**European Association
of Establishments for Veterinary Education**

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

EAEVE

REPORT ON THE STAGE 2 EVALUATION VISITATION TO THE FACULTY OF
VETERINARY SCIENCE, BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

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by the EXPERT GROUP

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In order to derive the necessary information, the Faculty must develop twelve (12) assessment procedures (AP 1 – 12).

INTRODUCTION

The Faculty of Veterinary Science Budapest was visited on 24-28th of February 2014; a combined stage 1 and stage 2 evaluation process was requested with the aim of obtaining EAEVE accreditation.

The basis of this report is the self-evaluation report (SER-2) prepared by the Faculty before the visitation, EAEVE guidelines, observations and interviews performed during the visitation. The SER-2 was supplemented with additional information during the visitation. Supporting documentation was presented in English as Annexes in the SER-2 and available during the visitation primarily in the Hungarian language; translators were present to help with understanding the different documents. The Office of Study Affairs provided information about the study management system in English. Different flow charts were provided either in SER-2 or at the time of the visitation.

A person responsible for quality assurance was available during the visitation. Most communication was conducted in English, with the remaining part conducted in German.

Most processes have been in place for more than 2 years, although some of the detailed aspects of the quality assurance system are still being developed, as the faculty discovers problems and is happy with the way the more important aspects have become embedded.

The management of unexpected events is regulated by law and local directives. An external, part-time, health and safety expert is hired by the faculty to support this area.

Chapter 1.   POLICY STATEMENT

Findings

The Faculty has well documented quality assurance processes, although it is not always clear how individual actions relate to the Faculty committee structure and how information flows through the system, plans are made and actions taken.

Standards are set at national level for university programmes, and degree programmes are benchmarked to these. However, it is not entirely clear how these articulate with EAEVE learning outcomes and standards in relation to these.

Comments

Quality assurance processes are well documented and have been developed with the help of external consultants. These support audit.

Some internally developed systems sit alongside these, such as the student assessment of courses and staff. This seems to be better understood and more effectively and extensively used than some of the externally created processes.

Suggestions

The faculty needs to ensure that all staff better understand what is meant by quality and standards and the value of these systems at programme, teacher and individual class levels, so that key performance indicators and relevant management information are used more effectively by all in assurance and enhancement of degree programmes.

Evaluation in relation to Assessment Procedure 1

Satisfactory

**Chapter 2.   ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS, POST GRADUATE EDUCATION
                 AND STUDENT WELFARE**

2.1   UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

Findings

The Faculty provides separate Hungarian and English language study programmes, as well as a German course for the first two years only. Selection criteria are in place for all three student intakes. The Hungarian course is the most oversubscribed and this is reflected in the superior performance of the Hungarian students, as revealed by their average grade, particularly in the first year, a trend that is maintained all the way through in comparison to the English programme. State funding is limited to the Hungarian language programme.

The oral examination is a dominant mode of assessment; other methods are also used across the programme but it is not clear how the decision on mode is linked to the knowledge, skills or attitudes being tested. Examination content, methods and standards are described as being defined at departmental and individual teacher level. University examinations can be taken a total of three times during a single examination period; however, a student can take the failed examination a further three times, in the subsequent period. If these are failed, a student must leave the course, but can apply to enter the course again.

Comments

Topics for study across the curricula are listed, but learning objectives/outcomes are not clearly defined. There is no clear documentation of the alignment between outcomes, assessment and teaching. Standard setting is at the level of the individual teacher, and it is routine for oral examinations with a single teacher to be chosen as the main assessment method. This means that, in the absence of any clear system for establishing or verifying grade thresholds, it is hard for curriculum managers to have oversight of standards. The students seem to learn about standards in each subject area directly from interaction with the teachers. There is no evidence of generic criteria for each grade that is modified appropriately to each area.

There is no evidence that individual questions are analysed in terms of how they perform. There is also no clear institutional strategy for the use of formative and summative examinations, or the use of the two processes in combination, although at departmental level there is a general rule that a mid-term formative examination are introduced if there is a tendency for a large proportion of the students to fail their end of semester examinations.

Student progress can be tracked through the different programmes, but there is no evidence that these data are used systematically to identify progress issues and inform curricular design, teaching delivery or student support. The multiple factors that may delay student progress are known, but these seem to be accepted as inevitable. In particular, there is no evidence that there is early identification of students with learning difficulties or special learning needs so that remedial action can be taken where appropriate.

Suggestions

The Faculty must give serious consideration to the creation of assessment strategies for its programmes that are aligned with overall programme learning outcomes and course-by-course learning outcomes, including the day one skills. This would provide confidence, through the university's quality assurance structures, that standards are appropriate and methods match the skills being tested.

The Faculty must consider introducing generic criteria for grading that are available to students and clearly linked to detailed grading criteria in individual courses.

The Faculty must consider using the data available on student progress to better understand flows of students and the reasons why students are delayed with some ultimately leaving the course. This could help the design of induction programmes to aid the transition to higher education, and student study skills development for those who have developed inefficient study practices prior to university.

Evaluation in relation to Assessment Procedure 2

Less satisfactory

2.2/2.3 POST-GRADUATE   STUDENT   EDUCATION;   ACADEMIC/PROFESSIONAL TRACKS

Findings

The Faculty provides postgraduate education through both academic and professional tracks. The PhD is based on an initial 3 year taught module and research block, followed by a variable period for completion of publications and the thesis. Depending on the student, the research may be based in a university department or an external institute. The majority of students attend Hungarian taught courses. A small number of students undertake their studies in English.

Professional education includes both national and international tracks. The national track is focused around species or discipline (eg State Veterinary Medicine and Infectious Diseases) based, three or four semester programmes leading to an expert diploma organised by the Centre of Research and Postgraduate Training.   The international track is built around European College residency programmes, but has not yet been implemented. Those studying for College examinations completed their residencies elsewhere.

Comments

The Faculty has a thriving academic track leading to the degree of PhD. However, although figures on individual student progress are available, these do not seem to be used to identify deficiencies in terms of student support. There is general acceptance that there will be a relatively high loss of students once their studies extend beyond about seven years.

The Faculty's professional (international) track is still in its infancy.

Suggestions

The Faculty should consider ways in which it can use progress data to identify categories of student that might benefit from extra support to ensure completion. It is clear that those in clinical departments need to have good organisational skills to complete their papers and their theses alongside clinical and teaching responsibilities.

The Faculty is encouraged to look at creative ways to develop and support European College Residency training.

Evaluation in relation to Assessment Procedure 3

Satisfactory

2.4 Student Welfare

Findings

It is impressive the way the Faculty has physical exercise courses integrated into its formal curriculum. However, the policies on equality for dealing with students with disabilities and special learning needs are still being developed. A counsellor has recently been recruited but the effectiveness of this provision can not yet be evaluated.

Comments

There is evidence in all departments of individuals who are passionate about student learning and very conscientious about supporting students. The student body is also very active in supporting students, with more senior cohorts, particularly of international students, providing support for their compatriots. This seems to substitute for the lack of a University co-ordinated provision. A formal student buddy system is proposed by the students, but this has not yet been implemented.

Suggestions

The reviewers recognise and applaud all the individual activity to support students. This is reactive according to student needs. However, the University must accelerate the implementation of its equality policy, and pro-actively develop and publicise formal and informal support structures for students so that this becomes a coherent framework for addressing student needs.

The Faculty is aware of some students who self-declare as needing extra time in examinations, but, by definition, these students are not always obvious and the University must do more to encourage all students that may have special needs to seek support.

Evaluation in relation to Assessment Procedure 4

Less satisfactory

Chapter 3. ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING STAFF

Findings

There is a process for student feedback on teachers, but in some parts of the course student engagement is low.

There is evidence that the Dean and Heads of Department take remedial action if there is persistent low scoring on the part of teachers, with the ultimate sanction being suspension from teaching which has financial consequences.

There is evidence of professional development in terms of disciplinary and research skills but no evidence of pedagogical development in the form of ongoing professional development of established teachers, although a new taught module in PhD programmes is now available.

Comments

The percentage of students providing feedback on some of the courses is too low to provide reliable data on the opinions of whole cohorts. However, it is clear that the Faculty recognises issues of timing and length of the feedback forms, and has taken action to remedy this, although it is not yet clear whether or not this will produce the improvement in participation that is the aim.

As in other areas, there is evidence that separate sections of the Faculty are not aware of opportunities to indicate to the student body that all their views are valued and discussed and action either taken or there being good reasons why elements of the courses are not changed. For instance the library has set up a system whereby this information could be conveyed to students, but this does not seem to be widely known.

Suggestions

The University should explore ways in which it can better support the pedagogical development of teachers when deficiencies are recognised. It should also continue to investigate how factors such as the time demands on students made by feedback form and the timing of their administration affect the level of feedback, and modify these to ensure good participation, and how actions taken (or not taken) are best communicated to students to ensure that they know that their feedback is valued.

The University should also consider the creation of a core group of staff with expertise in pedagogy, in addition to their disciplinary skills, who can help lead enhancement of teacher skills, assessment processes and teaching delivery.

Evaluation in relation to Assessment Procedure 5

Satisfactory

Chapter 4.   ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Findings

Materials and documents for independent study are provided by departments on the internet on various departmental websites. Despite this heterogeneous provision, the students are satisfied and develop appropriate skills for finding these course materials. The material is provided in Hungarian and most of it in English; some of it is also available for the first two years of study in German. Learning outcomes and day 1 skills/competencies are defined for single subjects or classes. Courses are offered in the second year to help students develop skills for searching the scientific literature, with the goal of preparing them for lifelong learning. New teaching methods are currently being introduced.

The Veterinary Science Library provides textbooks, multimedia CD ROMs and DVDs. Computers are provided by the faculty, but are the quality management system suggests that these are insufficient in number.

Course notes, hand-outs, and practical manuals are read by 2 reviewers, and distributed following approval by the Committee for Education and Accreditation. The library uses quality indicators such as numerical attendance by visitors; number of websites visited and downloads of publications.

The library has been engaged in quality management since 2003, and was evaluated in 2003/2004, 2006, 2010 and 2013. The library has a quality manager, and students get adequate help at the reception desk. Annual questionnaires are filled out by teachers (choice of textbooks) or students (opening hours) and are evaluated. Departments have to refresh their choice of books and lecture notes regularly, and this is monitored by the library director. The library increases their stock according to the recommendations of teachers.

The curriculum is evolving to provide increased amounts of self-directed learning.

Comments

The teaching environment supports students in meeting the requirements of the necessary examinations. Critical points, such as an insufficiency of computers and the use of a range of different websites have been identified by the quality management system, and there are plans to resolve these issues.

Suggestions

As self-directed learning and eLearning opportunities are being increased, enlargement of computer rooms and the numbers of computers available is essential.

At the same time, the Faculty should ensure that all the online published learning materials are available from an integrated, faculty website. Consideration should be given to ensuring that IT courses aimed at supporting independent learning are offered at the beginning of the veterinary programme of study. Learning outcomes/desired day-1-skills must be published for all subjects, so that these are freely available for teachers and students.

Evaluation in relation to Assessment Procedure 6

In summary, based on the SER-2, and the discussions with relevant personnel from the Faculty and students, the mechanisms established for assessment of learning opportunities can be considered as **satisfactory.**

Chapter 5. ASSESSMENT OF TRAINING PROGRAMMES AND THE AWARD OF THE TITLE OF VETERINARY SURGEON

Findings

The curriculum is reviewed annually, the Dean of the Faculty having overall responsibility for this. The executive tasks and student affairs are the responsibility of the Vice Dean for Study Affairs, who is in charge of co-ordinating the implementation of the curriculum in co-operation with the Education and Accreditation Committee chaired by another senior professor.

When curriculum changes are proposed, a draft programme is submitted for discussion to the Faculty Council and then to the University Senate for final adoption. Feedback from students, academic staff, and stakeholders are all used to inform this process. Response rates from graduates are low, but the faculty has recognised this problem and hopes to address it.

Students participate in committees and working groups of the Faculty.

A national ECT system is used, but could not be explained in detail. At the national level, the quality of the education is assessed by the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (HAC).

National criteria for degree qualifications are used for some subjects/courses, and the 11th year, but these are not fully developed.

Comments

Based on SER-2 and discussions with relevant personnel from the Faculty, the expert visitors consider the assessment of the training programme, especially the definition of the learning outcomes, is lacking. Learning outcomes should be considered central to curriculum development, and inform the choice of assessment methods and the content and delivery of the teaching.

Suggestions

Learning outcomes and day-1-skills based on the lists developed by the EAEVE must be introduced and published for the whole curriculum, to facilitate curriculum development and assessment procedures. The application of the ECTS must be made more consistent and transparent for staff and students.

Evaluation in relation to Assessment Procedure 7

Less satisfactory

Chapter 6.   ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR CLINICS, LABORATORIES AND FARM

Findings

The quality management system of the Faculty evaluates the workflow of the clinics. The procedures are reviewed annually. Other activities are monitored by more detailed local protocols, co-ordinated and controlled by the Vice Dean for Clinical Affairs, who gives feedback to the Faculty Council.

The quality management system is well implemented in the Small Animal Clinic and currently under construction for the large animal clinic. The Faculty is aware of this discrepancy, and is in the process of improving the system. Quality indicators of clinical processes include customer satisfaction, monthly patient flow, complaints and the monthly financial balance by division; results are analysed in order to inform the necessary actions.

In part, laboratories are quality assured by means of internal and external quality control systems; some are ISO certified, others are not accredited. The faculty is aware of these differences. In some laboratories used for student teaching, safety measures are available but signs are not well placed to assure student safety. Signs for first aid stations should be provided in three languages.

Comments

There is evidence of variable practice in data collection between different laboratories and clinical units, and the reasons for this are unclear.

Suggestions

The quality assessment procedures should be harmonised for all clinics and laboratories, or clear reasons should be articulated for the differences which should be understood by those working in these

units. Safety signs must be provided, consistently, in the three different languages in which courses are offered.

Evaluation in relation to Assessment Procedure 8

Based on these findings, the discussions and the SER2, the expert visitors consider the assessment procedure to be classified as **Satisfactory**

Chapter 7.   ASSESSMENT OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

Findings

The Faculty provides a range of short courses, which are funded by participants.

Comments

Participants confirmed that they have a vested financial interest in the relevance of these courses for their daily work and their efficacy in developing their knowledge and skills. This ensures engagement in feedback processes.

Suggestions

None

Evaluation in relation to Assessment Procedure 9

Satisfactory

Chapter 8.   ASSESSMENT OF RESEARCH

Findings

The Faculty is proud of its internationally recognised research activity. In the process of the visitation, the ISO certification of the Faculty, assessment of research, support of research and organisation of research were scrutinised closely. The Faculty has been granted the status of 'Research Faculty' for the period of 2013 - 2016. The research plan and development plan of the Faculty are prepared by the Dean, the Vice Dean for Research and Postgraduate Training and the members of the Research Committee of the Faculty. As bibliometric data, cumulative impact factor and numbers of independent citations are used.

All students are exposed to research, and involved in writing a thesis which might include a research project or literature review that prepares the students for independent and lifelong learning.

The Scientific Students' Association of the Faculty, a member of the national network of such associations and was introduced in the mid-1950s. The aim of the association and the faculty is to offer a framework for exceptionally gifted students to participate in research projects and to present their achievements to the professional community. In the discussions it became obvious that such students can proceed well to the PhD program and the expert visitors are impressed by this opportunity.

Comments

Major research themes could be more clearly identified and supported by the Faculty with the aim of promoting high quality research. In addition, although some collaborations were identified between the Departments, these were limited in number and could be beneficially encouraged.

One area to be commended was the undergraduate projects and the support structures in place to foster student scientific development both individually and collectively. The team identified students that were intending to proceed to a PhD as a result of their project and that were engaged in PhDs as a result of the inspiration provided by their undergraduate projects.

Suggestions

The Faculty should take steps to improve the co-ordination of its research activities to maximise their benefit to the faculty.

Evaluation in relation to Assessment Procedure 10

Based on the SER-2 and the discussions, the expert visitors consider this Assessment Procedure as **Satisfactory.**

Chapter 9. ASSESSMENT OF INTERNATIONALISATION OF EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Findings

The Faculty has a lively student exchange system supported by Erasmus, with a number of students going out from the university as well as coming to the university from abroad.

Comments

The Erasmus programme is of high quality. A disadvantage for some returning Hungarian students is that not all their studies abroad may be credited towards their degree, which may cause some delay in their progress.

Suggestions

The Faculty should consider a better advice system for students so that they can wherever possible ensure that the modules that they study elsewhere can be incorporated into their programmes.

Evaluation in relation to Assessment Procedure 11

Satisfactory

Chapter 10. ASSESSMENT OF COOPERATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS AND SOCIETY

Findings

The study programmes are published on the Faculty's redesigned website, separately arranged by study programme and language. First-year students receive a booklet that contains the model

curriculum, electives and other information regarding their studies. The Faculty is engaged in annual public events.

The University provides a Graduate Career Tracking system, but this is does not provide rapidly compiled and comprehensive data. The Faculty is aware of the low rate of responses. The alumni surveys of the Faculty complement those offered by the University, but these too could be better managed.

The management of the Faculty has good informal relations with the Chief Veterinary Officer and with the executives of the Hungarian Veterinary Chamber. To keep in touch with practice, the 'Friends of the Faculty of Veterinary Science of Szent István University' has recently been established. Feedback from stakeholders is used for curriculum development.

Comments

More comprehensive data could be collected from recent and progressing graduates to help inform revisions of the curricula based on the needs of society and the profession.

Suggestions

It is recommended that the Faculty discusses with the University how together the two alumni feedback systems can be better aligned, more comprehensive and more representative, ensuring robust information sets to inform decisions on new curricula.

Evaluation in relation to Assessment Procedure 12

Based on the SER-2 and the discussions the expert visitors consider this Assessment Procedure as **Satisfactory.**

Executive Summary

Satisfactory: AP1, AP3, AP5, AP6, AP8, AP9, AP10, AP11, AP12

Less satisfactory: AP2, AP4, AP7

Not satisfactory: None

Considering all points addressed in this report, the visiting team is of the opinion that there are no major shortcomings. However, as there are more than two Assessment Procedures that are "less satisfactory" (AP2, 4 and 7), the expert visitors recommend that the Faculty should receive "Conditional Accreditation" following the Stage 2 visitation.

ECOVE DECISION:

No serious shortcomings have been found.

The status of the establishment is: accreditation.