

Revisit report
Faculty of Veterinary Medicine
University of Pisa

Pisa, 1st – 2nd February 2012

Revisiting team: **Pierre Lekeux**, ECOVE member
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1. Preparation of the visit: re-visit report

Before arrival, the team received through the EAEVE office a series of documents related to the re-visit, namely the re-visit report with annexes and a two day programme (attached to the report). In addition, references to two videos documenting practical teaching in bovine and porcine medicine was made available via Internet :

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EerUsnkT0s4>;
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wAnTTsHajJg>).

The report provided a good background for an efficient on-site visit, including new ratios calculated. Facts and improvements directly related to rectifications of the Category I deficiency were the primary focus. However, improvements in other areas, mostly mentioned as Category II deficiencies in the original Evaluation Report were documented. A third piece of information related to the last stage of construction of new facilities in the new campus.

2. Factual information

2.1. Category I deficiency in the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in Pisa

The EAEVE Team visited the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Pisa in December 2009. In June 2010, the Faculty was conditionally approved by ECOVE based on the following Category I deficiency: ***“In the Large Animal scene, there is no Bovine Clinic, no Bovine Hospitalization, no true Mobile Clinic and Bovine Medicine is inadequately covered.”***

As stated in the report, the Faculty has adopted several measures to eliminate this deficiency. Briefly summarized, clinical activities were added to the fourth year curriculum: all 4th year students are now involved in a 3 days practical training session at the University Farm. Each student of the 4th year is now expected to perform at least 20 rectal palpations, 4

AI attempts and general clinical examination in bovine at the University Farm, before starting the Mobile Clinic program scheduled for the 5th year. Students spend one week participating in the management of clinical cases at the farm. Sheep and goat farms are also visited to integrate the Small ruminant Clinic. A Mobile Clinic daily logbook has been adopted so the activity of each student can be monitored. In addition, a Swine Mobile Clinic was also developed. Two practitioners were hired as teachers guaranteeing these activities.

“Hands-on” activities increased. Practical activities represent now > 30% in the first three years of the curriculum and \geq 50% for the final two years. This is documented by changes of the corresponding ratios: R6 increased from 0.43 in 2009 to the current value 0.74 and R7 decreased from 2.7 in 2009 to the current value of 1.7.

2.2. Further improvements documented by the report

Changes in further 12 areas since the 2009 visitation were documented following the structure of the 2009 Evaluation Report (see attachments). Among them, Item 13 was judged as an extremely important aspect of the EAEVE re-visit for the future of the Faculty, based on the ER statement:

The Team indicated that it could not emphasize enough how urgent the recommencement and realization of the Stage 3 Project at San Piero a Grado is for maintaining the critical mass and development of the Veterinary Faculty at the University of Pisa.”

The original 32 million Euro project has been thoroughly revised. However, in July 2011, this new project has been approved by the Faculty Council, now awaiting the definitive answer by the Rector of the University of Pisa who formally expressed willingness to speed up the procedures, despite the economic difficulties of the present political moment. Taken into account the importance for the Faculty and the sustainability of the changes made in the Faculty, meeting with the Rector and Vice-Rectors was included into the programme of the re-visit.

3. Comments by the team

- The team appreciated a comprehensive and focused approach of the Faculty aiming not only to eliminate the Category I deficiency but to take this opportunity for improving in other areas. The Faculty used the 2009 ER as a real feedback tool.
- The revisit report was well prepared, informative and well illustrated.

- Due to a collective effort to correct the Category I deficiency, the areas of bovine and swine medicine have developed since the 2009 visit in terms of curricular changes, practical teaching and individual hands-on experience.
- During the on-site visit, the bovine mobile clinic in action in one huge dairy farm was demonstrated. "Hands-on" experience (2 students with 2 vets) was clearly available. This fact was also approved by students during a meeting with them. Based on the on-site visit, the team is convinced that the system was really implemented into teaching and not only for the purposes of the re-visit. New staff were hired.
- Meetings with staff and students confirmed the first-visit finding that for this faculty, very good relationships between teachers, students and the leadership of faculty are a typical feature. The meetings also showed that staff are highly motivated to improve and that the changes depicted in the report are considered as a matter of the entire faculty.
- During the meeting with the Vice-Rectors (the Rector was eventually busy), the team was informed that the *Stage 3 Project at San Piero a Grado* is prepared for financing with full support of the University. The Vice-Rector responsible for financial affairs assured the team that, based on the budget anticipated for future years, all the changes made and/or previewed by the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, are sustainable in a long-term perspective. In addition, the University confirmed that a reduction of the number of students envisaged by the Faculty will also be supported. The team expressed the opinion that this will contribute to the quality of practical teaching, especially in the clinics.
- The team recommended to the Faculty and to the University to optimize the project in terms of better logistics and biosecurity.
- Large improvements of other minor deficiencies were observed. All of them contributed to a better level of veterinary teaching in Pisa, including curricular as well as safety and biosecurity issues.

4. Conclusions and suggestions for ECOVE

- The team expresses the opinion that the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in Pisa has corrected all aspects of the Category I deficiency. The revisit report is in full agreement with what the team has seen and listen.
- The university authorities act in full in agreement with the faculty. The University is financially healthy, warranting the sustainability of the improvements and plan new investments for the FVM

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- Despite improvements in the hands-on practice, the case flow is not really high. However, it seems to be enough, especially with the reduced numbers of students.
- Several other minor deficiencies were successfully corrected. The total level of veterinary teaching in the Faculty has significantly improved. On the other hand, some areas, like clinical research, could still better develop.
- The Faculty is a nice example of the benefit of the EAEVE visitation system for helping a faculty to improve (win-win model)

Overall conclusion

Based on the re-visit report and based on the on-site visit, the revisiting team recommends the faculty of Pisa to be fully approved.

Pierre Lekeux

Petr Horin

ECOVE DECISION: NO MAJOR DEFICIENCIES FOUND

STATUS OF FACULTY: FULL APPROVAL