

## ASSESSMENT POLICY

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### 1. Foreward

This document illustrates the **guidelines** designed to streamline and promote the learning process of students attending the Veterinary Medicine Course (hereafter CdS). In particular, it summarises the principles the assessment work is based on and outlines the teacher and student role and responsibility in the assessment process. This document is not intended to replace the mandatory requirements reported in the CdS Regolamento.




### 2. Stakeholders

The assessment policy illustrated in this document applies to:

- all teaching units of the Veterinary Medicine course;
- students attending these teaching units;
- academics and other staff in charge of planning and delivering the teaching units and any other training activities of the Veterinary Medicine program.

### 3. Definitions

**Learning outcomes:** the set of skills and knowledge a student is expected to acquire, and the ability to apply them in an operative context (competences)

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**Review (of the assessment procedures):** the regular review by the teachers of how assessment is planned and how learning outcomes are measured. The review process includes the check that exams and corresponding marks are valid, fair and reliable.

**Exam:** the procedure when teachers assess the student ability to answer specific questions, discuss a given subject, and/or demonstrate acquired competencies. The procedure must bring out the adequacy of learning and related technical language by the student, in line with the teaching unit and the program learning objectives.

**Competence:** ability to apply knowledge and skills in order to solve problems and issues relevant to the study scope.

**Competencies portfolio:** a document that is regularly updated, listing the competences and skills that the student must acquire during her/his training course.

**Examinations Committee:** the committee in charge of monitoring the organisation and management of exams. This committee, which is under the Monitoring and Review Commission, consists of the Course President and Vice President, and a small number of teachers and students.

#### 4. Assessment principles

Exams must be:

- designed to check the student learning;
- in line with the training objectives of the CdS and the individual teaching units;
- able to assess whether the student has acquired the expected competences and skills based on the Competencies portfolio.

Ideally, the learning outcomes should be consistent with the Dublin Descriptors.

The assessment must:

- a. be set on procedures that can be repeatable as much as possible;
- b. provide an indication of the learning level of the student compared to the expected results, which the teacher has previously publicized;
- c. be transparent, honest and fair for all students;
- d. comprise a combination of at least two test forms in line with competencies evaluation for courses mentioned in the Competences Portfolio. In particular, clinical/professional Day One competencies and skills will be directly tested, eventually by means of simulating case studies.
- e. cover those Day One Competencies which are acquired separately from official courses (e.g. during traineeship periods).

- f. be regularly reviewed by both teachers and students, including feedbacks from other stakeholders (see Annex 3bis in this document);
- g. when applicable, include digital tools as opportunities to improve the procedures (e.g. Moodle platform).

## 5. Types of assessment

The Veterinary Medicine course recognises the following test forms:

- Individual oral presentation
- Group oral presentation
- Individual oral examination
- Assessment of practical and non-practical activities (e.g. internship, continuous assessment)
- Practical examination
- Written report (with/without discussion in the presence of the teacher)
- Individual written examination.

As outlined in 4d above, the courses exam with announced competencies provision (see Competencies Portfolio) will have to include at least two test forms, since the sole assessment of theory, although essential, does not guarantee the evaluation of competencies and skills.

Following the CdS Regolamento Didattico, a single partial test (esonero) can be scheduled for monographic courses, and one for each teaching module for the integrated courses. Partial tests scheduling is submitted to positive advice by the Examinations Committee. Students are not bound to take these exams, which may only test a part of the course or teaching module program. Partial tests must always be consistent with (at least) one of the test forms of the relevant course. Once the student has passed the partial test and accepted the grade, the assessment of corresponding program will not be repeated. The weight of the partial test on the overall exam grade must be clarified in the course page. Partial tests are only available for students enrolled in the current curricular year and the repeat students following that course.

Self-assessment tests can be delivered as part of a course or an individual teaching module, although they do not imply any reduction in the program of the final exam.

Discussion of the Dissertation Thesis represents a form of assessment with specific learning objectives. Guidelines for students drawing up their thesis and assessment criteria for the discussion with the Thesis Commission are published on the CdS website and subject to periodic review.

## 6. Managing exams

Exam periods and dates are scheduled annually and the calendar is published on the CdS website at least three months in advance of the earliest date. Should any date be modified for exceptional reasons, students will be timely advised accordingly. Students must sign up for their exams and teachers must register the exam grades exclusively online by the University platform.

The number of exam dates of an individual course that students can sign up annually is defined in the CdS Regolamento Didattico. Each course should have pre-defined criteria for attribution of exam marks. These criteria will have to be detailed and publicized online on the course page, and will be periodically reviewed by the Examinations Committee. It is contemplated that minimum requirements may be identified as condition to positively pass an exam. If applicable, these requirements must be pedagogically justified and clearly announced in the course page.




Students always have the right to reject a partial exam mark. Apart from that, exams of monographic and integrated courses must be passed during the same sitting. If they do not succeed even in a single exam test, students will have to re-sit the entire exam at a later date.

## 7. Quality Assurance

All phases of the assessment process are managed according to Quality Assurance standards, which apply at the programme, individual course and individual teaching module level. The Quality Assurance of the CdS assessment procedures is ensured by internal (peer) review, possible external review (other stakeholders) and benchmarking. The primarily goal is to guarantee that the exam design and assessment methods meet quality criteria. The CdS establishes an obligation for all teachers to participate in training initiatives on designing, implementing and reviewing assessment methods. An Examinations Committee is hereby established within the Monitoring and Review Commission. The main task of the committee is to review this policy document regularly, oversee the organisation and management of exams, and assess that the exam procedures of all courses are in line with the CdS training objectives.

## 8. Notifying students of exam requirements

Clear information on exam procedures and marking criteria must be provided to students at the beginning of any course. This information is also published in the course page. Any deviation from the published procedures (eg, adopting

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different test forms) is subjected to approval by the Course President or her/his delegate, after consultation with the Examinations Committee. Student will be readily informed of any change by the Course Manager.

## **9. Personal circumstances that may affect a student's ability to take exams**

Exam procedures may be adapted to the needs of individual students with documented disabilities, including Specific Learning Disorders (DSA). Any such student must reach out to the University Disability and DSA Office and the Department of Veterinary Sciences contact person for guidance on available services and the necessary documentation. Exam adaptations may include an extension of published dates, supplementary dates, special conditions guaranteed (e.g. extra time for written exams), and whatever indicated by the University management.

## **10. Students reporting procedure anomalies in exams**

Any report concerning a student exam result will be dealt with in accordance with Annex 1 in this document.

## **11. Student responsibilities**




Students are responsible for actively engaging in their learning process, taking vision of the published assessment procedures and adhering to the requirements. Responsibility of the students for further activities assessed is summarized in Annex 2 in this document.

## **12. Teacher responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the teachers to:

- schedule exam dates respecting prerequisites among courses delivered in the same curricular year. April and December exam sessions are excluded from this;
- schedule the partial exam (esonero) dates with due attention to didactic continuity at the relevant semester level;
- provide assessment according to the guidelines in the present document;
- actively engage in educational initiatives on assessment techniques and strategies.

Teacher responsibility for assessment work and the related Quality Assurance standards is outlined in Annex 3 and 3bis in this document.

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## ANNEX 1

### REPORTING OF EXAM PROCEDURE ANOMALIES PERCEIVED BY THE STUDENTS

#### FORWARD

This annex outlines how the individual student can report on perceived anomalies during the running of her/his exams. For observations, criticism and reports on general aspects of the assessment process, students are invited to follow the official feed-back procedures (e.g. the student opinion-tracking platform, classroom tutoring and student representatives in the corporate bodies).

#### THE FOLLOWING IS MANDATORY:

Students that require clarification on exam procedures and marks should first contact the relevant teachers before officially reporting an issue. Only later they may proceed with the formal report for the individual instance. The application should be submitted to the Course President who asks the advice of the Examinations Committee.

#### DEFINITION OF THE REPORTING PROCEDURE

The procedure for individual report on issues related to exams is an official tool and is open to all the students, permitting them to ask for the review of an exam or any kind of assessment. The procedure allows the individual student to challenge the results based on specific arguments (see below).

#### SCOPE OF THE REVIEW



To be considered, a student report will need to deal exclusively with perceived deviations from assessment procedures announced in the individual course page (e.g., in the running of an exam and/or in mark allocation). Reports will not be considered if dealing with specific evaluations by the Examination board or when deriving from poor awareness of the exam regulations and procedures by the student.

#### THE REPORTING PROCEDURE

The individual student must submit her/his request for re-assessment within 15 working days of the exam results being published. The report will have to be e-mailed to the attention of the Course President and the Examinations Committee, and will be structured as follows:

- Exam date and denomination
- Why the report is forwarded
- Any supporting documentation.



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The Course President, following consultation with the Examinations Committee and after auditing the lecturers, will review the report at the first opportunity and will deliberate within 30 days from receipt, at latest. Decision will be unappealable.

### POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

Potential outcomes of the review are as follows:

- The report is not considered valid, so it is archived once the student has been informed;
- The report is considered valid, but the exam result/mark will not be rectified due to the minor irregularities found;
- The report is considered valid due to obvious irregularities or deviations from the exam procedures announced in the relevant course page. If applicable, the exam result/mark will be rectified once the binding opinion of the President of the concerned Exam board has been acquired.

## Annex 2

### SUMMARY OF STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

CATEGORY	REQUIRED ACTIONS
<i><b>AT THE BEGINNING OF A STUDY PERIOD/ACTIVITY UNDER ASSESSMENT</b></i>	
<i>Course/Teaching Module Content</i>	<p>Check pre-requisites from the course page</p> <p>Become acquainted to expected objectives and learning outcomes</p>
<i>Students with disabilities and DSA</i>	<p>Get in touch as quickly as possible with the Department contact person and follow the procedures published online by the University Disabled and DSA Student Office</p>
<i><b>DURING THE STUDY PERIOD</b></i>	
<i>Communication</i>	<p>Check the Course website and your university email account every day</p> <p>Contact the relevant teacher/s directly if you have any doubts concerning the course/teaching module</p>
<i>Exams</i>	<p>Take exams diligently and honestly, without cheating or plagiarism, in order to prove that the learning objectives have been met.</p> <p>Be sure you have all the pre-requisites and requisites outlined in the Course page (eg. Pre-requisite courses and attendance signatures)</p> <p>When applicable, hand in reports and other material to be assessed in the format and time frame outlined in the course page.</p> <p>Keep your own copies of reports and other material under assessment.</p>
<i>Attendance</i>	<p>Make sure you attend the minimum amount of lectures and other</p>








	course activities as expected from the CdS Regolamento Didattico
<i>Exam material and feedback on exams</i>	<p>Access the online or paper exam material via the specified procedures.</p> <p>When applicable, be proactive in front of teachers feedback about the exams. Feedback may be in form of notes on written test, discussion in class or online, emails in which strengths and weaknesses of test answers are discussed (eg, comments on a report or a presentation).</p>
<b><i>AFTER RESULTS HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED</i></b>	
<i>Understanding your marks</i>	Contact the teacher within two weeks of the exam marks being published.
<i>Making complaints about exam procedures</i>	Consult Annex 1 of this document

## Annex 3

### SUMMARY OF TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

CATEGORY	REQUIRED ACTIONS
<i>BEFORE THE DIDACTIC PERIOD</i>	
<i>Planning exams</i>	<p>Exams of integrated courses must be planned collegially in keeping with: the announced learning objectives, the competences listed in the Portfolio, the different credits assigned to each teaching module and the importance of certain topics/teaching units (e.g. the so-called threshold topics).</p> <p>The dates suggested for the exam should take into account the pre-requisite courses held the same curricular year and should promote the student progression as much as possible.</p> <p>Exams must be planned so that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>they are explicitly and soundly linked to expected specific objectives/learning outcomes in line with those of the CdS and those announced in the course;</li> <li>learning outcomes are reliably evaluated by means of multiple assessment forms (at least two different forms for the monographic and integrated courses listed in the Competences Portfolio);</li> <li>outcomes are comparable even when exams are offered in other forms of study (e.g. e-learning);</li> <li>their difficulty/burden is consistent with the course credit value and the learning outcomes to be assessed.</li> </ol>
<i>Course description</i>	<p>Prepare a detailed description of the course/teaching module and published it online in the course page within expected deadlines.</p> <p>In the course page, provide students with a detailed information on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exams, including the expected results, a description of the exam tests and their relative weight in the final mark;</li> <li>guidelines for the report writing, and for individual and group presentations;</li> <li>the consequences of not respecting these guidelines.</li> </ol>
<i>DURING THE DIDACTIC PERIOD</i>	
<i>Communicating with students</i>	<p>Before the course start, clearly illustrate to students how exams will be conducted, and the relationship between exams and the expected learning outcomes.</p> <p>Publish the student reception time (with or without appointment) on the CdS website. Go through exam results with students, if requested.</p>

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<p><i>Managing exams</i></p>	<p>Make sure exams are fairly and consistently managed.</p> <p>When assessing exams, follow the criteria and requirements publicized in the course page.</p> <p>Take all reasonably applicable measures to highlight and discourage any student behaviour not inspired to the fore mentioned academic honesty.</p> <p>Report any breach of academic honesty by a student to the Examinations Committee and the CdS President.</p>
<p><i>Giving marks</i></p>	<p>Make sure a student mark is not given by others except teachers in the Exam Board.</p> <p>Make sure marks by all members of the Exam board are consistent and equitable.</p> <p>When applicable, give students feedback within two weeks of having received their exam work (e.g. a report).</p> <p>Take part in periodic review and benchmarking sessions on assessment criteria, in accordance with Cds requests.</p> <p>Make sure marks are correctly and timely uploaded online, including marks for partial exams (esoneri). When applicable, make sure that signatures for those competences that are meant acquired once the exam is passed, are timely put on the Portfolio.</p>
<p><i>Changing assessment criteria underway</i></p>	<p>Should exceptional circumstances lead to changes in assessment criteria which have already been established and published, seek the consent of the CdS President and inform students as soon as possible. Seek consent from the Course Directors.</p>
<p><i>Courses with minimum attendance requirements</i></p>	<p>Register student attendance regularly.</p>
<p><i>Students with disabilities</i></p>	<p>Make sure that additional indications/tools for disabled students with appropriate certification, communicated by the University Disabled and DSA Student Office, are implemented during managed exams</p>
<p><i>Clarifications and reports on the exams forwarded by the students</i></p>	<p>Follow up on student requests on exam procedures</p> <p>Take student reports into due account</p>
<p><i>Archiving past exam papers</i></p>	<p>In the case of written tests, keep the originals for no less than two months after the results are recorded.</p>

## Annex 3bis

### CdS RESPONSIBILITIES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE

CATEGORY	REQUIRED ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITIES
<i>Supervising the program and the individual teaching units</i>	<p>Develop a procedure for approving course descriptions pages and periodically reviewing exam formats.</p> <p>Monitor assessment procedures at the individual course level and recommend changes where necessary.</p> <p>Regularly analyse students assessments of exam procedures (University assessment systems, tutoring reports) and, in case of any weakness, implement remedial actions according to relevant guidelines.</p>	Examinations Committee
<i>Quality Assurance in assessment procedures</i>	<p>Make sure that the program as a whole take a unified approach to assessment, pivoted on alignment of criteria and standards with learning outcomes.</p> <p>Make sure that exams have varied and appropriate formats, and that tuning of these formats over the five curricular years, in parallel with the growing competences by the students, may be perceived.</p> <p>Make sure that every exam format is critically reviewed during its design, implementation and post-implementation.</p> <p>Guarantee that assessment procedures allow certification of acquired Day One Competences.</p>	Examinations Committee
<i>Reviewing and benchmarking</i>	<p>Make sure that the design and review of assessment procedures of individual courses is aligned to the CdS Quality Assurance practices and procedures.</p> <p>Make sure that exams are consistent with the CdS and the individual course learning objectives.</p> <p>Make sure that review of assessment criteria meet standards in use at other Veterinary Medicine programs in the same discipline.</p>	Examinations Committee