



Standards of excellence in animal welfare

A guide for veterinary schools

We were known as **WSPA**
(World Society for the
Protection of Animals)



“I wish to express the support of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) for the efforts of World Animal Protection relating to the global survey on suitable standards of excellence in applying animal welfare principles in veterinary education institutions.

Unless otherwise stated, all images are from World Animal Protection.

“The ability of the graduating veterinarian to identify animal welfare problems, participate in corrective actions, know where to find current and credible information regarding regulations and standards, and to explain the responsibilities of those responsible for the care of animals is fundamental to the practice of veterinary medicine at both private and public level.”

Bernard Vallat, Director General,
World Organisation for Animal Health

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1. Introduction

Introduction

World Animal Protection has worked with the veterinary community to establish a system whereby vet schools that demonstrate good standards in animal welfare can be recognised. This document outlines how such a system might work and be implemented. It is hoped the veterinary community will go on to explore the establishment of an awards system for excellence in animal welfare in veterinary education.

The proposed animal welfare standards in veterinary education are the product of considerable consultation and reflection between World Animal Protection and our stakeholders within the global veterinary community between 2014 and 2016.

What is animal welfare?

The earliest definitions of animal welfare concerned this issue in physical terms and most notably in connection with how an animal's body responds to stress physiologically. Within this approach, the emphasis remained on animal functioning, biological fitness and productivity. However, animal welfare science has demonstrated that an animal's physical and mental states and behaviour are equally important to consider. Accordingly, animal sentience – the capacity of animals to have feelings and to experience suffering and pleasure, implying a level of conscious awareness – is increasingly recognised in legislation around the world.

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) now defines animal welfare as follows:

“Animal welfare means how an animal is coping with the conditions in which it lives. An animal is in a good state of welfare if (as indicated by scientific evidence) he/she is healthy, comfortable, well nourished, safe, able to express innate behaviour, and if he/she is not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, fear and distress. Good animal welfare requires disease prevention and veterinary treatment, appropriate shelter, management, nutrition, humane handling and humane slaughter/killing.”

‘Terrestrial Animal Health Code’ (OIE, 2011)

The OIE's definition of animal welfare incorporates all three aspects of animal welfare, namely:

- functioning – physical components such as coping, health, disease prevention and nutrition
- mental – feelings-based components such as comfort and absence of suffering from unpleasant states
- humane handling and slaughter
- naturalness – the animal's ability to express innate behaviour.



Another set of key statements that combines all elements of welfare are known by the term the Five Freedoms¹.

1. Freedom from hunger and thirst
2. Freedom from (thermal) discomfort
3. Freedom from pain, injury and disease
4. Freedom to express normal behaviour
5. Freedom from fear and distress.

UK Farm Animal Welfare Council (1979)

The Five Freedoms overlap with the three aspects of welfare: physical, mental and naturalness. For example, to achieve functioning we need freedom from injury and disease, freedom from hunger and thirst, freedom from thermal discomfort, and freedom from fear and distress. The Five Freedoms are, therefore, often used as a framework to assess the welfare of any animal in any context such as in the wild, during handling, surgical procedures or euthanasia, or simply within a certain management or housing system on the farm, in a laboratory, zoo, rescue shelter, veterinary hospital or school.

For further information about animal welfare, please refer to World Animal Protection Concepts in Animal Welfare Modules 1 - 5 (worldanimalprotection.org/concepts-animal-welfare-modules-1-5).

The role of veterinary education in improving animal welfare

Veterinarians have the capacity to be leading advocates for animal welfare worldwide. They also have the professional, scientific and legal authority to protect animals. The OIE's recommendations on the Competencies of graduating veterinarians ('Day 1 Graduates') make animal welfare integral to veterinary education.

These competencies include the skills of advocacy and communication to inform, guide and motivate action and they are being adopted by many national authorities to become the global standard for veterinary education.

Animal welfare is increasingly recognised as a bedrock of a humane and sustainable society where there is no place for animal suffering. Most animal suffering is not intentional, but is the result of ignorance, neglect or production systems which do not consider the five core areas of animal welfare. This can be addressed when vets or other professionals recognise a problem and intervene to improve animal welfare.



2. Background

Effective veterinary animal welfare education

During the last decade, some concerns have been raised in the UK² and other European countries including Turkey³, as well as in the US⁴ and Australia⁵, with regard to the adequacy of veterinary training in animal welfare science, ethics and law, in conjunction with the effects of progressing through veterinary education itself. In brief, largely cross-sectional research indicates that as veterinary students' progress through veterinary education there is a decline in their moral reasoning and they become less sentimental, altruistic, and empathic. Their belief in animal sentience and the importance of the human-animal bond also decreases. In addition, students are less inclined to provide post-operative analgesia to patients as they pass through their education and less likely to use post-operative analgesia. Subcultures specific to individual vet schools have also been identified in terms of how they view and provide treatment to animals. A similar hardening effect has also been found in students passing through human medicine education⁶.

Clear and progressive steps have been taken by veterinary associations to support and promote integration of animal welfare within the veterinary curriculum. As a key international intergovernmental organisation with 178 members, the OIE has defined animal welfare as a specific competency for graduating veterinarians the world over⁷ to enhance the quality of the National Veterinary Services. The OIE also recommends that animal welfare is taught to veterinary students. More recently, the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE), the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE) and American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) have also developed a Model Curriculum for Animal Welfare.

However, the above research indicates that despite initiatives by veterinary associations and educators to have animal welfare included in the veterinary curriculum, this alone may not be enough to support the next generation of vets becoming advocates for good animal welfare.

Within the context of veterinary education in particular, it could be possible that attitudes towards animals and animal welfare are culturally transmitted or educated. This is particularly likely in the case of 'role models' and 'social norms', which are determined by the attitudes and behaviours of the faculty and staff in the vet school and qualified practitioners and educators of veterinary medicine. The majority of the current veterinary educators in veterinary schools were not formally trained in animal welfare themselves, and if they want to learn about animal welfare they must do so by proactively completing specialised training.

If we accept that attitudes towards animals are largely culturally transmitted in the context of veterinary education – as is thought to be the case in human medicine education – then more needs to be done beyond curriculum change to support both staff and graduating vets. Within human medicine education there is increasing focus on establishing a 'culture of care' in order to tackle some of the problematic issues highlighted above. World Animal Protection now proposes that a system for recognising excellence in animal welfare should be implemented globally within veterinary education and we have created a set of guidelines with the intention of catalysing this process.

World Animal Protection recognises that to effectively equip graduating veterinary students with competence in animal welfare, it not only needs to be taught but taught effectively. Ideas about what makes an effective educator vary with discipline, generation and culture. However, a great deal more is understood about how both children and adults can be supported by educators to learn most effectively. There is an increased focus on determining the learner's needs, and it is also argued that learners should be provided with opportunities to interact, question, dialogue and discuss⁸. To instil a culture of care within veterinary education it is important for veterinary educators to demonstrate kindness in all interactions, not only with animals but also with their students⁹.

To ensure the next generation of vets develop lifelong learning skills, teaching approaches are needed that support independent and self-directed learning, problem solving, critical thinking, reflection and collaborative learning. This needs to be embraced and applied through the culture and curriculum of veterinary schools and their faculty¹⁰. Additionally, the use of a variety of assessment tools are required in order to align with the diversity of areas and learning styles. Where assessment design synchronizes with educational outcomes and teaching methods, the quality of education is improved and student learning is supported¹¹.

World Animal Protection's work in veterinary education

For more than 15 years, World Animal Protection worked with the veterinary community to mainstream animal welfare within veterinary education. Our work has focused on supporting veterinary educators to integrate animal welfare science and ethics into their veterinary schools' curriculum. We have also trained veterinary educators in animal welfare science and ethics so they are well equipped to pass on the relevant animal welfare knowledge, attitudes and skills to the next generation of veterinarians¹².

Our 2014 global consultation of the veterinary profession sought the views of more than 2,600 people from 97 countries or territories. It confirmed that more than 80% of vets supported each of our eight animal welfare standards and more than half were strongly in agreement. The results and comments of the consultation are reflected in the guidelines outlined in this document¹³.

Our survey also showed that the responding veterinarians were motivated primarily by the desire to ensure better treatment of animals. This response was consistent across professional groups surveyed. These groups included veterinary educators, students, practicing veterinarians and other relevant professionals all over the world. In fact, the level of interest in the survey by veterinary students was exceptionally high and indicates a keenness among the next generation of vets for ensuring good animal welfare.

Benefits to implementing animal welfare standards in veterinary education

Being recognised as a centre of excellence in animal welfare can act as a unique selling point, helping veterinary schools attract more applications from aspiring future veterinary students. In turn, these veterinary schools may be better positioned to secure much needed external funding to support facilities and research.

Where veterinary schools integrate animal welfare education into the veterinary curriculum and demonstrate excellence in animal welfare, graduating veterinary students will be:

- better equipped to graduate with OIE Day 1 competencies in animal welfare
- more empowered to learn about welfare
- more prepared and able to answer client's questions on animal welfare topics¹⁴
- more concerned about how animals are treated¹⁵
- more able to effectively identify ethical dilemmas, discuss options and the impact on stakeholders¹⁶.

Furthermore, experiences during veterinary education have been cited as a contributing factor towards later mental health issues within the profession¹⁷. Though more needs to be understood about the relationship between veterinary mental health and attitudes towards animal welfare, some argue that instilling a culture of care helps human medicine students have a more positive view towards their patients. It is also argued that this increases student satisfaction and buffers against a loss of idealism.

Want to know more?

Through our work with the veterinary profession to develop animal welfare education standards of excellence, we have identified eight ways for veterinary schools to promote good animal welfare.

The following guidelines aim to help veterinary bodies and schools integrate animal welfare across all areas. If you would like to discuss these standards further, please contact your regional office of World Animal Protection listed on page 26. For examples of good practice, sources of support, and questions to help vet educators with self-assessment and peer-assessment, please refer to the World Animal Protection website.



3. What should the standards of excellence in animal welfare include?

1. Senior team commitment to animal welfare

The mission and vision of the veterinary school show commitment to promoting good animal welfare. The senior team creates a culture that promotes and embodies good animal welfare throughout the veterinary school.

“The [name of veterinary school] holds the position that the veterinary community, and veterinarians individually, must maintain our commitment to animal welfare and fulfil our duties as animal advocates and leaders in the field of animal welfare.”

What does this look like in practice?

If the school does not yet have a commitment to animal welfare in its mission or policies we suggest that it develops one, if possible, following a discussion with the wider school community. This statement does not need to be long or detailed. It could adapt that of the OIE or World Vet Association (WVA) along the following lines:

This provides a clear reference point for all policy and practice. The OIE, WVA, national vet associations and these guidelines offer advice about how to put this commitment into practice.

<p>*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The dean and senior management team make their commitment to animal welfare clear so that it informs the whole curriculum and management of the veterinary school. This can be done through the student welcome/induction/assemblies; student handbook, and curriculum/study materials and in association with an animal welfare lecturer where one is already established. ☞ Public-facing documents recognise animal welfare as central to the education of veterinarians, as a holistic concept beyond animal health. ☞ These documents include the prospectus, website, strategic plan, mission and vision of the veterinary school/faculty.
<p>**</p>	<p>One star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The veterinary school has a culture of promoting good animal welfare in which staff, students or the public are encouraged to identify and address welfare problems. This can be demonstrated through induction/tutorials, documentation, e.g. the handbook, and posters throughout the department. ☞ There is an official and confidential procedure for staff/students to discuss animal welfare issues, and a timeline for responses and action by the faculty. ☞ Students are well informed of the procedure. They know who to discuss animal welfare issues with, as shown through their response to internal student satisfaction/experience surveys. ☞ The faculty can provide evidence of their prompt response to act if animal welfare concerns are raised.
<p>***</p>	<p>Two star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Meetings of the senior management team regularly consider and review animal welfare issues and provision for good animal welfare in the school in general. This is shown in meeting minutes. ☞ Team takes action to rectify any animal welfare issues that arise through an action plan which is made public.
<p>****</p>	<p>Three star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The dean and staff address animal welfare issues in the community. ☞ Veterinary school has a procedure for taking action to safeguard or improve animal welfare at a local community level.
<p>*****</p>	<p>Four star requirements met and verified by independent assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The dean and staff are engaged with and promote animal welfare issues at a national and international level. ☞ Faculty has ongoing relationship with national/international animal welfare bodies and contributes to improving the lives of animals nationally.

2. Effective ethics committee

The veterinary school has an animal ethics committee that complies with national legislation. This committee acts independently. It has extensive powers to review the use of animals in research, education and clinics within the institution and to ensure the humane use of animals.

What does this look like in practice?

The animal ethics committee is registered with the competent official bodies of the country and has the membership, powers and resources to carry out its responsibilities.

<p>*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌘ Senior management establish procedures and personnel to form an animal ethics committee. ⌘ Membership of the animal ethics committee should meet the criteria established in national legislation. ⌘ The animal ethics committee should include at least one veterinarian and an animal researcher/postgraduate student. ⌘ The animal ethics committee has clear guidelines as to its purpose, scope, and power of decision. ⌘ The animal ethics committee reviews and approves all research, teaching and clinical practice involving animals. ⌘ The animal ethics committee is clearly publicised to everyone in the institution. ⌘ Teachers, students and other staff should know who is on the animal ethics committee and how to contact them in confidence about any concerns over animal welfare. The complaints procedure is clearly communicated. ⌘ The animal ethics committee members are trained in the functions, role, and responsibilities of an animal ethics committee. ⌘ The animal ethics committee is able to investigate and act on concerns about animal welfare raised by members of staff and protect their confidentiality as whistle-blowers if necessary.
<p>**</p>	<p>One star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌘ The animal ethics committee should include a member of the senior management team. ⌘ The animal ethics committee reviews and approves all lesson plans that use animals, cadavers or specimens. ⌘ The animal ethics committee meets periodically, with the dates widely publicised to all members of the institution. ⌘ The animal ethics committee can veto any class or experiment it deems incompatible with the rules and/or guidelines that promote the humane use of animals, through replacement, reduction, and refinement (the 3Rs).
<p>***</p>	<p>Two star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⌘ The animal ethics committee should include at least one person who specialises in animal welfare and bioethics. ⌘ The animal ethics committee members are replaced from time to time through a democratic and inclusive process. ⌘ The animal ethics committee's annual report is published and publicly available.

2. Effective ethics committee

Three star requirements met

- ❖ The animal ethics committee should include an independent representative. The independent representative should not be associated with the establishment or animal research. They should have autonomy to make decisions without any coercion of other members of the institution.
- ❖ The animal ethics committee has a duty to monitor and evaluate the introduction of alternatives that replace the harmful use of animals in teaching and research.
- ❖ The animal ethics committee provides guidance and support to researchers and teachers on matters relevant to animal welfare. This is done through the preparation of guidelines or protocols and dissemination of relevant scientific literature.
- ❖ A member of the animal ethics committee is on the board of the veterinary school or faculty.

Four star requirements met

- ❖ The animal ethics committee is responsible for advising the institution on plans and policies (on animal use) that may affect animal welfare.
- ❖ The veterinary school and associated animal ethics committee participate in an external animal welfare assessment process that includes both on-site assessments and at least annual self-reviews. Examples of acceptable assessment programs include the Association of Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International (AAALAC) and the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC).



3. Humane use of animals

The use of animals in teaching and research is humane. A harmful interaction with animals in education refers to any action, intentional or not, that affects the current and future welfare of an animal, as defined by the Five Freedoms, with a pedagogical objective¹⁸. Harmful use of animals should no longer take place as part of a veterinary curriculum. Any harmful use of animals should be replaced where possible

by use of alternative resources such as videos, models, software and ethically sourced cadavers. In addition, animal facilities, housing and care must offer animals kept by the school a good quality of life.

What does this look like in practice?

Students and staff show humane care of animals in all areas of teaching and research.

*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ A senior member of staff holds official responsibility to ensure the humane use of animals. This staff member has authority to stop inhumane practices and implement alternatives with support from the ethics committee. ☒ Staff (and students if applicable) log the use of animals and monitor the welfare of each animal at regular intervals daily. ☒ The veterinary school and ethics committee review all policies and guidelines for responsible animal use in education and research annually. This is to ensure that they are clear, easy to follow and follow the precepts of the 3Rs.
**	<p>One star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ Staff introduce all new students to the humane use of animals as part of their induction at the start of their education.
***	<p>Two star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ The senior team or an animal welfare/ethics committee regularly reviews and if necessary modifies the housing for animals used in education and research appropriate to each species.
****	<p>Three star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ There are funds to invest in the acquisition of alternatives (mannequins, software, simulators) to replace the harmful use of animals. ☒ The faculty encourages students and animal welfare charities to raise funds for better animal care and acquisition of alternatives.
*****	<p>Four star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ Veterinary schools have a centre of research into alternatives. This centre can provide alternatives to the veterinary school and other veterinary schools. It trains teachers and employees to use the alternatives. This centre can be a foundation or have own school resources. ☒ Veterinary school allocates funds to regularly maintain the alternatives suite/equipment and trains staff and supervisors in their effective use.

4. Animal welfare is taught across the curriculum

The principles and practice of good animal welfare are taught to all students and can be identified throughout the curriculum.

What does this look like in practice?

Animal welfare learning outcomes are integrated into teaching throughout all courses and years of study within the veterinary curriculum.

<p>*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ Animal welfare is clearly identified as a core subject in the veterinary curriculum for undergraduates. This means, for example, including at least one compulsory animal welfare course equipping vet students with animal welfare knowledge and skills to put animal welfare into practice. ☒ The course covers animal welfare science, ethics, national laws and international norms. This course should have a minimum of 20 hours contact time. ☒ All preparation for veterinary extra-mural/work experience placements includes a briefing on relevant animal welfare issues ☒ Veterinary graduates meet the 'Day 1 competencies' recommended by the OIE. The compulsory animal welfare course is examined with the same pass/ fail criteria as other core subjects
<p>**</p>	<p>One star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ The compulsory animal welfare course includes at least one session on the role of vets as advocates for animal welfare and communication with those responsible for animals. <p>Animal welfare knowledge is integrated into other disciplines such as anatomy, physiology, animal husbandry, clinical skills, surgery etc. to extend the depth and breadth of these traditional sciences.</p>
<p>***</p>	<p>Two star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ The veterinary school offers animal welfare as a mandatory subject for all postgraduates and PhD students who will be managing, handling, teaching with or performing any research involving animals. ☒ The academic curriculum includes both didactic and problem-based learning for students. This gives direct practical experience and support to address animal welfare issues in a real-world context.
<p>****</p>	<p>Three star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ Talks and workshops on animal welfare advocacy are offered from expert speakers such as animal welfare researchers, ethicists or campaigners. These should be a minimum of five hours over the animal welfare course's duration.
<p>*****</p>	<p>Four star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ Knowledge of animal welfare is integrated into all disciplines of the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in the faculty. ☒ Veterinary students' extra-mural /work experience placements are selected based on their adherence to positive animal welfare requirements. ☒ Veterinary students are formally examined for competency in animal welfare prior to graduation.

5. Continuing Education (CE) and Professional Development (CPD) in animal welfare

The veterinary school sponsors, supports, or conducts animal welfare education and training for their staff and practising vets. Ideally the veterinary school will offer CPD itself in order to demonstrate the promotion of CE and CPD in animal welfare. Veterinary schools that use external rather than internal facilities (e.g. no onsite veterinary hospital, all teaching outsourced to associated veterinary clinics) could support their staff to gain training in animal welfare through other means (e.g. at another veterinary school or institution that does provide training in animal welfare in situ and/or online). All faculty staff show competence in animal welfare as identified by the OIE day 1 competencies. Other staff such as animal handlers, keepers and administrative staff are supported to demonstrate animal welfare awareness and skill appropriate to their role.

What does this look like in practice?

- Staff at the veterinary school continue to develop their skills and knowledge in animal welfare.
- CPD for animal welfare is comprehensive.
- Professional development in animal welfare science, ethics and/or law is available to vets in the area.
- There are quality assurance processes in place for teaching, learning and assessment.

CPD can be carried out through conferences, training courses, workshops, online courses and field trips. These enable staff and practising vets to continue learning about animal welfare throughout their careers. Refresher courses in animal welfare could also be a requirement for all staff.



- There is at least one designated full-time lecturer with advanced training in animal welfare (postgraduate or specialisation).
- The veterinary school provides CE and CPD for veterinary school staff and practicing vets that covers key areas of animal welfare relevant to vets and other staff. If this is not possible the vet school supports its staff to attain CPD in animal welfare elsewhere or through conferences, online training, webinars or national veterinary meetings, for example.
- The key areas include the Five Freedoms, ethics, physiological and behavioural measures of welfare, and welfare assessment. Those trained will be able to explain animal welfare responsibilities to owners, handlers, veterinarians and others responsible for animal care.
- Staff will be able to identify animal welfare problems and participate in corrective actions.
- Staff will also be able to find up-to-date and reliable information regarding local, national and international animal welfare regulations/standards.
- A senior member of faculty is responsible for managing the development and delivery of CE and CPD.
- Feedback from all participants on CE and CPD courses is sought, analysed and used to improve provision. It is discussed by senior team/animal welfare/ethics committee and integrated into the curriculum (at least annually).
- The veterinary school provides access to a minimum of one hour of CPD a year for all veterinary school staff. All faculty staff will have received at least one training on the competency in animal welfare as defined by the OIE day 1 competencies*.
- All faculty staff and postgraduate students have basic competency in animal welfare as defined by the OIE day 1 competencies. Animal handlers have been trained in the respect and good care of animals*.

*Within the last 5 years

5. Continuing Education (CE) and Professional Development (CPD) in animal welfare

<p>***</p>	<p>One star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ Provision for CE and CPD for veterinary school staff covers specialist areas of animal welfare. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e.g. implementation and adherence to local, national and international animal welfare regulations/standards; carrying out humane methods of animal production; transport; slaughter for human consumption; killing for disease control purposes. ☒ Provision for CE and CPD includes training of staff and supervisors on the theory of the 3Rs. It also includes how to use and apply alternative teaching models to reduce and refine the use of live animals. ☒ The veterinary school offers four hours of CPD in animal welfare which is achievable via a half-day workshop. ☒ Lecturers from critical areas (anatomy, physiology, surgery, husbandry, internal medicine and species-specific medicine) have received further training in animal welfare in the humane use of animals. This should relate to their subject area and in species-specific welfare issues*. ☒ Clinical, research and animal care staff have received further training on animal handling and care of animals, as per FVE Competencies*. ☒ All staff are trained in the use of alternatives to animals for teaching and research. ☒ Administrative staff have received training on the role of vets as advocates and basic animal welfare as part of their induction*. ☒ Animal welfare training is incorporated into faculty staff's CPD training plan and completed/carried out at least once a year.
<p>****</p>	<p>Two star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ CE and CPD courses are available at intervals across the year. ☒ Practicing vets are able to start CE and CPD courses within three months of registering. ☒ Veterinary school offers eight hours of CPD in animal welfare. ☒ Lecturers from critical areas (anatomy, physiology, surgery, husbandry, internal medicine and species-specific medicine) have received further training in animal welfare in the humane use of animals. This is in relation to their subject area and in species-specific welfare issues*. ☒ There are no reported breaches for animal handlers failing to provide good animal welfare. ☒ More than half of the veterinary faculty has animal welfare advocacy training.*
<p>*****</p>	<p>Three star requirements met (caveat if jumping to two months)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☒ The veterinary school works with national and/or international veterinary authorities to offer and deliver CPD in animal welfare for practicing vets. ☒ The veterinary school and/or its staff contribute to CE and CPD in animal welfare. This involves working with and for external companies and veterinary associations (in a consultancy capacity). It also requires the completion of a training needs analysis to establish appropriate CE and CPD for the context/area. ☒ As effective advocates for animal welfare the veterinary school/faculty communicates issues to the public, officials or politicians. The veterinary school offers 24 hours of courses or a workshop in animal welfare. ☒ At least half of faculty staff have received training in the role of vets as advocates and in basic animal welfare as part of their induction*. ☒ Clinical, research and animal care staff have received further training on animal handling and care of animals, as per FVE Competencies*. ☒ All veterinary staff have received animal welfare advocacy training. They integrate this into the undergraduate curriculum, giving examples specific to their subject area*.

*Within the last 5 years

5. Continuing Education (CE) and Professional Development (CPD) in animal welfare



Four star requirements met

- The animal welfare science, ethics and law courses offered by the veterinary school are accredited.
- The veterinary school establishes a collaborative capacity building twinning programme with another veterinary school. This is to encourage/mentor/support other veterinary schools to establish and roll out CPD in animal welfare.
- The veterinary school runs its own CPD suite and offers 40 hours' worth of courses in animal welfare.
- Clinical, research and animal care staff are demonstrating good practice in animal handling and care of animals, based on the training on FVE Competencies.
- At least one staff member is an animal welfare professional consultant to local government.
- Veterinary school staff achieve competence and then complete CPD every year/biannually.



6. Active involvement of students in animal welfare

Veterinary school staff actively promote and support student participation in animal welfare through academic activities, research projects, placements and extra-curricular activities.

What does this look like in practice?

Students are fully aware of, and supported in, all the different opportunities to promote good animal welfare during their veterinary education.

This can range from setting up and running animal welfare discussion groups through to fundraising to support animal welfare focused community outreach initiatives led by the veterinary school or animal charities.

<p style="text-align: center;">*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The prospectus, website and other publicity for students emphasises wider opportunities for students to get involved in animal welfare. ☞ The welcome for all new students encourages them to take part in animal welfare activities. ☞ Student-led activities for animal welfare are described and celebrated throughout the veterinary school. Examples include: internal and external newsletters, websites and other media; special awards or prizes for animal welfare initiatives.
<p style="text-align: center;">**</p>	<p>One star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The induction programme for new students includes opportunities for students to sign up for animal welfare related activities. These could involve on-site animal welfare monitoring, running animal welfare-related societies, or outreach programmes. ☞ Existing students have the opportunity to get involved in the care of live animals owned or used by the school. This can be either as part of their course or as an extra-curricular responsibility. ☞ A senior member of staff is responsible for coordinating and promoting animal welfare activities for students whose role is known to students and staff. ☞ There is adequate practical support for student-run initiatives in animal welfare. This may include places to meet and organise, small grants or funds as well as public recognition.
<p style="text-align: center;">***</p>	<p>Two star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Students can explain how requirements for positive animal welfare impacts on their research and study opportunities via the animal welfare ethics committee. This is demonstrated through surveys/ interviews prompts. ☞ Students are able to choose animal welfare placements instead of clinical placements (and gain credits). They may do this through placements at venues including approved animal shelters, welfare-friendly farms, community outreach or animal welfare charities. ☞ More experienced senior students are expected to mentor and support new students on animal welfare projects. ☞ Students are encouraged, and the faculty facilitates/supports students, if necessary, to join the animal welfare activities of the International Veterinary Students Association.

6. Active involvement of students in animal welfare

Three star requirements met

- Students are encouraged to get involved in animal welfare research. See – **Research in animal welfare.**
- Students are represented in animal welfare decision-making structures, possibly through an independent students' council or forum.
- Students are involved in quality assurance of learning, teaching and handling of animal welfare.
- Conscientious objection to animal use by students is permitted or students are made aware that this is an option for them.

Four star requirements met

- Students are supported and encouraged to actively engage the wider community in animal welfare education. This may be through school visits and community focused activities. Students are also mobilised to engage with animal welfare issues/external lobbying).
- Animal welfare organisations are able to work with and support students on projects, either financially or administratively.



7. Extension/community programmes

The school, professors and students are engaged with and offer public engagement activities. They enhance the welfare of animals in the community.

What does this look like in practice?

The vet school engages with the local community to raise awareness of and support solutions to contextual animal welfare issues.

*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ The veterinary school is developing relationships with other veterinary schools, national veterinary associations, vet practices, animal owners and animal welfare organisations.
**	<p>One star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ The veterinary school offers low cost/subsidised/affordable treatment to the local community and their animals. Where required, the veterinary school can seek financial and logistical support externally from reputable partner clinics or non-governmental organisations. ☐ Faculty members give talks about animal welfare in primary/secondary schools and local community projects. ☐ Community outreach projects or services are designed using evidence gathered by the school through monitoring welfare of animals in the community.
***	<p>Two star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ The veterinary school is providing students with capacity/opportunity to take part in 'service learning' placements to support and improve animal welfare in the local community.
****	<p>Three star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ The feedback from the extension programme is used to make changes in the veterinary curriculum after discussion by the senior team or animal welfare committee.
*****	<p>Four star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ The veterinary school works in partnership with its selected placements to assess and improve its animal welfare provision. ☐ The veterinary school and staff are encouraging students to be actively involved with animal welfare (whether organised by the school or not) in the local community. This could include providing affordable or pro-bono advice, human resources or clinical services in animal-related activities. ☐ The veterinary school works with governments and policy makers to advise on and be involved in national or local animal welfare issues. ☐ Local government can use the services of the veterinary school – for example, to help conduct neutering programmes.

8. Research in animal welfare

The school offers research opportunities in animal welfare science and ethics with a competent supervisor and/or in an independent animal welfare department.

What does this look like in practice?

The school promotes inquiry, research capacity, critical thinking and an investigative spirit that favours a permanent and critical approach to animal welfare. Such an approach should foster independent thinking, inspiring staff and students to formulate problems and develop solutions around animal welfare in practice.

The school has a core of teachers and students – undergraduates and postgraduates – who devote significant time to research in animal welfare through teaching and outreach projects. There are policies, procedures and funding for the development of applied research projects on animal welfare science and ethics in the veterinary school.

The results of research are widely disseminated to the scientific community and key audiences who can apply them to improve animal welfare. These audiences may include animal producers, keepers, other researchers and teachers, etc.

<p style="text-align: center;">*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Establishes and maintains subscriptions to relevant scientific journals regarding current animal welfare science and sentience research. ☞ At least one researcher is involved and supported to carry out animal welfare research. ☞ Postgraduates participate in animal welfare research. ☞ Research is published in scientific or specialist journals. ☞ Undergraduate and postgraduate students can propose research projects on animal welfare relevant to the veterinary medicine programme. ☞ Research methods avoid the harmful use of animals. ☞ All research within the veterinary school is approved through the senior team or animal ethics committee.
<p style="text-align: center;">**</p>	<p>One star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Development and provisions for budget (or fundraising to create a budget) for animal welfare research. ☞ The veterinary school has teachers trained in animal welfare at postgraduate level. ☞ The faculty has carried out research in animal welfare science in the last 12 months. ☞ The veterinary school has a research leader/director post with explicit responsibility for animal welfare, and a budget for the development of animal welfare research projects.
<p style="text-align: center;">***</p>	<p>Two star requirements met</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Undergraduate students participate in animal welfare research projects, supervised by postgraduates and/or staff who have been trained in animal welfare. ☞ There is academic exchange between the veterinary school and other veterinary institutions to share animal welfare research results. ☞ Research is disseminated through technical publications and animal industry bulletins, scientific events and meetings (seminars, conferences, etc.) to reach other key audiences. ☞ Criteria for selection of animal welfare topics for investigation include relevance to the long-term improvement of animal welfare as well as local/topical issues, and according to government and industry needs and interests.

8. Research in animal welfare

Three star requirements met

- Animal welfare research projects inform teaching and community outreach/ engagement activities through discussion by the senior team or animal welfare committee.
- The veterinary school supports the creation of a research seedbed on animal welfare. At least 10% of students will be part of this.

Four star requirements met

- The school has well-defined lines of research and areas of interest in animal welfare, as stated in the faculty mission or prospectus.
- There is an entire department dedicated to animal welfare research. The veterinary school establishes itself as a reference centre for animal welfare research.
- The faculty promotes a prize scheme for recognition of animal welfare research in their region.





4. Conclusion

We hope these guidelines will help and inspire veterinary associations, schools and educators to work together to further develop and refine a scheme that recognises excellence in animal welfare within veterinary education. You can find out more about a range of veterinary schools around the world that are already demonstrating excellence in animal welfare by visiting the World Animal Protection website.

By taking action to implement excellence in animal welfare, veterinary schools will be strategically placed to produce competent vets who will be animal welfare advocates in whichever specialism they choose to work.

Further information

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