



swiss center of accreditation and  
quality assurance in higher education

## **Accreditation of the Study Programme in Veterinary Medicine**

### **Final report of the OAQ**

24 February 2011

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## 1 Introduction

The accreditation of study programmes leading to a Federal Diploma in Medicine is mandatory according to the Federal Law on Financial Aid to Universities (UFG)<sup>1</sup> and to the Federal Law on Medical Professions (Art. 23, para 1 MedBG)<sup>2</sup>.

Art. 24, para. 1 MedBG defines the criteria which must be fulfilled for accreditation of study programmes in addition to the accreditation according to UFG. The quality assessment is based upon the quality standard set "Accreditation of Study Programmes in Veterinary Medical Education. Quality Standards"<sup>3</sup>, dated February 2010, which comprises the educational objectives specified in arts. 4, 6, 7, 10 of the MedBG as well as the general quality standards for study programmes outlined in art. 10 of the Accreditation Guidelines of the Swiss University Conference SUC<sup>4</sup>.

The Swiss accreditation procedure for medical education is based on international best practice and consists of four phases:

- Phase 1: Application

Application for accreditation according to art. 26 MedBG and Application for accreditation according to art. 14 Accreditation Guidelines.

- Phase 2: Self-evaluation

Internal assessment of the study programme in basic medical education (Art. 26 MedBG / art. 18 Accreditation Guidelines).

- Phase 3: External evaluation

On-site visit and expert report by a group of independent experts and final report of the OAQ (Art. 27 MedBG / art. 20 Accreditation Guidelines).

- Phase 4: Decision

The Swiss Accreditation Council and the SUC (Art. 28 para. 1 MedBG / art. 26 Accreditation Guidelines) decide on the accreditation of the study programmes in medical education. Both decisions are necessary for the accreditation according to MedBG.

The OAQ and the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE<sup>5</sup>) performed the accreditation procedure of the study programme in veterinary medicine as a joint accreditation procedure.

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<sup>1</sup> Bundesgesetz über die Förderung der Universitäten und über die Zusammenarbeit im Hochschulbereich vom 8. Oktober 1999 (UFG), SR 414.20

<sup>2</sup> Bundesgesetz über die universitären Medizinalberufe vom 23. Juni 2006 (MedBG), SR 811.11

<sup>3</sup> [www.bag.admin.ch/themen/berufe/03937/03939/index.html?lang=de](http://www.bag.admin.ch/themen/berufe/03937/03939/index.html?lang=de)

<sup>4</sup> Richtlinien der Schweizerischen Universitätskonferenz für die Akkreditierung im universitären Hochschulbereich vom 28. Juni 2007 (Akkreditierungsrichtlinien/Accreditation Guidelines), SR 414.205.3

<sup>5</sup> [www.eaeve.org](http://www.eaeve.org)

## 2 Object of the accreditation procedure

The object of the accreditation procedure is the study programme in veterinary medical education of the Vetsuisse Faculty (VSF)<sup>6</sup> of the Universities of Bern and Zurich.

The history of the VSF Zurich dates back to 1834. The “Berner Tierarzneischule” was founded in 1805 and VSF Bern has been part of the University of Bern since 1900. The two faculties are similarly structured into preclinical, paraclinical and clinical disciplines.

VSF emerged on 1 September 2006, based on the fusion of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Bern, and the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Zurich. The two locations were maintained (VSF Bern, VSF Zurich) but adapted to be complementary.

The total number of undergraduate students is about 315 at VSF Bern and 388 at VSF Zurich. The number of students graduating annually is about 50 in Bern and between 50 and 55 in Zurich.

In 2008, the Vetsuisse Faculty was approved by EAEVE with no conditions (Stage one).

During EAEVE evaluation Stage one, the expert team assesses major weaknesses (Category I deficiencies) which, if allowed to persist, could lead the ECOVE<sup>7</sup> to consider that the training given does not conform to the requirements of Directive 2005/36/EC. Secondly, the experts give suggestions for changes which the team of experts conclude would improve the training, even though they relate to weaknesses that do not conform to the requirements of the above listed directives and amendments. During Stage two, the expert team assesses the system of quality assurance of the veterinary school. Accreditation can only be given when full approval of Stage one has been obtained and when Stage two evaluation has provided convincing evidence that the Faculty has qualified in providing a functional system of quality assurance.

In the autumn of 2009, OAQ and EAEVE decided to perform a joint accreditation according to the requirements of the MedBG, the UFG and the EAEVE.

As a preparation for this joint procedure, the peer leader of the expert group Prof. B. Hoffmann compared the self-evaluation report of VSF of the European evaluation of 2007 (SER 1) with the actual Swiss Quality Standards for accreditation of the study programme in veterinary medical education. Since no more than three years have elapsed since the 2007 EAEVE evaluation, the SER 1 and the findings of the 2007 evaluation can be taken into consideration for the present 2010 accreditation procedure.

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<sup>6</sup> The term "Vetsuisse faculty (VSF)" is used for the faculty of veterinary medicine of the Universities of Bern and Zurich, [www.vetsuisse.ch](http://www.vetsuisse.ch)

<sup>7</sup> ECOVE is a joint committee of the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) and the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE), [www.eaeve.org/evaluation/ecove.html](http://www.eaeve.org/evaluation/ecove.html)

According to art. 24 Accreditation Guidelines, the use of third-party evaluations is possible under the following conditions: “The results of self-evaluations or external evaluations not carried out as part of the Swiss accreditation procedure can be taken into consideration provided that they were carried out not more than three years previously, and comply with the methods and standards of these Guidelines for academic accreditation in Switzerland. The same applies to accreditation procedures carried out by foreign/international accreditation agencies.”

Therefore, the self-evaluation report of VSF for the joint accreditation of 2010 (SER 2) relies on data from the 2007 EAEVE evaluation.

In December 2010, the Vetsuisse Faculty was accredited by EAEVE without conditions for 10 years (Stage two).

### **3 Accreditation procedure**

The rectors of the Universities of Zurich and Bern and the dean of VSF submitted the applications for accreditation in March 2010. The procedure officially started on 26 April 2010 with the opening meeting between the main responsible members of the steering group and the OAQ.

During the self-evaluation (see chapter 3.1) and the external evaluation (see chapter 3.2) phases, the quality of the study programme was examined. Based on specific areas defined in the document "Accreditation of Study Programmes in Veterinary Medical Education. Quality Standards", dated February 2010, the compliance of the study programme with the quality standards was assessed.

As noted in the quality standard set, not every single quality standard must be completely fulfilled in order to qualify for accreditation based on MedBG criteria. The recommendation for accreditation by the experts and the accreditation agency, as well as the decision by the independent accreditation council (Art. 47, para. 1, MedBG) is the result of a global judgement.

The on-site visit took place from 20 to 24 September 2010. The OAQ received the draft of the expert report on 15 October 2010. VSF had the opportunity to comment on the draft expert report within two weeks. Taking into consideration the comments of VSF, the experts then submitted their final expert report to the OAQ on 29 November 2010. Based on the self-evaluation report, the expert report, notes taken during the on-site visit, and the comments of VSF on the expert report, the OAQ drew up a draft of its final report. The “Medizinalberufekommission” (MEBEKO) and the Scientific Advisory Board of the OAQ received all documents on 22 December 2010 for their statements. After consulting with the MEBEKO (first consultation, art. 27, para. 5 MedBG) and the Scientific Advisory Board, the OAQ completed the present final report including the recommendations for accreditation, for the attention of the SUC and the Swiss Accreditation Council (see chapter 6).

### 3.1 Self-evaluation report

The actual self-evaluation report (SER 2) was written in English and consists of two parts. The first part follows the accreditation standards of the EAEVE and the second part follows the format of the Swiss Quality Standards for Accreditation of the Study Programmes in Veterinary Medicine dated February 2010. The report was prepared by a steering committee comprising VSF representatives from the Universities of Zurich and Bern. The SER 2 was circulated among all members of the local VSF faculty assemblies before being approved by the VSF Executive Board and forwarded to the OAQ. It was submitted to the OAQ in the proper time frame on 29 July 2010 and copies were sent to the persons interviewed during the on-site visit.

Non-German speaking members of the group of experts found it difficult to make use of the many links to German documents provided with the electronic version. However, all problems were solved during the visit by giving the necessary explanations in English.

### 3.2 External evaluation

#### 3.2.1 Group of experts

The group of experts was selected according to art. 20 of the Accreditation Guidelines and art. 27 of the MedBG in collaboration with VSF. It was approved by the Scientific Advisory Board of the OAQ and the Swiss Accreditation Council.

The group consisted of the following experts:

- Professor Bernd Hoffmann (peer leader), "Klinik für Geburtshilfe, Gynäkologie und Andrologie der Groß- und Kleintiere", Justus-Liebig-University of Giessen, Germany
- Professor Andrea Tipold, "Stiftung Tierärztliche Hochschule Hannover", Small Animal Clinic, University of Hannover, Germany
- Professor Giovanni Re, Department of Animal Pathology, Division of Pharmacology & Toxicology, University of Torino, Italy
- Professor Aart De Kruif, Head of the Department of Reproduction, Obstetrics and Herd Health, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Ghent, Belgium
- Katharina Heilen (student), "Stiftung Tierärztliche Hochschule Hannover", University of Hannover, Germany

#### 3.2.2 On-site visit

The on-site visit took place from 21 to 24 September 2010, of which two days were spent in Zurich and two days in Bern. The experts met for a briefing session on the previous evening during which they shared their impressions on the self-evaluation documents and prepared items to address during the visit. An introduction to the Swiss higher education system and the Swiss accreditation system and procedures based on the MedBG and the UFG was provided by the OAQ.

The programme of the on-site visit – prepared by the OAQ, the steering committee and the group of experts – contained discussions held in English with various interview partners (accreditation steering committee, management, academic, administrative and research staff, students and alumni, etc.). Also included were visits to the veterinary hospitals and the teaching infrastructure of Zurich and Bern. Some time between the sessions was devoted to a first analysis of observations made. The visit ended with a debriefing session during which the experts communicated their first impressions to the management, the steering committee and all interested interview partners in Zurich and Bern in the form of a brief analysis of “strengths and weaknesses” and recommendations for quality improvement. This session took place in the “Neuer Hörsaal” at VSF in Bern and was transmitted to Zurich by teleteaching. It was very well attended at both locations.

In summary, the atmosphere of the on-site visit was very agreeable. VSF members were not only very interested in participating in the procedure and answering the questions clearly and frankly, but were also consistent in helping to gather any complementary information requested by the experts. This enabled the expert team to obtain a good overall picture of the study programme and assess all given quality standards.

### **3.2.3 Expert report**

The draft of the expert report was drawn up in collaboration and in consensus of the group of experts according to the format and content defined in the “Guide to external evaluation”. The peer leader of the group submitted the draft expert report to the OAQ in time on 11 October 2010. It was immediately forwarded to VSF with a two-week deadline for comments.

VSF sent its statement on the draft expert report to the OAQ and the peer leader of the expert group on 25 October 2010. Comments and suggestions were based on discussions within the faculty and on feedback from several faculty members.

The peer leader adapted the expert report, taking into account the comments of VSF. The final expert report comprises 20 pages and was submitted to the OAQ on 29 November 2010, in the agreed time frame, as well.

### **3.3 Consultation of MEBEKO**

The OAQ sent the VSF's self-evaluation report, the expert report, the VSF's comments on the expert report and the OAQ's draft of the final report to MEBEKO on 22 December 2010. The OAQ received the statement on 22 February 2011 and considered it in its final report. The MEBEKO fully supports the accreditation recommendations of the OAQ (see Chapter 6) and does not comment on the recommendations of the expert panel.

## **4 Assessment of quality standards / Areas of evaluation**

The following chapters summarise shortly the compliance with the quality standards in each area of evaluation (see annex 2) and follow the structure of the quality standard set. They are based on the SER 2 and the final report of the experts. For more detailed information and analysis of the areas refer to the expert report.

#### **4.1 Area: Mission and Objectives**

All the standards of area 1 are met. The expert group highlights that VSF has strong interactions with all stakeholders, including students. The experts noted that allocation of resources follows specific but different procedures at Bern and Zurich (see chapter 5, suggestions of experts). The interviews with the students and alumni supported the conclusion of the experts “that there is a big likelihood that students have acquired the listed competencies at graduation”<sup>8</sup>.

#### **4.2 Area: Study programme**

All the standards of area 2 are met.

#### **4.3 Area: Students**

The standards of the subareas 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 of area 3 are met. Standard 1 of subarea 3.4 “student representation” is partially met. The experts found that student participation in the recruitment process of professorial staff is reduced to a minimum (see chapter 5, suggestions of experts).

#### **4.4 Area: Assessment of students**

All the standards of area 4 are met.

#### **4.5 Area: Academic staff / faculty**

All the standards of area 5 are met.

#### **4.6 Area: Educational resources**

The standards of the subareas 6.1 to 6.5 and 6.6.1 of area 6 are met, whereas standard 6.6.2 is not met. VSF has a considerable number of Erasmus contracts. However, though students would like to make use of these possibilities, implementation of the curriculum with its blocks and many examinations seems to be a highly effective obstacle (see chapter 5, recommendation of experts).

Theoretically, it should be easily possible to change between Bern and Zurich after years 1, 3 and 4. However, students encountered difficulties in this special situation, probably due to the availability of study places. Moreover, there seems to be virtually no communication between Bern and Zurich on the student level (see chapter 5, suggestions of experts).

#### **4.7 Area: Programme evaluation**

All the standards of area 7 are met. The day-1-skills are well defined and are in agreement with the European requirements. The curriculum and modules are evaluated regularly and the feedback from students and teachers is used for adaptations.

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<sup>8</sup> “Lernzielkatalog”, [www.vetsuisse.ch/assets/LZK\\_Veterinaermedizin\\_Vetsuisse\\_2008\\_05-29\\_d.pdf](http://www.vetsuisse.ch/assets/LZK_Veterinaermedizin_Vetsuisse_2008_05-29_d.pdf)



#### 4.8 Area: Governance and administration

All the standards of area 8 are met.

#### 4.9 Area: Continuous renewal / quality assurance

The standard of area 9 is met. As a voluntary member of the EAEVE, VSF is submitted to the European evaluation on a 10-year basis.

### 5 Conclusions and recommendations of the experts

#### 5.1 Profile of strengths and weaknesses

The expert report contains a comprehensive list of strengths and weaknesses, as perceived during the accreditation process, as well as suggestions and recommendations for quality improvement. This part is summarized below (excerpts from the expert report).

– Strengths

“At both locations, VSF Bern and Zurich, veterinary education is provided on a very high level. VSF has established control mechanisms and quality procedures to guarantee excellence of teaching and to assure with a high likelihood that the students meet day-1-competencies at graduation.”

“The teaching environment must be considered as excellent.”

“The research-based learning environment, but also the interviews with students and alumni, leave no doubt that graduates are well prepared for lifelong learning and to enter all the different areas of the veterinary profession.”

“Postgraduate education on the academic and professional track and continuing education are of high importance for VSF. At both locations training to a European or American Specialist or Diplomate<sup>9</sup> is provided on a very broad basis.”

“VSF has developed a policy to recruit and develop a highly research-oriented staff in both the clinical and nonclinical field.” “On the research level VSF is excellently integrated into an international scientific communication network.”

– Weaknesses and suggestions / recommendations for quality improvement

“A harmonization (between Bern and Zurich) concerning the procedure for allocation of funds should be aimed at.”

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<sup>9</sup> [www.ecvs.org](http://www.ecvs.org), [www.acvs.org](http://www.acvs.org)

“VSF has a considerable number of Erasmus contracts. However, though students would like to make use of these possibilities, implementation of the curriculum with its blocks and many examinations seems to be a highly effective obstacle. It is recommended that VSF makes a serious effort to solve this problem, e.g. by better allowing for exceptions and by developing an attitude that in time the experiences a student may gain in a foreign university may by far outweigh the passing of a given exam.”

“Theoretically it should be easily possible to change between Bern and Zurich after years 1, 3 and 4. However, students also encountered difficulties in this special situation.”

“The merger of the faculties in Bern and Zurich has come to a factual end and a further merging, though desirable from different points of view, can not be achieved. Indeed, the team gained the impression that there are still two clearly separated faculties, in spite of the existing cooperation in scientific matters and - to a smaller extent - on the teaching level, though there is a common curriculum. Thus the team among other things encountered that there seems to be virtual no communication on the student level. At least this must be changed if the VSF wants to remain as a successful model.”

“Students make up the core of a faculty and the basis for good student participation is visible in the governance of Vetsuisse. However, student participation in the recruitment process of professorial staff is reduced to a minimum. In view of the good experiences made at other places with student participation in this special process and the highly cooperative attitude of the local students, it is suggested that VSF seeks for an adaption of this procedure.”

## **5.2 Recommendation on accreditation**

“The documents provided and the observations made during the on-site visit clearly show that VSF meets the legal requirements for veterinary medical education in Switzerland.”

“The visiting team unanimously suggests that VSF should be unconditionally accredited.”

## **6 Conclusion and recommendations of the OAQ**

Based on the VSF's self-evaluation report, the expert report, the VSF's comments on the expert report, the statements of the MEBEKO and the Scientific Advisory Board, the OAQ fully supports the expert group's recommendation on accreditation and recommendations for quality improvement and considers the quality standards relevant for the accreditation decisions as being fulfilled.

### **6.1 OAQ accreditation recommendation according to UFG for the attention of the SUC**

Concluding that the study programme in veterinary medicine fulfills the accreditation standards pursuant to art. 10 of the Accreditation Guidelines the OAQ thus recommends:

Unconditional accreditation of the study programme in veterinary medicine of the Vetsuisse Faculty of the Universities of Zurich and Bern for a period of seven years.

## **6.2 OAQ accreditation recommendation according to MedBG for the attention of the Swiss Accreditation Council**

Concluding that the study programme in veterinary medicine fulfills the objectives and accreditation criteria pursuant to arts. 4, 6, 7, 10 and 24 of the MedBG the OAQ thus recommends:

Unconditional accreditation of the study programme in veterinary medicine of the Vetsuisse Faculty of the Universities of Zurich and Bern for a period of seven years.

### **Übersetzung der Akkreditierungsanträge des OAQ**

Das OAQ stimmt aufgrund des Selbstbeurteilungsberichts der VSF, des Expertenberichts, der Stellungnahmen der VSF, der MEBEKO und des wissenschaftlichen Beirats des OAQ, voll mit den Experten in der Akkreditierungsempfehlung und den Empfehlungen zur Qualitätsverbesserung überein und betrachtet die für die Akkreditierungsentscheide massgebenden Qualitätsstandards als erfüllt.

## **6.3 Antrag des OAQ auf Akkreditierung gemäss UFG an die SUK**

Das OAQ bestätigt, dass der Studiengang in Veterinärmedizin die Akkreditierungsstandards gemäss Art. 10 der SUK-Richtlinien erfüllt.

Daher beantragt das OAQ: Akkreditierung ohne Auflagen des Studiengangs in Veterinärmedizin der Vetsuisse Fakultät der Universitäten Zürich und Bern für sieben Jahre.

## **6.4 Antrag des OAQ auf Akkreditierung gemäss MedBG an den Schweizerischen Akkreditierungsrat**

Das OAQ bestätigt, dass der Studiengang in Veterinärmedizin die Ziele und Akkreditierungskriterien gemäss Art. 4, 6, 7, 10 und 24 MedBG erfüllt.

Daher beantragt das OAQ: Akkreditierung ohne Auflagen des Studiengangs in Veterinärmedizin der Vetsuisse Fakultät der Universitäten Zürich und Bern für sieben Jahre.

### **Traduction des propositions relative à l'accréditation de l'OAQ**

L'OAQ, sur la base du rapport d'auto-évaluation, du rapport des experts ainsi que sur la base des prises de position de la VSF, de la MEBEKO et du conseil scientifique de l'OAQ, suit l'avis des experts sur les propositions relative à l'accréditation et sur les recommandations d'amélioration de qualité et considère les standards de qualité pertinents accomplis.

## **6.5 Propositions relative à l'accréditation de l'OAQ selon LAU**

L'OAQ certifie que la filière d'études en médecine vétérinaire satisfait aux standards d'accréditation conformément à l'art. 10 des directives de la CUS et propose l'accréditation sans condition de la filière d'études en médecine vétérinaire de la faculté Vetsuisse des universités de Zurich et Berne pour 7 ans.



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## **6.6 Propositions relative à l'accréditation de l'OAQ selon LPMéd**

L'OAQ certifie que la filière d'études en médecine vétérinaire satisfait aux objectifs et critères d'accréditation conformément aux art. 4, 6, 7, 10 et 24 de la LPMéd et propose l'accréditation sans condition de la filière d'études en médecine vétérinaire de la faculté Vetsuisse des universités de Zurich et Berne pour 7 ans.

### **Annex Abbreviations**

EAEVE	European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education
ECOVE	European Committee on Veterinary Education
MedBG/LPMéd	Federal Law on Medical Professions dated 23 June 2006
MEBEKO	"Medizinalberufekommission"
OAQ	Swiss Center of Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Higher Education
SUC/CUS	Swiss University Conference
SER 1	Self-evaluation report of VSF for the European evaluation of 2007
SER 2	Self-evaluation report of VSF for the Swiss and European accreditation of 2010
UFG/LAU	Federal Law on Financial Aid to the Universities dated 8 October 1999
VSF	Vetsuisse Faculty, the faculty of veterinary medicine of the Universities of Bern and Zurich

**Expert Report on the accreditation procedure – Vetsuisse Faculty, Universities of Zurich and Bern;  
Visit Period of 20. – 24. Sept. 2010  
Final Expert Report submitted on Nov 29<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

**This report is guided by the Quality Standards; Accreditation of Study Programmes in Veterinary Medical Education, final version of February 2010 as supplied by the centre of accreditation and quality assurance of Swiss universities (OAQ).**

Apart from the information obtained during the visit the report considers the following information:

1. Information provided in the SER 1 prepared for an EAEVE stage 1 evaluation in 2007.
2. Information provided in the SER 2 for an EAEVE stage 2 evaluation in 2010, Chapters 1 - 10.
3. Additional information as required by Swiss Accreditation Authorities (OAQ); SER 2, Chapter 11.

This additive provision of information resulted from the fact that the accreditation visit was a joint operation of OAQ and EAEVE.

The visiting team acting for OAQ was composed as follows:

Peer leader:

Prof. Bernd Hoffmann, Justus-Liebig Universität Giessen  
Klinik für Geburtshilfe, Gynäkologie und Andrologie  
der Groß- und Kleintiere mit Tierärztlicher Ambulanz  
Frankfurter Straße 106  
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Experts:

- 1.) Prof. Aart de Kruif, University of Ghent  
Head of the Department of Reproduction,  
Obstetrics and Herd Health  
Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Ghent University  
Salisburylaan 133  
B-9820 Merelbeke
- 2.) Prof. Giovanni Re, University of Turin  
Department of Animal Pathology  
Division of Pharmacology & Toxicology  
University of Turin  
Via Leonarde da Vinci 44  
I-10095 Grugliasco, Torino
- 3.) Prof. Andrea Tipold, Stiftung Tierärztliche Hochschule Hannover  
Stiftung Tierärztliche Hochschule Hannover  
Klinik für Kleintiere  
Bünteweg 9  
D-30559 Hannover

Student:

Katharina Heilen, Stiftung Tierärztliche Hochschule Hannover  
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D-30167 Hannover

**A) Short introduction to the faculty**

The vetsuisse Faculty (VSF) emerged on Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006 from the fusion of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Bern, and the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Zurich. The two locations were maintained (VSF Bern, VSF Zurich) but adapted to be complementary.

The history of VSF Zurich dates back to 1834, the VSF Bern is part of the University of Bern since 1900 with the “Berner Tierarzneischule” founded in 1805. As is indicated in the SER 2007, VSF-Bern is structured into a Preclinical, Paraclinical and Clinical Department, VSF-Zuerich is structured into Preclinical Institutes, Paraclinics and Clinics (Tierspital), the latter one encompassing a Department of Small Animals, a Department of Food Animals and a Department for Horses.

The total number of undergraduate students is around 315 at the VSF-Bern and 388 at the VSF-Zurich. The number of students graduating annually is around 50 in Bern and 50 to 55 in Zurich.

As became evident during the visit, the merger of the two faculties has come to a factual end with the clear statement made, that- though desirable from different points of view – a further merger can not be acquired, largely due to the different kantonal university regulations.

The present visit resulted from the fact, that all Swiss medical educational facilities need accreditation. As no more than three years have elapsed since the 2007 EAEVE evaluation, the self evaluation report (SER 1) and the findings of the 2007 evaluation can be taken in consideration for the present 2010 evaluation. In 2007 resp. 2008 Vetsuisse was unconditionally approved by EAEVE.

**B) Self Evaluation Report (SER 2)**

The SER 2 was provided in time in an electronic and print version. It met the requirement of the OAQ and EAEVE evaluation. However, for the non German speaking members of the team it was difficult to make use of the many links provided with the electronic version as all of the document referred to were in German. All problems initially resulting from this situation could easily be solved during the visit, when the necessary explanations could be given in English.

**C) On – site visit**

At both locations the team encountered a friendly and highly supportive atmosphere. The visit rather strictly followed the program outlined and the technical and logistic support provided by OAQ-staff was greatly appreciated.

The program itself was structured in a way that identical sessions and visiting course were organized at the two locations. Thus the program was rather tight, and the team of visiting experts would have appreciated some more time between meetings for assessing previous meetings and to get ready for the forthcoming meeting - However, clearly the team could cope with this situation and there was no negative effect.

Another recommendation for further evaluations relates to the fact, that the number of interview partners should be limited and that the selection of students and alumni should be on a more rational basis.

Particularly due to the situation of a “double visit” with the same people participating on various interviews there was enough time to discuss and define still open questions. The peer leader therefore suggested to follow the EAEVE guidelines and not to allow for any further questions after the debriefing.

**D) Report: Assessment on the basis of each sub-area**

The respective Accreditation of Study Programmes in Veterinary Medical Education, final version, dates from February 2010.

There are standard-requirement for each sub-area with the annotations provided giving further explanations. Aim of the accreditation procedure is to evaluate, if and to what extent VSF meets these standard-requirement. The following report restricts itself to answering these questions, it only deals with the annotations in cases where further explanations seem to have been necessary.

The OAQ-FOPH Quality Standards cover the following sections:

**1 Area: Mission and Objectives**

**1.1 Mission and Objectives**

Standards

As laid out in SER 1 and SER 2, Chpt 1 and as revealed during the visit all 3 standards are clearly met. Strategic planning of research is flexible enough to allow input from “great minds” from various areas, also from those not being in general focus.

**1.2 Participation in Formulation of Mission and Objectives**

Standards

The standard is clearly met. Mission and objectives are clearly outlined (SER 2, Chpt 1) and made transparent. In respect to teaching the Vetsuisse teaching committee defines and supervises the undergraduate teaching objectives. All guidelines were approved by the Vetsuisse Assembly and Vetsuisse Council.



## Annotations

VSF has a strong interaction with the university located stakeholders, including students. Also the interaction with the professional association (SVS) is good in respect to both, undergraduate and professional postgraduate (continuing) education. Interaction with alumni has been initiated on a solid platform in 2010 and VSF constantly seeks the interaction with clients and the public.

### **1.3 Academic Autonomy**

#### Standards

In respect to the legal frame (Medizinalberufegesetz, implemented in Sept. 2007), the goal to meet the requirements of Directive 2005/36/EU, and the funds made available to the faculties in Zurich and Bern, Vetsuisse follows a policy permitting the freedom to design the study programme and to allocate the necessary resources for its implementation. Despite a clearly structured curriculum, it is an important goal of VSF to assure freedom of academic teaching. This is felt absolutely necessary to assure a truly research based education.

Curricular matters fall within the responsibility of the joint teaching committee, its main duties comprise coordination, evaluation and further development of the curriculum.

Allocation of resources follows specific but different procedures at the two VSF locations.

*Bern: (p 17, SER 1); The allocation of funding, so far, has been determined by historic developments. Thus, arbitrary decisions taken by the faculty were the rule for the past decades, but basically no significant changes are anticipated. The body that is responsible for the final allocations is the faculty council, but financial matters are prepared by the faculty board.*

*With regard to the development and establishment of the new Vetsuisse faculty, the faculty in Berne has liberated 6% of the global funds to be invested into promotion and clinical research and veterinary public health.*

*Zurich: (p 21, SER 1); The allocation of funds within the establishment is within the Dean's responsibility.*

*Each institute or clinic prepares a financial request to cover the necessary expenditures. The dean coordinates the request and applies for funding at the university council.*

#### Comment and suggestion:

A harmonization concerning the procedure for allocation of funds should be aimed at.

### **1.4 Educational Outcome**

#### Standards

The VSF curriculum follows the Bologna Process, leading to a “non professional” Bachelor (B Vet Med) after three years and a Master (M Vet Med) after another two years.

The key qualifications a student should have acquired at graduation to a M Vet Med are clearly outlined and published (Liste der Lernziele der VSF).

The underlying curriculum complies with Directive 2005/36 EU.  
The two standard points are clearly.

### Comment

Assessment of students during the undergraduate study is an important matter to the VSF and performed in cooperation with the Department for assessment and evaluation, University Zurich, and the Institute of Medical Learning, Bern. Evaluation of success / failure rate is via a "Notenkonferenz" with input for the further development of the educational program.

Though no proof can be obtained, there is, however, a big likelihood that students have acquired the listed competences at graduation. The interview with former students has supported this conclusion.

## **2 Area: Study Programme**

### **2.1 Study Programme Models and Instructional Methods**

#### Standards

Standard points 1 and 2 are clearly met.

The Vetsuisse teaching committee was involved in the coordination and implementation of the new Vetsuisse curriculum from the very start of VSF in 2003/2004.

As outlined in SER 1, Chpt 4, the curriculum is clearly structured into modules, accounting for the various disciplines and teaching methods with the quality of teaching being an important issue. To provide a "science based" teaching is a "credo" of VSF and is clearly implemented as became obvious during the visit.

The VSF curriculum aims at introducing specific veterinary subjects as early as possible and the students are fully integrated in the Vetsuisse faculty from year 1. Clinical and non-clinical subjects are integrated in the organ-centered blocks of year 2 and 3. A problem-based approach has been chosen explicitly in year 4 for the tracking-part as well as for the one focusing on major complaints. Year 4 thus becomes a preparation for the clinical work in year 5. The curriculum has strong elements of a horizontal and vertical integration.

Modern approaches to teaching are anticipated by VSF and are heavily supported by the university (E-learning center, OLAT, Didactica). PC-assisted learning is applied wherever suitable productions are available.

This study programme with the need to choose a "track" in combination with the examination system and the implementation of research based teaching (e.g. master thesis) should ensure that students have acquired a responsibility for their own learning process and that they are prepared for a lifelong, self-directed learning.

#### Annotations

As a comment it is stated that "learning methods" are not a subject of its own but inherent to the teaching applied.

## **2.2 Structure, Composition and Duration of the Study Programme**

### Standards

As outlined in detail in SER 1, Chpt 4 (curriculum), p 23, the requirements of standards 1 and 2 are clearly met. The curriculum is highly coordinated.

Concerning standard 3 the term “complimentary therapies” needs definition. The curriculum does not provide a clear cut information how and whether such an interphase is established. However, during the interviews it became obvious, that since 2010 some basic information on “complementary therapies”, like homeopathy, is provided by the same teacher at VSF-Bern and –Zurich. Application of physiotherapy is a matter of clinical training. In general the visiting team views this as a minor point of importance as the focus clearly should be on evidence based medicine.

The ratio between compulsory and elective classes is fixed. This complies with the request, that all undergraduates are submitted to the same “core” curriculum. This is no obstacle to further participate in optional teaching events.

## **2.3 Study Programme Management**

### Standards

As indicated in SER 1, Chpt 4 (curriculum), p 23 and as already stated above there is a legal frame embracing the Veterinary Curriculum in Switzerland.

Within this legal frame and on the faculty level the “teaching committee” is responsible for co-ordination of teaching and implementation of the program. Apart from having been involved in the coordination and implementation of the Vetsuisse curriculum from the very start of VSF, an ongoing responsibility of the committee comprises coordination, evaluation and further development of the curriculum. Major changes anticipated must be approved by the faculty assembly, minor adjustments like changing the allocation of a few hours of lectures to a specific subject in a module are decided by the teaching committee. The two curriculum coordinators as well as the deans of education (all full voting members of the teaching committee ex officio) stay in close touch with faculty members responsible for the different parts of the curriculum. Following full establishment of the new curriculum the teaching committee meets monthly, thus assuring close contact between the two locations.

Thus standard 1 is clearly met.

Not the teaching committee but the dean/faculty council are responsible for major investments (like tele-teaching) and the cost for evaluation of teaching. The teaching committee itself consists of senior (4) and junior (3) academic staff members, 1 student and 1 representative of the Office of Students Affairs of each faculty. In view of the otherwise excellent interactions with other stakeholders also standard point 2 can be considered to have been met.

## **2.4 Scientific Methods**

### Standards

The standard is clearly met. The statements made in SER1, Chpt 1, p 2 “To provide students with the understanding of the scientific basis of veterinary medicine...” was clearly verified during the visit.

Education in the VSF is research based. Not only the senior faculty but virtually all teaching staff is engaged in research in their respective areas and students are exposed to the impact of science on medical progress during the lectures. Specific instruction in methods of scientific investigation is given to all students in the epidemiology/statistics course. Critical review of research publications is part of several courses in the fourth year of the new core curriculum. With the new curriculum all undergraduate students must prepare a master thesis.

In addition those 10 - 20% of the students having chosen either the biomedical research track, the pathobiology laboratory track or the VPH track get more direct exposure to research projects. In Zurich active participation with completion of own research work is mandatory in the diagnostic track as well as the biomedical research track.

## **2.5 Basic Biomedical Sciences**

### Standards

Basic subjects and sciences, encompassing Basic Biomedical Sciences, are fully integrated into the curriculum and adapted to veterinary education. Standards 1 and 2 are clearly met.

## **2.6 Behavioural and Social Sciences, Medical Ethics**

### Standards

A distinction has to be made between human and veterinary medicines. The demands on Social Sciences, Medical Ethics and Educational Sciences are relative. SER1, Chpt 4, basically indicates that these subjects are dealt with by the faculty.

During the visit it became obvious that ethology is taught in year one and that proper and ethical interactions with patient owners is part of the clinical training.

The team is of the opinion that this standard is met, medical psychology and medical sociology as referred to in the annotations are not part of the core curriculum but may be conveyed during clinical rotations and as optionals.

### Comment

It is suggested to reconsider the definition of point 2.6.

## **2.7 Clinical Knowledge and Skills**

### Standards

It is obvious from the curriculum and how it is executed and as was confirmed during the visit that clinical teaching and hands-on clinical training is comprehensive and that there are no hints that the educational goals (day 1 competences, Liste der Lernziele) may not be reached. The theoretical background of the students in general seems to be excellent, the basics of clinical handling of animal patients have also been acquired, however, it became clear, also after the interview with former students, that the acquirement of clinical confidence and expertise is a matter of further professional engagement.

## **2.8 Linkage to Veterinary Practice and Veterinary Public Health**

### Standards

The Vetsuisse curriculum requires a 4-week core extramural training in a veterinary practice in year 5. Another extramural training in year 5 is required as part of the track chosen (private clinic, clinics, institutes, industry, public health sector). The extramural training periods enforce the linkage to veterinary practice and- depending on the track chosen – also to veterinary public health during undergraduate education. Extramural training in the first 4-week core period in a veterinary practice is assessed by the faculty and the practitioner, providing the necessary feedback.

The postgraduate professional track has an inherent linkage with the undergraduate study program as residents and interns seeking for a European/American diploma are normally involved in student education of the respective field. The program has to meet European requirements with, however, no special responsibility of Vetsuisse in respect to the goals set.

There is also training offered to get a respective Swiss certification. This is in support of the national species orientated programmes and relies on cooperation with Swiss national organizations.

Thus standards 1 and 2 are clearly met.

### Annotations

There is not a clear description but a situation inherent to undergraduate and postgraduate education at VSF that the assumptions of the annotations are met.

## **3 Area: Students**

### **3.1 Admission Policy and Selection Process**

#### Standards

The rules for student admission and the selection process conform with the CRUS guidelines. Students applying need to have the “Maturität”. Following application further selection is based on an aptitude test to assign students to one of the 150 study places in veterinary medicine offered by the VSF Bern and Zürich. The criteria of the selection process are published as are the appeal procedures.

Students can also enter studies at VSF after studying 2 or 3 years of veterinary medicine at a veterinary establishment in a foreign country.

A Gender equality committee is established at the university level in Bern and Zürich, which include representatives of each faculty. In Bern there is an additional gender equality committee established by the VSF Bern.

The standards are clearly met.

### **3.2 Number of Students.**

#### Standard

The number of student places is determined by the SUK (Swiss University Conference).

The capacity of clinical training (60 places in Zürich and 50 in Bern) and the number of students dropping out after year one are the basis for calculating the number of students admitted on a yearly basis. This results in 80 places for VSF Zurich and 70 for VSF Bern. With a ratio of 1/4.35 for the indicator teaching staff/undergraduate students (SER, p 141), the denominator is by far better than in most other European veterinary establishments.

The standard is clearly met

### **3.3 Student Support and Counselling**

#### Standards

At both locations individual student counselling is offered on the university level and by an own office of students affairs of each faculty. Students are able to get support by the office during the official working hours, per Email or via their representative. One of the main tasks of the office is counselling the students and dealing with individual problems, like long time sickness or pregnancy, as well as gender equality questions, if they turn up.

There are also courses offered by the university, for example in ways of research and career planning.

The standard is clearly met.

### **3.4 Student Representation**

#### Standards

Student Representation is secured by the student council, which is made up out of representatives of each year, except the last year. They meet with the dean once a year to discuss student matters and to forward problems to a competent committee. In most committees (e.g. teaching committee) there are student members of both faculties. In the professorial recruitment committees, the research committee, assessment committee VSF Zurich and the promotion committee there are no students involved.

#### Comment

The standard is partly met and it is suggested to include students in the professorial recruitment process.

## **4 Area: Assessment of Students**

### **4.1 Assessment Methods**

#### Standards

The method of assessment of undergraduate students is clearly described (The examination system) and published, thus meeting standard 1.

Methods and criteria for the assessment are well defined and communicated to students and stakeholders. The reliability and validity of assessment methods is secured by the "Institut für Medizinische Lehre" (IML) at the central university level.

The number of examinations across the curriculum and in respect to both, OA and NOA courses seems appropriate; the students do not complain.

There is an acceptable balance between written and oral examination, as written examinations are performed mainly during the first three years in the basic and paraclinical sciences.

During the last two years, the VSF currently applies other different testing methods as structured practical exam (SPP, OSCE) or structured oral examinations (SOE), particularly for professional and clinical courses; these kind of exams are not under the IML management and are assessed by the Faculty.

The assessment of students by examination gives a statistically assessed feedback of the progression in learning by students.

Only Students having successfully graduated to a M Vet Med are allowed to sit for the Federal Examination. The federal diploma entitles the holder to practice all fields of veterinary medicine in Switzerland.

External examiners, in general practitioners that follow the extramural activity of the students, may participate in these examinations. "The criteria for the admission and passing of the federal examination are defined and published by the federal government".

Thus also standard 2 is clearly met.

## **4.2 Relationship between Assessment and Learning**

### Standards

With the adoption of the new curriculum in 2003, quality assurance of the examinations was taken into account by the VSF as a key point of main importance. All necessary efforts were taken to prepare all examinations using a well-defined system in order to cover all relevant aspects of specific subjects (e.g., major species, major organ systems, key problems, etc.). In addition to the internal controls by the curriculum coordinators in Bern and Zurich and their collaborators, quality assessment is provided by the "Institut für Medizinische Lehre" (IML) of the university of Bern. The IML provides an analytical revision of all questions of written examinations. The IML also provides the technical management of a specific and protected database for the written examination. After automated assessment of multiple choice examinations and assessment of short assay tests by the respective specialist, the IML provides the overall evaluation of test results including all written examinations.

All written examination questions are revised with regard to form and language by experts in examination methodology prior to use. Of all written examinations an item analysis and a key validation are being performed. To set standards of the examinations of year one to three, the Rasch model is applied. In the examinations of year four, standards are set using the Hofstee method (clinical topics) and according to Angoff, securing that an examinee has reached the requested level of competence.

Thus the examination system applied is closely linked with the course of the curriculum as requested by the Bologna process and it seems legitimate to postulate, that the number and types of examinations performed encourage integrated and interdisciplinary learning.

Standards 1 and 2 are clearly met.

## **5 Area: Academic Staff/Faculty**

### **5.1 Recruitment Policy**

#### Standards

There is a clearly defined recruitment policy and procedure concerning the filling of professorial positions. Concerning recruitment of other non professorial staff no standardised policy on the faculty level became visible. The responsibility is within the respective unit (department, institute, clinic) represented by the head (director). The needs of the unit are defined and depending on the budget available the position and the expected qualifications are publicly announced. Following interviews and selection of a candidate approval of the dean is necessary at VSF Zurich while at VSF Bern the file is directly forwarded to the university personnel department which checks the correctness of the procedure and assigns the candidate to the position.

Faculty approval and – in the case of Bern – also university approval is necessary if positions are to be shifted between independent units.

At the VSF-Zurich the quality of teaching by new staff is evaluated by student for the first four semesters, then on a 6 year-cycle basis as a minimum request. At VSF-Bern evaluation of teaching is guided by university regulation; it is on a 4-year cycle and requests interactions of the teacher evaluated with the students. Questionnaires are filled in at the end of each module/course or clinical rotation.

Concerning the accepted number of non veterinarians on the teaching staff there is no distinct policy. However, so far apparently the number of non veterinary teaching staff at VSF is way below the threshold level of 30% set by EAEVE (Annex Ia, 1.10).

The standards are clearly met.

### **5.2 Personal Policy and Development**

#### Standards

A good balance in teaching, research and the services provided became obvious during the on-site visit and from the feed-back by the teachers and students.

In loco promotion – an important issue of VSF – depends on the recognition of meritorious academic activities in both teaching, as recognized by the students, and research. The nomination of the “teacher of the year” by students has a long tradition in Bern, in Zurich for the first time in 2010 the “best clinical teacher” will be elected by students.

VSF has a strict policy in evaluating teaching (see 5.1) and by providing pedagogic training, with young staff encouraged or even asked to participate in case of a problematic student feed-back. Student participation on the teaching committee helps to ensure these mechanisms.



Non academic staff is encouraged to participate in continuous education while the academic staff rather provides continuous education.

Consequently all 5 standard points are met.

## **6 Area: Educational Resources**

### **6.1 Infrastructure**

#### Standards

Full information on the infrastructure in respect to facilities and equipment is given in SER1, Chpt 6, p 73. The underlying structure of the academic and non academic staff is depicted in SER1, Chpt 10, p 131. Special information concerning learning resources is given in SER1, Chpt 8, p 118.

In summary, the learning environment and the equipment available at both locations and at all preclinical, paraclinical and clinical units are of latest technical development and allow for a broad spectrum of applications e.g. diagnostic, therapeutic and laboratory services and self learning. The infrastructure provided without any doubt ensures that the study program can adequate be implemented.

Standards 1 and 2 are fully met.

### **6.2 Practical Clinical Training Resources**

#### Standard

SER1, Chpt 6, p 74 and Chpt 7, p 95 give the respective information.

When evaluated by the EAEVE in 2007 the clinical institutions in Zurich and Bern had met all requirements in respect to a modern animal hospital. With the new small animal hospital available in Zurich, small animal medicine at VSF is certainly at the highest level presently achievable.

As was confirmed during the visit the clinics are well organized showing the necessary interactions and patient referrals.

The standard is clearly met.

### **6.3 Information Technology**

#### Standards

The statements made in SER1, Chpt 8.2 indicate a high level of IT. There is an adequate support service.

E-learning resources have been created and are regularly updated. The infrastructure is excellent. E-learning is an integral part of teaching and learning. It functions well. Students are well trained in using the library and internet.

The tele-teaching system is in full use.

The standard is clearly met.

## **6.4 Research**

### Standards

SER 1, Chpt 13 gives the respective information also concerning the involvement of students in research with additional information provided by SER 2.

Research is on a very high level resulting in a substantial number of publications in peer reviewed international journals. A high priority has also been given to clinical research for example by establishing an excellently equipped and directed research platform (center for clinical studies) at the animal hospital of VSF Zurich and the Dept. of Clinical Research and Veterinary Public Health at VSF Bern.

Students are exposed to research during the core curriculum as all teaching evolves from evidence-based medicine. They get also exposed to scientific literature as they have to prepare and present a substantial number of reports and a master thesis at the end of year 5.

Standard 1 and 2 are clearly met.

## **6.5 Educational Expertise**

### Standards

The educational expertise is part of the internal university educational unit. The faculty makes good use of this expertise.

The faculty is also advised by the E-Learning Center of the University of Zürich concerning die “Studierenden- Befragung”.

Multiple choice questions are evaluated by the “Institute of Medical Learning” in Bern. This institute provides state-of-the-art revision of all questions of written examinations. This is considered as very helpful.

The standard is met.

## **6.6 Cooperation**

### Standards

The VSF has an Erasmus agreement with 20 veterinary establishments spreaded across Europe (SER2, chpt. 2.3, p 21). There is quite a number of incoming students, however, due to the structure of the curriculum there are only few outgoing students.

Students know about ERASMUS and the interviews clearly showed that students are highly interested to participate in the program. The fact that one student had to repeat a full year after an Erasmus period in Vienna because the Erasmus period was interfering with teaching and exams in Zürich, was a repelling example. Students are of the opinion that one has to take an “Urlaubsjahr” for an exchange which makes it extremely difficult for them to participate in the Erasmus program.

Theoretically it should easily be possible to change between Bern and Zurich after years 1, 3 and 4. However, students also encountered difficulties in this special situation, probably due to the availability of study places. Thus a mutual exchange is easily possible.

As also became obvious during the interview with the Bern-students, there seem to be virtually no interactions between VSF Bern and Zurich on the student level.

Taking into account these comments from the students, it can be concluded that Standard 1 is met. However the requirement of Standard 2 is not met.

### Annotations

It is suggested to add "Intra-VSF-Communication" to the annotations.

## **7 Area: Programme Evaluation**

### **7.1 Study Programme Evaluation**

#### Standards

Learning objectives were set by the joint VSF teaching Committee. To define learning objectives and outcome stakeholders were involved (practitioners from the Swiss Veterinary Association, Federal office of public health, BAG). An extended version of the learning objectives "Lernzielkatalog" is published.

The curriculum resp. modules are reviewed and evaluated regularly. A feedback system from the students follows a standard procedure, courses, modules and teachers are evaluated. The feedback from teachers concerning the curriculum is performed on an ad hoc basis and personally. The study coordinators on both sides of the VSF are the most important persons facilitating the study program evaluation and adaption to new needs. Official discussions on curriculum, modules and courses take place during faculty meetings and in the so called "Notenkonferenz". Shortcomings may be identified using these feedback mechanisms. A policy for faculty/curriculum development is included in the so called "Mehrjahresplan". Students participate in the teaching committee. Day-1-skills are well defined (Lernzielkatalog) and outcome is controlled by formative assessment and at the state exam. An adaption of the program in case of shortcomings is possible.

The given standards are fulfilled.

### **7.2 Teacher and Student Feedback**

See 7.1, 4.1 and 4.2 this report.

The given standards are fulfilled.

### **7.3 Student Performance**

See 7.1 and 4.1 this report.

Day-1-skills are well defined (Lernzielkatalog) and are in agreement with the EAEVE requirements. The federal examination was designed in close collaboration with the Federal Office of Public health to test student's performance (see 4.1).

In the interviews it became apparent that students are stimulated and prepared for life-long learning (controlled self studies, preparation of presentations). Formative assessment is provided regularly in the clinics by portfolio analysis and on a 1:1 personal tutoring giving ad hoc feedback.

ECTS points are given to students for their performance during the clinical rotations. Statistics on dropout rates, collection and evaluation of student's reports about conditions in their courses exists and could be provided. To collect the different information and coordinate measurements study coordinators on both sides are available and essential.

The given standards are fulfilled.

## **7.4 Involvement of Stakeholders**

See 7.1 and 1.2 this report.

The given standards are fulfilled.

## **8 Area: Governance and Administration**

### **8.1 Governance Structures and Functions**

SER 1, Chpt 1 and 2 clearly explain the structures of governance and administration. Strategic planning is performed. Agreements (Zielvereinbarungen) have to be signed between the faculty (dean) and the university (rector). Similar procedures exist between the departments and the dean. The requirements of standard 1, 2 and 3 are met. In the interviews it became apparent that information of the results of decision making is communicated to the responsible persons either during faculty meetings and/or by sending the minutes (standard 4).

The 4 standards are clearly met.

### **8.2 Academic Leadership**

During the visit a clear description of responsibilities was given concerning the different forms of leadership and workload of commissions. In the interviews it became apparent that healthy academic leadership exists, annual meetings with employees are obligatory, are conducted and help for promotion is given. Research concepts are focused, main research themes are introduced and followed in Zürich and Bern, but individual excellent research is fostered as well.

An adaption of positions of academic staff is feasible in case of curriculum changes and new needs in the profession. The teaching committee has the leadership on curriculum development/adaption in the frame of national legal aspects.

The 2 standards are clearly met.

### **8.3 Administrative Staff**

See SER1, Chpt 10, p 132 and 137.

According to ECOVE criteria (Ratio R5) both locations (Bern, Zurich) are at the upper end of the denominators established so far (very good).

The given standards are fulfilled.

### **8.4 Educational Budget and Resource Management**

At both locations the VSF has clear authority and responsibility for the study programme and its financing (SER1, Chpt 3, p 14, Chapter 8.1. of this report). There is a distinct but different legal frame at the two locations handling financial matters, the outcome, however, is satisfactory at both locations.

Standards 1-3 are met.

### **8.5 Interactions with the Health and Veterinary Sector**

During the interviews it became apparent that a healthy interaction with health and veterinary sectors exists in the development of the study programme, continuing education and to provide animal welfare. See also points 7.1 and 1.2 of this report.

The given standards are fulfilled.

## **9. Area: Continuous Renewal/Quality Assurance**

### Standards

VSF is a voluntary member of the EAEVE and hence submitted to a evaluation on a 10 year basis. This is accompanied by national evaluations.

VSF has established a number of committees (e.g. teaching committee) to interact with the VSF council to meet new demands in all respects of student education and clinical matters. This, for example, is well demonstrated by the development of the present curriculum.

Also that the participation and organization of continuing education in cooperation with the professional organization and other stakeholders is part of the mechanisms for a continuous renewal/quality assurance of veterinary education at VSF.

The standard is clearly met.

## **E: Compliance with legal requirements**

The documents provided (SER 1, 2) and the observations made during the site-visit clearly show that VSF meets the legal requirements for veterinary medical education in Switzerland.

On top of that also the requirements outlined in EEC Directive 2005/36/EC are met.

## **F Profile of a strength and weakness, recommendations**

At both locations, VSF Bern and Zürich, veterinary education is provided on a very high level. VSF has established control mechanisms and quality procedures to guarantee excellence of teaching and to assure with a high likelihood that the students meet day 1 competences at graduation.

The teaching environment must be considered as excellent. This not only relates to the provision of future orientated clinical training facilities but also the provision of outstanding IT training material, e.g. for self studies.

This is certainly an outstanding achievement of VSF.

The research based learning environment, but also the interviews with students and alumni leave no doubt that the graduates are well prepared for a life long learning and to enter all the different tracks of veterinary profession.

Postgraduate education on the academic and professional track and continuing education are of high importance for VSF.

At both locations training to a European or American Specialist or Diplomate is provided on a very broad basis, which – at least at present – is special to VSF.

The wide and outstanding research activities of VSF at both locations offer ample opportunities for students to enter postgraduate academic training. There is a very high number of veterinary graduates entering the training to become a Dr. med. vet. This certainly contributes to the stability and success of research performed at VSF.

Both locations also offer training to a PhD. However, there are distinct differences concerning the acceptance of veterinary graduates in this program between the two faculties resulting in more veterinary graduates entering this program in Bern than in Zürich. In view of the fact that the availability of highly qualified young veterinary scientists must be considered the basis for a continuous development of veterinary medicine, it is strongly suggested to develop a PhD program which equally recognizes the graduation to a veterinary surgeon as an entrance qualification.

VSF has developed a policy to recruit and develop a highly research orientated staff in both, the clinical and non clinical field. It also recognizes the basic difference in respect to the type of research performed at the 2 areas. Apparently and as reflected in the success of research, no further stimulus seems to be necessary. Nevertheless the team suggests that means should be found to recognize successful research by providing additional funds from the faculty/university budget.

On the research level VSF is excellently integrated into an international scientific communication network. In theory also undergraduate students could participate in such a network as VSF has a considerable number of Erasmus contracts. However, though students would like to make use of these possibilities, implementation of the curriculum with its blocks and many examinations seems to be a highly effective obstacle. It is recommended that VSF should develop a serious effort to solve this problem, e.g. by better allowing for exceptions and to develop an attitude that the experiences a student may gain in a foreign university may by far outweigh the passing of a given exam in time.

The team has learned by the VSF Dean and by the rectors, that the merger of the faculties in Bern and Zürich has come to a factual end and that a further merging, though desirable from different points of view, can not be achieved. During its visit the team indeed gained the impression that there are still two clearly separated faculties, in spite of the existing cooperation in scientific matters and - to a smaller extent - on the teaching level, though there is a common curriculum. Thus the team among other things encountered that there seems to be virtual no communication on the student level. At least this must be changed if VSF wants to remain as a successful model.

Students are at the core of a faculty and there is the basis for a good student participation in the governance of Vetsuisse. However, student participation in the recruitment process of professorial staff is reduced to a minimum. In view of the good experiences made at other places with student participation in this special process and the highly cooperative attitude of the local students, it is suggested that Vetsuisse seeks for an adaption of this procedure.

**G: Recommendation on accreditation**

The visiting team unanimously suggests that VSF should be unconditionally be accredited.