to the relevant institutional bodies. Details of the composition, function and responsibilities of the committees and Student Unions are provided in Appendices 1-3 (VNJ), 1-4 (SVM/HU) and 1-5 (SCVM/OU).

Collaborations with Other VEEs

We hold information exchange meetings approximately twice a year with VetJapan South (Kagoshima University and Yamaguchi University) and Rakuno Gakuen University, both of which obtained EAEVE accreditation in 2019 and 2024, respectively. Furthermore, through the National and Public Veterinary University Conference and the Japanese Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (JAEVE), we exchange information about twice a year with other veterinary universities nationwide for the purposes of improving and enhancing veterinary medical education, implementing the common veterinary examination, and promoting veterinary education that meets international standards.

SVM/HU: The SVM/HU conducts educational and research exchanges with 21 and 16 overseas VEEs through inter-university and inter-faculty exchange agreements, respectively. The partner institutions are listed in Appendix 1-6. Through the IVEP, 3-6 students per university are dispatched annually for short-term programmes to the VEEs at the University of Zambia, the University of Edinburgh, Chulalongkorn University and Kasetsart University, and 3-6 students are accepted from the latter three universities.

SCVM/OU: At the SCVM/OU, faculty exchanges are conducted with academic exchange partner institutions such as Wroclaw University of Environmental and Life Sciences, the University of the Philippines, Seoul National University, the Mongolian University of Life Sciences, the University of Bern, the University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover and Chulalongkorn University. Furthermore, based on inter-university partnership agreements, the university conducts faculty and student exchanges with Cornell University and the University of Wisconsin. The partner institutions are listed in Appendix 1-7.

Key Personnel: Academic and VTH Affairs

SVM/HU:

- Responsible person for the veterinary curriculum (for AY2024): Professor Mayumi Ishizuka, D.V.M, Ph.D., Chief of the Academic Affairs Committee
- Responsible person for the veterinary curriculum (for AY2025): Professor Ken-ichi Otsuguro, D.V.M., Ph.D., Chief of the Academic Affairs Committee
- Responsible person for the professional, ethical and academic affairs of the VTH (for AY2024 and AY2025): Professor Mitsuyoshi Takiguchi, D.V.M., Ph.D., Director of the VTH

SCVM/OU:

- Responsible person for the veterinary curriculum (for AY2024): Professor Eiji Takahashi, D.V.M., Ph.D., Chief of the Academic Affairs Committee
- Responsible person for the veterinary curriculum (for AY2025): Professor Manabu Yamada, D.V.M., Ph.D., Chief of the Academic Affairs Committee
- Responsible person for the professional, ethical and academic affairs of the VTH (for AY2024 and AY2025): Professor Kotaro Matsumoto, D.V.M., Ph.D., Director of the VMC

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.*

Due to our focus on the COVID-19 pandemic response starting in AY2020, we decided to postpone a planned SWOT analysis in AY2021, avoiding the period of educational instability during the pandemic. Consequently, the AY2016-2021 strategic plan was extended until AY2024. The plan implemented in AY2024 was based on a SWOT analysis of the VNJ (Figure 1.3.1), which was updated by the QA Committee and approved by the VNJ Programme Executive Board in March 2017.

The new strategic plan for the AY2025-2030 period has been developed based on a SWOT analysis conducted by the QA Committee in AY2024 (Figure 1.3.2).

Figure 1.3.1. SWOT analysis of the VNJ conducted in AY2017

Strengths

- Academic staff with novel & broad specificities with high activities in scientific research
- Combined education system with totally complementary structure, facilities, resources & environment for veterinary studies and training
- Excellent facilities and infrastructure
- Students with high motivation & academic abilities
- Harmonization of staff from two locations sharing periodical FD/SD for QA
- Leading VTHs for small and large animals with eminent medical cares in Japan
- Various active oversea collaborations in education & research

Weaknesses

- Lack of 24/7 equine emergency services
- Insufficient No. of patients in pigs, poultry & exotic pets
- Insufficient necropsy cases of companion animals
- Time, costs and labor for transportation of students & academic staff between two campuses
- Lack of system to input from external stakeholders
- Inefficient management of EPT program

Opportunities

- Strong demand & interest to veterinary science, especially zoonoses, public health and food safety
- Veterinarian as a popular occupation in Japan
- Hokkaido as an attractive location for veterinary education
- Building greater reputation, branding & competitiveness of VetNorth Japan by international accreditation

Threats

- Continuous decline of budgets to national universities in Japan
- Financial difficulty for sufficient staff employment
- Declining birthrate leads the decreased number of prospective students
- Changes in economic status & population aging that would affect veterinary education & training

Figure 1.3.2. SWOT analysis of the VNJ conducted in AY2024

Strengths

- Academic staff with innovative and broad expertise, actively engaged in scientific research
- An integrated educational system that fully supports the structure, facilities, resources, and environment for veterinary medicine and training
- Excellent facilities and infrastructure
- Highly motivated and academically capable students
- Harmonization of staff from two campuses through regular FD/SD (Faculty/Staff Development) programs for quality assurance
- A veterinary faculty that provides top-tier veterinary care for both small and large animals in Japan
- Active educational and research collaboration with overseas institutions
- Close cooperation with nearby veterinary-related services
- An ideal location for comprehensive veterinary education and research

Weaknesses

- Limited number of cases handled by the 24/7 emergency services for companion animals and horses
- Low number of cases involving pigs, poultry, and exotic pets
- Limited number of autopsy cases for companion animals
- Limited opportunities for veterinary students to engage with primary care cases in small animals
- Burden of time, personnel costs, and operational expenses (e.g., travel and accommodation for staff and students) required for supplementary education
- Insufficient number of board-certified veterinary specialists
- Coordination of multiple portal platforms that students must access
- Low number of female faculty members

Opportunities

- Strong local demand and interest in veterinary medicine that emphasizes the bond between humans, animals, and nature
- Increasing popularity of the veterinarian, attracting high-achieving students
- The significance of VetNorth Japan in enhancing the global relevance of veterinary education in Japan
- Expectations for Japan to take a leadership role in veterinary education across Asia
- Growing public awareness of transboundary and zoonotic diseases, and the importance of the One Health approach
- Opportunities for collaboration with domestic and international EAEVE-accredited universities to improve educational quality
- Societal support for the digital transformation (ICT integration) of educational systems

Threats

- Ongoing budget cuts for national universities in Japan
- Insufficient financial support for securing qualified personnel
- Impact of economic fluctuations on veterinary education and related industries
- Declining number of prospective students due to the falling birthrate
- Limited educational opportunities in animal hygiene caused by outbreaks of animal infectious diseases
- Restrictions on educational activities due to the pandemic caused by infectious diseases
- Cultural and religious limitations in securing autopsy cases for companion animals
- Restrictions on the number of students accepted at slaughterhouses
- Rising costs associated with student travel and accommodation

Strategic Plans (AY2016–2024)

The detailed plans are shown in Appendix 1-8. The following is a summary of the plans.

1. Introduce a student-centred curriculum in 2019 and enhance practical training by launching 24/7 emergency veterinary services.
2. Enhance our internal QA system and meet international veterinary standards by successfully completing external evaluations from EAEVE (2019) and JUAA (2023).
3. Enhance research activities by securing external funding and expanding our research staff to cultivate students' scientific thinking and problem-solving skills.
4. Contribute to society by developing skilled professionals, building strong partnerships and providing public veterinary services to support Hokkaido's agriculture, public health and food safety.
5. Promote the globalisation of education and research through international exchanges and collaborations with World Health Organisation (WHO), World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and Japan International Agency (JICA) to support capacity-building worldwide.
6. Foster global leaders who contribute to 'One Health' by improving our education to equip students with international perspectives, expertise and leadership skills.

The Strategic Plan for AY2025–2030 (Appendix 1-9) builds upon the previous framework of the six pillars, advances curriculum reform (Curriculum 2027), further strengthens QA, expands Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and DX, reinforces research capacity, enhances regional engagement and promotes international collaboration aligned with 'One Health' principles.

VNJ Operating Plan: Timeline and Key Performance Indicators

The details of the Operating Plans with a timeframe and indicators for the Strategic Plans for AY2016–2024 and AY2025–2030 are shown in Appendices 1-10 and 1-11, respectively. Indicators are also shown in the tables. The following are the summaries of the operating plans with high priority given to the Strategic Plan (AY2016–2024):

Education: Continuously improve our programme by upgrading biosecurity facilities, expanding practical training, enhancing informational websites and strengthening our QA system utilising stakeholder feedback.

Research: Reform our graduate schools and continue to advance research, secure grants, increase publications, and strengthen international collaborations and exchanges.

Services: Provide advanced clinical care and internationally accredited diagnostic services, while strengthening 24/7 emergency clinics, community practices and local collaborations.

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.*

The VEE's QA and Assessment Strategy

The VNJ operates a formally defined and documented QA system at the programme and university levels, supported by university and national QA frameworks. The overall QA framework of the VNJ, integrating internal QA mechanisms with national and international external evaluation processes, is presented in Appendix 1-12.

National QA Context: As part of Japan's higher education system, the SVM/HU and the SCVM/OU have a long-standing culture of internal and external QA and continuous quality improvement (Appendices 1-13 and 1-14). The QA framework for Japanese higher education institutions is

established by law and consists of:

1. The system for the establishment and authorisation of universities by MEXT.
2. Annual internal self-inspection and evaluation.
3. Certified Evaluation and Accreditation (CEA) conducted every seven years by the National Institution for Academic Degrees and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education (NIAD-QE).
4. The National University Corporation Evaluation (NUCE), conducted annually as part of a six-year cycle by MEXT's National University Corporation Evaluation Committee (NUC-EC).
5. An evaluation of veterinary medical education conducted every seven years by JUAA.

The results of these evaluations, accreditations and reviews, as well as the self-inspection and evaluation reports, are published to ensure transparency. The SVM/HU obtained national authorisation in 1918 and received CEA and NUCE accreditation in AY2021, while the SCVM/OU obtained national authorisation in 1949 and received CEA and NUCE accreditation in AY2024 and AY2021, respectively (Appendix 1-15). Additionally, as the VNJ, the Cooperative Veterinary Education Programme obtained the Accreditation of Veterinary Education Evaluation from JUAA in AY2023 (Appendix 1-15).

VNJ's Global QA Policy and Assessment Strategy

The VNJ has established the VNJ QA Committee to enhance the quality of education and research. The global QA policy of the VNJ is formally defined in the Regulations of the VNJ QA Committee (Appendix 1-16), which were initially drafted by the VNJ QA Committee and are periodically reviewed and revised as necessary, with both the original regulations and all subsequent revisions subject to formal approval by the Programme Executive Board. The regulations define the mandate of the Committee to:

1. Assure and enhance the quality of education and research.
2. Monitor the achievement of intended learning outcomes.
3. Analyse internal and external evaluation results.
4. Initiate corrective and enhancement measures.
5. Operate a structured and continuous PDCA cycle.

These written regulations constitute the formal QA policy and associated procedures required for the VNJ's QA activities. The internal QA structure and information flow are illustrated in Figure 1.4.1. Feedback from students, staff and stakeholders is analysed by the VNJ QA Committee and translated into structured improvement measures through the PDCA cycle. Students participate through course evaluations, programme surveys and advisory structures, while academic staff are involved through faculty assemblies and committee membership. Through this structured and participatory framework, the VNJ fosters a culture that recognises the importance of quality and continuous enhancement in education and research.

The VNJ QA Committee is composed of local QA committees from each university. At the SVM/HU, the local committee consists of the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, the Director of the VTH, the Chair of the IAPC and up to four academic staff members. Similarly, at the SCVM/OU, the committee includes the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, the Director of the VTH, the Chair of the IAPC and up to four academic staff members.

The VNJ QA Committee integrates the QA activities of the SVM/HU and the SCVM/OU and oversees the development and implementation of programme-level QA procedures. Information relevant to the veterinary programme is provided by internal sources (e.g. committees, Student Unions, faculties and the VTH) as well as external stakeholders, including domestic and international accreditation bodies (e.g. JAEVE, the Asian Association of Veterinary Schools (AAVS)) and the VNJ Advisory Panel. These inputs are analysed by the QA departments of both universities and subsequently

reviewed by the VNJ QA Committee to ensure coordinated management of the joint veterinary programme.

Recommendations from the VNJ QA Committee are reviewed by the VNJ Executive Board, composed of the VNJ Dean and Vice Dean, and are communicated to the relevant committees for implementation. In response, the responsible committees formulate and implement improvement plans (Plan and Do). The outcomes of these measures are subsequently evaluated by the VNJ QA Committee, including monitoring of intended learning outcomes and analysis of evaluation results (Check).

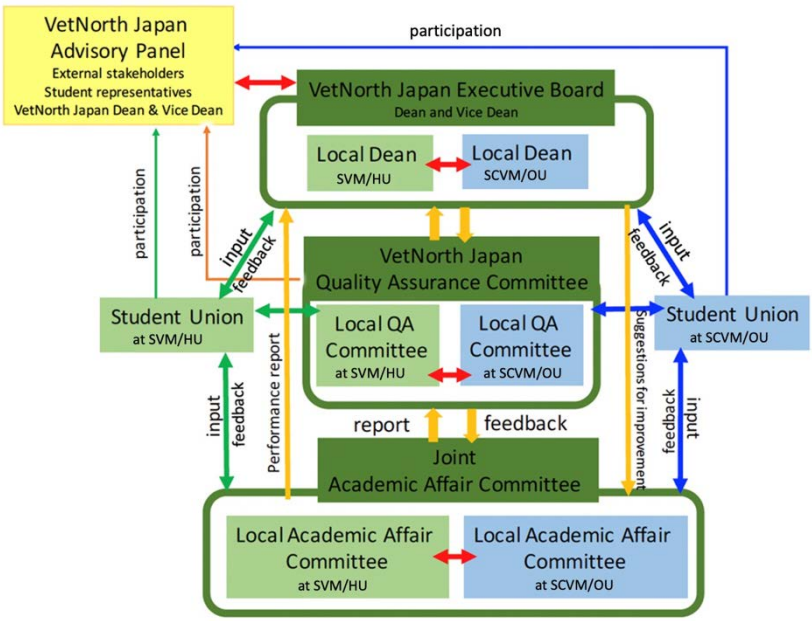
Based on this evaluation, the QA Committee formulates corrective or enhancement measures and submits recommendations for further improvement (Adjust). These recommendations initiate the next improvement cycle through implementation by the relevant committees (Plan and Do). The results of evaluations and improvement actions are shared through the university intranet and communicated to internal and external stakeholders via advisory structures and committees.

Through this structured governance and participatory process, the VNJ ensures that the PDCA (Plan–Do–Check–Adjust) cycle operates continuously and effectively in accordance with the ESG 2015 standards.

Academic Integrity

Policies governing research ethics, prevention of misconduct, examination integrity and disciplinary procedures are established and enforced at university level by SVM/HU and SCVM/OU. These regulations apply equally to students and staff participating in the VNJ programme. Matters such as academic misconduct, suspension and expulsion are handled in accordance with the respective university regulations. All students enrolled on the VNJ programme are formally registered at either SVM/HU or SCVM/OU and are therefore subject to the full disciplinary authority of their respective universities. In addition, academic and administrative staff are required to participate in FD and Staff Development (SD) programmes organised by their respective universities. Opportunities are also provided to participate in FD/SD activities organised by the Hokkaido FD and SD Council (https://ctl.high.hokudai.ac.jp/en/), of which both universities are members. Through university regulations and ongoing professional development, VNJ fosters a culture that recognises the importance of integrity, quality and continuous enhancement in education and research.

Figure 1.4.1. VNJ's QA structure



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, views and employment destinations of past students as well as the profile of the current student population. 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.*

Stakeholder and Public Communication

The VNJ informs its stakeholders and the public about the following information through various channels, including its website, pamphlets, university information sessions, joint career fairs and educational meetings for the Cooperative Veterinary Education Programme.

1. Its objectives
2. Its activities in education, research and outreach
3. Employment destinations of past students
4. The profile of its current student population (primarily through the website and various information sessions)

The VNJ ESEVT status, the previous Self-Evaluation Report (SER2019) and the Final Visitation Report are publicly available on the following websites:

https://www.vetmed.hokudai.ac.jp/study/vnj/eaeve/

https://www.obihiro.ac.jp/en/office-for-international-accreditation-of-veterinary-education

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.*

Governance and Decision-Making

VNJ systematically monitors and periodically reviews its strategic plans, organisational structure, educational activities and QA policy to ensure that objectives are achieved and that the programme responds to the needs of students and society. As VNJ is a cooperative veterinary education programme delivered by two universities, decision-making, communication, monitoring and revision of strategic plans take place both at the VNJ level and at the level of each university.

In Japan, NUCs establish six-year mid-term objectives and corresponding operational plans to guide strategic institutional development. The VNJ strategic plan reflects the strategic plans of both universities and provides a coordinated framework for the joint veterinary education programme, although the internal communication processes of the two universities differ due to their organisational structures.

VNJ-Level Strategic Planning: The draft of the VNJ strategic plan, which is made based on a SWOT analysis, is first discussed by the Faculty Meeting at both schools. The Programme Executive Board revises the plan and releases it to the VNJ Executive Board. The Executive Board finalises the plan, followed by the approval of the VNJ Council. These approval processes ensure institutional legitimacy, transparency and shared responsibility at programme level. Decisions are communicated to faculty members and support staff usually through internal mailing, regular and on-demand meetings and FD/SD seminars. The strategic plans are implemented by the VNJ faculty members, whereas relevant committees and the Programme Executive Board assess and revise progress and outcome statements. Decisions and evaluation results are made public on the website, as well as at university information sessions and the VNJ Advisory Panel.

Monitoring and Periodic Review: Monitoring of strategic objectives and educational activities is conducted on a continuous basis by relevant committees and the Programme Executive Board.

Evaluation includes ESEVT indicators as well as additional quantitative and qualitative indicators, such as:

1. Student progression and graduation rates
2. Course and programme evaluation results
3. Participation in clinical and extramural training
4. Graduate and employer surveys
5. Faculty surveys
6. Feedback from the Advisory Panel and accreditation bodies
7. Review and amendment of biosecurity SOP
8. Review and amendment of curriculum

These indicators are reviewed annually and within the six-year strategic cycle to ensure both short-term responsiveness and long-term programme development. Collected data are analysed within the QA structure (Figure 1.4.1) and translated into documented action plans.

Implementation and QA Loop Closure: Identified issues are translated into documented action plans, implemented by the responsible committees and academic staff, and subsequently re-evaluated in the following monitoring cycle. Where objectives are not fully achieved, revised measures are adopted and re-implemented. This structured process ensures full closure of the PDCA cycle. Further documented evidence of closed PDCA cycles is provided in Appendix 1-17, which presents selected examples of formal QA recommendations and corresponding Dean responses demonstrating governance clarification, workload adjustments and curricular modifications.

Communication and Stakeholder Involvement: Decisions, evaluation results and implemented actions are communicated to faculty members and support staff through internal mailing lists and meetings including the VNJ Joint FD. Students are involved through course evaluations, programme surveys and advisory structures. Academic staff participate through faculty assemblies and committee membership. Key strategic plans and evaluation outcomes are publicly disclosed on the website and shared with stakeholders at information sessions and Advisory Panel meetings, ensuring transparency and accountability.

***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 QA process.*

The Last ESEVT Visitation and Addressing Findings from the Visitation

The last Full Visitation (FV) was conducted from July 8–12, 2019, and the following three Minor Deficiencies were identified. Our response to these deficiencies was detailed in the interim report, and further improvements have been ongoing since then. The deficiencies and the corresponding actions taken are shown below.

Insufficient practical training in meat hygiene, including meat inspection: Following extensive discussions with the Hokkaido Prefectural Government, we launched an off-campus practical training programme in AY2018 for interested students (approximately 10 each from HU and OU) at the meat hygiene facilities of several slaughterhouses. The number of students accepted by the government has increased year by year and the programme is now mandatory for all students from AY2025.

1. We have introduced a VR programme for slaughter inspection, developed by a third-party organisation, and utilised it as pre-training for the off-campus practicals from AY2022–2024.
2. Numerous e-learning images and content related to meat hygiene practicals (post-mortem inspection) have been prepared and made available to students.
3. In AY2024, we began practical training using abnormal organs from diseased livestock provided by slaughterhouses.

Insufficient training in educational methods for teaching staff: Original pedagogical training programs for the staff of basic, intermediate and advanced levels have been created individually by SVM/HU and SCVM/OU and their online implementation has begun in AY2025.

Unclear promotion criteria for staff:

1. **SVM/HU:** For administrative staff, criteria are communicated during biannual interviews with their section chief. For assistant professors, performance evaluation criteria for their term-limited positions are provided in advance.
2. **SCVM/OU:** The promotion period for assistant professors to become tenured faculty has been shortened. A system was established for outstanding assistant professors to be promoted to associate professor without the typical six years of experience. Furthermore, a system was created to hire capable part-time support staff into full-time positions.

Comments on Area 1

Integrated Governance Structure: The VNJ is a distinctive cooperative veterinary education model integrating the complementary strengths of two nationally recognised veterinary schools. Its joint governance structure, including the Programme Executive Board and joint committees, ensures coordinated decision-making and coherent implementation of the strategic plan across two campuses.

Effective QA System: VNJ operates a structured QA framework that supports continuous monitoring and improvement of educational activities. Participatory governance involving academic staff, students and stakeholders contributes to a strong culture of quality. The COVID-19 pandemic further strengthened VNJ's monitoring and risk-management mechanisms, enhancing systematic review processes, digital coordination and data-driven decision-making.

Geographical Complementarity: The dual-campus structure provides clear educational advantages: SVM/HU in Sapporo offers extensive companion animal caseloads, while SCVM/OU in the Tokachi agricultural region provides strong exposure to food-producing animals (FPA) and livestock industries. Hokkaido's natural environment also supports wildlife and One Health education.

Comprehensive Veterinary Education: Through the integration of academic expertise, diverse educational environments and structured governance, VNJ delivers comprehensive veterinary education aligned with international standards.

Suggestions for Improvement in Area 1

Optimisation of the Dual-Campus Governance: Given the geographical distance between campuses, VNJ will continue improving coordination of jointly delivered courses through expanded digital platforms, hybrid teaching models and improved timetable management. The improvement of delivery methods for our jointly offered courses has started in the second semester of AY2024.

Further Strengthening of the QA Feedback System: VNJ will further institutionalise graduate surveys and employer feedback within the QA cycle. These data will be more systematically analysed and integrated into curriculum review and strategic planning.

Financial Sustainability of the Educational Environment: In response to decreasing national subsidies, VNJ will strengthen partnerships with industry and regional governments and pursue diversified external funding to support sustainable programme development.

Continuous Curriculum Development: The ongoing review of 'Curriculum 2019' and implementation of a revised curriculum demonstrate VNJ's commitment to continuous improvement and competency-based veterinary education aligned with evolving international standards.

2 Finances



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).*

Global Financial Process of Each University

The university's annual budget is adopted for the academic year beginning on 1 April and ending on 31 March.

SVM/HU (Appendix 2-1): The main budget sources are the 'Government subsidies for NUCs that HU received are allocated by the President to faculties based on a request and appraisal process. The subsidy that our faculty received can be used as ordinary expenses for managing the faculty. Each relevant committee in SVM/HU submits budget requests to the Dean. The Dean makes a draft budget, with the Budget Committee of the faculty, by considering the committees' requests and transferring the draft budget to the Faculty Meeting. Then, the draft budget is discussed and approved by the Faculty Meeting. The budget execution is reviewed at the Faculty Assembly, ensuring efficient expenditure.

Most of the project subsidies at the faculty are funded by MEXT and are used specifically for each project's objectives. Project leaders prepare their budgets while steering committees discuss and approve the budgets. Project leaders report the budget execution to HU through the SVM/HU dean. HU sends the reports to MEXT. Programme officers or MEXT-assigned evaluation committees annually review the reports and recommend improvements if necessary.

Research grants at HU are funded by MEXT, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW), the MAFF, the Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED), the JICA and other ministries, organisations or companies.

All research grants are allocated to HU, and then HU transfers them to the principal researchers responsible for the budget execution. Principal researchers render financial statements and send them to relevant ministries, organisations or companies through the SVM/HU dean and HU.

The Annual Financial Report includes information on expenditure and revenues while separately describing personnel, operating, maintenance and equipment costs.

SCVM/OU (Appendix 2-2): The process for the budget plan and allocation is shown in Appendix 2-2. Main sources of revenues are the 'Government subsidies for NUCs' and 'external research grants'. In 'Government subsidies for NUCs', a chairman and directors, who are executive members of HHERS decide on the budget allocation for each constituent university, and then the university's Executive Office, which consists of the president, vice presidents and administrative manager, decides the allocation of budget to each department. The global financial process at OU is consistent with the Regulation for Budget Management. The Management Committee, which includes external experts and the Board of Directors, must approve the plan, then the chairman finalises it and decides on the budget allocation.

The financial charts and summary of SVM/HU's and SCVM/OU's total expenditures and revenues are shown in Appendix 2-3 as well as in Table 2.1.1–2.1.3.

Institutional Overhead on External Revenue

SVM/HU: The HU headquarters takes 5% of the income from the VTH through the faculty. 95% of the VTH's income is used for operating and managing the VTH. The overhead percentage for each research grant varies, depending on grant rules and can go up to 30% (the university and veterinary school take

50% of the overhead, each).

SCVM/OU: The percentage of overhead to be paid to the University is as follows: research funding (30%) and clinical and diagnostic service (0%, no overhead).

Annual Tuition Fee

In Japan, the annual tuition for national universities is, in principle, determined by each university based on a standard amount (currently €3,525; €1 =152 JPY) stipulated in the Ordinance on Standards for Tuition and Other Fees of National Universities. This is in accordance with the provisions of Article 22-3 of the National University Corporation Act.

Table 2.1.1. Annual Expenditures During the Last Three Academic Years (in euros)

SVM/HU

Area of expenditures	AY2024	AY2023	AY2022	Mean
Personnel	6,203,979	6,317,927	6,607,297	6,376,401
Operating costs	7,445,777	6,620,292	6,634,695	6,900,255
Maintenance costs	365,739	309,760	392,698	356,066
Equipment	1,069,023	1,048,981	1,127,330	1,081,778
Total expenditures	**15,084,518**	**14,296,959**	**14,762,020**	**14,714,499**

SCVM/OU

Area of expenditures	AY2024	AY2023	AY2022	Mean
Personnel	4,046,163	3,888,669	3,686,172	3,873,668
Operating costs	2,357,613	2,271,228	2,061,290	2,230,043
Maintenance costs	158,307	130,623	289,248	192,726
Equipment	351,834	258,146	296,713	302,231
Total expenditures	**6,913,916**	**6,548,665**	**6,333,423**	**6,598,668**

Values are rounded to the closest whole number.

Table 2.1.2. Annual Revenues During the Last Three Academic Years (in euros)

SVM/HU

Revenues source	AY2024	AY2023	AY2022	Mean
Public authorities*1	5,683,601	5,626,957	6,316,744	5,875,767
Clinical services	4,271,542	4,070,010	3,708,122	4,016,558
Diagnostic services	0	0	0	0
Other services	1,775,636	1,793,151	1,651,048	1,739,945
Research grants	2,258,746	2,543,782	2,711,452	2,504,660
Continuing Education*2	0	0	0	0
Donations	471,617	196,561	119,570	262,583
Other sources (balance carried forward from the previous year, etc)	1,889,187	1,945,783	2,195,294	2,010,088
Total revenues	**16,350,331**	**16,176,243**	**16,702,231**	**16,409,602**

SCVM/OU

Revenues source	AY2024	AY2023	AY2022	Mean
Public authorities	4,686,660	4,220,623	4,308,381	4,405,221
Tuition fee (standard students)	967,562	971,344	950,799	963,235
Clinical services	741,171	571,928	431,579	581,559
Diagnostic services	110,005	80,917	76,716	89,213
Other services	86,463	147,655	185,493	139,871
Research grants	1,112,732	955,167	905,792	991,230
Continuing Education*2	0	0	0	0
Donations	362,949	388,460	406,887	386,099
Other sources (balance carried forward from the previous year, etc)	0	0	0	0
Total revenues	**8,067,543**	**7,336,095**	**7,265,648**	**7,556,429**

Values are rounded to the closest whole number.

*1: This revenue includes the personnel costs, tuition fee and parts of the Government subsidies for NUCs, all of which are allocated from HU Headquarters to the SVM/HU.

*2: No charges for the continuing education that SVM/HU and OU offer.

Table 2.1.3. Annual Balance Between Expenditures and Revenues (in euros)

SVM/HU

Academic year	Total expenditures	Total revenues	Balance
2024	15,084,518	16,350,331	1,265,813
2023	14,296,959	16,176,243	1,879,284
2022	14,762,020	16,702,231	1,940,211

SCVM/OU

Academic year	Total expenditures	Total revenues	Balance
2024	6,913,916	8,067,543	1,153,627
2023	6,548,665	7,336,095	787,429
2022	6,333,423	7,265,648	932,225

Indirect Costs and Institutional Support

SVM/HU: Most of the grounds and buildings of SVM/HU are maintained with central funding from HU, and utility bills are paid directly by the facility's accounting division. These costs are included in the statement of expenditures. For AY2024, the costs were as follows: Water: €54,382, Electricity: €719,836 and Gas: €132,226.

SCVM/OU: Most of the estate and the buildings are maintained by central funding, and facility maintenance fees (including repairs, utilities, water purification and cleaning) are paid directly by the official authority. These costs are included in the university's overall budget.

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.*

Financial Management of Clinical and Field Service

SVM/HU: Medical service fees are centrally managed by the accounting staff of the faculty of Veterinary Medicine and reported to the university headquarters at the end of each month.

The Director of the VTH is responsible for creating the VTH's budget and submitting it to the Animal Hospital Steering Committee for consultation. The committee deliberates on and decides the budget. The Faculty Meeting then reviews and approves the VTH budget. The VTH meeting, composed of approximately 20 clinical faculty members, is held monthly to review budget execution and discuss potential improvements to equipment and education. The financial status is self-sufficient. Additionally, a portion of the medical service revenue (approximately €131,580) is utilised for the operational funds of the faculty.

SCVM/OU: At SCVM/OU, the Director of the VMC submits the budget request for the following academic year to the Finance and Facilities Section around January each year. The budget request is prepared based on the previous year's revenue and consists of three main categories: Centre Operational Expenses, Medical Expenses and Part-Time Staff Expenses. Part-Time Staff Expenses refer to personnel costs for employed veterinarians and veterinary nurses. These budget proposals are reviewed and finalised by the administrative organisation. At the beginning of the academic year, a portion of the requested budget is allocated, and the remainder is adjusted in the latter half of the year based on monthly reports of medical service revenue. In principle, all medical service revenue can be used to cover the operating expenses and education in the VTH.

Financial Autonomy

SVM/HU: The Government subsidies for NUCs are allocated from the university's headquarters to the SVM/HU. These subsidies can be used for a variety of activities in education and research. The

SVM/HU dean is responsible for making the budget plan for both the faculty and Graduate Schools.

SCVM/OU: The Government subsidies for NUCs allocated to OU by HHERS and subsequently distributed to SCVM/OU, as described above, are managed at the discretion of the Dean, allowing flexible use in support of the faculty's strategic priorities and educational and research activities.

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

Facility and Equipment Upgrades and Funding

SVM/HU:

1. **Ongoing investments**
   - Equipment renewal of e-learning room: PC renewal and E-learning System Upgrade (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science)
   - Equipment expansion of VTH: Surgical Video Streaming System (VTH income)
2. **Planned investments**
   - Advanced research equipment installation: protein purification system (chromatography system), and electro-ejaculator (Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research)
   - Equipment renewal of VTH: linear accelerator and Computed Tomography (CT) renewal (VTH income)

SCVM/OU:

1. **Ongoing investments**
   - Development of equine education and research facilities (National Association of Racing, etc.)
   - Development of FCASA (MEXT, etc.)
   - Renewal of Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) system (MEXT, etc.)
   - Upgrading of the transmission electron microscope (MEXT, etc.)
2. **Planned investments**
   - Renewal of CT system (planned; funding source to be determined)

Three-year Financial Projections

SVM/HU: The primary sources of revenue are as follows:

1. General operating funds allocated from the university headquarters for AY2025 (for reference AY2024, €16,350,331)
2. Allocation from the university headquarters for the continuation of the IVEP, which fosters Achieving Global Standards of Excellence in Veterinary Education, is €75,322 for AY2025.
3. Allocation from the university headquarters for the continuation of the 'One Health Frontier Graduate School of Excellence' programme is €282,895 for AY2025.
4. Revenue from the VTH and testing fees from the Translational Research Promotion Office and so on.
5. Research funding acquired by academic staff from governmental and/or private sources.
6. We will strive for reasonable and balanced financial management, ensuring that expenditure align with the aforementioned income. In particular, the €46,000 cost associated with the EAEVE evaluation and its subsequent maintenance, scheduled for AY2026, is expected to be a significant increase compared to a typical year. Therefore, to balance this financial burden, we will stabilise our budget operations by appropriately distributing related expenditure across AY2025 and AY2027.

SCVM/OU: The primary sources of revenue are as follows:

1. General operating funds allocated from the MEXT for AY2025 amount to €3,264,589. Based on the financial data for the past three years (Table 2.1.2), a comparable level of funding is expected to be maintained from AY2026 onward.
2. External services provided by the university, including tuition fee, small and large animal clinics, diagnostic service and sales of agricultural products. Based on the financial data for the past three years (Table 2.1.2), revenue from these sources is also expected to remain broadly stable from AY2026 onward.
3. In addition to the funding above, the academic staff will obtain government and/or private research funds.

Financial Governance and Decision-Making

SVM/HU: The Dean drafts a six-year financial plan for the school, which included an action plan for a six-year term (the current term being AY2022–2027). The plan is discussed and approved at the Faculty Meeting. The plan is submitted to the university and undergoes the budget appraisal process in the Executive Office. The Dean also drafts the annual budget and settlement and then sends it to the Budget Committee, which consists of academic and support staff. It is then approved at those at the Faculty Meeting. The budget is reviewed at the Faculty Assembly.

The VTH Director is responsible for drafting the budget for the VTH and sending it to the Animal Hospital Steering Committee, which meets three times a year. The committee discusses and decides on the budget. The Faculty Meeting reviews and approves the VTH budget. The VTH meeting, which consists of around 20 faculty members from the Clinical Division and meets monthly, reviews the budget execution and possible improvements. The VTH clinical practice profits are used to cover VTH expenses and management; therefore, its financial condition is self-sufficient.

Once a year, the university makes its financial reports available to the public on its website and in a brochure. The detailed budget and settlement report for each faculty is also circulated amongst faculty members and support staff but not provided to students.

SCVM/OU: A budget plan of OU, including SCVM/OU, is determined by the President based on the university's master plan and the budget requests submitted by faculties, departments and other sections. The President then submits the proposed budget plan to the HHERS Executive Office. The Executive Office, which consists of the Chairman, Directors and the Financial Section, reviews the budget plans submitted by the three constituent universities and determines the annual budget plan. The information pertaining to annual expenditures, investments and revenues is presented in a yearly financial report by the Financial Section. The report is analysed by the Management Committee and then approved by the Division Head Committee. The report is publicly available on the website.

https://www.obihiro.ac.jp/corporation-info-financeComments on Area 2

Both universities have continued to secure the budget necessary for the implementation and maintenance of the programme by utilising diverse funding sources in addition to their core institutional budgets.

Suggestions for Improvement in Area 2

The gradual decline in the MEXT subsidies to the national universities is expected to continue in the future. Therefore, the VNJ must continue to obtain internal and external funds for maintaining the quality of education and research, especially for the external hands-on meat hygiene inspection training.

3 Curriculum



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.*

Educational Aims and Curriculum Strategy

Educational Aims: The VNJ programme aims to provide a world-class veterinary education by joining the higher education faculties and facilities of HU and OU. The VNJ programme combines the strengths and advantages of the two veterinary schools. The idea of this unique cooperative education programme is based on a complementary teaching framework that responds to wider public interests. It is underpinned by the strengths and distinctiveness of the educational and research resources at each of the universities. Our mission is to benefit society and the environment by providing veterinary professionals with a solid foundation of knowledge, skills and ethics. They will contribute to the promotion of the health and welfare of both animals and humans. Our primary educational objectives are described in Area 1.

VNJ's Diploma Policy: VNJ awards the degree of Bachelor to students recognised as possessing the following competencies, based on the educational objectives of the faculty.

1. Have a code of conduct based on logic and ethics to complete their responsibilities as veterinarians.
2. Have distinguished knowledge and skills in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of animal diseases, maintenance and promotion of animal health, and public health.
3. Have international perspectives, knowledge, and skills to contribute to addressing global issues such as stable food supply, safety and security of livestock and livestock products, and countermeasures against zoonoses.
4. Be exposed to cutting-edge life science research and have the ability to raise and resolve problems that need to be addressed for new discoveries about life phenomena and the development of pharmaceuticals, based on veterinary science.

Global Educational Strategy: The six-year curriculum was built to prepare students for veterinary roles, as defined in the competency-based framework. Our cohesive framework helps the VNJ curriculum achieve our learning outcomes and consists of six pillars.

1. **Veterinary Education Model Core Curriculum (VEMCC) and EU Directive 2005/36/EC:** The VNJ curriculum adheres to the VEMCC, which is a comprehensive national subject-specific learning outcome catalogue (Appendix 3-1, https://www.jaeve.org/cur/release/img/ModelCoreCurriculum_R8_en.pdf). The VEMCC covers 50 theoretical subjects and 19 practical subjects and guides the minimum requirements of standard education that students must meet by graduation. The learning outcomes statements in the VEMCC represent the capabilities and competencies expected of every graduate of veterinary schools in Japan. Implementing the VEMCC is one method of QA in veterinary education.

   Furthermore, our curriculum is designed to include EU-listed subjects and to comply with EU

Directive 2005/36/EC, thereby achieving the ESEVT D1C (Table 3.1.1 and 3.1.2, Appendices 3-2, 3-3).

2. **Unified Education Across Two Campuses:** All core subjects are provided to students at HU and OU under a common curriculum using unified syllabi. The methods of class delivery are mainly divided into the following types.
   - Subjects provided to all students by the same faculty members.
     1) Classes are delivered in a hybrid format (for example, face-to-face at HU and online at OU)
     2) Classes are conducted at a single location, with students travelling between the two universities and staying in on-campus or off-campus accommodation. Complementary clinical rotations are included in this category.
   - Subjects provided separately at each university by faculty members of the respective university. These subjects are offered in this manner for reasons of educational effectiveness and efficiency. The supervisors of both universities coordinate and standardise the class content, learning outcomes and assessment criteria under the unified syllabus to ensure equivalence of education between the two campuses.
3. **VCAT:** The VCAT is a nationally defined veterinary common achievement test, which has been implemented by the non-profit organisation Veterinary Education Support Organisation (vetESO) since 2017 to qualify veterinary students' pre-clinical competencies. The vetESO provides and oversees a fair, standardised format for assessing pre-clinical competencies. The test is held prior to the clinical years (Years 5 and 6), and employs both Computer-Based Testing (vetCBT, a total of 300 multiple choice questions) to assess knowledge and Objective Structured Clinical Evaluation (vetOSCE) to assess basic clinical skills. Students who pass the VCAT can participate in clinical rotations.
4. **Complementary Clinical Rotations:** As described in 'Introduction' and 'Area 1', we operate a unique rotation system, which takes advantage of each university's location, specialties, strengths and characteristics for our students. HU's VTH receives many companion animal (dogs and cats) cases (the second largest caseload in Japanese national veterinary schools). The caseload for FPA and horses at OU's VTH is the largest among VTHs of national veterinary schools in Japan. This complementary clinical rotation requires the movement of students between the two locations.
5. **Tutorial Research:** Research-based learning engages students in discovery-oriented and problem-solving learning and helps them to develop logical thinking, critical thinking and communication skills. Through this advanced course, students acquire skills in basic and advanced research methods/techniques, scientific writing, presentation and discussion. Their theses and oral presentations are reviewed and evaluated by the academic staff members. The benefits of this experience are not specific to laboratory research and are expected to help the students to cultivate lifelong learning skills in all veterinary disciplines.
6. **Third-Party QA Evaluation & Internationally Standardised Veterinary Education:** To ensure the quality of our education, we apply veterinary-specialised QA in addition to periodical external QA at institutional levels. In particular, the ESEVT Standards provide an important benchmark for our continuous improvement efforts to offer an internationally standardised veterinary education curriculum for our students.

Constraints Imposed by National/Regional Legislation and the Degree of Autonomy in Curriculum Determination

VET Curriculum: National Constraints and Institutional Autonomy—Veterinary education must comprise six years of study, as established by the Basic Act on Education. The Standards for the Establishment of Universities state that a total of 182 credits is the minimum requirement for graduation in veterinary education. In addition to such national legislation, the curriculum at veterinary schools must adhere to the VEMCC. Provided that these requirements are met, universities retain autonomy in developing their curriculum and course content to achieve the objectives set out in their diploma policy. The current VNJ curriculum (Curriculum 2019) consists of 195 credits, which is corresponding to 360 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and complies with the VEMCC. The list of all subjects and the VNJ curriculum map are shown in Appendices 3-2 and 3-4.

Curriculum Review and Alignment: Because a veterinary curriculum consists of a great deal of content and is highly integrated across disciplines, curricular problems can be difficult to accurately detect. Curricular overlaps, redundancy, omissions and inconsistencies were discussed by the VNJ academic staff as part of the initial curriculum development. Curriculum mapping also helps one to understand the vertical, horizontal, disciplinary and interdisciplinary coherence of the curriculum (Appendix 3-4). It is also useful for identifying how each learning outcome is assessed at the different stages of the curriculum. Academic staff can access the syllabi (Appendix 3-5) and educational content of other related classes on the VetPortal website, a web-based class supporting system (see details in Area 6). By using the keyword search function, academic staff can retrieve a set of search results to identify possible overlaps and omissions in their class content. The academic staff find such problems, and then they coordinate to resolve such issues with the relevant staff and counterparts. Serious problems are reported to the Academic Affairs Committee and the Programme Executive Board to discuss a resolution. Curricular problems are shared at the Faculty Meetings of each university and at the annual VNJ Joint FD. Student feedback is an important source for identifying unnecessary overlaps or other problems in the curriculum. The comments on student evaluations are released to each faculty member and are used as one of the tools for curriculum improvement. The course/subject coordinator has the responsibility to minimise overlaps and consistency issues. The curriculum's content, design and subject allocation are the responsibility of the Academic Affairs Committee, which meets monthly to discuss and review the curriculum.

Table 3.1.1 Curriculum Hours in Each Academic Year Taken by Each Student

Year	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	J
	Lectures	Seminars	Supervised self-learning	Laboratory and desk-based work	Non-clinical animal work	Clinical animal work	Elective practical training (EPT)	Others	Total
Year 1	525	15		135	16			44 *5	735
Year 2	503	15	7	54.5	238				817.5
Year 3	474	27		239	96			4 *5	840
Year 4	377	15	37.5	100.5	107	148	15 *1	25 *5	825
Year 2-6	30 *2							90 *3	120
Year 5-6						630	592.5 *4		1222.5
Total	**1909**	**72**	**44.5**	**529**	**457**	**778**	**607.5**	**163**	**4560**

*1: Includes Seminar in Particular Veterinary Medicine I and II. *2: Includes Compulsory Elective Courses. *3: Includes Field Practice on Shorter Periods I and II, compulsory internship courses. *4: Includes Advanced Seminar and Tutorial Research. *5: Include practical training in institutions/facilities related to VPH.

Table 3.1.2 Curriculum Hours Taken by Each Student

Subjects	A Lectures	B Seminars	C Supervised self-learning	D Laboratory and desk-based work	E Non-clinical animal work	F Clinical animal work	G Others *1	H Total
Basic subjects								
Medical Physics	100							100
Chemistry (Inorganic and Organic sections)	60			45				105
Animal Biology, Zoology and Cell Biology	74			45				119
Feed Plants and Toxic Plants	33							33
Biomedical Statistics	60			45				105
Total number of hours	**327**			**135**				**462**
Specific veterinary subjects								
Basic Sciences								
Anatomy, histology and embryology	114.5*2	1		6	189			310.5
Physiology	60.5	1		33.5	49			144
Biochemistry	30.5	1		27	23			81.5
General and molecular genetics	49							49
Pharmacology, pharmacy and pharmacotherapy	75.5	1		9	46			131.5
Pathology	30.5	1		12	3			46.5
Toxicology	35.5	1		6	24			66.5
Parasitology	30.5	1		34	6			71.5
Microbiology	38	1		104	9			152
Immunology	30.5	1		27	6			64.5
Epidemiology	21.5	12.5	2					36
Information literacy and data management	9.5	3	5					17.5
Professional ethics and communication	9	2			9			20
Animal health economics and practice management	13							13
Animal ethology	33	0.5						33.5
Animal welfare	21.5	0.5		6	9			37
Animal nutrition	30							30
Total number of hours	**632.5**	**27.5**	**7**	**266.5**	**373**	**0**	**0**	**1304.5**
Clinical Sciences in companion animals (including equine and exotic pets)								
Obstetrics, reproduction and reproductive disorders	12.5					32.5		45
Diagnostic pathology	31	1.5		24	3	13		72.5
Medicine	78	1.5			5	55		139.5
Surgery	53	1.5			5	65		124.5
Anaesthesiology and analgesia	12	1	5	5	5	39		67
Clinical practical training in common companion animals	1	1	15			140		157
Infectious diseases	16.5							16.5
Preventive medicine	10.5							10.5
Diagnostic imaging	19.5			6	3	40		68.5
Therapy in common companion animals	13.5				5	99.5		118
Total number of hours	**247.5**	**6.5**	**20**	**35**	**26**	**484**	**0**	**819**
Clinical Sciences in FPA (including Animal Production and Herd Health Management)								
Obstetrics, reproduction and reproductive disorders	24	2				26.5		52.5
Diagnostic pathology	32	1		41	3	26		103
Medicine	14	1			5	20		40
Surgery	21	1			5	25		52
Anaesthesiology and analgesia	6		2.5	7.5	5	8		29
Clinical practical training in common food-producing animals			15			76		91
Infectious diseases	60*2			5		4		69
Preventive medicine	7					18		25
Diagnostic imaging	11					20		31
Therapy in common food-producing animals	3				5	48.5		56.5
Animal production (including breeding, husbandry and economics)	38	3			10	2	2	55
Herd health management	17.5*2	6				20		43.5
Total number of hours	**233.5**	**14**	**17.5**	**53.5**	**33**	**294**	**2**	**647.5**
Veterinary Public Health (including Food Safety and Quality)								
Veterinary legislation including official controls, regulatory veterinary services, forensic veterinary medicine and certification	20	15					6	41
Control of food, feed and animal by-products	9	1.5		2			13	25.5
Zoonoses and their prevention	40.5	1.5		10	4		6	62
Food hygiene and environmental health	29	1.5		21	21	0	8	80.5
Basic food technology	10	4.5		8			8	30.5
Total number of hours	**108.5**	**24**	**0**	**41**	**25**	**0**	**41**	**239.5**

*1 Include practical training in institutions/facilities related to VPH.

*2 These subjects incorporate components of “Fish Diseases.”

Professional Knowledge

Professional knowledge (including soft skills) is broadly covered throughout the six-year curriculum. For example, in the Seminar in Veterinary Communication (Year 4) and VCAT, students acquire soft skills and communication skills through mock interviews with standardised clients. In clinical rotations, students learn ethics, economics, client communication, teamwork and medical report writing in a clinical environment. Furthermore, they develop literacy in handling research data, as well as scientific and logical thinking skills, through Tutorial Research.

Table 3.1.3 Practical Rotations Under Teaching Staff Supervision (Excluding EPT)

Types	Subjects	List of practical rotations (Disciplines/Species)	Duration	Year
Intra-mural clinics (VTH)	Practice in Companion Animal Medicine I (at HU's VTH for both students)	Internal medicine (general), gastroenterological medicine, cardiovascular internal medicine, neurology, dermatology, diagnostic imaging, haematology, blood bank, oncology, surgery (general), orthopaedics, physiological examination, clinical examination, diagnostic imaging, anaesthesia, surgery, clinical procedure (dogs and cats)	4 weeks	Year 5
	Practice in Companion Animal Medicine II (at individual VTH for each student)		2 weeks	Year 5
	Practice in Comprehensive Veterinary Medicine (at individual VTH for each student)	Physiological examination, clinical examination, diagnosis, diagnostic imaging, anaesthesia, surgery, necropsy (companion animals and FPA)	2 weeks	Year 5, 6
Intra-mural clinics (VTH) / Herd Health Management / Ambulatory Clinics	Practice in Farm Animal Medicine I (at OU's VTH for both students)	Handling, physical examination, diagnostic imaging, clinical diagnosis, necropsy, hoof trimming, dehorning, equine clinic, surgery, reproductive monitoring, castration (horses and cattle)	3 weeks	Year 5
	Practice in Farm Animal Medicine II (at individual VTH for each student)	Physiological examination, clinical examination, diagnosis, diagnostic imaging, anaesthesia, surgery, clinical procedure, vaccination (FPA including pigs, sheep and chicken)	1 week	Year 6
Emergency Service/ Intensive Care	Practice in Night Times and Emergency Medicine I (at HU's VTH and external private hospital for both students)	Emergency service and intensive care (dogs and cats)	3 nights	Year 5
	Practice in Night Times and Emergency Medicine II (at OU's VTH for both students)	Emergency service and intensive care (horses and cattle)	4 evenings	Year 5
Veterinary Public Health (including Food Safety and Quality)	Seminar in Agriculture and Farm Animal Science, Practice in Meat Hygiene	Slaughtering, ante- and post-mortem inspections (cattle and pigs)	2 days	Year 1, 4
	Hands-on Meat Hygiene Inspection Training*	Meet hygiene practical training (off-campus)* (cattle and pigs)	3 days	Year 5-6

*: From AY2020 to AY2024, 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 AY2025, the programme has been made available to all VNJ students and has therefore been incorporated into Core Clinical Training (CCT).

Table 3.1.4 Curriculum Hours Taken as Electives for Each Student

Subjects	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Basic Subjects *1								
Elementary Seminar in Biosciences	30							30
Zoo Science	15							15
Seminar in Wildlife Biology		15						15
Seminar in Veterinary English		15						15
Law of Agriculture and Stockraising	30							30
Basic Sciences *1								
Seminar in Research start-up		15						15
Environmental Entomology	30							30
Molecular Biology	30							30
Environmental Microbiology	30							30
Clinical Sciences in companion animals (including equine and exotic pets) *1								
Equine Science 1	30							30
Equine Science 2	30							30
Clinical Sciences in food-producing animals (including Animal Production and Herd Health Management) *1								
Animal Nutrition	30							30
Introduction in Fisheries	30							30
International Studies for Agricultural Development	30							30
Advanced Seminar, Tutorial Research and related subjects								
Seminar in Practical Veterinary Medicine I *2		7.5						7.5
Seminar in Practical Veterinary Medicine II *2		7.5						7.5
Advanced Seminar							142.5 *3	142.5
Tutorial Research							450 *4	450

*1: Choose 30 hours from these programmes (2 credits). *2: Detailed information is in Standards 3.5 and 3.7. *3 Detailed information is in Standard 3.5 and Appendix 3-10. *4: Detailed information is in Standards 3.1 and 3.5–3.7. A: lectures; B: seminars; C: supervised self-learning; D: laboratory and desk-based work; E: non-clinical animal work; F: clinical animal work; G: others (specify); H: total

Table 3.1.5 Optional Courses Proposed to Students (Not Compulsory)

Not Applicable in VNJ.

Pre-clinical Skills Training (Appendix 3-6)

Core Clinical Training (CCT) prior to clinical rotations is fully integrated and scheduled within VNJ's cumulative curriculum. These activities are conducted in small student groups (6–20 students per group depending on the topic) and include training in Food Safety and Quality (FSQ), clinical diagnosis, diagnostic imaging, clinical pathology and necropsy, using healthy animals in a clinical environment, diagnostic data from clinical cases and cadavers. Non-clinical animal practice such as handling of healthy animals, dissections and training with simulators is also offered. These preparatory activities include the following:

Year 1: Introductory veterinary medicine, focusing on animal handling, restraint, basic physical examinations for FPA and fundamental FSQ practices such as farm biosecurity and meat inspection.

Years 2–4: Progressive acquisition of pre-clinical skills across specialised disciplines, including clinical examinations, diagnostic imaging, internal medicine procedures, basic surgical techniques, reproductive medicine, veterinary communication and pathology (necropsy).

A comprehensive list of the specific skills and procedures covered in these pre-clinical training sessions is detailed in Appendix 3-6.

Core Clinical Rotations: Structure and Student Roles (Table 3.1.3, Appendices 3-6, 3-7 and 3-8)

Core Clinical Rotation for Dogs, Cats and Exotic Animals (6 weeks): The programme spans a total of six weeks. Students from HU complete a six-week rotation, including Internal Medicine and Surgery, at the HU's VTH. Students from OU complete a four-week rotation in Internal Medicine and Surgery at the HU's VTH, followed by a two-week clinical training period at OU's VTH. All rotations are conducted in small groups (maximum of five students per group). Students are supervised by 17 academic staff members at HU's VTH and five at OU's VTH.

Core Clinical Rotation for FPA and Horses (4 weeks): Four weeks in total—three weeks at OU's VTH and mobile clinics for all students and one week at the individual VTH independently. Students in Years 5 and 6 must take participatory clinical training for dairy cattle, beef cattle, sheep, pigs, chicken and horses. Training is generally conducted in groups of 6–8 students, with a ratio of 4–8 students per supervising veterinarian. However, depending on the target species and the type of training, group sizes may vary from large groups of around 20 students to small groups of 1–2 students.

Clinical Rotation for Comprehensive Veterinary Medicine (2 weeks): Hands-on training using clinical cases involving companion animals (dogs and cats) and FPA is conducted in the clinical departments of each VTH. Students learn clinical diagnosis, diagnostic imaging (radiography, ultrasonography, CT and MRI), various laboratory examinations including blood tests and cytology, as well as anaesthetic management required for diagnostic procedures. In addition, they participate in necropsy to learn the comprehensive diagnostic process. Training is generally conducted in groups of students at a ratio of 2–10 students per supervising veterinarian.

Night Duty / Emergency:

1. **Dogs, Cats and Exotic Animals (3 nights):** Year 5 students work for 3–5 nights at HU's VTH (two students per academic staff member and one veterinary technician). Students undergo overnight clinical rotations at the VTH, where they engage in the care of patients — particularly hospitalised cases — alongside veterinarians and veterinary technicians. Under veterinary supervision, students

perform physical examinations, administer medications, manage waste disposal and enter data into electronic medical records. The VTH is also fully equipped with intensive care systems and facilities; a distinctive feature of this university is the frequent opportunity for students to be involved in post-operative case management. Through these experiences, the VNJ provides students with an education that leads to proficiency in intensive care. To increase the exposure of students to emergency cases, the curriculum incorporates emergency response training at the extramural private clinic (a local private clinic, Sapporo Veterinary Emergency Hospital) for one night. This also serves to increase opportunities for handling primary care cases. After completing their training at that hospital, students return to the VTH to continue their overnight rotations, ensuring a comprehensive opportunity to learn a continuous series of emergency and night time care procedures.

2. **FPA and Horses (4 evenings):** Year 5 students participate in after-hours services, including evening duty (extending into night when required) and emergency care. Four evenings for emergency rotation are integrated within the three-week clinical rotation (Appendix 3-8). During the evening session, students remain on duty until approximately 20:00 and participate in emergency care. The session may be extended depending on the case. They are also involved in intensive monitoring and treatment of hospitalised animals. Faculty members supervise them. The degree of hands-on experience varies depending on the case. We therefore provide a simulated case conference if students are not exposed to enough emergency cases.

Activities and Responsibilities

During their clinical rotation, students participate in all the work at the VTH, under the supervision of veterinary faculty and other staff members. The activities and responsibilities of students vary between departments and clinical services and should be carried out in accordance with the 'Guidelines for Students Activities in Participatory Clinical Rotation'. Clinical procedures are categorised into low-invasive, moderately invasive and highly invasive procedures. Low-invasive procedures may be performed by students following instruction from teaching staff. Moderately invasive procedures may only be performed by students under the direct and careful supervision of teaching staff. Highly invasive procedures are not permitted to be performed by students; they are limited to assisting with or observing these procedures.

Practical Training in VPH (including FSQ)

Intra-mural: OU has the on-campus Food Processing Practice Facility, which includes a slaughterhouse. For all students of OU and HU, we use these facilities for the following subjects: Seminar in Agriculture and Farm Animal Science (Year 1) and Practice in Food Hygiene (Year 4). In Year 1, students learn about the slaughtering, post-mortem inspections and meat processing of pigs (40 students per four to six academic staff members plus five to six support staff members including teaching assistants (TAs)). In Year 4, students learn about the meat inspection, including cattle slaughtering and ante- and post-mortem inspections of two cows (one cow per 40 students with six academic staff members and support staff members) followed by the gross inspection of discarded, diseased organs at a public slaughterhouse. The training is held at the slaughterhouse of the Food Processing Practice Facility and a teaching laboratory S2101 (Biosafety Level 2; BSL-2) at OU.

During the slaughtering and meat inspection sessions, slaughtering and dressing are carried out by professional workers invited from a private slaughterhouse, while meat inspection is performed by OU academic staff who, after receiving appropriate training at a meat hygiene inspection centre, are officially commissioned as meat inspectors by the relevant authority. This ensures that students learn slaughtering, inspection, and meat processing procedures in full compliance with the relevant legislation and regulatory standards.

Practical training in poultry meat inspection is provided as part of pathology practical training at both universities. Using spent hens, students are trained to conduct systematic carcass and visceral examinations and to identify occasional pathological lesions. At HU, from AY2025, a newly introduced one-day practical training programme in poultry meat inspection for approximately 40 HU veterinary students, will be conducted at the university's on-campus Agri-Food Centre, with students divided into two groups of approximately 20 and supervised by four teaching staff.

Extra-mural: The VNJ organises off-campus practicum programmes in animal hygiene and VPH during the third and fourth years. While utilising diverse resources from public institutions and private industries in each region (the Sapporo and Tokachi areas), the learning objectives are integrated across the entire programme. Under faculty supervision, all approximately 40 students visit sites to observe environmental hygiene (water and waste management) and veterinary legislation and official inspections (such as food poisoning and zoonoses) at local government agencies, based on a 'One Health' perspective. Consequently, students from both HU and OU learn about food safety and public health from 'farm to table'.

Hands-on meat hygiene inspection training at meat hygiene inspection centres and slaughterhouses in Hokkaido, was first introduced in AY2018. This training involves small groups of students from Year 5 undertaking practical sessions at slaughterhouses across Hokkaido (Higashimokoto, Obihiro, Kitami, Hayakita, Nayoro, Iwamizawa, Yakumo, Furano, Hidaka and Asahikawa) (Appendix 3-9). At these facilities, veterinarians employed at meat hygiene inspection centres serve as official slaughter inspection officers and perform ante-mortem and post-mortem inspections in accordance with national regulations. Students receive direct instruction from these active slaughter inspection veterinarians and observe and participate in all aspects of slaughter inspection, including ante-mortem inspection, post-mortem inspection, visceral inspection and detailed inspection, as well as diseases leading to full or partial organ condemnation. Students undertake approximately half a day of practical training with either cattle or pigs, or a full day if both species are involved.

In the beginning, this training was conducted as an elective course (EPT, as described below) for students who wished to participate. The programme was suspended in AY2020 and AY2021 due to COVID-19. Following its resumption in AY2022, the number of participating students was initially limited due to the capacity of meat inspectors and operational constraints at slaughterhouses. However, through continuous coordination with the Hokkaido Prefectural Government, the number of placements has been progressively expanded. Participation increased from 13 students in AY2018 to 26 in AY2022, 40 in AY2023, and 50 in AY2024.

From AY2025, this training has been formally designated as a compulsory course (CCT, as described below), enabling all VNJ students (74 students in AY2025) to participate in extra-mural meat hygiene inspection training for pigs and cattle at designated facilities across Hokkaido.

Field visits to commercial mega-farms for pigs and chickens, slaughterhouses and food processing plants, previously conducted in the 'Animal Hygiene Practice' course (Year 3), have been completely suspended due to the severe outbreaks of CSF and HPAI in Japan. As an alternative, several instructors currently working at pig and poultry farms have been invited to deliver lectures on husbandry hygiene in pig and poultry farming, delivered either online or in person, depending on the course and institutional arrangements. From this course, students can learn the rearing management of pigs and poultry through the digital content used in the lectures. Furthermore, practical husbandry hygiene training, including blood sampling and vaccination, has been conducted to complement the cancelled farm training content, using chickens from the university's own poultry farm at HU and the nearby poultry farm of the Obihiro Agricultural High School at OU. In addition, considering the domestic situation, desk-based exercises

and lectures on disease prevention, with a focus on countermeasures against transboundary infectious diseases in livestock and poultry, have been incorporated with administrative cooperation. Experts working at poultry slaughterhouses also deliver lectures on slaughtering procedures and hygiene management, compensating for the lack of visits.

Management of Elective Course Selection

The VNJ offers Advanced Seminar (Appendix 3-10) as elective subjects within five veterinary medicine fields: Basic Veterinary Medicine, Applied Veterinary Medicine, Pathobiology, Public Health and Clinical Veterinary Medicine. The students must take at least 5.5 credits of seminars, including 1.5 credits of compulsory subjects ("Practical English" and "One Health Seminar" for HU students and "Attractive Veterinarians in Tokachi Region" and "One Health on Obihiro University" for OU students). From AY2025, the Hands-on Meat Hygiene Inspection Training (1 credit) has been a compulsory subject. Taking these seminars enables students to deepen their knowledge in a specialised field and broaden their future career options. Advanced seminar courses are provided by both HU and OU, and students generally have considerable freedom in selecting most seminars. However, due to limitations in facilities, classrooms and staff capacity, some Advanced Seminars have fixed enrolment numbers. Should too many students select a particular course, the course conductor will either adjust the student numbers or arrange for students to be allocated to other subjects. Generally, student selection is based on academic performance and interest.

Verification of Competencies

The core subjects are designed to obtain D1C (Appendices 3-2 and 3-3). Different procedures are used to evaluate students' achievements, depending on the nature of the learning outcomes being assessed:

1. Paper-based assessments include multiple choice questions, short answer tests, problem-solving questions and essays/written reports.
2. Practical tests include spot tests, oral questions and performance (skill) tests.
3. There are oral presentations of individual or group work, group discussions and case presentations.

During the clinical rotation, there are multiple procedures for evaluating each student's achievement:

1. Logbooks (Appendix 3-11a)
2. Students' learning behaviour
3. Answers to oral questions
4. Case log (Appendix 3-11b)
5. Round discussion
6. Case conference
7. Self-evaluation record of clinical competences (Appendix 3-11c).

Career Development Education

Students are required to participate in short-term internships in the career development education courses, Field Practice on Shorter Periods I and II. Through these internships, each lasting five days, students gain experience in the professional fields of veterinarians and learn about their professional and social responsibilities. For Field Practice on Shorter Periods I, clinical placements are recommended, whereas for Field Practice on Shorter Periods II, internships in VPH/FSQ-related fields are recommended. Students independently select the host institution and plan their internship between Years 2 and 6. They submit an internship application, including the host institution and preferred training period, to the Academic Affairs Office. The universities send the host institution a request letter for

internship placement together with documents explaining the objectives of these courses and the procedures for providing feedback. After completing the internship, students submit their activity records and reports to the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee for assessment. The final grade also takes into account feedback from the host institution. All internship activities are covered by student accident insurance. As these courses are not intended to teach specific veterinary disciplines, they are not classified as Core Subjects or EPT. However, they play an important role in supporting students' career exploration and future career decision-making.

***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.*

How the VNJ Ensures That the Study Programmes Meet the Objectives

Annual guidance sessions are held to explain course objectives and assessment methods to students. At the start of each course, the teaching staff explains the relationship between the course and D1C to students. The syllabus for each subject is provided to students via the web. In addition to the course plan, the syllabus details learning objectives and the criteria and methods for grading. Instructors assess student attainment according to the syllabus specifications. Assessment methods include paper-based or computer-based examinations, oral examinations, oral presentations, reports and rubrics. In clinical rotation, learning objectives are outlined via a logbook system. The students check and confirm the progress of their practical training, and the supervising veterinarians certify their achievement.

How the VNJ Promotes a Teaching Environment Conducive to Learning

The VNJ offers the common study spaces on each campus (see Areas 4 and 6). Student requests for the learning environment are gathered via student representatives of the Student Union and Academic Affairs Committee and suggestion boxes (including online) and are utilised for improvement.

How the VNJ Encourages Students for Self-learning and Lifelong Learning

Students learn the importance of self-learning and lifelong learning through tutorial learning, internships, graduation research and lectures by veterinarians in various fields in the curriculum. For self-learning, the Skills Labs are accessible 24 hours a day.

For self- and lifelong learning, numerous workshops and seminars are held using animal hospitals and lecture rooms. The libraries at SVM/HU and SCVM/OU are accessible to non-affiliated users, including graduates. Furthermore, at SVM/HU, specimen display rooms within lecture buildings and skeletal specimens exhibited in the university's comprehensive museum are freely available for observation and study; this information is also published on the website.

***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.*

Educational Strategy for Learning Outcomes

To achieve 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 are rich in creativity and humanity, a six-year integrated

educational programme has been established. Course subjects are broadly categorised into general education and specialised subjects. Specialised subjects comprise four subject groups (Basic Veterinary Medicine, Pathological Veterinary Medicine, Applied Veterinary Medicine and Clinical Veterinary Medicine) and three related subject clusters (Introduction to Veterinary Medicine, Introduction to Veterinarians, Peripheral Fields). The objectives, learning outcomes, teaching plans and assessment criteria and methods for each subject are clearly stated in the syllabi. The tutorial research cultivates students' problem-solving abilities and equips them with the skills to excel in diverse fields.

Aligning Learning Outcomes with D1C

The VNJ curriculum is designed to achieve ESEVT D1C, following the VEMCC and the EU List Subjects, with a correspondence table for D1C provided (Appendices 3-2, 3-3 and 3-4). D1C is clearly explained during orientation at the start of each academic year. Furthermore, at the commencement of each subject, the D1C attainment targets for that subject are explained. Additionally, within the clinical rotation, students are required to complete a logbook corresponding to ESEVT D1C, enabling them to assess their own proficiency (Appendix 3-11a).

Learning Outcomes: Process and Management

According to the assessment criteria approved by the VNJ Council, learning outcomes are assessed based on the results of tests, reports and practical examinations conducted by the subject coordinator. Students must attend at least 70% of classes to be eligible for assessment. Those who earn a grade below 60 must retake the course. Grades are available on the portal and may also be shared with relevant staff and parents/guardians. Progression to Years 2, 4 and 5 requires meeting minimum credit requirements; students who fall short cannot advance. Students who disagree with their assessment should first consult the instructor. If the issue remains unresolved, they may file a formal appeal during the designated period each semester (see Area 8.2 for details).

***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.*

Management and Review of the Core Curriculum

Minor Revisions (Subject Level): Minor revisions at the individual subject level are routinely implemented during the academic year by the teaching staff in charge. The subject coordinator is responsible for providing students with the latest information via ELMS, VetPortal, the online syllabus, or email.

Major Revisions (Curriculum Level): The current VNJ curriculum (Curriculum 2019) was first discussed among faculty members from the same field at both universities. Programme details — including educational content, subject configuration, subject allocation, the ratio of lectures to practical sessions and timetables for each academic year — were discussed and finalised within regional and joint academic committees. This ensured alignment with the VEMCC and the ESEVT Curriculum while realising VNJ's unique identity. Subsequently, the proposed curriculum was presented and discussed at the Faculty Meetings of each university and the VNJ Joint FD. Feedback from students regarding the previous curriculum was also considered. The Academic Affairs Committee makes systematic decisions and finalises the curriculum plan. This plan is approved by the Joint Education Programme Council and the VNJ Board of Directors.

All changes to course content require approval from the Programme Executive Board. Minutes of each meeting are provided in hard copy and/or electronically.

The Academic Affairs Committee monitors and periodically reviews the VNJ programme. This committee examines information regarding the current status of curriculum operations, student evaluations, student course evaluations, stakeholder feedback from educational consultation meetings, graduate employment outcomes and the utilisation of self-study support resources such as Skills Labs. Information gathering and analysis are primarily conducted by the QA Committee. Subsequently, a revised programme for QA is planned.

Regarding curriculum information, communication with students occurs through various means: the Student Handbook, VetPortal, each university's portal site, mailing lists, email, noticeboards, guidance sessions and direct announcements from faculty. Programme information is also provided on both universities' websites, in brochures and at open campus events for prospective students.

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 extramurally with the student being under the direct supervision of a qualified person (e.g. a veterinary practitioner) or intramurally, 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.*

EPT as a Complementary Component to CCT (Tables 3.1.4 and 3.5.1)

All courses of 'Advanced Seminar' are conducted by faculty members (Appendix 3-10). The style and contents vary from lectures , laboratory work, clinical activities, and field work. Course conductors are responsible for all aspects of the programme, from scheduling, training, instruction and assessment. Students apply for 5.5 credits from courses of their choice between Year 5 and Year 6 with the support of EPT supervisors. These EPTs are not intended to replace CCTs but designed to allow students to gain more specialised knowledge and experience.

Year 4 students participate in 'Seminar in Particular Veterinary Medicine I & II', selecting laboratories across basic, applied, and clinical fields based on their individual interests. Each Year 5 student selects a supervising instructor, subject to the approval of the Academic Affairs Committee. In their respective laboratories, all students acquire evidence-based scientific knowledge, critical thinking, and soft skills through conducting research and delivering presentations in the subject 'Tutorial Research'.

Table 3.5.1. Curriculum Days of Elective Practical Training (EPT) for Each Student.

Fields of practice	Minimum duration	Year of programme
Production animals (pre-clinical)	142.5 hours (5.5 credits) *1 *2 450 hours (10 credits) *3	Years 5–6
Companion animals (pre-clinical)		
Production animals (clinical)		
Companion animals (clinical)		
VPH (including FSQ)		
Others (specify)		

*1 Choose 5.5 credits (142.5 hours) from courses of Advanced Seminar. Detailed information is in Standard 3.5 and Appendix 3-10. *2 Hands-on Meat Hygiene Inspection Training (provided as one of the elective courses in Advanced Seminar until AY2024) has been a compulsory course since AY2025. *3 Tutorial Research.

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.*

EPT Provider Collaboration and Assessment

All EPT courses of Advanced Seminar are conducted and supervised under academic teaching staff formally trained in teaching and assessment. The course conductor assesses the student's performance

based on reports, examinations or other criteria, and the final grade is determined on a Pass/Fail basis. Hands-on Meat Hygiene Inspection Training has since AY2022 been conducted under an agreement with the Hokkaido Prefectural Government's Department of Health and Welfare. A part of this course is supervised by public health veterinarians in the relevant inspection facilities. The educational content, objectives and assessment methods of this course were communicated through detailed prior meetings with these veterinarians, and academic teaching staff were present during the students' preparatory training, including safety training, to confirm the training content and ensure appropriate supervision. As Hands-on Meat Hygiene Inspection Training became a compulsory course in AY2025 and now corresponds to CCT, a training course for external non-academic teaching staff is currently provided to veterinarians involved in this course.

EPT Coordinator

Advanced Seminar is coordinated by the Chair of Advanced Education Committee (Professor Osamu Ichii (–AY2024), Professor Mayumi Ishizuka (AY2025–) in SVM/HU, Professor Yasuo Nambo in SCVM/OU). Tutorial Research is supervised by the respective faculty members.

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.*

Implications of Students in the Preparation, Recording and Assessment of EPT

Advanced Seminar: Each course within the Advanced Seminar is offered by the faculty members. Students select courses from the provided list based on their individual interests. The Chair of the Advanced Education Committee reviews the training content and other details. Attendance is recorded to verify participation. Students are required to submit reports, deliver oral presentations, and/or complete logbooks in most courses.

Seminar in Particular Veterinary Medicine I & II and Tutorial Research: In these courses, students are expected to read relevant scientific literature and deepen their knowledge in related fields. In Tutorial Research, students acquire specialised knowledge and practical skills through their assigned research projects. As a final requirement, students must submit a thesis, which is evaluated by their supervising instructor and other faculty members.

Complaint Process in Place Concerning EPT

If any complaints arise during the implementation of the EPT, students can contact the Academic Affairs Office. Students may also submit anonymous opinions or complaints via the web or a suggestion box. The matter will then be discussed by the Academic Affairs Committee for the appropriate action. The QA Committee will review these and request Dean to implement the action.

Comments on Area 3

The VNJ curriculum is characterised by a structured, evidence-based and forward-looking approach to curriculum management and quality enhancement, jointly implemented across the two universities.

In 2023, VNJ established an Ad Hoc Curriculum Review Committee as a formal subcommittee of the Academic Affairs Committee to conduct a comprehensive review of Curriculum 2019. This initiative demonstrates VNJ's proactive and systematic commitment to continuous improvement rather than reactive modification. The review process involves faculty members from both universities and integrates input from departments, students, graduates and external stakeholders through the VNJ Advisory Panel, ensuring multi-layered QA and transparency. The revised curriculum is scheduled to

be implemented in AY2027, reflecting strategic mid-term planning.

In response to the revised ESEVT D1C (ECCVT, 30 March 2023), VNJ promptly established a working group and developed the VNJ D1C 2024, which has been applied since AY2024. A detailed correspondence table between subjects and D1C has been created (Appendix 3-3), and D1C coverage is explicitly explained at the start of each course and practical session. This demonstrates VNJ's agility in aligning its curriculum with evolving international standards.

Furthermore, graduate feedback has been systematically collected since 2018 through surveys conducted prior to graduation. The results are analysed and shared across both universities and used as an evidence base for curriculum enhancement. This data-driven approach ensures that programme learning outcomes remain relevant to professional practice and societal needs.

Suggestion for Improvement in Area 3

Although access to commercial pig and poultry farms has been restricted due to national biosecurity concerns (CSF and HPAI), VNJ has implemented structured alternative measures, including lectures by practitioners, practical training at university facilities and enhanced disease-prevention exercises in collaboration with administrative authorities. More broadly, VNJ will continue to expand structured hands-on opportunities in poultry and pig medicine across multiple academic years.

In situations where access to poultry inspection sites is restricted, HU introduced a newly structured poultry meat inspection practical training at its on-campus Agri-Food Centre from AY2025. VNJ continues to seek ways to compensate for restricted access to poultry meat inspection by reorganising existing courses, utilising on-campus farm facilities and developing video content to ensure the effective practical training.

In addition, the introduction of an electronic portfolio system is under consideration to enhance competency-based assessment and longitudinal tracking of students' practical skills, further strengthening alignment between clinical exposure and D1C attainment.

4 Facilities and Equipment



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.*

Physical Facilities

The direct distance between the SVM/HU and SCVM/OU is approximately 180 kilometres. Public transport options connecting the campuses include JR Hokkaido trains (two and a half hours) and intercity buses (4 hours). Campus maps are available via the following links:
HU: https://www.global.hokudai.ac.jp/maps/
OU: https://www.obihiro.ac.jp/en/access

SVM/HU (Appendix 4-1): SVM/HU is in the centre of Sapporo City. The School of Veterinary Medicine occupies the northern section of the HU campus, centred around the Administrative and Research Building (Main Building, E Building and S Building, total area 8,844 m²), the General Research Building (2,801 m²) alongside the Lecture Building (1,126 m²), the Radiation Experiment Facility (763 m²), the Animal Facility (total 3,366 m²) and the VTH (3,027 m²).

SCVM/OU (Appendix 4-2): SCVM/OU is located on the outskirts of Obihiro City, which is the core urban area of Tokachi District in Hokkaido and a major farming region. The total site area of OU is 1,884,475 m². Facilities related to veterinary education, such as the Main Lecture Building, the Large Animal Hospital and Clinical Research Building (LAC Building), the Small Companion Animal Clinical Research Building (SAC Building), FCASA (which functions as a teaching farm) and some research buildings, are located on the campus.

Strategy and Programme for Maintaining, Upgrading and Acquiring Facilities and Equipment

Over the past decade, SVM/HU and SCVM/OU have strategically prioritised construction, undertaking renovations in accordance with the university's master plan to enhance educational and clinical capabilities. Furthermore, VNJ received substantial funding under the University Reform Promotion Budget (2012–2017), enabling seven years of financial support for the construction and refurbishment of veterinary education facilities.

At OU, refurbishment and rebuilding works through the redevelopment of the FCASA were carried out from 2021 to 2025, establishing educational systems for herd management and individual animal management of farm animals. Furthermore, as part of the Comprehensive Equine Science Centre Development Project, new equine education facilities are currently under construction, with completion scheduled for 2026.

SVM/HU: Based on the seven-year action plan, the Academic Affairs Committee (educational facilities), Safety Management Committee (general facilities), Shared Facilities and Equipment Steering Committee (research equipment), Animal Facilities Steering Committee (animal facilities), Science Information Committee (library) and Animal Hospital Steering Committee shall maintain and improve facilities relevant to their respective roles, whilst consulting with students and staff. These committees propose strategies for the maintenance, improvement and installation of equipment and facilities to the Dean of the SVM/HU.

SCVM/OU: The Finance and Facilities Section and the Educational Affairs Section at OU regularly check the lecture room usage (rate of operation) and equipment, in the lecture room building, to verify

that room sizes are appropriate for use (in terms of number of rooms and capacity) and that they have been used appropriately since the large-scale refurbishment. The results of these self-checks help to determine future equipment needs and changes in room use.

How the VEE Ensures that All Physical Facilities Comply with All Relevant Legislation

All physical facilities are designed and maintained in compliance with the relevant laws and regulations related to the structure and use of facilities and equipment, including building, health and safety laws such as the Building Standards Act, Fire Service Act, School Health and Safety Act and Industrial Safety and Health Act, as well as the Act on Welfare and Management of Animals, Domestic Animal Infectious Diseases Control Act, Radiation Hazard Prevention Act, Poisonous and Deleterious Substances Control Act and the Cartagena Act.

SVM/HU: All pathogenic microorganisms used are subject to review by the Pathogenic Agent Safety Committee established within the school and are utilised under strict control. Laboratories and facilities handling pathogenic microorganisms (BSL-2 and BSL-3 facilities) are subject to mandatory inspections every two years by the HU Pathogenic Agent Safety Committee. Furthermore, inspections by the MHLW and the National Police Agency are mandatory every three years. A rigorous verification system is implemented to ensure pathogenic microorganisms are used within each facility in strict compliance with relevant laws and regulations, including the Infectious Diseases Control Law. To demonstrate that the Animal Research Facility conducts world-class animal research, complies with relevant laws and regulations concerning animal experimentation and considers animal welfare, full accreditation was obtained from the US NPO, AAALAC International in 2007, and full accreditation has been maintained ever since.

SCVM/OU: Campus regulations were established based on these laws and regulations, and internal committees were established as necessary to ensure their proper operation. The Biological Safety Committee for Pathogens inspects the status of pathogen management in controlled areas and conducts maintenance inspections of facilities and equipment at least once a year. The Office for Chemical Substances Management oversees the usage and management of chemical substances for laboratory and storage facilities. The Finance and Facilities Section regularly inspects and repairs facilities or equipment and submits reports in accordance with the law, such as the Domestic Animal Infectious Diseases Control Act, the Prevention of Radiation Hazards Act and the Regulation of Nuclear Source Materials Act. Compliance with these laws and regulations is regularly confirmed through supervision by relevant government agencies.

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.*

Premises for Lecturing

SVM/HU: The school comprises three lecture rooms, a lecture hall and a co-use lecture room. Lecture Rooms 1, 2 and 3, along with the Lecture Hall, are each equipped with a two-way lecture system. This facilitates remote lectures between two locations and transmits live footage from field activities to the lecture rooms (see Appendices 4-3 and 4-4).

SCVM/OU: The school includes a total of 27 lecture rooms on campus. The area and number of seats in the lecture rooms used for theoretical training are shown in Appendices 4-5 and 4-6. There have been functional improvements made to the audio-visual equipment and enhancements to the IT installations for remote classes. In addition, card-reader systems for monitoring student attendance are installed in

each lecture room to ensure accurate and efficient attendance management. The Clinical Lecture Room 101 in the LAC Building is a large tiered lecture theatre equipped with equine and bovine parturition simulators.

Premises for Group Work

There are 11 and 23 group-work rooms on campus at SVM/HU and SCVM/OU, respectively. The areas and numbers of seats in the rooms used for group work are shown in Appendices 4-4 to 4-6. Some of the rooms are equipped with large touch-panel displays, screens and/or white boards.

Premises for Practical Work

SVM/HU (Appendices 4-3 and 4-4): The main building houses four practice rooms, Practice Rooms 1–4, each accommodating 45 students. Practice Room 1 is equipped with a virtual slide system for teaching histology, pathology and parasitology. Practice Room 3 contains five Class II biosafety cabinets (BSCs) and an autoclave, used for practical training in handling BSL-2 pathogens. The BSCs are inspected and certified annually by academic staff holding BSC inspection qualifications. The autoclave's sterilisation function is regularly checked by academic staff.

The General Research Building houses a Clinical Examination Practice Room, a Small Animal Practice Room and a Large Animal Practice Room. The Clinical Examination Practice Room is equipped with microscopes, centrifuges, biochemical analysers and complete blood count analysers. The Small Animal Practice room contains a surgical table, surgical light, inhalation anaesthesia machine, and vital signs monitors including electrocardiogram, capnogram, gas concentration, oxygen saturation and blood pressure monitors for use in practical sessions. The Large Animal Practice Room houses an anaesthesia recovery room, two restraint treatment stalls, a mobile hydraulic surgical table and an inhalation anaesthesia unit.

The Animal Facility, which was refurbished in 2018 to meet safety level and biosecurity standards, contains a dissection room with a cold room. The Pathology Dissection Room contains a cold room, autoclave, safety cabinet, chemical hood and an underground tank for temporary storage of water, which can be disinfected as required to render the effluent non-infectious.

SCVM/OU (Appendices 4-5 and 4-6): In the General Research Building I, Laboratory S1101 is equipped with 50 light microscopes, sufficient to accommodate the number of students, and is used for teaching histology, pathology and parasitology. Laboratory E1201 is equipped with 50 light microscopes, 30 stereomicroscopes and other equipment for biological experiments, such as centrifuges, transducers and electrical stimulation devices, and is used for practical training in several basic subjects. Laboratory S2101 in the General Research Building I contains two Class II BSCs and two autoclaves for handling BSL-2 pathogens. Access to the laboratory is restricted by a lock operated with either an ID card or a six-digit access code, and entry is limited to authorised users during practical sessions. The BSCs are tested and certified annually, and the autoclaves are routinely checked with biological indicators to ensure proper sterilisation.

The Anatomy Dissection Room and the Specimen Practice Room are located in the Macroscopic Anatomy Building, which is equipped with a refrigerator room, a freezer room and locker rooms. In addition, plastinated specimens for Practice in Anatomy are produced in a dedicated room in this building.

The Pathobiological Diagnostic Building has two necropsy rooms. The Large Animal Necropsy Room includes a glass-walled observation room. Necropsy images transmitted from a video camera installed on the ceiling of the necropsy room can be viewed on a large monitor. The Isolated Necropsy Room is equipped with an autoclave and BSC. The facility is equipped with refrigerator and freezer

rooms, air conditioning and the Formalin Mixing Room. Ancillary facilities include locker rooms and showers. Liquid waste is collected in an underground water tank and is disinfected as necessary.

The practice rooms in the SAC Building contain a range of equipment, including microscopes, stereomicroscopes, examination tables and surgical lights, and are used for examination training and simulator-based training. Treatment rooms for horses and cattle in the LAC Building (described below) are also used for practical training.

Premises for Skills Labs

SVM/HU: The Skills Lab is located in the General Research Building and is accessible to students 24/7 throughout the year with card authentication. The equipment installed in these laboratories is shown in Appendix 4-7.

SCVM/OU: The Skills Lab is located in the SAC Building and is accessible to students 24/7 by card authentication. Additional training equipment is also installed in the lobby of the first floor of the Large Animal Clinical Research Building (LAC Building). The equipment installed in these laboratories is shown in Appendix 4-8.

Premises for Study and Self-learning

SVM/HU: The faculty houses an e-learning education system room and a library reading room in the main building. Additionally, the Central Library, North Library and 14 other faculty/department libraries on the Sapporo Campus are also available for use (see Area 6).

SCVM/OU: A study space in Room S1112 of the General Research Building I is available 24/7 throughout the year, with established terms of use and is open to all students. In addition, the Macroscopic Anatomy Building houses a self-study room accessible 24 hours a day, equipped with anatomical skeletons, plastinated specimens, and PCs for learning CT image data. Reference rooms are also available in the SAC Building (Room N209) and the LAC Building (Room 223), where students can access veterinary clinical books.

Premises for Catering and Canteens

SVM/HU: Faculties do not have attached cafeterias, but vending machines selling boxed lunches and light snacks are installed. Students may eat and drink in the lobby and lecture rooms. There are seven cafeterias on campus. Two convenience stores are in operation on campus, one of which is open 24 hours with an eat-in area (approximately 50 seats). Numerous restaurants are located around the campus.

SCVM/OU: There is one food court (open 11:00 to 14:00 for lunch, 18:00 to 20:00 for dinner) and one coffee shop (open 10:00 to 19:00).

Premises for Locker Rooms

SVM/HU: There are two locker rooms in the General Research Building: one for male students (162 lockers) and one for female students (156 lockers). The Animal Facility and the VTH have three locker rooms with showers and washing machines for use by both male and female students and staff.

SCVM/OU: Students and staff are each provided with a locker for storing their belongings. The practical training facilities (the SAC and LAC Buildings, the Pathobiological Diagnosis Building, the Macroscopic Anatomy Building, FCASA and the Food Processing Practice Facility) are equipped with lockers and separate changing rooms for male and female students.

Premises for Accommodation for On-call Students

SVM/HU: VTH has two accommodation rooms: one for male students (40 m², 4 beds) and one for

female students (24 m², 2 beds).

SCVM/OU: Akkamui, a two-storey, 258 m² facility, was built in 2016 and includes six rooms that accommodate 18 people, as well as a kitchen and lounge. It provides convenient on-campus accommodation for HU students.

Premises for Leisure Activities

SVM/HU: The faculty houses tennis courts. The Sapporo Campus features multiple welfare facilities (convenience stores, bookshops), barbecue areas, several club buildings equipped with rooms for extracurricular activities and sports facilities (gymnasium, indoor athletics hall, swimming pool, sports grounds, etc.), a museum, and a botanical garden. Students have easy access to various recreational facilities within Sapporo City.

SCVM/OU: To support extracurricular activities, the campus includes a club building containing rooms for each club, indoor and outdoor sports facilities (gymnasium, martial arts hall, Japanese archery facility, training room, football pitch, rugby pitch, American football field, ice-hockey rink, baseball field, horse-riding facilities, tennis court) as well as campus facilities, including shared kitchens where students can cook for themselves, barbecue areas and rental spaces for cultural and social interactions. The Student Affairs Section provides a leisure equipment hire service.

Premises for Sanitary

There are 28 toilets and 8 shower rooms at SVM/HU (Appendices 4-3 and 4-4), and 49 toilets and 9 shower rooms at SCVM/OU (Appendices 4-5 and 4-6).

Staff Offices and Research Laboratories

SVM/HU: Each research laboratory typically contains three staff rooms, two experimental rooms, and one student room. Maintenance of utilities such as electricity, water, gas, and air conditioning is covered by the faculty budget. Staff rooms and student rooms are approximately 28 m², while experimental rooms range from 28 m² to 84 m².

SCVM/OU: Faculty members are provided with dedicated offices (approximately 16 m²). There are common offices in front of their offices wherever possible for administrative staff, research fellows and graduate students. Undergraduate students have their own seats in the rooms near their supervisors' offices. Common laboratories (approximately 50 m²) near the faculty member's office can be used according to the research topic.

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.*

Premises for Housing Healthy Animals

SVM/HU: The animal facility houses a unit capable of accommodating 21 healthy dogs for use in pre-clinical training. Currently, 12 dogs are housed within this facility. The Farm Animal Facility includes an attached paddock (3,571 m²) capable of housing 2 horses (30 m² x 2), 10 cattle (free barn with linked stanchions, 100 m²) and 8 goats (36 m²). It also features individual housing rooms (21 m²) and a treatment stall for horses.

SCVM/OU: OU has a cattle (2,390 m²) and a horse (458 m²) breeding facility, which can accommodate 120 cattle (9 loose housed barns equipped with interlocking stanchions; 757 m²), 16 horses (12 standard stalls; 132 m² and 4 large stalls; 64 m²), and 15 miniature horses. There are also attached paddocks for

cattle (845 m²) and horses (28,680 m²). The facilities are managed and maintained by dedicated support staff. These animals are used for practical training such as medical health checks, blood collection and reproductive management for VNJ students. Four Labrador retrievers are used as blood donors in the VMC. They are kept in a laboratory animal kennel and cared for by dedicated support staff. These dogs are also used for practical training in ultrasound examinations.

Premises for Housing Research Animals

SVM/HU: The animal facility can house 50 dogs, 36 rabbits (or 54 guinea pigs), 27 chickens, 930 rats and 9,576 mice. The main building houses three ABSL-3 infection laboratories equipped with isolators and safety cabinets, capable of housing a total of 13 minipigs, 14 chickens, 675 rats and 1,134 mice. The facility for Infection and Hazardous Chemical Pathology includes ABSL-2 rooms for FPA and horses (2 rooms), poultry (16 rooms) and companion animals (dogs and cats, 4 rooms), along with a chemical exposure unit on a 301 m² floor (5 animal housing rooms, measuring 19, 15, 10, 12 and 31 m² respectively). There is also space to house 60 mice for behavioural observation.

SCVM/OU: There are two laboratory animal buildings for small animals and poultry, i.e. a specific pathogen-free facility for mice, rats, guinea pigs, degus, rabbits, cats and chickens (138 m²) and a dog-rearing facility (147 m²). Each of these facilities can house 210 mouse cages, 35 rat and degu cages, 15 guinea pig cages, 20 rabbits, one cat room (housing a maximum of 12 cats), 5 chicken cages with an egg incubator and chick brooder and a dog room (housing a maximum of 22 dogs). The laboratory animal buildings include an experimental laboratory and operating/treatment rooms that are managed and maintained by dedicated support staff.

The experimental animal facilities can house eight cows (86 m²), twelve pigs (6 rooms, 13 m² each), eight sheep (2 rooms, 47 m² each), 603 chickens and 53 quails (2 rooms, 199 m² and 126 m²). The outdoor breeding area includes a pasture for sheep (456 m²), a pasture for cow (2,650 m²), a paddock for cow (675 m²) and a paddock for experimental cow (166 m²).

In addition, there are various mouse-rearing and infectious animal rooms (ABSL-2 and 3 containments) in the General Research Buildings 1-4 and the NRCPD.

Premises for Housing Hospitalised Animals

SVM/HU: The school has dedicated hospital facilities for dogs and cats (63 animals). These include an intensive care unit (ICU) for 47 dogs and 16 cats.

SCVM/OU: The school has hospital facilities for cattle (3 places including one ICU), horses (4 including one ICU), dogs (15), cats (7) and seven ICUs for dogs and cats.

Premises for Clinical Activities

SVM/HU: VTH (3,027 m²) comprises 12 consultation rooms, 1 treatment room, 3 ICU rooms, 2 inpatient rooms, 5 small animal operating theatres, 3 ultrasound/echo examination rooms equipped with Doppler ultrasound diagnostic devices (5 units), 2 X-ray examination rooms equipped with X-ray imaging diagnostic devices and fluoroscopy units, 1 endoscopy examination room (digital endoscopy system), a CT/MRI room with an 80-slice CT scanner and a 3-Tesla MRI scanner, an electroencephalography system and a polygraph. The surgical area includes one C-arm, a mobile X-ray unit, laparoscopic, arthroscopic and cystoscopic equipment, five electrosurgical units, ultrasonic scalpels, two vascular sealing systems, four orthopaedic power units, patient warming systems and a semiconductor laser device. Additionally, there is a radiotherapy room equipped with orthovoltage X-ray and a linear accelerator.

One operating theatre incorporates an observation room and is equipped with a surgical video

recording system. Cameras are installed in all operating theatres; images can be viewed in real time at the VTH and the General Research Building and are stored on the surgical image server. Two operating theatres are equipped with positive pressure ventilation systems.

SCVM/OU:

1. **SAC Building:** The SAC Building (3,227 m²) is centrally located on the Obihiro campus and is connected to the Diagnostic Centre for Animal Health and Food Safety and the LAC Building. Clinical examination and imaging data are integrated with clinical records and can be viewed by students who participate in clinical rotations. There are three operating rooms equipped with positive pressure ventilation systems. An ICU cage is installed in the treatment room. The hospitalisation rooms for dogs and cats are separated by a treatment and preparation area. In addition, there is a physical therapy room for rehabilitation, a duty room, an ultrasound diagnostics room, a radiography room, a radiotherapy room, a clinical laboratory and a dog run.
2. **LAC Building:** The LAC Building (3,738 m²) was built in 2014 for clinical education on large animals. The building is divided into three blocks, comprising a clinic for FPA and horses, lecture rooms and research laboratories. The clinic has consultation and treatment rooms for horses and cattle (2–3 restraint treatment stalls per room), a preparation room, a padded anaesthesia/recovery room and an operating theatre with a movable hydraulic operating table, a large animal gaseous anaesthesia apparatus, ECG/blood pressure monitoring equipment and an artificial respirator.
3. **Hospital Ward for Large Animals:** There are hospitalisation stalls (633 m²) for horses and cattle and ICU rearing rooms, the aisles and ceilings of which are equipped with running hoist rails. A garage for mobile clinic vehicles was also installed in this unit. There is an isolation unit for large animals that contains two isolation rooms and one preparation room (93 m²).

Premises for Diagnostic Services Including Necropsy

SVM/HU: The Diagnostic Imaging Facility comprises three ultrasound examination rooms, two X-ray examination rooms, a CT examination room, an MRI examination room and a clinical haematology laboratory. Clinical test results and imaging data are integrated with clinical records and can be viewed in lecture rooms, training rooms and seminar rooms.

1. The Laboratory of Comparative Pathology provides diagnostic services including necropsy, histological diagnosis and immunohistochemical diagnosis. The laboratory includes a tissue examination room and a laboratory capable of handling BSL-2 pathogens.
2. Other laboratories provide the following diagnostic services: the Laboratory of Toxicology (wild bird lead poisoning; rodenticide resistance in wild rodents; pesticide poisoning in wildlife; sex determination in zoo animals; forensic veterinary science examinations from police authorities), the Laboratory of Public Health (tick-borne encephalitis), the Laboratory of Infectious Disease (bovine leukaemia) and the Laboratory of Microbiology, which received ISO 17025 accreditation in 2017 for HPAI diagnosis.

SCVM/OU:

1. **Diagnostic imaging facilities at the VTH:** These facilities comprise two ultrasonography rooms and two X-ray rooms in the SAC and LAC Buildings, a CT scan room and an MRI scan room in the LAC Building as well as a clinical animal blood testing room. The VTH staff offers this service for VTH sections, researchers at the university and veterinarians in the local community.
2. **Mobile service for diagnostic imaging and reproduction:** The VTH owns two diagnostic imaging vehicles. The two vehicles are equipped with an endoscope device and various blood test equipment, an X-ray fluoroscopy unit, an X-ray radiographing device, an ultrasound diagnostic

device, etc. and implement cutting-edge breeding techniques such as endoscopic artificial insemination, ovum pick-up and in vitro production of embryos on farm. Reproductive management services using a portable ultrasound machine, such as pregnancy diagnosis and examinations of the ovary and uterus, are also supplied for cattle and horse farms.

3. **Necropsy service:** The Pathology and Diagnostic Laboratory accepts university and external cases for pathological diagnosis. These cases (necropsy and biopsy) are used for educational and research purposes. The necropsy room is in the Pathobiological Diagnosis Building, which also has hospitalisation and clinical examination units for diseased animals. In addition, there are three other histopathology laboratories (one of which is a BSL-2 facility) in the General Research Building 1 for research purposes.
4. **The ISO17025-accredited Diagnostic Centre for Animal Health and Food Safety:** The facility has two floors. The ground floor has a laboratory section, and the second floor has an office and a conference area. In addition to this centre, other individual laboratories list tests for infectious diseases in their areas of expertise. All examination procedures are in accordance with biosafety and laboratory safety standards.
5. **NRCPD:** This is the first WOAH-collaborating centre in Asia. It includes three reference laboratories that offer diagnostic services for equine piroplasmosis, bovine babesiosis and surra (ISO17025-accredited in from 2017 to present).

Premises for Others (specify)

SVM/HU: The carcass incinerator (160 m²) is not operating due to a malfunction. Carcasses are kept in cold storage rooms and are removed and incinerated once a week by a specialist company.

For educational purposes, the faculty has the following facilities: 16 touchscreen displays (65-, 70- and 75-inch widescreen), wireless presentation systems, educational support systems, remote lecture systems, video conferencing systems, virtual slide systems and fieldwork equipment.

SCVM/OU: The carcass incinerator facility is located near the dissection and necropsy areas and is used for animals from pathological necropsy, normal dissection and experimental use. All lecture rooms in the lecture building are equipped with slide projectors and screens. Lecture Room 25 and Clinical Lecture Room 101 in the LAC Building are equipped with CCD and monitor cameras that are compatible with the HU bi-directional remote lecture system.

Equipment Used for Clinical Services

The VTHs at both universities possess the following equipment: X-ray television systems, C-arm fluoroscopy units, CT scanners, MRI systems, Doppler ultrasound devices, digital endoscopy systems, endoscopic surgical equipment, arthroscopic surgical equipment, inhalation anaesthesia units, blood chemistry analysers, orthovoltage X-ray machines and so forth. Furthermore, the HU's VTH also has a linear accelerator for radiotherapy.

Intra-mural Premises for the Practical Teaching of Veterinary Public Health (VPH) and Practical Animal Husbandry Hygiene Training

OU has the on-campus Food Processing Practice Facility (1,315 m²), which includes a slaughterhouse (Appendix 4-5). This facility was accredited to ISO22000 in 2016 and has been used for both research and educational purpose. In addition, in 2024, the slaughterhouse was accredited as a public slaughterhouse by the Hokkaido Government. The facility comprises three areas: slaughter, meat processing and milk processing. Each area has a separate entrance and locker room to minimise the risk of cross-contamination. The slaughtering area includes ante- and post-mortem examination rooms, a butchering/organ processing room and a carcass processing room. Training for meat processing, sausage

and canned meat production is conducted in the meat processing area. The dairy processing area supports dairy food processing and a research and extension programme. It is equipped to make dairy products, such as butter, natural cheese and ice cream, using milk from the university farm.

Practical animal husbandry hygiene training, including blood sampling and vaccination using chickens at HU's poultry farm, is being conducted to supplement the cancelled farm fieldwork.

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.*

Organisation and Management of the VTH and Ambulatory Clinics

SVM/HU: The operation of the VTH is managed by the Animal Hospital Steering Committee (Appendix 1-5). Outpatient registration is available Monday to Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, while inpatient care is provided 24/7. Patients without a referral letter from a private veterinary practitioner are also accepted. VTH/HU is equipped with the facilities and personnel to respond immediately to severe and emergency cases. It has maintained a 24-hour clinical readiness for dogs and cats since 2019.

Specialist areas for companion animal consultation and hospitalisation include Internal Medicine, Gastroenterology, Cardiology, Respiratory Medicine, Dermatology, Haematology, Medical Oncology, Radiation Oncology, Soft Tissue Surgery, Orthopaedics, Neurology, Radiology, Animal Blood Bank, Animal Genetics, Exotic Animal Medicine and Diagnostic Imaging. For food-producing animals, an Animal Genetics department is also established. Veterinary care for zoo animals is also provided.

SCVM/OU: The VMC functions as VTH and consists of the LAC and the SAC. The VMC is managed by an VMC Management Committee (Appendix 1-5). The academic staff of the VMC discuss practical themes at weekly staff meetings.

The LAC comprises three divisions: FPA Medicine, Equine Medicine, and Reproductive Medicine, accepting both first-opinion and referral cases. The LAC provides outpatient services Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 17:00. Equine surgery is performed on Thursdays and Fridays. Additionally, veterinarians, including faculty members, provide intensive care for hospitalised animals outside regular hours if necessary. Emergency services for both equine and FPA patients operate on weekdays from 17:00 to 09:00 and throughout weekends. The ambulatory service, including scheduled farm visits (such as reproductive management) and on-call emergency responses, is maintained by academic teaching staff and support staff of the LAC. Outpatient or ambulatory service is selected by the responsible faculty member or veterinarian depending on the case following a telephone consultation. The SAC accepts appointments Monday to Friday from 9:00 to 11:30, with consultations continuing until 17:00. It provides both primary and secondary care. Specialist areas for companion animal examinations and hospitalisation include internal medicine, cardiology, oncology, ophthalmology and diagnostic imaging.

How the VTH and Ambulatory Clinics Are Organised to Maximise the Hands-on Training of All Students

SVM/HU: The HU's VTH provides eight weeks of clinical rotations for HU students and four weeks for OU students, as well as night-time and emergency care training for students from both schools (Standard 3.1, Table 3.1.3). The HU's VTH maintains an instructional framework that pairs each student

with a trained veterinary resident or intern, assigning both new and follow-up cases as dedicated educational resources. The facility ensures an environment where students can independently execute the entire clinical sequence, ranging from initial history-taking and physical examinations (including auscultation) to blood collection, laboratory testing, and diagnostic imaging. Through this approach, the hospital provides students with the opportunity to take a proactive role in experiencing the fundamental duties of a veterinarian, from initial diagnosis and testing to the formulation of comprehensive treatment plans.

SCVM/OU: The OU's VTH (LAC and SAC) provides eight weeks of clinical rotations for OU students and three weeks for HU students, as well as night-time and emergency care training for both students (Standard 3.1, Table 3.1.3). In the LAC, a substantial number of outpatient cases, particularly in bovine and equine orthopaedics, equine general surgery, and post-operative inpatient management, are used for hands-on training during clinical rotations. In the ambulatory clinics, students participate in clinical services covering surgery, internal medicine, and reproduction, as well as farm management tasks (including post-calving health checks, dehorning, and castration). Affiliations with external farms provide sufficient exposure for students to first-opinion cases. The SAC provides opportunities for hands-on clinical training in internal medicine, surgery, anaesthesia, and diagnostic imaging for dogs and cats.

In the clinical rotations at the VTH of both schools, appropriate group sizes (as described in Standards 3.1 and 5.3) and the use of logbooks (Appendix 3-10a) ensure that all students have sufficient opportunities for hands-on training and receive immediate feedback and evaluation from supervisors. For effective complementary education, detailed schedules are carefully developed by the subject coordinators in close consultation with VTH academic teaching staff and are shared in advance with students and VTH staff.

Statement that the VEE Meets the National Veterinary Practice Standards

Both SVM/HU and SCVM/OU meet the national Veterinary Practice Standards through the provision of evidence-based clinical education in their respective VTHs, in accordance with VEMCC. At SVM/HU, 26 faculty members lead clinical education, supported by a 24-hour accessible Skills Lab and online video resources that promote self-directed and repetitive learning. At SCVM/OU, 14 faculty members provide clinical education under the same national framework.

At both institutions, students may undertake faculty-supervised clinical research following approval by the relevant ethics committees (the ethics screening committee at HU's VTH and the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee at OU), including, at HU, research utilising Biobank samples from the One Health Research Centre. These activities are subject to annual evaluation and continuous improvement through the PDCA cycle by each university's internal QA Committee and the Joint Veterinary Medical Programme QA Committee.

Furthermore, both HU and OU individually undergo external evaluation and accreditation every seven years by the JUAA. Based on these structured educational, research and QA systems at both institutions, the VEE meets the national Veterinary Practice Standards.

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.*

Students Access to Relevant Facilities

SVM/HU: Access to the General Research Building (including the Skills Lab), VTH and Animal Facilities (excluding Facility II) requires the registration of a student ID card equipped with an IC chip.

For Year 3 pre-clinical placements and Year 5 hospital placements, access permission is granted for specific periods only, upon request from the Academic Affairs Office and the course instructor. For students from SCVM/OU, a separate IC card is issued rather than registering their student ID.

SCVM/OU: Students participating in participatory clinical placements receive guidance from the subject coordinator on the first day of the placement. This includes an explanation of the rules, procedures and prohibitions for accessing relevant facilities. During the placement period, all students are permitted 24-hour access to the VTH.

Students in both schools can access the educational equipment for soft skills, such as examination tables and stuffed animals (AI-based role-play bot available from AY2025).

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.*

Premises for Housing Isolated Animals and How These Premises Guarantee Isolation and Containment of Infectious Patients

SVM/HU: Two isolation rooms for dogs and cats are located within the animal facility, separate from the VTH. One room (6 m²) is for cats (2 animals), the other (16 m²) is for dogs (3 animals). Microbiological containment is ensured through the facility's multi-barrier structure, filtered cages and adherence to the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for use, which includes wearing protective clothing (Appendix 4-10). Persons entering the isolation rooms must thoroughly read the isolation room SOP, view the lecture on entry and exit procedures (on-demand video material) and, on their first entry, must be accompanied by a member of the Pathogenic Agent Safety Committee or an experienced individual.

General (routine) infection control measures within the VTH are implemented in accordance with the VTH Biosecurity SOP. The content of the SOP is covered in a one-hour lecture delivered annually to all staff. Students receive the same lecture during their clinical rotation, fostering a shared understanding of the required measures and infection control protocols. The fundamentals of infection control are hand hygiene (hand washing, alcohol-based hand rub) for all cases and the appropriate use of personal protective equipment. For infectious disease cases, responses are tailored according to the transmission potential and severity of the infection. Staff awareness of infection control measures is assessed through an annual questionnaire, and initiatives are in place to receive feedback from the field regarding any issues.

SCVM/OU: There are isolation facilities for dogs and cats (2 rooms, 5 m²/8 m², with a preparation room), which can accommodate at least two dog cages and at least four cat cages, and isolation facilities for FPA and horses (2 rooms, 24 m²/34 m², with a preparation room).

The isolation facilities operate under a strict SOP (Appendix 4-12) governing animal transport and management. Animals suspected of having serious infectious diseases are handled via mobile clinics, with coordination and support from veterinary specialists at the Livestock Hygiene Service Centre.

***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.*

Teaching of Field Veterinary Medicine and Herd Health Management (Procedures and Responsibility)

The Seminar in Production Medicine, offered to Year 4 students, provides the knowledge and practical exercises necessary for herd management. Students are given the opportunity to consider the impact of animal welfare, mastitis and hoof problems on productivity. They also learn practical herd management utilising metabolic profile testing and herd testing information. The Year 5 Practice in Farm Animal Medicine course involves visiting private farms for hands-on training in veterinary techniques essential for herd management (including dehorning, castration and health examinations and treatment of ruminants during the peripartum and neonatal periods).

Vehicles and Equipment Used for the Ambulatory Clinic

SCVM/OU has four vehicles (ten seats), one estate car (five seats), and two imaging diagnosis vehicles (three seats) for visiting/mobile clinics.

***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.*

Vehicles Used for Transportation of Students

Chartered coaches or public transport is used. For SCVM/OU, see Standard 4.7.

Vehicles Used for Transportation of Live Animals

SVM/HU: For the transport of FPA and horses, livestock transporters are utilised. For the transport of dogs, cats and exotics, an eight-seater vehicle is used.

SCVM/OU: The university owns a two-tonne lorry, primarily used for transporting cattle and horses.

Vehicles used For Transportation of Cadavers/Organs

SVM/HU: Livestock transporters and/or school-owned vehicles are used.

SCVM/OU: The university possesses two small pick-up trucks for the transport of carcasses.

***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.*

Processes and Responsibilities for the Decision, Communication, Implementation, Assessment and Revision of Facilities, Equipment, Biosecurity, GLP and GCP

SVM/HU:

1. **Facilities and Equipment (Appendix 4-9):** The Safety Management Committee and the Shared Facilities and Equipment Steering Committee bear overall responsibility for the management of educational and research facilities and their equipment. Practical training management is handled by the Academic Affairs Committee, while educational equipment management falls under the purview of the Veterinary Medical Educational Reform and ICT Support Committee. Facility reforms are discussed by relevant committees and subcommittees. Final decisions are made by the Dean. The practical maintenance and management of facilities is the responsibility of the Administration Department Accounting Section.

2. **Biosecurity Procedures (Appendix 4-10)**: Changes to standard operating procedures for animal facilities, their equipment and biosecurity are typically determined by the Animal Facility Steering Committee (AFSC) and the Pathogenic Agent Safety Committee (PASC). These decisions are evaluated and confirmed by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). If necessary, the IACUC prompts the AFSC to make amendments. The Incinerator Facility Committee is responsible for waste management concerning animal carcasses. HU's Safety and Health Management Office oversees safety management through inspections, seminars and meetings. The PASC, IACUC, AFSC, Radiation Safety Committee and Committee for Recombinant Nucleic Acid Molecules are responsible for safety management in their respective fields and communicate this to staff and students. Medical waste and biological waste must be autoclaved and disposed of in containers within lockable storage cabinets. Hazardous waste liquids are collected and treated at HU's Hazardous Liquid Waste Treatment Support Facility.
3. **Communication among Stakeholders**: Information regarding facilities, equipment and biosecurity procedures is communicated to staff, students and relevant parties through Faculty Meetings, FD sessions, special lectures, announcements and emails.

SCVM/OU:

1. **Facilities and Equipment (Appendix 4-11):** The Facilities Section, working with several committees, is responsible for the planning, physical development, construction, maintenance, renovation and safe operation of the university's educational and research facilities. The Facilities Subcommittee and the Committee on Facilities Management devise the strategic campus master plan and landscape design for the campus environment, providing physical structures to support the university's mission. This plan is made available to faculty and staff, with requests and opinions being collated. The plan is finalised through consultation with the Strategic Planning Committee and the Executive Committee and receives the President's approval. The Health and Safety Committee conducts safety inspections of educational and research facilities several times a year and evaluates safety procedures.
2. **Biosecurity Procedures (Appendix 4-12):** All animal activities are approved by the IACUC, which conducts biannual inspections of all animal facilities and reviews all animal use protocols and SOPs. Waste management is the responsibility of the Finance and Facilities Section. Management and control of waste and odours generated on the Obihiro campus premises are governed by the OU Waste Management Regulations, established in accordance with relevant laws and regulations.

   Students are provided with information regarding university health and safety upon enrolment. The Biological Safety Committee for Pathogens and the Institutional Committee for Recombinant Nucleic Acid Molecules determine internal regulations based on relevant laws and regulations. All practical training involving pathogen handling or genetic recombination experiments must be approved by these committees. All veterinary students must complete specialised guidance courses before using laboratory animals, handling pathogens or conducting genetic recombination experiments. These courses are held twice yearly and are planned and delivered by academic staff from the responsible committee. Students are also provided with safety information via handouts and guidance distributed at their practical training locations. First-aid kits, AEDs and eye wash stations are installed throughout the campus.

   In addition to the Biological Safety Committee for Pathogens, SCVM/OU has its own Biosafety Committee at the programme level. The committee consists of the chair of the Biological Safety Committee for Pathogens and other faculty members representing all sections, including the VTH

and the necropsy unit, and establishes SOPs for facilities used in veterinary education. The committee is also responsible for the periodic review and renewal of SOPs and for the management of first-aid kits.

3. **Communication among Stakeholders:** In accordance with the Occupational Safety and Health Act, hazardous procedures and substances at the university undergo risk assessment, control measures are implemented and risk values are assigned. Committee members discuss changes to facilities, equipment and biosecurity measures, along with methods for communicating these changes to stakeholders. Generally, communication to staff and students is conducted both in writing (facility management reports, water quality reports, meeting minutes, handouts, notices, signage, emails) and verbally (face-to-face meetings, lectures, guidance sessions) to ensure all stakeholders are aware of the changes.

Detailed Manual for Safety Management: Both schools have their own manuals for biosecurity (Appendices 4-10 for SVM/HU and 4-12 for SCVM/OU).

Comments on Area 4

VNJ constantly monitors and makes improvements to the buildings and facilities. Currently, the facilities are used at appropriate capacity, and important efforts are made to avoid overcrowding of spaces and ensure compliance with the biosafety measures.

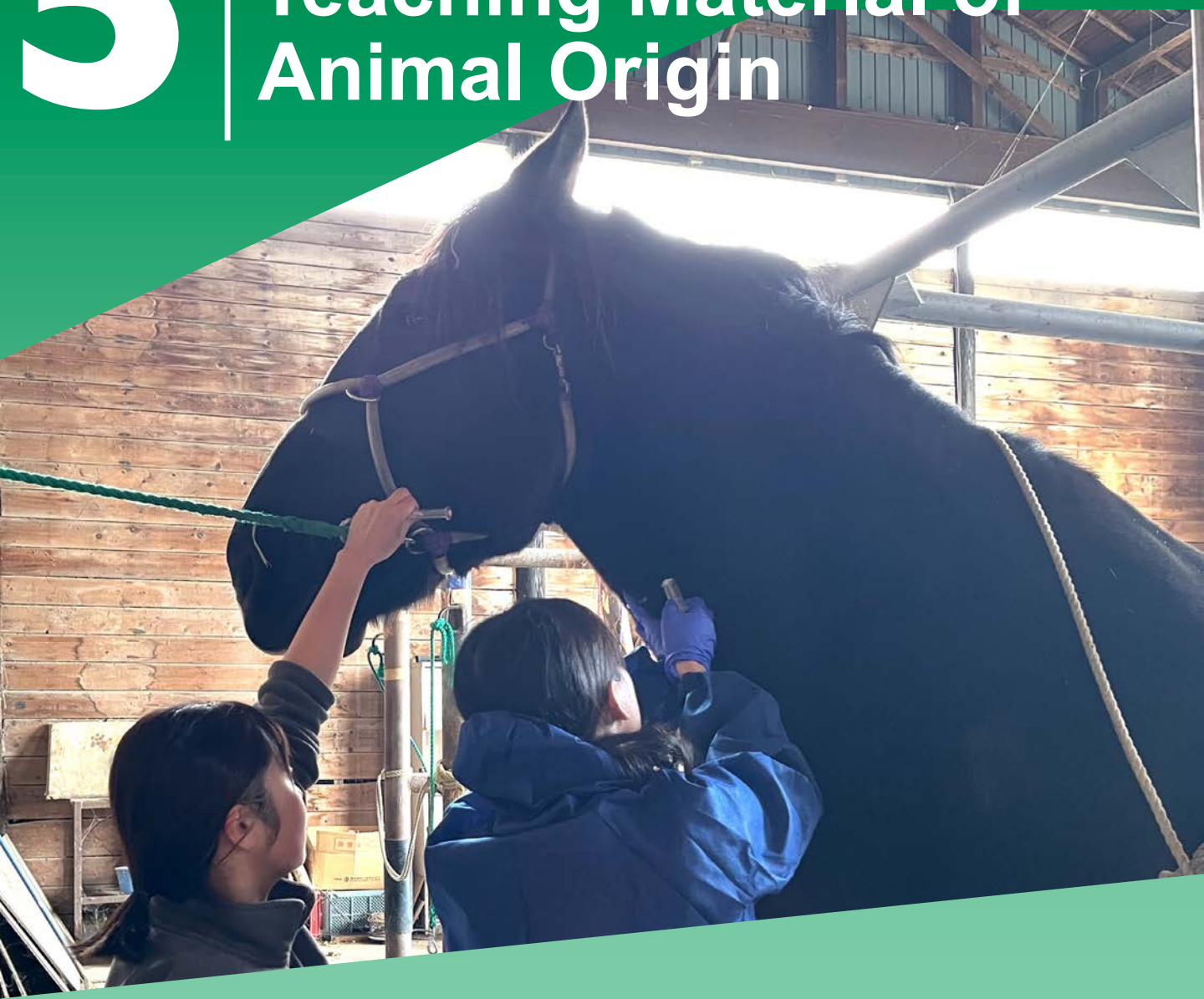
The SOPs are now shared with students and staff via the e-learning platforms. The 2D barcodes linking to the digital SOP documents are posted at the entrance to the facilities.

The HU's VTH has temporarily suspended ophthalmology services due to a lack of specialists but continues to provide student training through extramural clinical placements at specialist hospitals while aiming to recruit a new specialist to re-establish the service and enhance clinical education.

Suggestions for Improvement in Area 4

VNJ regularly reviews the facilities for defects and abnormalities and makes efforts to strategically secure funding to ensure repairs are made as quickly as possible. This is an important process to provide a safe facility for animal patients and students.

5 Animal Resources and Teaching Material of Animal Origin



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.*

Global Strategy for Securing and Utilising Educational Resources

VNJ ensures the provision of adequate and diverse educational resources necessary for D1C by integrating the complementary strengths of both universities, as detailed in the curriculum description in Area 3. The strategy leverages the distinct geographical advantages of each institution. HU provides a high volume of clinical cases (dogs, cats) and maintains the 24-hour clinical readiness typical of an urban setting, while OU offers abundant cases of cattle/horses and equine emergency services typical of a livestock-producing region. Additionally, established networks with local governments and farms at both sites secure a steady supply of cadavers for necropsy. By sharing these resources, VNJ guarantees that students have access to the necessary volume and variety of cases without the need for redundant facilities at every site.

Specific Strategy to Ensure that All Students Receive the Required CCT

VNJ ensures access to the animal resources required for CCT for students at both schools through the following strategies.

Resources for Enhancement of Preparative Training for Clinical Rotation (Tables 5.1.1, and 5.1.2): To ensure that students have sufficient knowledge related to basic and clinical science and the ability to perform clinical procedures on patients in participatory clinical training, VNJ provides adequate animal resources for pre-clinical training such as cadavers and body parts for dissection. Furthermore, to maximise the safety and efficacy of these clinical cases, VNJ equips its facilities with extensive pre-clinical training assets—such as models, simulators and clinical data sets—ensuring students are technically proficient before their first contact with patients. In addition, university-owned animals in teaching farms are used to provide preparatory training in low-invasive diagnostic techniques.

Utilisation of Animal Resources through Complementary Education (Tables 5.1.3 – 5.1.5): VNJ utilises its distinctive 'complementary education' system to provide students in Years 5–6 with access to diverse clinical environments, participating in small and large animal clinical rotations at both campuses (see Area 3, Table 5.1.3 and Appendix 5-1). At SVM/HU, the VTH is a leading advanced facility where most small animal cases (dogs, cats) are referral cases from private veterinary clinics. This environment provides resources for students to learn the practice of secondary veterinary care. To ensure comprehensive experience in primary and emergency medicine, the VTH strives to accept non-referral and walk-in (unscheduled) cases. Additionally, students of SVM/HU and SCVM/OU participate in night-time emergency rotations at the Sapporo Veterinary Emergency Hospital (private), which further contributes to students' exposure to first-opinion practice. Furthermore, HU provides resources for spay/neuter surgery training (shelter medicine) on sheltered dogs and cats in collaboration with the Sapporo Animal Welfare and Management Centre (Year 5). At SCVM/OU, collaboration with local welfare organisations supports a community practice programme for dogs and cats (Years 5–6). In large animal practice, more than 90% of the cases are first-opinion cases in cattle, offering extensive resources for diagnosis and treatment. Additionally, students at both universities receive training in bovine and equine pathology, as well as hands-on training in meat inspection using

the on-campus slaughterhouse facility.

Recording and Balancing Access to Animal Resources: At VNJ, student progress in clinical training is monitored using logbooks, case records and self-assessment sheets. Supervising faculty review these records to ensure that student experiences are not biased toward particular fields. For example, during the small animal clinical training at HU, students secure access to sufficient cases through specific rotations:

1. **Surgical Rotation:** In addition to managing new cases, students encounter approximately three follow-up cases per day and serve as an assistant in at least one operation.
2. **Internal Medicine Rotation:** Students manage new cases and encounter approximately three follow-up cases per day.
3. **Anaesthesia Rotation:** Students gain experience in the management of approximately 6–8 cases of general anaesthesia.

In addition to logbook entries, students prepare case reports for all new patients—ranging from detailed summaries in internal medicine to operative findings in surgery—which are reviewed by supervising faculty to provide feedback and verify that students are effectively utilising the clinical resources.

Exposure to Emergency Cases: HU's VTH maintains a 24-hour service with an ICU, providing students with opportunities to experience emergency medicine and intensive management of critical cases. During clinical rotations, students undertake night duty, participating in the care of emergency cases and 5–15 hospitalised animals (post-operative and critically ill) per shift (see Area 3 for shift details). Furthermore, due to the limited number of emergency cases, students undertake on-site training at the private night-time emergency animal hospital (Sapporo Veterinary Emergency Hospital). In this rotation, students are trained in primary care for emergency cases and submit a case log. At OU, a 24-hour equine emergency service (including night-time emergency care) has been established, offering ambulatory services, inpatient management and emergency surgeries, thereby expanding the caseload available for student training.

FPA Cases in HU's VTH and Dogs/Cats Cases in OU's VTH: While VNJ emphasises complementary education, students also undertake part of their essential training at their home campuses to accommodate their temporal and geographical constraints. SVM/HU utilises its affiliated farm (see Section 5.2.1) for pre-clinical and clinical training in FPA, covering bovine parturition, vaccination in pigs and chickens and porcine castration. Meanwhile, OU's VTH handles approximately 2,500 small animal cases annually, which are utilised for training with a balance of first opinion (25–40%) and referral (60–75%) cases (Appendix 5-1).

Exotic Animals Cases: As detailed in the curriculum description in Area 3, VNJ actively expands its clinical resources to provide clinical opportunities for a diverse range of animal species, which also contributes to addressing the nationwide scarcity of exotic animal cases. HU has an Exotic Animal Unit and maintains an agreement with the Sapporo Maruyama Zoo, providing access to zoo animals requiring advanced care (e.g., CT/MRI). Similarly, SCVM/OU has formed partnerships with external hospitals that see many exotic animal cases (starting in AY2025).

Necropsy Cases (Table 5.1.6): While there is a continuous need to ensure a sufficient number of clinical cases for dogs and cats, the current volume of animals is adequate to provide effective veterinary

education across all animal species.

Visits to Farms (Table 5.1.7): VNJ students visit cattle farms during their clinical rotations and learn about biosecurity procedures for farm entry and herd health management. To compensate for the lack of the visits to the poultry farm in SCVM/OU (Appendix 5.1), the spent hens (approximately 150 hens) are introduced to the intra-mural facility of OU from a nearby farm of Obihiro Agricultural High School and utilised for practical sessions, focusing on clinical techniques important for both individual and herd health management, such as basic clinical examination, administration procedures simulating vaccination and blood sampling. From AY2026, SCVM/OU plans to resume visits to the farm. SVM/HU students have continued to visit HU's teaching farm for chickens during this period.

Visits to Slaughterhouses (Table 5.1.8): Students from both universities use the on-campus slaughterhouse facility at OU for practical training in meat inspection of cattle and pigs. Over the three academic years from AY2022 to AY2024, a total of 116 visits to external slaughterhouses were conducted for hands-on training in meat hygiene inspection as part of an EPT course (these visits are not included in Table 5.1.8). From AY2025, this hands-on training has become mandatory (Standard 3.1), and the number of visits has accordingly increased. In addition, visits to external poultry slaughterhouses have been restricted due to the current biosecurity issues related to HPAI outbreaks in Japan. Compensation for this challenge is described in Standard 3.1.

Animal Welfare

Animal Welfare and Humane Education Policy: VNJ adheres to the 3Rs (Replacement, Reduction, Refinement) and the Five Freedoms in all animal-related activities. To ensure ethical conduct, students are required to take the compulsory course Veterinary Ethics and Animal Welfare, laying the ethical foundation for animal resource usage. Beyond education, the usage of animal resources is strictly governed by the following framework.

Compliance and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Oversight: All activities involving live animals comply with national laws (e.g., Act on Welfare and Management of Animals) and are subject to rigorous review by the IACUC at each university. Protocols must justify the number of animals used, measures to alleviate pain and humane endpoints. Compliance is strictly enforced through annual monitoring and reporting.

Facility Accreditation and Management: To ensure high standards of care, animal facilities undergo annual self-inspections, periodic IACUC evaluations and external audits by the Japanese Association for Laboratory Animal Science. Notably, HU has been accredited by AAALAC International since 2007, complying with the ILAR Guide. Consequently, advanced welfare measures — such as environmental enrichment and group housing for social species (e.g., dogs, cattle) — are standard practice unless scientifically precluded.

Pre-clinical Training and Alternative Educational Resources: Live animal use in pre-clinical training is restricted to the minimum necessary scope, permitted only when high educational effectiveness is demonstrated and adequate alternatives are lacking, subject to strict IACUC approval. To facilitate the 3Rs, VNJ has established Skills Labs at both universities, actively expanding alternative resources such as models and simulators. These facilities enable students to practice basic procedures repeatedly in a low-stress environment, ensuring technical proficiency prior to clinical rotations. This approach significantly reduces the use of live animals in invasive procedures, simultaneously safeguarding animal welfare and ensuring the achievement of D1C (Table 5.1.2).

Acquisition, Storage and Disposal of Animal Material for Anatomy and Pathology Education

Acquisition and Use: For anatomy practicals using unfixed tissues, VNJ obtains cadavers or animals destined for slaughter/euthanasia. In pathology training, the curriculum integrates clinical and pathological perspectives. FPA submitted for diagnosis first undergo clinical examination followed by humane euthanasia and necropsy, allowing students to comprehensively correlate ante-mortem findings with post-mortem pathology. Similarly, for dogs and cats, students review clinical histories and medical records prior to necropsy to evaluate disease progression and treatment outcomes. To supplement teaching resources, SVM/HU utilises ownerless cadavers provided by Sapporo City authorities. SCVM/OU accepts necropsy requests from private owners and clinics. Additionally, specimens from local zoos (Maruyama and Obihiro) are utilised for training in zoo animal pathology.

Storage and Disposal: Both universities are equipped with dedicated cold storage and freezers within their anatomy and necropsy facilities to preserve specimens. Post-training, cadavers are disposed of hygienically via on-campus incineration or removed for cremation by certified external contractors.

Table 5.1.1. Cadavers and Material of Animal Origin Used in Practical Anatomical Training

Species	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Cattle	153	179	186	172.7
Small ruminants	84	86	87	85.7
Pigs	71	98	101	90.0
Companion animals	156	178	171	168.3
Equine	110	143	145	132.7
Poultry & rabbits	92	112	113	105.7
Aquatic animals	14	25	25	21.3
Exotic pets	15	21	19	18.3
Others (specify)*	58	70	68	65.3

Cadavers and body parts, live animals, fixed preparations, whole bone sets, plastinates, anatomical models are used.
*Others: Species: rodents, aquatic animals and a variety of wildlife species.

Table 5.1.2. Healthy Live Animals Used for Pre-clinical Training (Animal Handling, Physiology, Animal Production, Propaedeutics, ...)

Species	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Cattle	211	181	219	203.7
Small ruminants	8	8	10	8.7
Pigs	32	40	37	36.3
Companion animals	25	22	23	23.3
Equine	28	12	23	21.0
Poultry & rabbits	101	137	188	142.0
Exotic pets	0	0	0	0
Others (specify)*	1015	1085	1072	1057.3

*Others: zebrafish, rodents and frogs.

Table 5.1.3. Number of Patients* Seen Intramurally (in the VTH)

Species	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Cattle	142	148	137	142.3
Small ruminants	1	8	3	4.0
Pigs	1	0	0	0.3
Companion animals	13734	14685	13320	13913.0
Equine	278	166	283	242.3
Poultry & rabbits	4	2	2	2.7
Exotic pets	5	15	17	12.3
Others (specify)	0	0	0	0

*The number of patients is the sum of patient visits at the VTHs of both locations during clinical rotation periods. HU's and OU's VTHs use

different electronic medical record systems, and neither record system can extract the episodes automatically. Therefore, we show the sum of the number of patient visits in this table.

Table 5.1.4. Number of Patients* Seen Extramurally (in the Ambulatory Clinics)

Species	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Cattle	2103	2043	1741	1962.3
Small ruminants	158	102	109	123.0
Pigs	89	14	74	59.0
Companion animals	806	754	921	827.0
Equine	840	1019	422	760.3
Poultry & rabbits	343	285	215	281.0
Exotic pets	22	16	28	22.0
Others (specify)	0	0	0	0

* The number of patients is the sum of those seen in the ambulatory clinics of the VTHs at both locations and at the private night-time emergency animal hospital in Sapporo.

Table 5.1.5. Percentage (%) of First-Opinion Patients Used for Clinical Training (Both in the VTH and Ambulatory Clinics, i.e. Tables 5.1.3 & 5.1.4)

Species	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Cattle	93.6	90.9	94.1	92.9
Small ruminants	100.0	99.1	100.0	99.7
Pigs	100.0	-	-	100.0
Companion animals	31.5	28.0	28.7	29.4
Equine	69.3	74.9	41.1	61.8
Poultry & rabbits	99.0	99.0	99.0	99.0
Exotic pets	74.9	80.3	94.7	83.3
Others (specify)	-	-	-	-

Table 5.1.6. Cadavers used in necropsy

Species	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Cattle	78	82	77	79.0
Small ruminants	33	20	25	26.0
Pigs	5	1	12	6.0
Companion animals	109	136	93	112.7
Equine	30	27	42	33.0
Poultry & rabbits	355	200	198	251.0
Exotic pets	17	4	2	7.7
Others (specify)*	21	40	45	35.3

*Others: rodents, aquatic animals, and a variety of zoo and wildlife species

Table 5.1.7. Number of visits in herds/flocks/units for training in Animal Production and Herd Health Management

Species	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Cattle	237	240	220	232.3
Small ruminants	5	22	20	15.7
Pigs	22	3	5	10.0
Poultry	6	5	5	5.3
Rabbits	0	0	0	0
Aquatic animals	0	0	0	0

Others (specify) *	398	311	261	323.3

*Others: equine farms, red deer farms and zoo

Table 5.1.8. Number of visits in slaughterhouses and related premises for training in VPH (including FSQ)

Species	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Ruminant slaughterhouses*	2	2	4	2.7
Pig slaughterhouses*	2	2	2	2.0
Poultry slaughterhouses	0	0	0	0
Related premises*	5	5	2	4.0
Others (specify)**	10	10	4	8

* OU's Food Processing Practice Facility and its slaughterhouse is included.
**Others: water treatment plants, sewage treatment plants, public health centres, livestock housing and manure treatment facilities, public health and animal health laboratories.

Monitoring of Animal and Case Numbers

To ensure the achievement of the Diploma Policy and D1C, the responsible faculty determine the number and variety of animals and animal-derived materials used in pre-clinical training and CCT based on educational objectives, the Veterinary Educational Model Core Curriculum and the Veterinary National Examination. All pre-clinical animal use requires prior IACUC approval. Additionally, national surveys by relevant Ministries provide benchmarking data to validate local practices against national trends.

Annual monitoring of animal use and caseloads (Tables 5.1.1–5.1.7) is conducted by the IAPC of both institutions to assess consistency with ESEVT indicators. If resources are deemed insufficient, these units collaborate with the QA Committee to implement improvements.

A comprehensive system is also in place to collect on-site opinions regarding animal use from stakeholders, including students, animal technicians and researchers. This feedback is reported to the IACUC as appropriate, and corrective actions are implemented when necessary. Monitoring information on animal and case numbers, as well as responses to related challenges, is communicated among faculty and staff through regular committee meetings and faculty meetings, as well as via electronic minutes, email, seminars and FD workshops. For students, information related to educational training is provided in a timely and appropriate manner, primarily through email and electronic bulletin boards.

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.*

Organisation and Management of Affiliated Educational Facilities (On-campus and External Teaching Farms) and Student Involvement

Teaching Farms: To enhance educational effectiveness, VNJ utilises both on-campus teaching farms and external affiliated facilities, providing diverse practical training in livestock management, animal hygiene and herd health. Training at these facilities is conducted under the supervision of university faculty, guaranteeing educational standards equivalent to on-campus practicals.

1. **SVM/HU:** The Field Science Centre for Northern Biosphere (FSC) operates the Experiment Farm (1,247 m²) within a 10-minute walk of the faculty. It houses 44 cattle, 3–5 adult and 30 growing pigs, 27 sheep and 278 chickens. Managed by the Experimental Farm Management Committee (http://www.fsc.hokudai.ac.jp/farm/en/outline/organization/), the farm is utilised for CCT activities.

2. **SCVM/OU:** The FCASA (54,400 m²) is located a 15-minute walk from the central campus. Key facilities include a training building (2,390 m²) equipped with a milking block and a milk processing plant (775 m²) certified under FSSC 22000 and equine education and research facilities (1,155 m²). It houses approximately 110 dairy cows, 20 beef cattle and 40 horses. The farm has 115 ha of on-campus meadow; it supplies the pasture and corn for minimising the use of imported feedstuff. Managed by the FCASA Management Committee (https://www.obihiro.ac.jp/facility/fcasa/en), it serves as a base for training in herd health, animal hygiene, public health and production medicine.

As described in Area 3, the teaching farms (FSC and FCASA) operate as an integrated resource network for VNJ, providing curriculum-aligned educational opportunities for all students, including pre-clinical training, participatory clinical training and selected EPT courses under the supervision of academic staff.

External Farms: VNJ collaborates with a network of 11 external farms (1 affiliated with SVM/HU and 10 with SCVM/OU) to provide diverse clinical training opportunities across animal species, all conducted under the supervision of academic teaching staff.

1. **Sheep Practice (Both Universities):** Students at both campuses engage in participatory training at partner sheep farms. Key activities include handling, blood sampling, deworming, faecal collection and parasitological examination. A distinctive feature of this training is that diagnostic results and deworming outcomes are reported back to the producers, fostering a link between education and community contribution.
2. **Cattle and Horses Practice:** The external network includes 4 cattle production farms and 5 horse breeding farms (affiliated with SCVM/OU). These sites provide students with extensive exposure to handling, general first-opinion procedures, herd management and reproductive examinations in commercial settings.
3. **Swine and Poultry Practice (Educational Farms):** To supplement on-campus resources, VNJ utilises partnerships with Obihiro Agricultural High School (affiliated with SCVM/OU). These educational farms, housing 10–20 pigs and approximately 160 chickens, offer valuable environments for students to gain further hands-on experience.

On-campus and External Slaughterhouses and Meat Inspection Facilities:

1. **On-Campus Resources (SCVM/OU)**: To support the practical training curriculum, the Food Processing Practice Facility at SCVM/OU houses an officially approved slaughterhouse (simplified abattoir). This facility provides the necessary infrastructure for pig and cattle slaughter training, covering ante-mortem and post-mortem inspections (including viscera and carcass examination).
   - Processing Training: In a designated area within the same facility, practical training in food processing is conducted using dressed carcasses, providing hands-on experience in food hygiene.
   - Supplementary Resources: Approximately 20 sets of discarded pig viscera (liver, lungs, heart, intestines) are annually procured from the local Obihiro slaughterhouse. These are utilised in BSL-2 training rooms for detailed inspection exercises under the supervision of faculty members holding official Meat Inspector qualifications from the Hokkaido Prefectural Government.

   All of the above activities are conducted under the supervision of academic teaching staff.
2. **External Resources (Public Meat Inspection Facilities):** Leveraging Hokkaido's livestock industry, VNJ has been collaborating with an increasing number of public facilities, including the

following three major facilities at Obihiro, Hayakita and Higashimokoto under formal agreements. These facilities provide massive-scale resources for hands-on training (e.g. Obihiro: 100,000 cattle and 5,000 pigs; Hayakita: 19,000 cattle and 260,000 pigs; Higashimokoto: 40,000 cattle and 180,000 pigs; annual throughput). Educational quality, safety standards, and student evaluations are tightly coordinated between academic and on-site staff.

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.*

Teaching Methods for Animal Nursing and Care Skills

VNJ teaches nursing skills (e.g., restraint, blood sampling, bandaging, drug administration and feeding) systematically from the pre-clinical stage, initially utilising simulators.

Dogs and Cats: During clinical rotations for dogs and cats, students actively participate in both inpatient and outpatient care, ICU and night-time care. This practical learning is conducted under the supervision of faculty and residents or interns, with support from certified animal nursing staff.

Cattle and Horses: A structured approach is applied to cattle and horses. In Years 3–4, students practice restraint and blood sampling using mannequins. In Years 5–6, training progresses to hands-on exercises with live animals, conducted in small groups (6–8 students).

Group Organisation in Clinical Training

As detailed in the clinical rotation schedules in Area 3, training groups are organised to maximises student engagement and supervision.

Dogs and Cats: For dogs and cats, rotations consist of 5 students at the on-campus VTH and 2 students at external night hospitals. The supervision ratio is consistently maintained at 1–3 students per veterinarian.

FPA and Horses: Training typically involves groups of 6–8 students, with a ratio of 4–8 students per veterinarian. However, depending on the target species and training type, group sizes vary flexibly from larger cohorts (approx. 20) to focused individual training (1–2 students).

Student Involvement in Clinical Procedures (Across Animal Species)

Hands-on clinical training is provided throughout the pre-clinical training and clinical rotations, utilising both on- and off-campus facilities. This training covers the species listed in Tables 5.1.1–6, with a primary focus on cattle, horses, dogs, cats, pigs and poultry. Detailed syllabi and assessment plans for these skills are described in Area 3, while concrete data on student experiences are presented in Appendix 3-6.

Opportunities for Discussion and Reflection to Deepen Case Understanding

VNJ places a strong emphasis on case-based discussions and reflective learning. Through multiple problem-based learning (PBL) opportunities in both pre-clinical training and participatory clinical rotations, students enhance their critical thinking and case management skills.

Rotations for Dogs and Cats, SVM/HU: A structured cycle of preparation, practice and reflection is implemented:

1. **Preparation:** Students are assigned cases the day before to review referral letters and conduct

independent study.

2. **Clinical Reasoning:** On the consultation day, students discuss differential diagnoses with faculty prior to the interview. They participate in history-taking, physical and clinical examinations and discuss these results.
3. **Management:** For medical cases, students propose drug choices and dosages; for surgical cases, they observe procedures and assist in inpatient care together with clinical staff and faculty. Furthermore, in SVM/HU's small animal rotations (dogs and cats), students are required to submit a case report to the clinical staff and deliver a presentation on their assigned case on the following day or later. To prepare for this, time after 16:30 is allocated for self-study. Students are required to compile case reports and deliver presentations, where they engage in academic dialogue with multiple faculty members to deepen their understanding.

Rotations for Cattle, SCVM/OU: A distinctive comprehensive diagnosis programme utilises diseased animals donated by farmers:

1. **Investigation:** Working in small groups with minimal preliminary information, students conduct history-taking, physical examinations and testing. Under faculty supervision, they formulate diagnostic and therapeutic plans, exercising clinical decision-making.
2. **Pathological Correlation:** Following humane euthanasia, students perform necropsies (with histopathology) to compare clinical and pathological findings.
3. **Output:** Students synthesise their findings into written reports and present them to faculty and peers.

In both settings, rigorous faculty feedback drives critical reflection on the diagnostic process, enabling students to apply lessons learned to subsequent cases.

Standard 5.4*: Medical records for patients seen intra- and extramurally 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.*

Overview of the Medical Record System and Its Use in Education and Research

VTH Digital Infrastructure & Student Access: Both SVM/HU and SCVM/OU manage clinical data through fully digitalised electronic medical record (EMR) systems on independent LANs.

Data Integration: All records, diagnostic imaging and surgical videos (synced with anaesthetic monitoring data) are digitally stored and text-searchable.

Educational Use: Students can access these EMR systems exclusively within the university network environment, enabling them to review examination results and images. Surgical archives are accessible at any time for self-study.

Specialised Record Management (SCVM/OU):

1. **Mobile Clinics:** Records of cattle and horse examinations from herd health and reproductive management activities are integrated into the EMR system.
2. **Pathobiological Diagnostic Cases:** Cases from this specific programme are recorded by faculty and stored on standalone computers to ensure appropriate management. Supervising faculty provide selected data to students as needed to support case discussions, PBL and research activities.

Comments on Area 5

Small Animal & Shelter Medicine: SVM/HU has significantly advanced its small animal CCT (especially cats) through a shelter medicine programme launched in AY2020 in collaboration with the Sapporo Animal Welfare and Management Centre. Under this initiative, animals are transferred to the university for student-performed spay/neuter surgeries. Over five years, approximately 300 surgeries have been conducted, providing high-value clinical training opportunities.

Large Animal & Pathology Resources: SCVM/OU has strengthened large animal education by increasing clinical faculty and expanding caseloads from local farms. Furthermore, in AY2025, SCVM/OU concluded agreements with two private partners for the transfer of cadavers. This has established a stable supply of horses, cattle and pigs for both clinical training and necropsy.

Animal Welfare and the 3Rs: Animal welfare is central to VNJ's education. Both universities have expanded the use of Skills Lab, successfully reducing live animal use in pre-clinical training. Furthermore, in AY2025, SVM/HU launched the Advanced Seminar: Veterinary Practice of Animal Welfare Science (Years 4–6). This programme is designed as a model for welfare education and is slated for future expansion.

Strengthening FSQ and Clinical Skills: VNJ has reinforced training in handling, herd management and meat hygiene by securing diverse sites.

Compulsory Meat Inspection: To strengthen FSQ education, external meat inspection training (cattle, pigs, poultry) has been progressively expanded, with full implementation as a CCT scheduled from AY2025.

Suggestions for Improvement in Area 5

Development of Alternative Methods: To mitigate the risk of training restrictions caused by livestock infectious diseases, VNJ should continue to expand alternative teaching methods, including simulation tools, video resources and Virtual Reality (VR) systems.

Securing Necropsy Cases of Small Animals: Securing small animal necropsies is a nationwide challenge in Japan due to cultural and religious values. VNJ has addressed this by establishing a donation framework through:

1. **VTH Requests:** Respectful solicitation of body donations from owners at HU.
2. **Collaborations:** Partnerships with the Sapporo Animal Welfare and Management Centre, Sapporo Maruyama Zoo and the HU One Health Research Centre.
3. **Public Appeals:** Outreach via the Obihiro City website and cooperation with the Sapporo Pet Cremation Association, which resulted in the provision of nine stillborn cadavers in AY2025. VNJ should sustain and further develop these established frameworks to ensure a stable supply of educational resources.

Exposure to Emergency Cases of Equine and FPA: Due to the irregular occurrence of after-hours emergency cases in equine and ruminant practice, it is difficult to ensure that all students are exposed to such cases within the limited rotation period. Therefore, simulated case exercises are conducted during the evening session waiting time to supplement training in emergency response. As further improvements, the following measures are under consideration: (1) facilitating student participation in late-night cases through the development of a digital communication network; and (2) enhancing substitute training through the development of video-based ‘Case Documentaries’ based on real LAC cases recorded in collaboration with the LMS Committee and related bodies.

6 Learning Resources



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.*

In VNJ, learning resources such as books, electronic materials, e-learning and the Skills Lab are systematically developed to support the achievement of educational objectives and to ensure D1C. The use of simulators and video materials is considered important, and they are continuously improved and applied to reinforce the principle of 'never the first time on a live animal'. Learning resources are managed in an organised manner, with continuous improvement undertaken through input from relevant committees in both SVM/HU and SCVM/OU as well as from students and staff. Furthermore, remote access through a virtual private network (VPN) and Wi-Fi, together with the provision of learning spaces accessible 24 hours a day, contributes to a comprehensive institutional support system for education.

Library Content (Books, Periodicals and Databases): Management and Operation

SVM/HU: The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Academic Information Committee is responsible for setting budgets and policies for the selection of books, periodicals, electronic journals and databases. Within the allocated budget, the library can purchase new books at any time in response to requests from students and staff. The University and the School provide instruction (lectures, seminars, FD/SD) on the use of web-based learning resources and on online searching of academic databases and library contents.

SCVM/OU: The library is managed by the University Library Management Committee, which is responsible for managing the budget and improving the collection, considering users' feedback and library policies. Most of the annual budget is spent on book purchases and subscriptions to electronic journals and databases. Procedures for accessing and using the library are explained to students upon enrolment, and a library guide is available in both printed and online formats. Librarians regularly organise training sessions on online bibliographic searches, electronic journal searches and electronic book searches. Librarians are always available on site and provide guidance on literature searches upon request. An Online Public Access Catalogue allows users to search the library collection.

Management and Operation of E-learning Content

The LMS Committee (Appendix 1-3) is a joint committee responsible for the maintenance of VNJ's learning support system, VetPortal, the development and use of educational content through e-learning platforms such as SVM/HU ELMS and SCVM/OU Moodle and the effective implementation of online teaching. The LMS Committee collects feedback from students and staff, improves e-learning content and reports its activities to the VNJ Programme Executive Board.

SVM/HU: The Veterinary Medical Education and ICT Support Committee (Appendix 1-4 establishes policies for the revision and maintenance of e-learning content and related equipment. Decisions of the committee are approved by the Faculty Meeting and communicated to staff and students via notifications, emails and website announcements.

SCVM/OU: Students are instructed on the procedures for accessing and using e-learning content at

matriculation, and the LMS user guide is always available through an online student guidance course. Faculty are trained in the use of the LMS during induction courses following their appointment. Decisions of the LMS Committee are reported and approved at the Faculty Meeting and are communicated to staff and students via emails and VetPortal.

Management and Operation of the Skills Lab

SVM/HU: The Skills Lab is accessible to students 24/7 throughout the year with card authentication. It is managed by one faculty member in charge, and usage is recorded in usage logs, with annual user numbers monitored. Instructions on the use of the Skills Lab are provided at the beginning of Year 2 when specialised subjects start, and further guidance is given during the pre-clinical training in Year 3.

SCVM/OU: The Skills Lab is managed by the Skills Lab Steering Committee, consisting of three faculty members, who also serve as LMS Committee members to promote effective self-directed learning through integration with e-learning content. Entry and equipment use are monitored and utilised for improvement. Guidance videos explaining the purpose and use of the Skills Lab are always available online for both students and staff, and detailed face-to-face instruction is provided to students in Year 3.

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).*

Libraries

SVM/HU: The University has two main libraries (Central Library: 18,381 m²; North Library: 6,250 m²) and 17 branch libraries attached to individual faculties. The Veterinary Library is one of the branch libraries of the Hokkaido University main library. It is located on the first floor of the main building and includes a study room available 24 hours a day. All users have access to the library database through two PCs located in the library. Students and staff can access the library database from anywhere on or off campus using their own PCs via Wi-Fi or LAN.The average annual budget (excluding personnel costs and building renovation/maintenance) for the Central and North Libraries over the last three years was €347,254. The average annual budget for electronic journals during the same period was €3,947,374. The Veterinary Library contains two stacks (112 m² and 56 m²) and one librarian's office (28 m²). A librarian is available from Monday to Friday between 08:30 and 17:00. During weekends, holidays and weekdays after 17:00, entry is controlled by an electronic card key system through student and staff ID cards. The annual budget of the Veterinary Library over the last three years (excluding personnel costs and building renovation/maintenance) was €10,200 per year.

SCVM/OU: OU has a university library that serves all educational units, providing access and resources to all students, including those in the VNJ 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 m². It includes a reading room (196 seats, 1,125 m²) with three bibliographic search terminals and an audiovisual material corner, stacks (1st floor: 342 m²; 2nd floor: 130 m²), an office and a PC room with 16 PCs.

The library employs four full-time and three part-time staff, including four qualified librarians. During semesters, the library is open on weekdays from 09:00–21:00 and on weekends from 09:30–17:30. During vacation periods, it is open on weekdays from 09:00–17:15 and closed on weekends.

During examination periods, it is open on weekdays from 09:00–22:00, on Saturdays from 09:30–21:00 and on Sundays from 09:30–17:30. Electronic journals and databases are accessible both on and off campus through a VPN. The average annual budget (excluding personnel costs and building renovation/maintenance) over the last three years was €349,883.37.

IT Facilities

SVM/HU: The management of the e-learning platform and ICT support across the faculty is carried out by the Chair of the Veterinary Medical Education Reform and ICT Support Committee and IT support staff members. Most students use their own PCs but can also use 45 PCs in a computer room available 24/7. Eduroam and HU LAN/wireless access points cover most areas of the campus. The Information Initiative Centre (IIC) manages the Hokkaido University Information Network System, which provides network coverage throughout the University with a connection speed of 1 Gbps. The IIC also provides campus-licensed software (e.g., Adobe, Microsoft Office, statistics, mathematics and geographic information systems) to students and staff.

SCVM/OU: The Agri-information Technology Centre (AITC) is responsible for the management and operation of IT facilities. AITC has four full-time staff with specialised expertise. It manages and operates the campus network system, strengthens network security and provides training and support in IT and DX. The campus is connected by optical fibre, enabling effective information sharing through internal and external network systems, with connection speeds of 1 or 10 Gbps. Eduroam-compatible wireless LAN and numerous on-campus access points provide wireless coverage across most areas of the campus.AITC establishes enterprise licence agreements for academic software and applications (e.g., Microsoft Office, antivirus software and statistical analysis software) and provides them to students and staff. Students and staff can securely access the campus network and e-learning platforms both on and off campus via ID/PW authentication and encrypted Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure (HTTPS) connections. AITC provides 219 PCs for student use, distributed across multiple learning and common-use spaces on campus. PCs are available for student use between 08:50 and 22:00 at one or more locations.

E-learning Platforms

VetPortal: VetPortal https://veteducation.jp/login.go?AD=initis the learning support system developed and managed by VNJ. All SVM/HU and SCVM/OU faculty members and students have access to it. It provides academic information such as timetables, announcement on class cancellations and learning materials for each class. On some class pages of VetPortal, links to related sites such as HU ELMS, OU Moodle and remote teaching platforms are provided to appropriately guide students.

HU ELMS: ELMS is the educational information system of SVM/HU, available to all HU faculty, staff and students. It is an open-source system that enables SVM/HU faculty to share information and materials with students from both universities, and it supports class delivery. As part of class support, lectures delivered at SVM/HU are recorded and made available on ELMS for on-demand self-study. In addition, on-demand content is used in 10 subjects, particularly videos explaining the handling of laboratory animals, specimen preparation, sampling methods and basic diagnostic procedures. Many of these videos are self-produced by faculty members, while others are effectively adopted from national institutions.

OU Moodle and Webtube: OU Moodle**https://moodle.obihiro.ac.jp/moodle3/** and Webtube **https://webtube.obihiro.ac.jp/login/index.php**are learning support system based on the open-

source e-learning platform Moodle. They are managed and operated by AITC and the Educational Affairs Section. Students from both universities have access to these systems. OU Moodle is used by SCVM/OU faculty for creating and uploading original e-learning content, conducting examinations, submitting and providing feedback on reports and distributing class materials. Webtube is an on-demand lecture video distribution site on which almost all lectures delivered at OU are recorded. Students can view on-demand videos of the courses in which they are enrolled.

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.*

Library Contents

SVM/HU: HU holds 3,765,039 books, of which 10,117 are related to animal science and veterinary medicine, together with 1,337 journals in these fields. In addition, 49 e-books and 379 e-journals related to veterinary medicine are available.

SCVM/OU: OU Library holds 219,086 books and 6,305 journals, including 8,659 volumes in animal science and veterinary medicine. More than 6,200 e-journals and 4,900 e-books are available, of which approximately 60 are related to veterinary and animal sciences. In addition, 2,637 audiovisual materials are accessible.

E-learning Courses

E-learning content is primarily delivered through HU ELMS and OU Moodle. The expansion of e-learning content is promoted by the LMS Committee, and its use is regularly monitored. Digital systems facilitating class implementation, including distribution of class materials, examinations and submission of assignments, are now used in almost all courses. All lectures are recorded and made available on demand during the semester for review. A complete list of current e-learning content is provided in Appendices 6-1 and 6-2. A representative example is the Companion Animal Clinical Skills Videos, instructional videos on companion animal procedures produced at SVM/HU and used as materials for pre-clinical training. The videos present observational points for different body regions and demonstrate restraint, suturing, administration, blood collection and aseptic techniques. Methods for practising blood collection using simulators are also shown, as well as diagnostic techniques using biological materials. These videos are available via HU ELMS and via OU Moodle.

Skills Labs

In the Skills Labs of both schools, students can practise procedures such as clinical interviewing, physical examination, blood collection, administration, infusion, aseptic techniques, surgical suturing, ligation, bandaging, tracheal intubation, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, ultrasonography, endoscopy and rope handling, using simulators and diagnostic equipment. Training methods with simulators are introduced during classes and are also provided through instruction sheets and on-demand video content permanently available in the Skills Labs. On-demand content can be accessed via 2D barcodes using smartphones or tablets, supporting self-directed learning and skills improvement. A detailed list of equipment and learning tasks in both schools is provided in Appendices 4-7 and 4-8, and the operational framework of the Skills Labs is described under Standard 6.1.

Comments on Area 6

In response to COVID-19, online classes using Zoom and Webex were introduced, and hybrid teaching without the need for faculty travel between the two universities became more frequent. Digitalisation of teaching materials, utilisation of e-learning platforms (HU ELMS and OU Moodle) and on-demand distribution of recorded online lectures for review were implemented as more efficient teaching methods using ICT. Access to electronic journals via VPN from off campus was instrumental in supporting continuous learning during periods of restricted mobility. To ensure that learning outcomes were not compromised during this transition, both schools, through the LMS Committee, the Academic Affairs Committee, and other bodies, conducted organised surveys, reviews and training activities.

In AY2025, a mock clinic was established in the Skills Lab at OU, and a generative AI-based role-play bot for clinical interview training was developed. Both were made available for students' self-practice. The use of the mock clinic in formal teaching sessions is currently under consideration.

In AY2025, clinical skills videos for equine and FPA practice were developed and released for VNJ students to support self-learning.

Suggestions for Improvement in Area 6

To further promote DX, in education in line with advances in information technology, the following improvements should be implemented: (1) further utilisation of e-learning materials, (2) enhancement of the emerging use of AI for efficient learning support and (3) introduction of digital management of learning records through the e-logbook, in order to further support education and learning in VNJ.

7 Student Admission, Progression and Welfare



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.*

Admissions and Programme Information

Two universities run separate admission procedures. Information on the educational programme offered by VNJ, including the admission policy, programme outlines, future career options and campus life, is available on the websites of SVM/HU, SCVM/OU and VNJ and in brochures issued by each of the veterinary schools. SVM/HU and SCVM/OU offer annual 'open campus' tours for prospective students. SVM/HU also offers consultation meetings in Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya and other cities for prospective students.

Admission Information

1. **HU**: https://www.global.hokudai.ac.jp/admissions/undergraduate-admissions-overview/
2. **OU**: https://www.obihiro.ac.jp/en/navi-admissions

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.*

Required data of this Standard are shown in Table 7.2.1-7.2.5.

Table 7.2.1. Number of New Veterinary Students Admitted by the VEE

Type of students*1	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Standard students (SVM/HU)*2	37	37	36	36.7
Standard students (SCVM/OU)	40	40	42	40.7
Total	**77**	**77**	**78**	**77.3**

*1 There are no full fee-paying students.

*2 SVM/HU selects a maximum of 37 students as first-year students through the entrance examination. Five students from the General Entrance Examination join SVM in Year 2.

Table 7.2.2. Number of Veterinary Undergraduate Students Registered at the VEE

Year of programme	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Year 1	78	78	79	78.3
Year 2	81	84	81	82.0
Year 3	87	86	88	87.0
Year 4	88	84	82	84.7
Year 5	79	79	78	78.7
Year 6	81	80	89	83.3
Total	**494**	**491**	**497**	**494.0**

The number of students is the sum of those at the HU and OU veterinary schools.

Table 7.2.3. Number of Veterinary Students Graduating Annually

Type of students*	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Standard students (SVM/HU)	41	40	41	40.7
Standard students (SCVM/OU)	37	38	45	40.0
Total	**78**	**78**	**86**	**80.7**

* There are no full fee-paying students.

Table 7.2.4. Average Duration of Veterinary Studies

Duration	Number of students who graduated in AY2024		
	SVM/HU	SCVM/OU	Total
+0	38	37	75
+1 year	2	0	2
+2 years	0	0	0
+3 years or more	1	0	1

Table 7.2.5. Number of Postgraduate Students Registered at the VEE

SVM/HU

Programmes	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Interns	15	20	21	18.7
Residents	4	2	3	3
PhD students	115	101	94	103.3
Others (research students)	8	11	18	12.3

SCVM/OU

Programmes	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Interns	1	0	0	0.3
Residents	0	0	1	0.3
PhD students	36	34	33	34.3
MSc students	15	15	13	14.3
Others (research students)	6	3	6	5.0

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.*

Selection Criteria for Standard Students

Admission Procedure Overview: As mentioned above, HU and OU implement admission procedures independently. Applicants to both SVM/HU and SCVM/OU follow a two-step process. First, after completing high school or an equivalent education, all prospective students who want to apply to SVM/HU or SCVM/OU must take the Common Test for University Admissions (hereafter referred to as the Common Test) held by the National Centre for University Entrance Examinations (NCUEE). Second, each university conducts its own additional examinations.

1. **Common Test:** The Common Test is divided into many subjects. Each university has its own prerequisites regarding which subjects in the Common Test are required for admission. For both SVM/HU and SCVM/OU, applicants choose eight subjects from six categories: 'Japanese Language and Literature', one subject from 'Social Studies (Contemporary Society, Politics and Economics, Geography, World History or Japanese History)', one subject from 'Foreign languages (English, German, French, Chinese or Korean)', two subjects from 'Mathematics', two subjects from 'Sciences (Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Earth Science)' and 'Informatics'. The Common Test score is used as an indicator of the applicant's academic performance. Applicants wishing to enter SVM/HU or SCVM/OU are generally required to obtain at least 85 to 88 % score on the Common Test (the average score of all applicants in Japan is around 62–64 %).

2. **General Entrance Examination:** Each university administers its own examinations after the Common Test. Two entrance examination schedules are available (Primary and Secondary). In addition to the Common Test, the scores of these examinations are used for the evaluation of applicants.
   - **Primary**: Applicants are selected based on their Common Test scores and a paper-based entrance examination of the major subjects ('Foreign Languages', 'Mathematics' and 'Science'). Regarding 'Foreign Language', applicants can choose one from four languages (English, German, French and Chinese) at SVM/HU and only English at SCVM/OU. Additionally, SVM/HU has a unique selection procedure after enrolment: students who have passed the General Entrance Examination choose a specialised course at the end of their first year. A maximum of five applicants are selected based on their Grade Point Average (GPA) and are transferred to SVM.
   - **Secondary**: At SVM/HU, applicants are selected based on their scores on the Common Test and a paper-based examination (two science subjects from Physics, Chemistry and Biology) and an interview. At SCVM/OU, applicants are selected on the basis of their scores on the Common Test, an essay and an interview.
3. **Special Admission (only available at SVM/HU)**: Two types of special admission are offered, the selection criteria for which follow.
   - **Returnee students**: The two-step selection process is adopted for returnee applicants. In the primary selection, the applicant is assessed based on a high school evaluation report and a recommendation or an essay and records of social activities. Students who pass the primary selection can apply to the second stage of the examination. The subjects of the second selection include a paper-based examination of Physics, Chemistry and Biology and an interview.
   - **Privately financed international students**: A two-step screening process is adopted for applicants. In the primary screening, the applicant is evaluated based on examinations of science subjects (two subjects from Physics, Chemistry and Biology), mathematics and Japanese proficiency, which are conducted by the Examination for Japanese University Admission for International Students. In the second screening, the applicant is evaluated via paper-based examinations (two subjects from Physics, Chemistry and Biology) and an interview and the score of an English proficiency examination.

Policy for Students with Disabilities and Health Conditions

In accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act issued by the Japanese Government, SVM/HU and SCVM/OU have set policies and consultation procedures for disabled or ill students applying for admission to their schools. No applicant will be disadvantaged by disability, a health condition or a learning difficulty during the admission process. The application (admission) guidelines include information for applicants with a disability, and such applicants can attend a consultation prior to applying to discuss any adjustments they may require.

Composition of the Selection Committee

SVM/HU: The Selection Committee for the Entrance Examination of the university, which consists of the president, vice presidents and deans of the faculties, is responsible for the policy of the entrance examination and for approval of enrolees at the university level (Appendix 7-1). The Admission Centre of the university conducts all procedures of General Entrance Examination and Special Admissions,

including the development of examination questionnaires, scoring and public relations for examinees. The Admission Centre consists of the vice president, deans/directors of several departments/centres, professors and associate professors selected by the dean of each faculty. The members who create questions and score the entrance examination in the Admission Centre are selected confidentially. At SVM/HU, the Entrance Examination Committee (Appendix 1-5) is responsible for administering the returnee student entrance examination and the entrance examination for privately financed international students (Special Admissions).

SCVM/OU: The committees and organisations responsible for admission are shown in Appendix 7-2. The Admission Council of the University Educational Affairs Centre (UAEC) consists of the director of the centre, the executive vice president, department chairs, heads of divisions, and other professors designated by the director, assisted by the Admission Unit (for administrative purposes). The Entrance Examination Preparation Committee convenes in April each year (ten months before the examination) and usually consists of five to seven faculty members for each examination subject. The names of the members selected are withheld to maintain fairness. The committee is responsible for devising the entrance examination questions and scoring all examination papers.

Training Relevant Faculty Members

The faculty members who set the entrance examination questions or interview applicants are selected by the dean and relevant committees at both locations, based on their expertise and experience with the admission process. They perform their duties in accordance with the Guidelines for the Preparation of Entrance Examinations and Interviews. The Entrance Examination Preparation Committee undertakes several rounds of discussion on the content and quality of the entrance examination questions based on the guidelines, and the chairperson summarises the outcome of these discussions. Both universities devise and implement guidance meetings and FD/SD training for staff to provide a comprehensive overview of the undergraduate admission process as well as theoretical and practical information concerning admission procedures.

Appeal Process

According to the NCUEE Guidelines for Information Disclosure, developed by the Japan Association of National Universities, no appeal process is currently available for the selection process at national universities in Japan. However, test scores can be provided upon request.

Advertisement of the Criteria and Transparency of the Procedures

All the selection criteria (i.e. allotments/ratios of scores for paper-based examinations and interviews) are available to the public on the homepage of each university and in a brochure outlining the guidelines for admission issued by each university (available in Japanese only).

Admission Procedures for Full Fee Students

Not applicable. Neither HU nor OU has a category for full fee-paying students.

Student Intake and Resource Capacity

The admission quotas for SVM/HU and SCVM/OU are a maximum of 40 at each school per year. This number is determined based on Article 18-2, Chapter V of the Standards for the Establishment of Universities (Admission Capacity). However, both universities have a slight degree of autonomy in that they can increase their admission quotas (by approximately 5% at HU and 10% at OU) based on entrance examination results. In general, the number of enrolled students is determined by the resources

of the academic staff, facilities, equipment and other educational factors. Thus, the current facilities and welfare requirements at both locations are designed to accommodate the maximum number of students. The educational resources suffice for the current number of students.

For pre-clinical and clinical training at on-site and off-site farms, we adjust the sizes of student groups and the numbers of academic and support staff in accordance with the size of each facility and the biosecurity measures of each farm to meet its biosecurity protocol.

Prospective Number of New Students for the Next 3 Academic Years

The prospective number of new veterinary students at each school will be 40 per year for the next three years. Given that the number of applicants has been five to six times the enrolment limit for the past three years, we expect to fill the admission quota.

***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.*

Policies and Procedures Dedicated to Applicants with Disabilities

Students who need special support (e.g. for specific learning difficulties, physical and mental disabilities or autism spectrum disorder) can consult with the staff at the Office for Student Counselling and the Accessibility Support Office at HU (https://www.sacc.hokudai.ac.jp/en/) or the Student Counselling Room and the Office for Students with Disabilities at OU (https://www.obihiro.ac.jp/en/navi-student-counseling-room). These offices facilitate services and implement reasonable adjustments to provide equality of educational opportunity for all students, in cooperation with the relevant sections and health care and counselling staff.

FD/SD content on the latest information and skills to support students with special needs is provided for academic and support staff to update their knowledge.

***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.*

Progression Criteria and Procedures for Students

The progression requirements to the next academic year are strictly enforced. Students who do not meet these requirements cannot advance and must repeat the year. The requirements are as follows.

1. Students who have obtained at least 32 credits in General Education courses (Basic/Core Education) may progress to Year 2.
2. Students who have obtained at least 46 credits in General Education courses (Basic/Core Education) and 78.5 credits in compulsory professional courses may progress to Year 4.
3. Students who have obtained at least 115.5 credits in compulsory courses may progress to Year 5.

Students who fail to progress must re-register in the following year and obtain the required credits. The appeal process for grade evaluation is described in Standard 8.1.4. There is no appeal process regarding progression decisions.

Remediation and Support for Students Who Do Not Perform Adequately

Re-examination: 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.

Learning Support System: Recognising the highly demanding and stressful nature of veterinary studies, we carefully monitor student performance using multiple indicators such as the number of credits earned, grade point average, examination scores and attendance records. When students are identified as underperforming, class instructors, course coordinators or other faculty members may initiate informal or formal consultations to provide supportive advice and ensure that students can continue their studies.If necessary, meetings with the Dean and/or the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee of the student's home university are recommended to discuss the issues and identify appropriate solutions. Students whose academic difficulties are due to emotional, mental or physical health problems are encouraged to seek counselling from campus physicians or counsellors. If the cause is related to academic or technical challenges, students may access peer learning support.

Advertisement to Students and Transparency of These Criteria/Procedures

All regulations and procedures are explained to students during Year 1 orientation. Students can access all relevant information at any time through the university websites or the student handbooks provided by each university.

Rate and Main Causes of Attrition

More than 95% of students successfully complete the programme. The main causes of attrition among the remaining ~5% are incomplete acquisition of the required credits or personal circumstances, which may include mental, physical or financial difficulties.

Procedure for Amending Admission Procedures

At each university, the committees for admission and the Admission/Academic Affairs Section in the administrative department (Appendices 7-1, 7-2) are responsible for preparing the annual admission procedure plan. The proposal for revision of admission procedures and criteria is discussed in the Faculty Meeting (SVM/HU) or in the Admissions Council (OU) and is then approved by the President of each university. The Admission Centre (HU) and the Admissions Council are responsible for the implementation of admission procedures under the authority of the University Presidents. The selection process (including questions) and criteria are reviewed at least twice a year by the universities' committees for question preparation and selection. These committees ensure that students are appropriately selected and recommend improvements or modifications to the process when necessary. Furthermore, based on information on student progress and learning outcomes provided by the Academic Affairs Section and the university evaluation office (Office for Institutional Research), the Test Development and Selection Committee in each university further analyse their adequacy and effectiveness and recommend revisions when necessary.

The admission guidelines are revised annually and made publicly available through brochures and the university websites (described in Standard 7.1). Applicants and prospective students may directly contact the Admissions Section by email or telephone for inquiries. Frequently asked questions (FAQs) and answers are accessible on the university websites. The approved admission procedures are also communicated to faculty and staff through Faculty or Staff Meetings, official notices, minutes, emails and FD/SD seminars.

Procedures for Reviewing and Determining Student Services

The faculty collects requests and feedback from students regarding learning services through meetings with student representatives (Student Affairs Committee meetings in SVM/HU and regular meetings between the Dean and student representatives in SCVM/OU). Students may also submit comments through suggestion boxes and surveys conducted by the QA Committee at the end of the semester. Based on student feedback, the Academic Affairs Committee and related committees evaluate and review the learning services and implement changes or improvements where necessary. When services are revised, the information is communicated to students through the Student Handbook, notice boards, emails, university websites and the VetPortal.

***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.*

Mechanisms for the Exclusion of Students

Students are permitted a maximum enrolment period of 12 years to complete the six-year programme (up to 2 years in Year 1, 4 years across Years 2 and 3, 2 years in Year 4 and 4 years across Years 5 and 6). Students who fail to complete the curriculum within this 12-year limit must withdraw from the school. Students who are unable to progress to the next academic year are notified of the maximum duration of enrolment permitted for their course of study.

Students who fail to pay tuition fees for two consecutive semesters are excluded from the university at SCVM/OU. Since April 2019, students who fail to pay tuition fees for the semester concerned are subject to exclusion at SVM/HU. Decisions regarding exclusion are made by the Programme Executive Board and must be approved by the VNJ Council.

Appeal Processes

There is no appeal process against exclusion decisions.

***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).*

Various Services for Veterinary Students at SVM/HU and SCVM/OU

Both SVM/HU and SCVM/OU provide a wide range of services for veterinary students. Information about these services is disseminated through multiple channels, including student handbooks, notice boards, emails, university websites, social media, guidance sessions, first-year orientation and advisory consultations.

Support for Course Registration and Academic Administration

Students are given opportunities to participate in orientation and guidance programmes to learn how to approach the courses required to complete the veterinary curriculum. Faculty academic advisors for each year group and support staff from the Academic Affairs Sections assist students in understanding the course registration process. Counselling rooms are also available where students can seek advice on various aspects of campus life. In addition, both universities operate peer support rooms for learning.

Career Support

The Career Centres at each university provide career-related information, career counselling and

consultation (including review of résumés, mock interviews and career guidance), job-seeking seminars, guidance for participation in corporate research seminars and support for participation in internships.

Healthcare Services

Each university maintains a Health Centre to support the well-being of students and staff. The HU Health Centre is staffed by six physicians, one dentist, one clinical laboratory technician, three counsellors and three nurses. The OU Health Centre is staffed by one physician and two nurses. Services include nutritional counselling and first aid. Both universities also provide counselling rooms: HU employs 12 counsellors, while OU employs two. These centres address emotional or personal issues that students may encounter in relation to their studies or daily student life. All students are required to enrol in an affordable student health insurance plan offered by the universities, which covers injuries and accidents that may occur during the programme.

Support Services for Students Requiring Special Care

Students requiring special support (e.g. specific learning difficulties, physical or mental disabilities or autism spectrum disorders) may consult with staff at the Accessibility Services Office of HU and the Offices for Students with Disabilities of OU. These offices collaborate with relevant departments as well as health and counselling staff to promote equal educational opportunities and implement reasonable adjustments.

Faculty and staff are regularly provided with FD/SD training content on updated knowledge and skills for supporting students with special needs.

For students facing financial difficulties, both universities offer tuition waivers of 25%, 50% or 100%, conditional upon maintaining satisfactory academic performance (SCVM/OU does not provide a 25% waiver). Information about scholarships for domestic and international students is made available on campus bulletin boards, via email and on university websites. Students seeking further details may consult with staff of the Academic Affairs and Student Services Divisions.

Clubs and Circles

At each university, at least 50 officially recognised student clubs, organisations and groups are active, covering sports, Japanese martial arts, traditional culture, music, dance and recreational activities. Student extracurricular activities are managed by the Extracurricular Activities Offices within the Student Services Divisions. Each club is supervised by at least one faculty or staff advisor. Club leaders are required to attend accident-prevention seminars held at their respective institutions. Students participating in club/organisation/group activities must enrol in an insurance plan that covers injuries and accidents occurring during activities.

Other Services

Both universities provide access to dormitories, cafeterias, university shops and student club buildings equipped with rooms for extracurricular activities and sports facilities. SCVM/OU also maintains the residential training facility Akkamui, which can accommodate SVM/HU students undertaking clinical training at SCVM/OU.

Mechanisms for Resolution of Student Grievances

Official meetings consisting of representatives from the Student Union and faculty from the Academic Affairs Committee are regularly held. This meeting provides opportunities to hear student complaints. According to the content of the complaints, they are discussed at the relevant meetings (Faculty Meeting,

Academic Affairs Committee, QA Committee, etc.). Measures to address these complaints are proposed in collaboration with the relevant administrative staff.

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.*

Mechanisms Allowing Students to Provide Their Needs, Complaints, Comments and Suggestions to the VEE

Students can convey their needs and wishes regarding learning services through multiple formal and informal mechanisms. These include formal communication opportunities involving both students and faculty (Student Affairs Committee meetings in SVM/HU, regular meetings between the Dean and student representatives in SCVM/OU and the Academic Affairs Committees in both schools), where students can directly express their views. Representatives of Student Unions are also able to express their views in the VNJ Advisory Panel, which is composed of students, faculty and stakeholders. In addition, students may anonymously submit suggestions, comments and complaints through suggestion boxes and end-of-semester surveys conducted by the QA Committee.

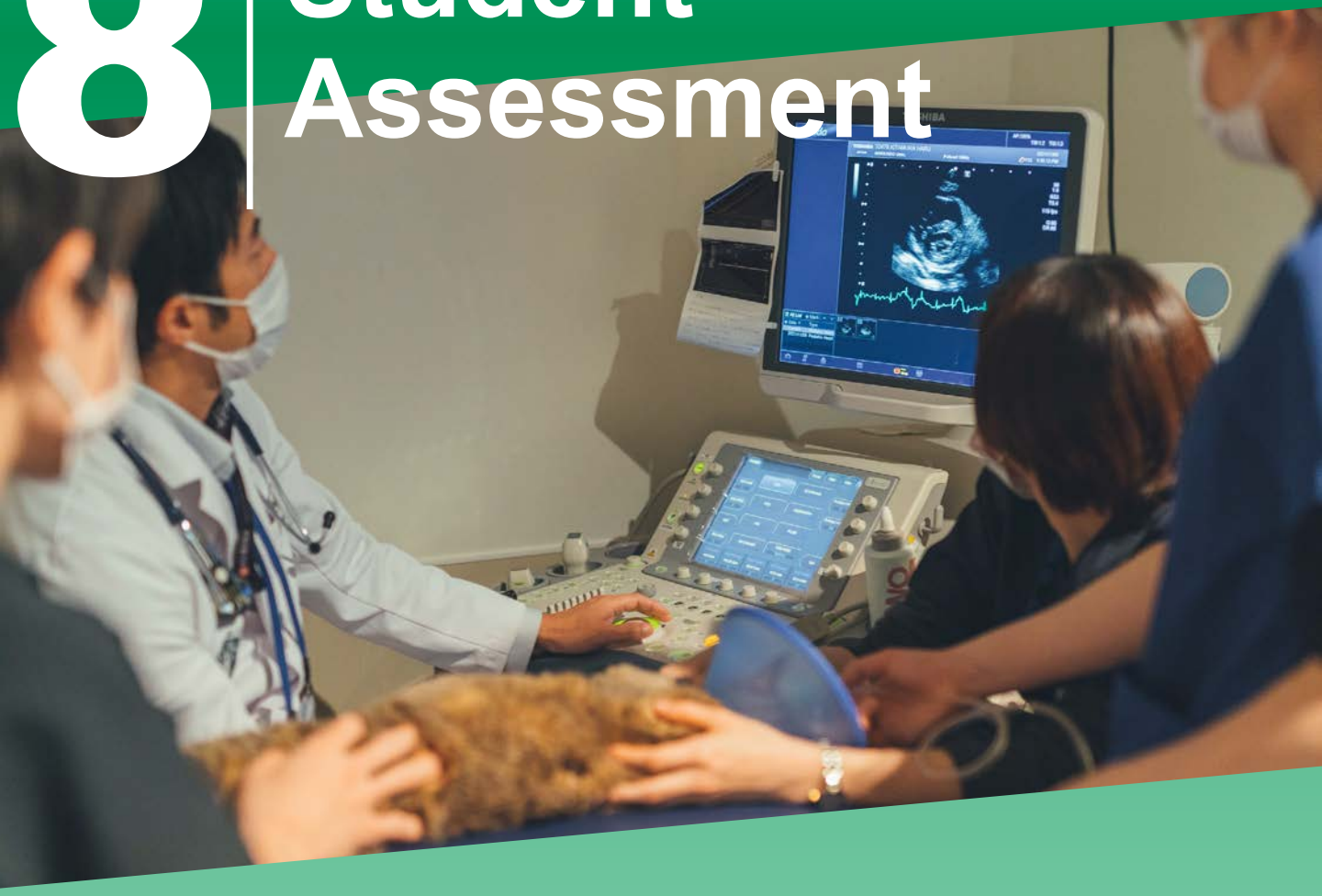
Comments on Area 7

Moving between their home university and the counterpart university gives VNJ students the opportunity to experience the distinct regional lifestyles in Hokkaido Prefecture. It also promotes interaction and academic exchange between students from both universities. Furthermore, VNJ provides a variety of support services to ensure that students live and study safely and healthily at both universities. In addition, OU started a special entrance examination for applicants who have the International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB Full Diploma) in 2024. This gives a wider range of applicants with excellent grades the opportunity to join SCVM/OU.

Suggestions for Improvement in Area 7

The total number of applicants is expected to decrease in the future due to Japan's declining birth rate. To secure students with excellent academic performance, continuous improvement of public relations strategies and admission procedures will be necessary. HU offers multiple admission routes to promote diversity and inclusiveness in student recruitment. In addition, a new scheme named the 'Frontier Entrance Examination' will be launched in 2027, which includes interviews to assess students' aptitude, knowledge and motivation for a career in veterinary medicine, thereby further expanding the variety of admission processes.

8 Student Assessment



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.*

General Student's Assessment Strategy of VNJ

Students are assessed/credited based on the GPA system (see Section 8.2 for details). The curriculum for each subject consists of lectures and practical training, with theoretical knowledge and practical skills (Appendix 3-2) evaluated through their respective examinations. Students' achievement levels are evaluated through the VCAT (described in Standard 3.1), followed by hands-on training in clinical rotations. Through this stepwise and cumulative curriculum, the achievement of D1C is evaluated in a multidimensional and comprehensive manner. In addition, the three barriers (minimum required credits) for students to progress to next academic years are set: i.e. the barrier for progress to Years 2, 4 and 5. These barriers ensure that students have acquired sufficient competence to advance to clinical training.

Theoretical Knowledge

Student achievement in each subject is assessed under the management of the person in charge of the subject by several different ways, such as paper-based and web-based examinations; oral examinations (interviews); oral presentations for summative assessment; essays/reports; learning logs (logbooks); quizzes conducted per module; and assignment submissions (Moodle may be used). Years 5 and 6 students undertake a mandatory research-based training programme (Tutorial Research). During the programme, students acquire fundamental and advanced research methods and techniques, scientific writing skills, and presentation and discussion abilities. At the end of the programme, students submit a thesis, which is reviewed by one chief referee and two sub-chief referees.

Pre-clinical Practical Skills

Pre-clinical training is assessed by the subject coordinator, based on written or online examinations, reports, oral assessments, presentations and practical tests. All students must pass the VCAT in order to progress to clinical training. The VCAT provides a comprehensive assessment of students' theoretical knowledge and fundamental skills acquired during pre-clinical training. The examination is held between February and March of Year 4.

Clinical Practical Skills

During practical training at VTHs or mobile clinics, clinical skills of the students are assessed by faculty members based on clinical training records, case logs and fundamental skills checked on competency evaluation records which assessed by teaching staff (Appendix 3-11). The quality of submitted case reports and their presentations is also assessed.

Soft Skills

Students learn the procedure of history taking in the Seminar in Veterinary Communication open in Year 4 where students do role-playing to practise history taking repeatedly. Faculty members assess their verbal and non-verbal communication skills and give feedback to them immediately. History taking is incorporated as a medical interview within the VCAT. Students must pass assessment by two examiners to be eligible for clinical rotations. During the clinical rotation period, students are required to conduct at least two history-taking sessions, one of which must be assessed by faculty members and feedback will be given. Teamwork skills are basically developed and assessed through participation in team-based

clinical care during rotations. Abilities such as handling pressure, keeping a positive mindset, a flexible mind, time management and responding to criticism are nurtured and assessed through presentations in laboratory seminars, experiments and final thesis presentations in Tutorial Research.

***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.*

Processes for Ensuring the Transparency of the Assessment Criteria and Procedures

Students can access information relevant to assessment criteria/procedures at any time via the online syllabus system and the student handbook.

Processes for Awarding Grades, including Requirements for Barrier Assessments

Assessment is conducted on an 11-point scale based on the GPA system (A+: 100–95 points, A: 94–90 points, A–: 89–85 points, B+: 84–80 points, B: 79–75 points, B–: 74–70 points, C+: 69–65 points, C: 64–60 points, D: 59–50 points, D-: below 49 points, F: no assessment). Grades from A+ to C signify that the student has 'passed' and will receive credit. The minimum requirements (skills and knowledge) for each subject are detailed in the syllabus (Appendix 3-5). Students meeting only the minimum requirements will receive a 'C' grade. Students graded D, D-, or F will fail the subject.

Processes for Providing Students with Post-Assessment Feedback and Guidance on Improvement

Students can confirm their credit status at any time via the online student services system. Guidance for students who have failed is outlined in Standard 7.1. Parents/guardians can also check the student's academic record via the parent portal at OU and via the document at HU.

Appeal Processes against Assessment Outcomes

If students have questions about their grades, they may contact the person in charge of the subject for clarification, and the grade will be corrected if necessary. If the issue cannot be resolved, students can appeal during an appeal period, which is set for one week in each semester. At HU, appeals are received by the Academic Affairs Section and forwarded to the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee. The Chair convenes a Grade Review Subcommittee composed of approximately three faculty members, which conducts interviews with both the student and the person in charge. Both cases are reviewed by the Academic Affairs Committee, and the outcome is conveyed to the student by the Chair. At OU, students submit a designated form to the Educational Affairs Section. A Grade Review Subcommittee under the Office for Student Support in the University Education Centre (composed of the Director and approximately three faculty members appointed by the Director) reviews and responds to the appeal.

***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.*

Procedures and Committee Structure for the Decision, Communication, Implementation, Assessment and Revision of the Students' Assessment Strategy

Student assessment strategies are deliberated and proposed by the VNJ Academic Affairs Committee, then finally decided and approved by the Programme Executive Board. This policy is shared with all faculty members via the Faculty Meetings at HU and OU, and further through the VNJ Joint FD. Relevant documents are distributed electronically to all faculty members. Materials are also stored in

shared folders, allowing faculty to access documents at any time. Syllabi detail course requirements and assessment criteria and are accessible online to all students and teaching staff at any time. Course evaluation by students is shared with the teaching staff responsible for each subject and utilised to enhance educational quality. Responses from teaching staff are communicated to students via email by the Academic Affairs Section at HU and by the Academic Affairs Section at OU at the end of each semester. Furthermore, the QA Committee conducts student surveys twice yearly to gather student feedback, and the results are shared with the relevant teaching staff. Faculty responses are compiled by the QA Committee and published on online portals such as VetPortal. Annually, subject coordinators review syllabus content based on evaluation of learning outcomes and student feedback. Stakeholders are informed and consulted through the VNJ Advisory Panel. The Academic Affairs Committee revises the assessment strategy as necessary, considering opinions and complaints from students, faculty, the Academic Affairs Office and other relevant parties.

Link between Learning Outcomes and Assessment Design

As outlined in Standard 8.1, learning outcomes are assessed progressively through the three barriers against progression to the next academic year, the VCAT and the Veterinary National Examination. For lectures and practical sessions, attendance of at least 70% of all sessions is required, and a pass mark of 60% or above is necessary. Assessment criteria and methods are established by the teaching staff, including the subject coordinator, and are approved by the Program Executive Board following deliberation by the Academic Affairs Committee of each university, and the Faculty Meeting. Once approved, the assessment criteria are published in the syllabus. To enhance assessment objectivity, automated grading and anonymous evaluation via Moodle have been introduced as new assessment methods through FD sessions, and some courses have adopted them. Student feedback gathered through subject-specific teaching questionnaires and the QA Committee's survey, alongside teaching staff input, is utilised to revise assessment design. Furthermore, feedback from student representatives participating in meetings with the VNJ Academic Affairs Committee and the Dean and Vice Dean of VNJ is also considered in reviewing assessment design. Each faculty member reviews course content and assessment methods, incorporating feedback gathered through various channels from students, and reflects these changes in the syllabus annually.

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.*

System to Certify Student Achievement of Learning Outcomes in the Different Subjects, Years of Study, etc.

Achievement in each subject is assessed by several different ways and is graded on an 11-point scale from A+ to F under the management of the subject coordinator (Standard 8.1 and 8.2). Students must fulfil progression requirements to advance to Years 2, 4 and 5. Students failing to meet these requirements will be held back and cannot progress until the necessary credits are earned. Students may not remain enrolled beyond the designated period (Standard 7.6). Periods of leave of absence are not counted towards the duration of enrolment. Students eligible for Year 5 may take the VCAT in Year 4, and passing it allows them to begin hands-on clinical training in Year 5 (Standard 8.1).

Strategy to Encourage Students to Take an Active Part in the Learning Process

Student representatives participate in the Academic Affairs Committee meetings held bi-monthly at each

university, providing an opportunity to present opinions gathered and discussed beforehand among students of each year group. Furthermore, at OU, student representatives have the opportunity to express opinions on all matters, including the learning system, at the monthly consultation meetings with the Dean. Additionally, through the open-ended questionnaire conducted by the QA Committee biannually for all students, students have the opportunity to express opinions on all matters, including the learning system. The Academic Affairs Committee, the Dean and Vice Dean of VNJ address the raised issues sequentially. The QA Committee compiles student surveys, communicates them to the relevant departments and staff, and provides feedback to students.

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.*

Assessment Methodology to Ensure that Every Graduate has Achieved the Minimum Level of Competence, as Described in the ESEVT D1C

To verify in a multifaceted and comprehensive manner that students have achieved each D1C through multiple lectures and practical sessions, a correspondence table clarifying which subjects correspond to each item of the D1C has been created (Appendix 3-3). Furthermore, to ensure the acquisition of D1C, the following assessment methods are employed.

Knowledge-based Assessment

As stated in Standards 3.1 and 8.1, paper-based and computer-based examinations, e-learning content, essays/reports, oral examinations, or oral presentations are used for the summative assessment of student learning outcomes.

Clinical Competences

Students use a logbook (Appendix 3-11a), case log (Appendix 3-11b), and self-assessment record (Appendix 3-11c) during clinical placements to clearly the acquisition of specific competencies, particularly the ESEVT D1C. The logbook contains multiple assessment items set by the instructor and is used for the direct assessment of the student's clinical competence. Their personal records are submitted to the subject coordinator after the clinical placement concludes, and each student is assessed to determine whether they have achieved the minimum level of competence. Students who have not achieved this level are required to undertake additional placements, and clinical placements continue until they do so, for the QA of the assessment of learning outcomes.

Competency Qualification Examination at National Level

As stated in Section 8.1, all students take the VCAT in February–March of Year 4 and proceed to clinical placements upon passing. Students who have successfully completed all assessments for Year 6, and earned all credits required for graduation are eligible to sit the National Examination for a veterinary licence, held in February. Those who pass the examination are granted a veterinary licence.

Comments on Area 8

The average pass rate of the National Examination for veterinary licence among VNJ students over the past five years is 88.8% for SVM/HU and 86.7% for SCVM/OU (for reference, the national average is 75.6%).

Suggestions for Improvement in Area 8

Preparation of e-logbooks should be considered.

9 Teaching and Support Staff



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.*

Global Strategy for Ensuring Staff Capacity to Cover All Requested Competences

Faculty members of both schools are responsible for teaching and practical training courses, including those in their respective fields of expertise, thereby covering the wide variety of subjects specific to veterinary education.

When recruiting academic staff, applicants are in most cases required to hold both a veterinary licence and a doctoral degree. Academic teaching staff are selected on the basis of their educational background, achievements, and research record. In the VNJ, 99% of full-time academic teaching staff hold a doctoral degree and 87% hold a veterinary licence (Table 9.2.2). For recruitment of academic and veterinary staff at the VTH, applicants must possess a veterinary licence. Applicants holding board certification as veterinary specialists are given high consideration in the hiring process. Newly appointed academic teaching staff are required, within one year, to undergo mandatory training provided by each university and/or by the SVM/HU and SCVM/OU. This training covers induction for new staff, code of conduct, biosecurity, animal experimentation and animal welfare, appropriate handling of chemical substances, facility SOPs, information security, teaching methods, educational tools including online resources and Skills Lab, assessment methods and tools, and QA procedures. Non-academic staff, part-time lecturers, support staff, and external qualified personnel are also provided with the necessary training depending on the extent of their involvement in teaching from AY2025. These programmes support them in becoming appropriately engaged in their new duties without delay. In addition, all teaching staff are also provided with the required annual update training. Furthermore, at the annual VNJ Joint FD, topics related to education, curriculum and QA are discussed and shared, thereby contributing to the enhancement of teaching competencies.

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.*

Number of Staff and Their Qualifications

A sufficient number of teaching staff and support staff, possessing expertise that covers the entire curriculum, are engaged in education. The number of academic teaching staff responsible for veterinary education is approximately 100 (expressed as full-time equivalent (FTE); Table 9.2.1). Further details are provided in the Academic Staff Table (Appendices 9-1 and 9-2).

Among the academic teaching staff, 57 are mainly responsible for basic veterinary science subjects (physiology, pharmacology, pathology, infectious diseases, etc.); 10 for VPH/FSQ subjects; 26 for clinical sciences in companion animals (dogs and cats); and 10 for clinical sciences in FPA and horses.

In the VTH companion animal practice, 22 academic teaching staff are engaged in education and clinical services, covering a wide range of specialties including internal medicine, surgery (soft tissue/orthopaedics), oncology, cardiology, neurology, dermatology, anaesthesiology and diagnostic imaging. In the field of food-producing animal practice, 10 academic teaching staff are involved, covering specialties such as reproduction, internal medicine, and surgery.

Eight faculty members are Diplomates of international veterinary specialty colleges, including the American College of Veterinary Radiology (ACVR), the American College of Veterinary Pathologists (ACVP), the AiCVIM, the Asian College of Veterinary Surgeons (AiCVS), and three are Diplomates of the Japanese College of Veterinary Surgeons (JCVS). In addition, 10 faculty members hold other domestic board-certified or specialist qualifications. Since 2024, the VTH of HU has been accredited as a training institution for residency programmes of the AiCVIM. Three residency tracks–Internal Medicine, Cardiology, and Oncology–are now offered, and five residents are currently enrolled (as of 2025). Three laboratories in the International Institute for Zoonosis Control at HU and the NRCPD at OU are designated as WOAH Reference Laboratories. Three academic teaching staff members serve as Experts, leading the diagnosis and control of infectious diseases.

As non-academic teaching staff, interns, residents, PhD students, and clinical veterinarians are also involved in education (Table 9.2.1). Although not included in the Academic Staff Table 9.2.1, approximately 64 invited speakers and unpaid lecturers per year occasionally participate in teaching activities of core subjects. The numbers of support staff and research staff who provide assistance for education and research are shown in Tables 9.2.3 and 9.2.4.

The projected number of FTE teaching and support staff for the veterinary programmes of each school over the next three academic years is as follows:

SVM/HU: Supported by subsidies, competitive funds for research and education, and hospital revenues, the number of FTE academic staff and support staff has gradually increased over the past ten years. With the launch of the AiCVIM residency programme at the VTH and the planned start of AiCVS residency programmes (Surgery and Anaesthesiology), the number of FTE staff is expected to further increase to meet expanding training and supervision needs.

SCVM/OU: The departments and centres involved in VNJ education develop a five-year personnel plan annually, considering the expected number of retirements. Over the next three years, the number of academic staff is planned to increase by approximately 3 FTE, including ongoing recruitment processes to fill vacancies. The number of support staff is expected to remain at the current FTE level.

Table 9.2.1. Teaching staff* involved with the core veterinary programme

Type of contract	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Academic staff (FTE)	102.9	100.4	94.0	99.1
Interns (FTE)	14.8	17.9	20.3	17.7
Residents (FTE)**	2.4	1.1	2.0	1.8
PhD students (FTE)	4.7	4.0	4.0	4.2
Certified specialists (FTE)	0	0	0	0
Practitioners (FTE)	3.1	3.1	2.1	2.8
Others (specify) (FTE)	0	0	0	0
Total (FTE)	**127.9**	**126.5**	**122.4**	**125.6**

* All staff included in this table are contracted by the VEE and have received training to teach and to assess undergraduate students. Qualified persons/practitioners involved with EPT are not included in this table.
** Including residents enrolled in the residency programmes of AiCVIM and JCVS.

Table 9.2.2 Percentage (%) of Veterinarians in Teaching Staff

Type of contract	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Permanent (FTE)*	88.2	86.8	87.2	87.4
Temporary (FTE)	98.4	98.6	98.9	98.7

* Teaching staff positions funded by the VEE's core funding and included in the officially approved staffing plan are classified as permanent staff, even if their individual contracts are fixed-term.

Table 9.2.3 Support Staff of the Veterinary Programme

Type of contract	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Permanent (FTE)	26.8	29.9	30.0	28.9
Temporary (FTE)	46.8	50.4	49.3	48.9
Total (FTE)	**73.6**	**80.3**	**79.3**	**77.7**

Table 9.2.4 Research Staff of the VEE

Type of contract	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Permanent (FTE)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Temporary (FTE)	39.3	38.7	42.9	40.3
Total (FTE)	**39.3**	**38.7**	**42.9**	**40.3**

Selection and Recruitment of Teaching Staff

SVM/HU: Based on its strategic plan, the school has maintained the increased number of staff in companion animal clinical practice, thereby sustaining strong educational resources for the VNJ programme. In line with this plan, the Dean determines the number of staff required to strengthen or supplement educational areas and support and is responsible for decisions on the number and rank of academic staff positions. An ad hoc recruitment committee for academic staff (comprising the Dean, professors, associate professors and lecturers) is elected and approved by the Faculty Meeting. The committee establishes recruitment criteria, including possession of a veterinary licence and a doctoral degree, as well as the employment schedule. The committee reviews application documents, statements of purpose, educational and clinical experience, skills, awards and research achievements, and selects suitable candidates. The selection results are reported to and approved by the Faculty Meeting.

SCVM/OU: The Chair of the Department of Veterinary Medicine (including faculty affiliated with the VTH) and the Director General of the NRCPD submit a personnel plan to the President each year. The President and executive board deliberate on the plan and decide the overall personnel plan of the university. According to the plan, the President instructs the Vice President to convene an ad hoc selection committee for the appointment of academic staff. The committee prepares a list of application requirements and announces international recruitment for academic staff. Candidates are selected based on their research achievements, teaching experience, proposals for research projects and education and letters of recommendation. The committee conducts interviews with the candidates and, if necessary, requires a mock lecture. Finally, the committee selects candidates and recommends them to the Education and Research Council. The council then votes on the candidates, and those approved are appointed as academic staff. Matters concerning the selection and recruitment of academic teaching staff are stipulated in the Employment Regulations of the HHERS and the Regulations on the Selection of Faculty at OU.

Training of Teaching Staff

Training of teaching staff involved in the VNJ is implemented at three levels: the university level, the

VNJ level and the individual level through mentoring. At the university level, structured training is provided to ensure compliance with institutional responsibilities and safety requirements. These training activities are delivered through face-to-face sessions and e-learning, with regular training updates provided annually or at multi-year intervals. At the VNJ level, both universities jointly provide FD opportunities; a face-to-face VNJ Joint FD has been held annually, and in AY2024 a new online, on-demand training course was jointly developed and introduced to establish a common foundation for teaching, QA and safety education, including facility SOP. At the individual level, newly appointed staff are supported through mentoring within their division or academic field. These training opportunities are provided not only for academic teaching staff but also, where appropriate, for external specialists and clinical veterinarians involved in teaching, as well as doctoral students participating in practical training as TAs. An overview of the training systems at both universities is provided in Appendices 9-3 and 9-4.

Teaching competence and effectiveness are assessed through multiple procedures, including completion and assessment of each FD/SD programme with achievement tests and eligibility criteria defined in the guidelines for participatory clinical training, which specify the required clinical experience and training for teaching staff.

Selection, Recruitment and Training of Support Staff

SVM/HU: Recruitment information for support staff (administrative and technical staff) is provided on the university website, through the Personnel Division of the General Affairs and Planning Department and at joint recruitment briefing sessions. Applicants are required to pass a first stage written examination, a workplace visit (technical staff only) and a second-stage interview. Candidates are selected based on examination results, personality and skills. In addition, SVM/HU offers orientation and regular SD sessions for newly appointed support staff to support the development of job-specific knowledge and skills.

SCVM/OU: The heads of the Department of Veterinary Medicine and the NRCPD prepare recruitment plans for support staff and submit them to the President. The President deliberates on the plans with the executive board, makes a decision and notifies the results. The Department/Centre heads, together with the faculty members concerned, prepare job postings and recruit candidates through the Public Employment Security Office. They review application documents, conduct interviews with selected candidates, evaluate abilities and make an appointment decision. After recruitment, faculty members are responsible for educating and guiding new and junior support staff mainly through on-the-job training, supporting them so that they can perform specific duties. Support staff are also required to attend training sessions provided by the University Administration Department on topics such as the code of conduct.

Regulations on External Work and Concurrent Employment of Teaching Staff

SVM/HU: Faculty members who engage in external activities through appointments or requests from outside the university (such as serving as lecturers, consultants or committee members) must submit an application to the Dean and obtain prior approval. Approval is granted when the purpose and conditions of the activity comply with university regulations, namely that such activities do not interfere with university duties and do not give rise to conflicts of interest. Concurrent employment is governed by the ‘Regulations on Concurrent Employment of Employees of Hokkaido University, National University Corporation’.

SCVM/OU: Full-time faculty are compensated for devoting their professional efforts full time to the university. At the same time, the university recognises that faculty can make valuable contributions by engaging in consulting and other activities with government, industry and other organisations outside the university, thereby enhancing their professional expertise in external contexts. Faculty must submit an application form to the Personnel Office before engaging in external activities (i.e. concurrent employment). Concurrent employment is stipulated in the Regulations on Concurrent Employment of Employees of the HHERS.

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.*

Opportunities for Pedagogical Training and Rewards for Excellence in Teaching

VNJ: The VNJ Joint FD is held at least once a year (approximately 8 hours/2 days). In this programme, information is shared and discussions are held on improved teaching and assessment methods. The content is made available on demand for later review.

SVM/HU: All faculty members are required to attend FD programmes on teaching methodologies and pedagogy organised at the university level during their first year of appointment. For continuing education, in addition to university-wide programmes, participation in FD programmes proposed by the FD Committee is also required. Contributions to education are assessed as part of a multifaceted performance evaluation system and high evaluations are reflected in salary increases. Furthermore, outstanding achievements in education are formally recognised through institutional award systems such as the President's Award for Education and Research, which acknowledges faculty members who demonstrate excellence in educational activities.

SCVM/OU: All faculty members are required to attend FD programmes for newly appointed staff as well as periodic refresher training at the university level. Additionally, faculty members have opportunities to participate in FD programmes provided by the Hokkaido FD/SD Council, the AAVS and other external organisations. Contributions to education are assessed as part of the multifaceted performance evaluation and high evaluations lead to incentives and salary increases (see Section 9.4 for details). In 2025, the Good Teacher Award, which is awarded based on nominations by Year 6 students, was established to recognise excellence in teaching and to provide an incentive for the continuous improvement of teaching quality.

Characteristics of Employment Contracts

SVM/HU: The duties of teaching staff are specified in the recruitment guidelines. In principle, faculty members are required to engage in education and research within their fields of expertise and in clinical service for clinical faculty members. The balance among these duties varies by discipline. Duties related to university administration are assigned through committee memberships according to academic rank to ensure an equitable workload. Faculty members are in principle employed full-time; however, part-time lecturers with specialised expertise may be appointed to complement education. Faculty members are generally employed under a discretionary labour system, although a fixed working-hours system is also available. In addition to mandatory refresh leave, the university provides multiple leave systems to support life events such as childbirth, childcare and nursing care.

SCVM/OU: Faculty members are expected to maintain a balance among multiple duties, including

education, research, clinical service and university administration, and their contributions to each area are assessed through a multifaceted performance evaluation. It is recognised that continuing research activities are essential for improving the quality of education and career development. The university therefore provides various forms of support, such as assistance in obtaining competitive research funds. In addition, leave management systems and schemes for employing technical support staff are in place to support life events such as childbirth, childcare and nursing care across different career stages. Even when employed under the university's basic operating budget, assistant professors are hired with fixed terms, typically a three-year term renewable once. Within six years of appointment, they are required to pass either the tenure review for assistant professor without term limits or the promotion review to associate professor, thereby transitioning to a tenured faculty position. For assistant professors under such contract conditions, it is agreed that their first three years should be arranged so that educational and administrative duties do not become excessive, enabling them to devote substantial time to research.

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.*

Programmes for Professional Growth and Development of Teaching/Support Staff

SVM/HU: The university and the school provide a range of FD/SD seminars for staff, covering areas such as English proficiency, teaching, leadership and management, research ethics, grant writing, and research-related compliance.In 2022, the Graduate School of Veterinary Medicine and the Graduate School of Infectious Diseases introduced a Mentoring Programme for doctoral students. Under this system, a small mentoring team meets regularly to provide advice not only on research and student life, but also on TA duties. In 2022, the VTH established a Staff Support Team for support staff. This office aims to promote sustainable working practices and work–life balance by responding to the needs of staff with diverse roles and employment types. Support measures include mental self-care training at recruitment and regular or on-demand interviews.

SCVM/OU: The university provides a variety of FD/SD programmes that are planned and implemented by the Educational Affairs Section to enhance the educational abilities of teaching staff. Participation in FD activities is recorded and reflected in the multifaceted performance evaluation system. A university-wide mentoring system has been introduced, under which a mentor faculty member is assigned to each newly appointed assistant professor. Through regular communication and meetings, mentors support the development of teaching and research activities. SCVM/OU also provides on-demand training courses for teaching and support staff, including TA.

Evaluation and Promotion Procedures

SVM/HU: The President announces a formal programme for the annual evaluation of academic and support staff. Academic staff employed on an annual salary basis are evaluated each year by the Dean across multiple domains, including education, research, social contribution, faculty and university administration, and clinical services. The Dean submits the evaluation results to the President, who refers them to the Performance Review Committee for review. The evaluation criteria and procedures follow the university-wide Basic Policy on the Performance Evaluation System for Faculty Members. The final evaluation is determined by the President, and the results are reflected in each employee's salary.

Support staff are evaluated annually by the Administrative Director, based on job performance, skills, attitude, and competencies. Support staff also undergo an annual interview. Promotions are decided based on the overall evaluation and interview results and are approved by the President upon receipt of the evaluation report.

The criteria for promotion are not open to the public. In order to enable a person concerned to understand the internal criteria, assistant professors are notified of the criteria for evaluating fixed-term performance at their appointment issuance ceremonies, and administrative staff are notified of the promotion criteria at office manager interviews that are held twice per year.

SCVM/OU: Faculty members are required to submit two documents each year: the Work Implementation Plan and Self-Evaluation Report, and the Multifaceted Performance Evaluation Sheet, which describes activities in education, research, administration and social contribution. Based on these documents, the executive board determines faculty evaluations according to achievements in education and research. The opinions of division heads are also taken into account during evaluation. The results are fed back to each faculty member, and performance-based incentives or salary increases are determined accordingly. The regulations for performance evaluation are shared in the university's online regulations system.Promotions are proposed in the personnel plans submitted by the heads of the Department of Veterinary Medicine, the VMC and the NRCPD. If deemed appropriate by the President and executive board after deliberation, an ad hoc selection committee is established, and an internal call for applications is announced for the relevant post. Applicants are evaluated and deliberated by the selection committee based on their multifaceted performance evaluation, interview and, if necessary, a mock lecture. Final decisions on appointment are then made. In addition, department/centre heads explain the anticipated promotion opportunities and criteria during individual interviews with faculty members, thereby supporting each faculty member in envisioning their career development.

Support staff are evaluated once a year by their department/centre heads and related faculty members on ten items, including cooperativeness, teamwork, knowledge and skills. A system is in place whereby fixed-term part-time support staff with outstanding abilities may be reappointed as non-fixed-term part-time staff.

How Staff Are Involved in the VEE's Decision-Making Processes

VNJ: Decisions on VNJ's operational policies and strategies, as well as resolutions on proposals from various joint committees, are made by the Programme Executive Board. Agenda items of the Programme Executive Board are, when necessary, referred to the Faculty Meetings of SVM/HU and SCVM/OU, where faculty members can express opinions and participate in the decision-making process. Regarding the medium- and long-term direction of VNJ, faculty members are regularly invited to provide opinions through surveys and are free to express their views. The Programme Executive Board and committees incorporate these opinions into their policy decisions.

SVM/HU: Policy decisions are made by the Faculty Meeting. The Faculty Meeting decides on agenda items submitted by committees through member participation in meetings. Assistant professors can contribute to decision-making by communicating their views to their supervisors and may also attend Faculty Meetings as observers upon request.Policy decisions at the VTH are made by the Animal Hospital Steering Committee, composed of clinical faculty and held monthly. Non-faculty hospital staff may submit anonymous suggestions via an online suggestion system, which are shared with members of Hospital Meeting and considered in decision-making.

SCVM/OU: Faculty members can express their opinions on various matters discussed at the Faculty Meeting, held once a month, thereby participating in decision-making for SCVM/OU and VNJ policies. Support staff at the VTH can convey their opinions on hospital operations to the Director of the VMC or relevant faculty members through meetings, email and verbal communication, and faculty respond accordingly. In addition, faculty members hold a monthly VMC meeting to share information regarding clinical service and education. Opinions concerning VTH personnel matters are reflected in the personnel plans submitted by the heads of the Department of Veterinary Medicine and NRCPD to the President.

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.*

Student Evaluation of Teaching Staff and the Decision-Making Process for Personnel Strategy

SVM/HU: The SVM/HU operates a web-based course evaluation system based on anonymous student feedback, through which students can comment on faculty performance and course content at the end of each semester. The results are fed back to students by the responsible faculty members and used to improve educational quality.Based on the approved strategic plan, the Dean reviews the personnel strategy and presents it to the Faculty Steering Committee. In addition, the Dean has established an advisory working group of junior faculty members to incorporate perspectives from early-career staff.

The VNJ Advisory Panel, composed of external stakeholders and student representatives, integrates feedback from students, faculty and support staff into the strategic planning process. The Faculty Steering Committee works with relevant faculty committees to draft the strategy, which is finalised through deliberation at the Faculty Meeting and subsequently implemented.

This strategy is communicated to faculty and support staff through FD/SD meetings and to students via the Student Affairs Committee or, where necessary, dedicated explanatory meetings.

SCVM/OU: At the end of each semester, students can evaluate and comment on faculty performance and the content of subjects/courses through a web-based anonymous survey. Course evaluations are compiled by the Educational Affairs Section, and a summary of the results is published on the UAEC website. The detailed results for each course are promptly conveyed to the responsible faculty members through the Academic Affairs Portal and are used as a tool for educational improvement. Furthermore, proposals gathered through the biannual student association survey are conveyed by the QA Committee to the responsible faculty members or departments, and responses are reported back to students. Representatives of the Student Union participate in the Academic Affairs Committee, where they can present opinions, and faculty members respond to them as necessary. In addition, a graduation survey conducted by the QA Committee evaluates students' satisfaction with their acquisition of knowledge and skills across disciplines, and the results are reported to the Programme Executive Board, Faculty Meetings, Joint FD and the VNJ Advisory Panel for discussion of problems and improvement measures. Moreover, in mock lectures occasionally held during promotion review processes, several students participate, and their evaluations are reflected in the assessment. In these ways, student opinions are actively gathered and incorporated for the improvement and evaluation of education at both the university and school levels.

Personnel plans are communicated to all staff through Faculty Meetings. Recruitment information

is published on the university website and advertised in relevant journals and websites. Various regulations related to faculty evaluation are made available online. Revisions or amendments to evaluation regulations are discussed at the Strategic Planning Committee, deliberated and approved by the Education and Research Council (attended by department/division heads), and then communicated to faculty and staff via the university website and Faculty Meetings.

Comments on Area 9

SVM/HU: To ensure the implementation of training necessary to maintain educational quality, an online training course was developed in AY2025. All academic, non-academic and support staff completed the course in AY2025, and it will continue to be used as induction training for newly appointed staff in the future. As part of diversity promotion efforts, recruitment quotas exclusively for women are sometimes established to increase the proportion of women.

SCVM/OU: An online course for the training of teaching staff has been available since AY2024. From AY2025, it has also been used for the training of non-academic teaching staff. As part of diversity promotion efforts, recruitment quotas exclusively for women are sometimes established to increase the proportion of women and those in senior positions. Furthermore, SCVM/OU has introduced a Career Path Programme for In-house Graduates, in which PhD graduates are employed as specially appointed assistant professors to support their career development. From AY2025, a new scheme has been implemented to support staff in undertaking technical training courses.

Suggestions for Improvement in Area 9

To further enhance coordination and QA of staff development across the VNJ, the establishment of a joint FD/SD committee at the VNJ level is under consideration. While FD/SD committees currently operate at each university and collaborate in implementing training activities, a VNJ-level committee would provide a more integrated framework for planning, monitoring and continuous improvement of staff development programmes.

10 Research Programmes, Continuing and Postgraduate Education



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).*

Integrating Research into Veterinary Education

All academic staff conduct their own research projects and publish their findings in peer-reviewed scientific journals. Research activities of the VEE (e.g., publication lists) can be viewed in annual reports and in Appendices 10-1 (SVM/HU) and 10-2 (SCVM/OU). The major funded research programmes in the VEE are shown in Table 10.1.1.

Table 10.1.1 List of the Major Funded Research Programmes in the VEE Which Were Ongoing during the Last Complete Academic Year Prior the Visitation (AY2024)

Location	Scientific topics	Grant/2024 (€)	Durations (Yrs)
SVM/HU	Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (from MEXT/JSPS)	1,469,309	1–5
	Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research from MHLW	168,947	1–3
	Joint Research	616,013	1–5
	Consigned Research	1,015,493	1–5
	Consigned Project	314,474	1–5
	WISE Programme (Doctoral Programme for World-leading Innovative & Smart Education)	579,717	7
	INTER-UNIVERSITY EXCHANGE PROJECT	81,151	5
	Other Institutional Grants	272,829	1–5
	Donations	328,974	
	Total	**4,846,908**	
SCVM/OU	Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (from MEXT)	560,526	1–5
	Other external research funding	1,143,728	1–5
	Total	**1,704,254**	

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.*

How Students are Made Aware of the Importance of Evidence-Based Medicine, Scientific Research and Lifelong Learning

Evidence-based medicine is one of the most important parts of the VNJ curriculum. It is essential for students to acquire the skills of evidence-based research because students will be researchers or veterinary professionals after graduation. Undergraduate students in Years 5 and 6 conduct research activities in Tutorial Research (described in Standards 3.5–3.7) and complete their graduation theses which allows them to develop critical thinking, evidence evaluation and careful observation skills. These abilities are necessary to make important decisions regarding individual clinical cases and to evaluate published papers and case reports. Students in their clinical rotations learn the importance of evidence-based medicine through case studies and pathobiological diagnostic training. Lectures by veterinary practitioners and off-campus activities such as internships also provide opportunities to understand the importance of continuing professional development.

How Students are Initiated into Bibliographic Search, Scientific Methods and Research Techniques, and the Writing of Scientific Papers

In the VEE, undergraduate students learn how to perform a bibliographic search and to read scientific

papers in Seminar in Particular Veterinary Medicine I and II. After they are assigned to a laboratory or a supervising academic staff for Tutorial Research, they acquire skills in the scientific method, research techniques and scientific writing during the course of their research work for the compulsory graduation thesis. Some students present their research work at academic congresses and/or publish it in international peer-reviewed journals.

Undergraduate Research Opportunities

Undergraduate students are assigned to a specific laboratory of their choice based on their individual interests and their academic performance at the beginning of Year 5. Undergraduate students may have an opportunity to take part in scientific research under the supervision of academic staff in the laboratory.

Thesis Requirements and Assessment

Undergraduate students must write a graduation thesis through the Tutorial Research. Students become involved in their research activities under the supervision of an academic staff member to complete their graduation thesis. Students are also required to give an oral presentation. The supervisor and two designated academic staff members review the content of the thesis and decide on the grade by consensus.

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.*

Details of postgraduate students for clinical training, for research training, and for other programmes, as well as attendees to continuing education courses are shown in Tables 10.3.1–10.3.4.

Table 10.3.1 Number of Students Registered at Postgraduate Clinical Training

SVM/HU

Training	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Interns:				
Companion animals	15	20	21	18.7
Equine	0	0	0	0
Production animals	0	0	0	0
Others (specify)		0	0	0
Total	**15**	**20**	**21**	**18.7**
Residents:				
Asian College of Veterinary Internal Medicine*	3	0	0	3.0
Veterinary Anaesthesia and Surgery	1	2	3	2.0
Total	**4**	**2**	**3**	**3.0**

*The residency course started in 2024.

SCVM/OU

Training	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Interns:				
Companion animals	1	0	0	0.3
Equine	0	0	0	0
Production animals	0	0	0	0
Others (specify)	0	0	0	0
Total	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0.3**
Residents:				
EBVS disciplines (specify)	0	0	0	0
Pathology	0	0	1	0.3
Total	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0.3**

Table 10.3.2 Number of Students Registered at Postgraduate Research Training

SVM/HU

Degrees	2024	2023	2022	Mean
PhD	115	101	94	103.3
Research students	8	11	18	12.3
Special research students	1	0	0	0.3
Clinical trainee	2	2	1	1.7
Total	**126**	**114**	**113**	**117.7**

SCVM/OU

Degrees	2024	2023	2022	Mean
PhD	36	34	33	34.3
MSc	15	15	13	14.3
Research students	6	3	6	5
Others (specify)	0	0	0	0
Total	**57**	**52**	**52**	**53.7**

Table 10.3.3 Number of students registered at other postgraduate programmes in the VEE but not related to either clinical or research work (including any external/distance learning courses)

SVM/HU

Programmes	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Research students	20	18	31	23.0
Auditor	16	1	0	5.7

SCVM/OU

Programmes	2024	2023	2022	Mean
Research students	0	0	0	0
Auditor	0	0	0	0

Table 10.3.4 Number of Attendees to Continuing Education Courses Provided by the VEE

Location	Courses	2024	2023	2022	Mean
SVM/HU	Veterinary teaching hospital continuing education seminars	235	263	0	166.0
	Infectious disease training from local government offices (short term)	2	2	2	2.0
	Infectious disease training from local government offices (long term)	1	1	1	1.0
	JICA training: Capacity building of veterinarians in Mongolia	15	10	16	13.7
	JICA Knowledge Co-Creation Programme for Clinical Studies Enhancement Project, University of Zambia	5	5	5	5.0
	Continuous Professional Development Webinar in Veterinary Clinics for members of the Veterinary Association of Zambia	52	48	45	48.3
	Total	**310**	**329**	**69**	**236.0**
SCVM/OU	Food Valley Tokachi Personnel Training Project. Food safety management course: Foodborne pathogens seminar [Basic]	7	4	10	7
	JICA programme: Nurturing researchers of countermeasures for zoonosis including a parasitic diseases	0	0	8	2.7
	JICA programme: Rural Development through Creating Agricultural Value Chain	0	0	7	2.3
	JICA programme: Food Science Training	0	0	1	0.3
	JICA programme: Food and Nutritional Biochemistry Training	0	0	1	0.3
	JICA programme: Capacity Development of Laboratory Tests and Research for Zoonosis Control	8	10	00	6.0
	Building Sustainable Animal Agriculture Value-Chains for Livelihood Improvement of Smallholder Farmers	8	10	0	6.0
	Nurturing researchers of countermeasures for zoonosis including parasitic diseases	0	1	0	0.3
	Potato Value Chain Training	0	4	0	1.3
	Basic technical training for ultrasound diagnostic imaging of bovine female reproductive organs	10	11	0	7.0
	Technical training on artificial insemination for improvement of conception rate in cattle	7		0	2.3
	Technical Training in Production Medicine (Advanced Course): Basic training for diagnostic imaging in reproductive management of dairy cattle	6	9	0	5.0
	Technical Training for Equine Reproductive Techniques	0	0	26	8.7
	Technical Training in Equine Clinical Techniques	24	24	0	16.0
	Total	**70**	**73**	**53**	**65.3**

Prospected Number of Students Registered at Postgraduate Programmes for the Next 3 Academic Years

SVM/HU: The graduate school consists of two schools; the Graduate School of Veterinary Medicine (enrolment: 16 students/year) and the Graduate School of Infectious Diseases (enrolment: 12 students/year). SVM/HU provides the doctoral programme 'One Health Frontier Graduate Programme for Excellence', and all students in both Graduate Schools are strongly encouraged to participate in the doctoral programme. In AY2025, 16 and 27 students have started their PhD projects in the Graduate School of Veterinary Medicine and the Graduate School of Infectious Diseases, respectively. In addition, there are in total 62 and 75 students, respectively, in the two Graduate Schools. It is expected that the number of students will fulfil the capacity of both Graduate Schools (16 and 12 students/year) for the next three years. SVM/HU offers scholarships of €987~ per month through the doctoral programme of 'One Health Frontier Graduate Programme of Excellence', and through other programmes such as 'Special Programme for Priority Placement of Government Sponsored International Students', 'Hokkaido University EXEX Doctoral Fellowship', and 'Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Research Fellowships'. Moreover, these programmes provide opportunities to apply for research grants and student travel grants, which promote the research project of individual students.

SCVM/OU: The Doctoral Programme in Veterinary Medicine within the Graduate School of Animal and Veterinary Sciences and Agriculture was established in AY2018 with an annual admission capacity of five students. In AY2022, six students were admitted, followed by eleven in AY2023 and nine in AY2024. Although a slight decrease in the number of admissions is anticipated over the next three years, it is expected that approximately five students, corresponding to 100% of the quota, will be enrolled each year. The Master's Programme in Animal Science and Agriculture, likewise, established in AY2018 within the Graduate School of Animal and Veterinary Sciences and Agriculture, includes a course in Veterinary Life Science, which is offered by the faculty of the School of Veterinary Medicine. This course is accessible to graduates of faculties other than Veterinary Medicine. No fixed admission quota has been specified; however, 7 students were admitted in AY2022, 9 in AY2023 and 6 in AY2024.

Integrating Post- and Undergraduate Clinical Training

SVM/HU: Graduate students in the Department of Clinical Sciences, as well as interns and residents in the VTH, play an important role in tutoring undergraduate students in the clinical rotations. Postgraduate students take initiative to consult clinical cases under the supervision of academic staff, and thus postgraduate students support undergraduate students in achieving their logbook objectives for the D1C. Although both postgraduate and undergraduate students participate in clinical consultations, the national veterinary licence clearly defines their roles in the clinics, avoiding the possible conflicts between the two participants.

SCVM/OU: In the field of clinical practice in dogs and cats, opportunities for participation in case management by interns and undergraduate students are allocated on separate days, thereby ensuring that their involvement does not overlap. In instances where both groups are permitted to participate in cases of particular interest, distinctions are maintained with respect to the examinations and procedures that may be undertaken, in accordance with whether a veterinary licence is held. In the field of FPA and equine clinical practice, graduate students are not permitted to assume responsibility as primary clinicians. Instead, they are formally employed by the university as TAs and are engaged in providing instructional support for undergraduate education.

Aligning Continuing Education with Professional Needs

SVM/HU: SVM/HU offers an outstanding postgraduate education programme in zoonotic disease and chemical hazard management, as well as integrated veterinary clinical science. Graduate students receive the doctoral degree and are certified as Zoonosis Control Experts, Chemical Hazard Control Experts and Integrated Veterinary Clinical Experts, respectively. The VTH provides postgraduate programmes for continuing professional development, such as workshops and seminars on advanced companion animal medicine for local veterinarians and postgraduate students every two months, in response to request from the community.

SCVM/OU: OU is in the Tokachi District, which is one of the largest food-producing regions in Japan. Moreover, Tokachi and its neighbouring Hidaka District are well-known horse-breeding areas. Accordingly, we offer various continuing education courses related to FPA, horses and food safety to address the lifelong learning needs of the profession and the local community.

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.*

Linking Research to Education

From Year 4, students participate in laboratory seminars and receive explanations about research activities through Seminar in Particular Veterinary Medicine I and II. From Year 5, students join a laboratory that is conducting research activities of their interest and begin conducting their research activities under the supervision of a professor for Tutorial Research (10 credits). Each laboratory conducts numerous internationally acclaimed research activities spanning a wide range of fields from basic research to applied and clinical research. The achievements are reviewed on the university website and summarised annually by the QA Committee.

Oversight of Research, Postgraduate, and Continuing Education

SVM/HU: The Academic Affairs Committee of the graduate school is responsible for planning and implementing graduate education programmes. Staff of the VTH are also involved in planning and implementing postgraduate programmes for interns and residents. Each student is assigned one primary supervisor and three or more secondary supervisors, who provide guidance for the research leading to the doctoral dissertation. The International Affairs Committee is in charge of various international student-related tasks, including accepting international students, providing support for their daily lives and studies, and collaborating with the Admissions Committee to select doctoral candidates through special admission quotas. Final decisions regarding postgraduate programmes are made by the Faculty Meeting, which takes full responsibility for all aspects of them. The Student Affairs Committee supervises communication between the graduate schools and students. Information regarding the graduate programmes and their activities is provided to students and academic staff by email, website, and paper-based communications. An electronic portfolio system called ‘VetLog’ has been introduced, providing students and academic staff with an opportunity to review, communicate, and support student life by sharing information, schedules, and messages related to the graduate programmes and their activities.

SCVM/OU: Graduate programmes are organised based on deliberations among senior faculty members and must be approved by the University Research and Education Council. Each student is assigned one primary supervisor and two secondary supervisors, who provide guidance for the research leading to the doctoral dissertation. Information regarding graduate programmes and their activities is

disseminated to faculty members and doctoral students through email, printed materials, the academic portal site, and the university website. Staff of the VTH are also involved in the planning and implementation of graduate education programmes. The themes of continuing education (postgraduate education) programmes are discussed, determined, evaluated, and revised by the faculty members of the affiliated sections of the university together with administrative staff. These programmes are announced through advertisements on the university website and in relevant journals.

Comments on Area 10

The research performance of VNJ is extraordinary and one of our strengths, which is reflected in our scientific production and research funding acquisition. VNJ requires students to submit a doctoral thesis, which provides students with the opportunity to develop a critical perspective and scientific thinking, similar to the graduation thesis in Tutorial Research. This builds a strong network between undergraduate students, doctoral students and research groups, which leads to a significant number of our graduates continuing their studies in our postgraduate programmes. SCVM/OU established the Master's Programme in Veterinary Life Science in AY2018. This provides graduates from fields other than Veterinary Medicine with an excellent opportunity to join biomedical research.

Suggestions for Improvement in Area 10

VNJ lacks the full resources required for structured residency training programmes in many clinical and paraclinical specialties. This is not just an issue for VNJ, but a major challenge facing many veterinary schools in Japan. Although SVM/HU offers residency training programmes in some specialties (Internal Medicine, Anaesthesia and Surgery in dogs and cats), it does not cover a wide range of veterinary specialties. SCVM/OU does not have any residency training programmes in clinical fields and has no internationally recognised specialists in FPA and equine medicine. As resources are limited at domestic veterinary universities in Japan, VNJ should actively participate in residency training frameworks in collaboration with other institutions in the Asian region.

ESEVT Indicators



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**

1	Median values defined by data from VEEs with Accreditation status
2	Recommended minimal values calculated as the 20th percentile of data from VEEs with Accreditation status
3	A negative balance indicates that the Indicator is below the recommended minimal value
*****	Indicators used only for statistical purpose

Comments on the Indicators

Overall, the ESEVT indicators show good values, indicating that the VNJ provides efficient educational activities with sufficient hands-on training opportunities for students. However, I14 is below the ESEVT minimal value, and I13 and I18 are only slightly above it.

I4 & I5: There were fluctuations in AY2022 and AY2023 due to the curriculum transition period. 'Curriculum 2019' will be fully implemented in AY2024, after which it is anticipated that the figures will remain at the AY2024 levels.

I13: The occurrence of infectious diseases such as HPAI in Japan has restricted opportunities for visiting poultry units. In fact, farm visits based on collaboration with one of the largest meat production companies in Japan have not been implemented for the past five years, and there is no prospect of resumption. Therefore, training opportunities have been secured through visits to the university farm at HU and to the educational farm of an agricultural high school near OU.

I14: In Japan, due to traditional cultural and Buddhist values, the number of owners who consent to necropsy of companion animals (dogs and cats) is limited. VNJ is working to further increase the number of necropsies of these animals through collaboration with public institutions and active outreach to owners.

I18: In addition to veterinarians certified as specialists by the ABVS, those certified by the Asian Board of Veterinary Specialties (AiBVS) are included. Although Japan does not have a national board for veterinary specialisation, the specialist qualification offered by the JCVS is well established and widely recognised for its structured residency training program. Thus, Diplomates of the JCVS are also included in this indicator.

Suggestions for Improvement on Indicators

I13: VNJ will continue to seek alternative opportunities for farm visits through collaboration with local farms and educational institutions.

I14: VNJ will continue to conduct 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.

I18: The number of Diplomates of the AiCVIM and the AiCVS is expected to increase in the future, as the VTH of SVM/HU has been accredited as a training institution for residency programmes.

Glossary

AAALAC International: Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International

AAVS: Asian Association of Veterinary Schools

ABSL: Animal Biosafety Level

ACVP: American College of Veterinary Pathologists

ACVR: American College of Veterinary Radiology

AFC: Animal Facility Committee

AFSC: Animal Facility Steering Committee

AI: Artificial Intelligence

AiCVIM: Asian College of Veterinary Internal Medicine

AiCVS: Asian College of Veterinary Surgeons

AITC: Agri-information Technology Centre

AMED: Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development

BSC(s): Biosafety Cabinet(s)

BSL: Biosafety Level

CCT: Core Clinical Training

CEA: Certified Evaluation and Accreditation

CSF: Classical Swine Fever

CT: Computed Tomography

D1C: Day One Competences

DX: Digital Transformation

ECTS: European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

EMR: Electronic Medical Record

EPT: Elective Practical Training

FCASA: Field Centre of Animal Science and Agriculture

FD: Faculty Development

FPA: Food-producing animal

FSC: Field Science Centre for Northern Biosphere

FSQ: Food Safety and Quality

FTE: Full-time Equivalent

GPA: Grade Point Average

HHERS: Hokkaido Higher Education and Research System

HPAI: Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza

HTTPS: Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure

IACUC: Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee

IAPC: International Accreditation Promotion Committee

ICT: Information and Communication Technology

ICU: Intensive Care Unit

IIC: Information Initiative Centre

IT: Information Technology

IVEP: International Vet Exchange Programme

JAEVE: Japanese Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education

JCVS: Japanese College of Veterinary Surgeons

JICA: Japan International Cooperation Agency

JUAA: Japan University Accreditation Association

LAC Building: Large Animal Hospital and Clinical Research Building

LMS: Learning Management System

MAFF: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

MEXT: Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

MHLW: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare

MRI: Magnetic Resonance Imaging

NCUEE: National Centre of University Entrance Examinations

NIAD-QE: National Institution for Academic Degrees and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education

NRCPD: National Research Centre for Protozoan Diseases

NUC-EC: National University Corporation Evaluation Committee

NUCE: National University Corporation Evaluation

NUCs: National University Corporations

PASC: Pathogenic Agent Safety Committee

PBL: Problem-based Learning

QA: Quality Assurance

SAC Building: Small Companion Animal Clinical Research Building

SD: Staff Development

SOP: Standard Operating Procedure

TAs: Teaching Assistants

UAEC: University Educational Affairs Centre

VCAT: Veterinary Common Achievement Test

VEMCC: Veterinary Educational Model Core Curriculum

vetCBT: Computer-Based Testing

vetESO: Veterinary Educational Support Organisation

vetOSCE: Objective Structured Clinical Evaluation

VMC: Veterinary Medical Centre

VNJ: VetNorth Japan

VPH: Veterinary Public Health

VPN: Virtual Private Network

VR: Virtual Reality

VTH: Veterinary Teaching Hospital

WHO: World Health Organisation

WOAH: World Organisation for Animal Health

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