



RE-VISITATION REPORT

**To the Veterinary Educational Establishment of VetSuisse, University of Bern and
University of Zurich**

On 18 - 20 May 2026

By the Re-visitation Team

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Introduction

The Final Report, as issued by the ECOVE on 10 December 2024, detected several areas of praise, areas of concern (Minor Deficiencies) and items of non-compliance with the ESEVT Standards (Major Deficiencies).

Minor Deficiencies were identified in:

- Substandard 3.1.2 because of suboptimal laboratory training in some Basic Science subjects.
- Substandard 3.1.4 because of suboptimal pre-clinical training in bovine on the campus of Bern.
- Standard 4.2 due to suboptimal space allowance for students and staff in the teaching facilities on both campuses and the recreation area in Bern.
- Standard 4.3 because the core clinical teaching facilities in both campuses are sub-optimally maintained from the point of view of biosecurity and bio-containment.

Major Deficiencies were found in:

- Substandard 3.1.5 because of insufficient training in Food Safety and Quality, which does not allow the students to acquire Day One Competences.
- Standard 4.6 because isolation facilities are operated inadequately to prevent the spread of infectious agents on both campuses.
- Standard 4.9 due to inadequate implementation and monitoring of biosecurity procedures on both campuses.

The RSER was sent on due time and written in agreement with the SOP 2019 as amended in September 2021.

1. Correction of the Major Deficiencies

1.1. Major Deficiency 1: The VEE is non-compliant with Substandard 3.1.5 because of insufficient training in Food Safety and Quality, which does not allow the students to acquire Day One Competences.

1.1.1. Findings

The curriculum was modified for FSQ with additional practical training.

A contract was made between the VEE and the commercial company owning an abattoir located at an equal distance from Bern and Zurich. Fifth-year students attending this facility in small groups (2 students from Bern, 2 from Zurich) for one week are also able to study inside the facility during the whole week from Monday to Friday. Additionally, a contract was made so that an official vet unit in charge of the FSQ in this abattoir is directly paid by the VEE to teach

and supervise the students all over their experience inside the abattoir. Students, exposed to the ongoing abattoir work together with self-study and group work, are then evaluated at the end of each rotation. This week has already been formally introduced in the core curriculum.

A virtual visit in a poultry abattoir was also added for all the students with the objectives to know the process flow in the abattoir, learning the tasks of ante mortem inspection, assessment of lairage and stunning and meat inspection of poultry.

Training on “slaughterhouse organs” will be added beginning August 2026 during the pathology rotations for all 5th-year students (1,5 days). An e-learning course on slaughterhouse lesions has also been created.

A virtual visit to food processing plants (meat and cheese) was added to the lectures.

1.1.2. Comments

The additional week at a slaughterhouse provides students with a unique opportunity to acquire practical training in food safety. The facility is updated (one of the biggest in Europe) and access is very open to students. Official vets in charge of the training of the students are really dedicated. One of them, a former PhD student at the VEE, acts as a coordinator in relation to the VEE teaching staff. She was educated on how to teach and assess. The other additional material increases students' experience in acquiring practical skills.

1.1.3. Suggestions

None.

1.1.4. Decision

Major deficiency 1 has been fully corrected.

1.2. Major Deficiency 2: The VEE is non-compliant with Standard 4.6 because isolation facilities are operated inadequately to prevent the spread of infectious agents on both campuses.

1.2.1. Findings

In both campuses, isolation facilities for LA and equine will be fully rebuilt either in 2029 (Bern) or in 2028 (Zurich). The budget for those new facilities is secured. Those new buildings will be fully separated and will use the procedures already discussed with the biosafety committee. In the meantime, intermediate measures were introduced to improve the use of isolation facilities.

In Bern Campus:

- A new building serves as an intermediate isolation facility for LA. A yellow restricted zone is clearly marked. Disinfection stations are available at the entrance and the exit of this yellow zone.
- At the Equine clinic, revision of disinfection protocols for the isolation facilities including tools to avoid leakage of potentially contaminated liquid outside the boxes, has been implemented.
- The SA isolation facility is operated with new effective procedures.

In Zurich Campus:

- Isolation facilities for LA were updated with clear separation and posting of instructions.
- Isolation facilities for Equine are now served with dedicated instructions and postage.

- Isolation facilities for SA are served with dedicated instructions linked to the zones which may be of potential risk.

In both campus and in all the clinics, a triage system, either by phone or during the arrival of any patients, allows the staff in charge of admission to detect patients with potential risks and to decide the zone where they should be admitted.

1.2.2. Comments

Even if the new buildings are not yet in place, great efforts were made to adequately operate the isolation facilities either by building temporary measures (Bern) or by fully reviewing the procedures and postings for the use of isolation facilities by students and staff (Bern and Zurich).

1.2.3. Suggestions

The VEE is encouraged to use its experience with actual isolation facilities to design the new buildings.

1.2.4. Decision

Major deficiency 2 has been fully corrected.

1.3 Major Deficiency 3: The VEE is non-compliant with Standard 4.9 due to inadequate implementation and monitoring of biosecurity procedures on both campuses.

1.3.1 Findings

A new “VetSuisse commission for biosafety” has been created. Its major duties are:

- co-ordination of activities related to biosafety;
- elaboration of common SOPs for VetSuisse BE and ZH;
- development of a uniform signage and zoning concept in both campuses;
- education of training staff and students to the major concepts for biosecurity;
- development of a system for reporting biosecurity failures or near failures.

The committee is made up of faculty members, technical staff and students. Biosafety officers were nominated for each of the clinics and are members of the commission. They receive a special educational programme and they all have from 40 to 80% FTE dedicated to this part of their job.

In addition, theoretical and practical instruction were harmonised by aligning and revising learning objectives between Bern and Zurich. E-learning material was created and made available for students of each campus, and assessments of student knowledge and skills were revised. Skills lab stations dedicated to biosafety are accessible for students at both locations, together with additional practical Biosecurity Training in all the major clinical sites and e-material. The EPASS system is used for assessments of the skills acquired by students. A compulsory test with 10 MCQ is applied with adaptation to each specific situation in Bern and Zurich.

Documents are posted in all relevant locations, and the biosafety manual is accessible for all students on the intranet for each location or via a QR code posted at the location of the signage. In both campuses, changing rooms and dedicated protective equipment are made available for students and staff to avoid the use of potentially contaminated clothes outside the dedicated zones.

1.3.2 Comments

The zoning in each campus is clear and allows everyone to be aware of the risk associated with the area of the campus he/she is travelling through. Explanations are available at any of the major entrance points and around the potentially contaminated zones. Signage for each room with the zone colour and the person in charge of biosafety, signage of hazards and obligations/prohibitions is clearly posted and easy to understand. QR code access is efficient. 96% of the students and 86% of the technical staff were already positively evaluated for the biosafety rules (which have been in place for less than 6 months). The process for staff has to be evaluated every 2 years. Necessity of being validated for biosafety is now integrated in the annual job review process of each staff member.

1.3.3 Suggestions

None.

1.3.4 Decision

Major deficiency 3 has been fully corrected.

2. Correction of the Minor Deficiencies

2.1. Minor Deficiency 1: The VEE is partially compliant with Substandard 3.1.2 because of suboptimal laboratory training in some Basic Science subjects.

2.1.1. Findings

The VEEs have revised the listing of all practical teaching as well as planned and implemented additional practical courses. In the RSER, the VEE also stated that the documentation provided in the SER did not adequately reflect all practical teaching activities. A comprehensive list of implementations for each basic science subject has been provided in the RSER. The skill lab activities have also been significantly expanded.

2.1.2. Comments

The laboratory training in basic science subjects has been implemented and it is now adequate.

2.1.3. Suggestions

None.

2.2. Minor Deficiency 2: The VEE is partially compliant with Substandard 3.1.4 because of suboptimal pre-clinical training in bovine on the campus of Bern.

2.2.1. Findings

The Curriculum Committee in Bern has developed a local plan to strengthen preclinical training for students in bovine medicine. Students are now able to benefit from the large herd of ruminants at Agroscope in Posieux and the Institut Agricole de Grangeneuve where they can practice animal handling and examination. The visit to the farm has already been fully integrated into the study programme. More opportunities will soon be available through a collaboration with the facilities of Bern University of Applied Sciences - School of Agricultural, Forest and Food Sciences.

2.2.2. Comments

For the Bern students, the acquisition of preclinical skills in bovine is now adequate.

2.2.3. Suggestions

None.

2.3. Minor Deficiency 3: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.2 due to suboptimal space allowance for students and staff in the teaching facilities on both campuses and the recreation area in Bern.

2.3.1. Findings

At Bern VetSuisse campus, two nearby premises to allocate more space to personnel, laboratories and students have been rented by the University. Both new locations, at a short walking distance from the main campus, encompass learning spaces and libraries and a new spacious skills lab and study rooms plus lab space for the Next Generation Sequencing Platform (NGS) of the VetSuisse Faculty. Students are happy with the new setting.

In Zurich, the veterinary students at the veterinary campus in “Irchel Nord” have full access to the learning facilities at the campus “Irchel Mitte”, located at a walking distance of 5 min.

2.3.2. Comments

While expecting new spaces available in the new constructions, the VEEs made available sufficient spaces for different student learning activities.

2.3.3. Suggestions

None.

2.4. Minor Deficiency 4: The VEE is partially compliant with Standard 4.3 because the core clinical teaching facilities in both campuses are sub-optimally maintained from the point of view of biosecurity and bio-containment.

2.4.1. Findings

The visitation team confirms that this minor deficiency has been fully corrected together with the major deficiency 3.

2.4.2. Comments

Biosecurity and biosafety policies have been fully revised and implemented in both campuses.

2.4.3. Suggestions

None.

3. ESEVT Indicators



ESEVT Indicators

Name of the VEE:		Vetsuisse Faculty Universities of Bern and Zurich				
Name & mail of the VEE's Head:		Prof. Dr. Gertraud Schüpbach; gertraud.schuepbach@unibe.ch				
Date of the form filling:		02/02/24				
Raw data from the last 3 complete academic years		2025/26	2024/25	2023/24	Mean	
1	n° of FTE teaching staff involved in veterinary training	543,8	583	592	572,93	
2	n° of undergraduate students	970	976	925	957,00	
3	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training	275,5	279,7	274,8	276,67	
4	n° of students graduating annually	128	122	109	119,666667	
5	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training	355,7	364,7	343,2	354,533333	
6	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	936	942	942	940	
7	n° of hours of Core Clinical Training (CCT)	1531	1531	1531	1531	
8	n° of hours of VPH (including FSQ) training	214	143	143	166,666667	
9	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in VPH (including FSQ)	50	160	160	123,333333	
10	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally	34836	35076	29521	33144,3333	
11	n° of individual ruminant and pig patients seen intra-murally	2494	2849	2744	2695,66667	
12	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally	5272	5406	4748	5142	
13	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen intra-murally	2771	2842	2669	2760,7	
14	n° of companion animal patients seen extra-murally	217	272	160	216,3	
15	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen extra-murally	8442	9226	8133	8600,3	
16	n° of equine patients seen extra-murally	816	904	597	772,3	
17	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic patients seen extra-murally	192	219	104	171,7	
18	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds	992	1014	1138	1048,0	
19	n° of visits to poultry and farmed rabbit units	14	11	7	10,7	
20	n° of companion animal necropsies	479	498	432	469,7	
21	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies	1104	1186	973	1087,7	
22	n° of equine necropsies	217	204	209	210,0	
23	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies	847	1013	910	923,3	
24	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training	145,5	145,6	144,03	145,0	
25	n° of PhD graduating annually	116	124	104	114,7	

The boxes within the red frames must be filled in by the VEE (the other values will be automatically calculated)

Name of the VEE:		Vetsuisse Faculty Universities of Bern and Zurich			
Date of the form filling:		02/02/26			
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	0,599	0,15	0,13	0,473
I2	n° of FTE veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	2,312	0,84	0,63	1,682
I3	n° of FTE support staff involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	2,963	0,88	0,54	2,423
I4	n° of hours of practical (non-clinical) training	940,000	953,50	700,59	239,410
I5	n° of hours of Core Clinical Training (CCT)	1531,000	941,58	704,80	826,200
I6	n° of hours of VPH (including FSQ) training	166,667	293,50	191,80	-25,133
I7	n° of hours of extra-mural practical training in VPH (including FSQ)	123,333	75,00	31,80	91,533
I8	n° of companion animal patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	278,780	67,37	44,01	234,770
I9	n° of individual ruminants and pig patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	94,396	18,75	9,74	84,656
I10	n° of equine patients seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	49,423	5,96	2,15	47,273
I11	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic seen intra-murally and extra-murally / n° of students graduating annually	24,504	3,11	1,16	23,344
I12	n° of visits to ruminant and pig herds / n° of students graduating annually	8,758	1,29	0,54	8,218
I13	n° of visits of poultry and farmed rabbit units / n° of students graduating annually	0,089	0,11	0,04	0,044
I14	n° of companion animal necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	3,925	2,11	1,40	2,525
I15	n° of ruminant and pig necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	9,089	1,36	0,90	8,189
I16	n° of equine necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	1,755	0,18	0,10	1,655
I17	n° of rabbit, rodent, bird and exotic pet necropsies / n° of students graduating annually	7,716	2,65	0,88	6,836
I18	n° of FTE specialised veterinarians involved in veterinary training / n° of students graduating annually	1,212	0,27	0,06	1,152
I19	n° of PhD graduating annually / n° of students graduating annually	0,958	0,15	0,07	0,888
1	Median values defined by data from VEEs with Accreditation/Approval status in May 2019				
2	Recommended minimal values calculated as the 20th percentile of data from VEEs with Accreditation/Approval status in May 2019				
3	A negative balance indicates that the Indicator is below the recommended minimal value				
*	Indicators used only for statistical purpose				

3.1. Findings

All Indicators are above the minimal values, several of them exceeding the median. The only indicator below the minimal value is I6.

3.2. Comments

Although improved from that found during the full visitation (-48.80 versus -25,133), the indicator which is still under the minimal value is I6. However, as stated in the RSER, I6 value is based on the last three academic years and, as a result, includes two years of the unimplemented FSQ training schedule.

According to Table 6 in the RSER, the value of I6 is expected to be 214h starting from August 2026, i.e. 22.2 above the minimum value of 191.8.

3.3. Suggestions

None.

4. Conclusion

The three Major Deficiencies identified after the Full Visitation on 30 September - 4 October 2024 have been corrected.

Decision of ECOVE

The Committee concluded that the Major Deficiencies identified after the Full Visitation on 30 September - 4 October 2024 have been corrected.

The VetSuisse Faculty of the University of Bern and the University of Zurich is therefore classified as holding the status of: **ACCREDITATION**.