

**Lithuanian University of Health Sciences**



Field of Study:  
**VETERINARY MEDICINE (H01)**

**SELF EVALUATION REPORT**

2021

## Study Field Data

No	Title of the study programme	State code	Type of studies	Cycle of Studies	Mode of study (duration in years)	Credit volume	Qualification degree and (or) professional qualification	Language of instruction	Minimum education required	Registration date of the study programme	Study programme termination date (if applicable)	Study programme location
1.	Veterinary Medicine	6011HX001	University studies	Integrated	full-time, 6 years	360	Master's Degree of Veterinary Sciences, Qualification of Veterinary Doctor	Lithuanian, English	No lower than high/secondary school education or its equivalent diploma	19 05 1997	-	Lithuanian University of Health Sciences
2.	Veterinary Medicine	6011HX001	University studies	Integrated	full-time, 5.5 years	336	Master's Degree of Veterinary Sciences, Qualification of Veterinary Doctor	Lithuanian, English	No lower than high/secondary school education or its equivalent diploma	19 05 1997	2022	Lithuanian University of Health Sciences

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## INTRODUCTION

The Lithuanian University of Health Sciences (LSMU) is the largest higher education school for health science specialists in Lithuania (LT), consisting of Medical Academy and Veterinary Academy (VA). The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (VMF) is the only faculty in LT that has been training veterinarians for 85 years and the second-largest faculty at LSMU, where a total of 1,168 students study, of which 859 are in the Veterinary Medicine (VM) study programme. The structure and content of the programme comply with the provisions of both the [Directive 2005/36 / EC of the European Parliament and of the Council](#) and the [Directive 2013/55 / EU of Article 38](#) (both hereinafter referred to as the Directives), the requirements of the [Description of the Study Field of VM](#), and the European System of Evaluation of Veterinary Training Standard Operating Procedure ([ESEVT SOP](#)) Annex 2.

With the rapid change and development of veterinary sciences, the VM study programme is being constantly reviewed and improved in order to maintain a high level of programme quality that meets the current and modern requirements. In 2011, the Center for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (SKVC) accredited the VM study programme for the maximum period at the national level. Due to the changing national laws, since 2017, the accreditation of the VM study programme has been extended annually by the Order of the SKVC Director. The essential self-evaluation of the VM study programme was performed according to the [Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania](#) and the [General Requirements for the Execution of Studies](#) regarding the scope of the programmes in 2017. The duration and scope of the VM study programme have been increased from 5.5 (336 ECTS) to 6 years (360 ECTS), and the classic structure of the study programme has been replaced by an integrated version since 2020. The first students to the 6-year duration study programme have been admitted since 2017. The duration of the VM studies for the students who were admitted before 2017 is 5.5 years with the study programme completion on February, 2022. Currently, the admission to this particular study programme is closed. Since 2011, the VM study programme is also available in EN. The programmes in LT and EN are identical in content and scope. Therefore, in the following report, both programmes will be considered as a whole, describing only the small inconsistencies that occur.

LSMU VMF has been recognized as a full member of EAEVE since 2002. EAEVE accredited the VM study programme in 2019.

Upon completion of the VM study programme, a master's degree in veterinary sciences is obtained, corresponding to [the seventh level of the Lithuanian Qualifications Framework](#) and [the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning](#), and the qualification of a veterinary doctor (veterinarian) is confirmed by a master's degree and a diploma supplement. The graduates of veterinary studies can work in both the state and private veterinary sectors. They may also seek to acquire a specialization of a veterinary doctor in the type (specialty) of veterinary medicine training by studying at the VM residency and / or pursue a career as a researcher by studying for a doctorate. The graduates of the VM study programme are highly valued not only in LT, but also abroad, and the number of those wishing to study veterinary medicine is not decreasing. In terms of programme selectivity, the VM study programme has remained in the top ten for a number of years.

## ANALYSIS OF FIELD AND CYCLE OF STUDIES

### 1. Study aims, outcomes and content

The VM integrated studies are based on academic and creative freedom and are founded on the unity of science, practice and studies, ethics, and the development of harmonious personality capable of ensuring animal health and welfare, public health, and public confidence in the veterinary profession.

**The aim of the VM study programme** is to train highly qualified veterinarians who know the LT and European Union (EU) legal acts regulating veterinary activities and to provide the students with sufficient scientific knowledge and skills on which veterinary activities are based; to provide the knowledge of the body structure, functions, behavior and physiological needs of animals and animal welfare; to develop

specific clinical, epidemiological and analytical skills required for the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care of animal diseases, including first aid, anesthesia and painless killing, and specific knowledge of diseases that can be transmitted to humans; to provide the knowledge of food hygiene and technology related to the production and placing on the market of animal feed or food of animal origin for human consumption, including the skills and competences needed to understand and disseminate good practice in this field; to develop the skills and competences necessary for animal husbandry, nutrition, welfare, reproduction and veterinary hygiene; to provide the knowledge, skills and competences necessary for the responsible and safe prescribing, dispensing, use of veterinary medicinal products in the treatment of animals and for ensuring the safety of the food chain and the protection of the environment; to develop a creative, scientific and critical thinking and the ability to maintain a sufficient professional competence through lifelong learning.

The aims and intended learning outcomes of the VM study programme are in line with the knowledge, skills and competences compatible with the EU level defined in the Directives. **The relevance of the study outcomes** of the VM study programme is defined in the light the results of the international research on professional activities, is based on advances in veterinary science and evidence-based veterinary medicine, and the application of digital technologies, includes knowledge in the veterinary field and its application in professional activities, abilities to carry out the research and social, personal, and special skills. The aims and study outcomes of the VM study programme (*Annex 1.1*) are regularly updated (last update was in 2021) considering the development of veterinary science and the quality assurance of studies in order to develop new modern competencies that exceed the requirements stated by legal acts. They comply with the qualification requirements of the veterinary doctor profession and are formulated with the direct involvement of the social partners and students.

The VM study programme focuses on the EAEVE initiative, which aims to unify the content of veterinary study programmes and the quality of veterinary training in the EU Member States. This is linked to the EU market area and its potential impacts and risks related to animal diseases and the quality of food of animal origin. The programme is balanced so that trained veterinarians meet the needs of the modern labor market and society and easily adapt to the labor market. The VM study programme is unique in its structure and includes the studying of the body structure of various species of farm animals, pets, horses, fur animals, wildlife, exotic and laboratory animals, birds, bees and fish and the processes taking place in their bodies; the causes and symptoms of diseases, the methods of diagnosis, treatment and care; a safe use of veterinary medicines; the disease prevention, productivity and well-being; the state veterinary supervision on the handling of animal products; food safety assurance, the handling and storage of veterinary medicines, veterinary means, feed and their additives; the protection of the territory against contagious animal diseases; research focused on a sustainable environment; animal health, welfare and public health, applying the *One Health* model: healthy animal-safe food-healthy society.

Lithuania is an agricultural country with well-developed animal husbandry. Although the number of livestock decreased slightly (*Annex 1.2., Table 1*), there is a growing number of pet, exotic, horse and other animal breeders keeping ornamental birds, rabbits, sheep, fish and bees. From 2018 onwards the number of dogs, cats and ferrets increased more than 5 times (*Annex 1.2., Table 2*). The focus on ensuring animal welfare and the need to consult on animal welfare and veterinary hygiene issues and to provide qualified veterinary assistance is increasing. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development policy has been much adjusted by the [strategic plan of the measures of the Lithuanian Rural Development Programme 2021-2027](#), paying significantly more attention to the safety, quality and ecology of agricultural and food products. The plan has been prepared according to the [EU Council Regulation \(EC\) No. 1698/2005](#) “On the European Agricultural Fund Support for Rural Development” ([Lithuanian Rural Development Programme 2014–2020](#) (version 12.2)). Among the priority works of the LR Ministry of it is planned to increase support for rural business projects, provide loans, develop alternative forms of direct sales of agricultural and food products such as farmers' markets, direct sales from the farm, online sales, fresh milk trade in the supermarkets, farmers' farm shops, etc. A quality and safety and self-control system for farmers' products is being developed. It is planned to expand the production of products of exceptional quality by increasing the number of producers of these products. The veterinarians are needed to control the

maintenance of this system and the quality of products in all production chains. In 2021, the State Food and Veterinary Service (SFVS) controlled the activities of more than 100 thousand economic entities (*Annex 1.3, Table 1*). The constantly growing number of food business entities controlled by SFVS (*Annex 1.3, Table 2*) proves an increasing need for veterinary professionals in the public sector.

**The professional activities of a veterinary doctor** include the prevention, detection and treatment and care of animal diseases, food safety and control, the epidemiology of infectious animal diseases, the organization of veterinary activities, research and veterinary advice, and the theoretical and practical competencies of veterinary pharmacy at graduation and during a further period of veterinary practice by improving professional skills. The profession of veterinary doctor is important for the successful development of the economic accounts for agriculture, animal health, welfare and public health. In LT, more than 2.5 thousand veterinarians work in both the public and private veterinary sectors. Most of them are engaged in private veterinary practice and veterinary pharmacy, with a valid SFVS license which is renewed every 2 years according to the [description of the in-service training procedure approved by SFVS](#). Some veterinarians work in state veterinary institutions and perform the statutory activities of state authorized institution, compliance with legislation, spread of infectious animal diseases, animal welfare, import, production, placing on the market and control of the suitability for use of feed and feed additives, animal products, animal by-products and derived products, genetic material products and veterinary medicinal products used. Through animal health and welfare programmes, veterinary doctors ensure the interests of consumers and the safe and quality consumption of food by implementing the *One Health* concept. In LT, **veterinary doctors are provided with the opportunity for lifelong learning**. After graduating from VM, a veterinary medicine specialist may seek to acquire a specialization in the qualification of a VM practice type (speciality) of veterinary medicine while studying at the national VM residency (more details in Area 4), continue their doctoral studies and work at the LSMU VA and other veterinary teaching and research institutions in the EU and worldwide, actively participate in the LR socio-economic life.

**The VM study programme in LT** is implemented only at the LSMU and the number of trained specialists is sufficient. There is no need to develop new university veterinary programmes. Given the integration processes in the world, since 2011, the VM study programme has been also conducted in EN and is becoming increasingly popular. The VM study programmes (in LT and EN) differ in that the national students study professional EN, and the international students study professional LT (other programme content is the same). The study programme in EN is attractive to students coming under the *Erasmus+* exchange programme.

**The aims and study outcomes of the VM study programme** correspond to the mission of LSMU to create, accumulate, systematize and disseminate scientific knowledge, the latest scientific and study achievements, to teach and develop creative, honest, proactive, educated, healthy, independent and entrepreneurial personality, to foster democracy and prosperity, to develop healthy and an educated society. The unique role of LSMU in this educational process is the pursuit of a healthy society, guaranteeing the social and economic progress of the country, the LT civilizational identity, the creation, maintenance and development of national and world cultural traditions. Ensuring animal health and welfare is an integral part of this endeavor. A part of the University's mission is VMF, which creates a healthy and sustainable environment for animals and humans by training fully educated veterinary doctors focused on science, practice and innovation. The VMF strategic goals are consistent and integrated into the University's strategic goals. The level of this coherence is regularly monitored by the VMF Council, the VM study programme Committee ( SPC) and the VMF study departments (more details in Area 7), according to the [LSMU Guidelines for the Strategic Development](#), which cover five LSMU strategic directions: 1. Internationally competitive graduates; 2. Research-based technologies and innovations; 3. International University; 4. Healthy human and healthy animal; 5. A united, creative, and socially responsible university community.

**The objectives, intended learning results, structure and content of the subjects (modules) of the VM study programme correspond to the field of integrated veterinary studies and professional requirements, and the scope of the study programme is sufficient to achieve the intended learning outcomes.** VMF seeks to achieve the aims of the VM study programme and the intended learning outcomes,

strives to ensure that VMF employs the most competent teaching staff, has got the advanced and modern information technology (IT) systems, infrastructure, and material resources that meet the needs of employees and students, masters and effective and high-quality decision-making, marketing, and communication. As a result, the popularity and awareness of the VMF study programmes (including the VM programme) is increasing and the image is formed in LT and abroad. The coherence of the VM study aims and study outcomes with the LSMU mission, operational goals and strategy is reflected in the annual reports of VMF departments, the annual plans, and reports of the SPC activities, and the reports of the VMF Dean and LSMU Rector, which are published and available on the LSMU website.

The VM study programme is one of the EU-regulated programmes and is implemented according to the international and national legal acts and documents regulating the VM studies at the University and Faculty. The structure and content of the VM study programme, conforming to the list of the study subjects and the Day One Competencies approved by the European Coordinating Committee on Veterinary Training (ECCVT) and set out in the [ESEVT SOP, Annex 2](#), enable the students to acquire the required knowledge, skills, and competence. The VM study programme's aims, intended outcomes, structure and content comply with the qualification requirements and provisions of the [Lithuanian Qualifications Framework, Study Cycle Description](#) and [Veterinary Doctor Professional Standard](#) and guarantee education that meets the requirements for training veterinarians set by the LR an EU legislation. The study programme corresponds to the seventh level of the [Lithuanian Qualifications Framework](#) and the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning, which leads to a master's degree and a veterinary doctor qualification. The study programme complies with the special requirements defined by the Provisions of the [Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania](#), the [General Requirements for the Implementation of Studies](#) (in areas not defined in the Descriptor of the Field of Veterinary Studies) and the [Descriptor of the Field of Veterinary Studies](#). At the University level, the structure and quality assurance of the VM study programme is regulated by the [LSMU Statute](#), its implementation by the [LSMU Guidelines for the Strategic Development 2017-2021](#) and the organization of the study process by the [LSMU Regulation of Studies \(LSMU SR\)](#). At the faculty level, the compliance of the VM study programme structure with the requirements of legal acts is carried out according to the VM study programme plans approved by the LSMU Senate, with the procedures for the implementation and assessment of compulsory internships, master theses and qualification exam, prepared by SPC, approved by VMF Council, and the decrees of the VMF Dean.

**Study programme plans** are one of the main documents regulating the implementation of the VM study programmes. The study plans (*Annex 1.4. A, B, C, D*) (all current study plans of the VM programme in LT and EN are presented separately providing the possibility to see their differences) include study subjects (modules), their volumes in credits, assignment to the respective study period, assessment method, coordinating lecturer and department. To ensure the coherence of the planned study results and their implementation, SPC annually evaluates the study plans according to the following criteria: the scope of subjects (modules) to achieve results, interdisciplinary integration and assurance of the continuity of knowledge, the ratio between theoretical and practical hours, pre-clinical and clinical direct work with animals, the volume of independent work and the suitability of the methods for subject teaching and knowledge assessment in order to achieve results. In ensuring student-centered studies, the views and recommendations of academic staff, students and social partners obtained through the surveys are taken into consideration during the deliberations. The prepared study plans (in LT and EN) are considered by VMF Council, at the Rectorate, approved by the LSMU Senate by November 1 of the current academic year, and published on the [LSMU website](#). Until 2017, the VM study programme consisted of 336 credits spread over 11 semesters (5.5 years): ten semesters – 30 credits each, and 11 semesters – 36 credits (*Annex 1.4. A*). Based on the [LR LHER](#), amended in 2016 (*Chapter 53, Article 7*) and [General Requirements for the Provision of Studies](#) (*Chapter 3, Article 11*), since 2017, the scope of the VM study programme has been increased to 360 ECTS credits (6 years), teaching 12 semesters (30 ECTS credits per semester). Consequently, a detailed evaluation of the Curriculum was performed, and appropriate related modifications were made. VMF had one year to restructure the Curriculum, so the 6-year curriculum was designed following the valid 5.5 years curriculum, considering the evaluated strengths and weaknesses and



following the LT and EAEVE legislation on the VM studies. More hours have been designated to master thesis preparation, Clinical Rotation and Clinical and Food Hygiene Practices, and, to achieve competency-based teaching, some subjects have been integrated. Also, two new practices (Preclinical Production Animal Practice and Practice of Companion Animal Nursing) have supplemented the study programme by reducing the scope of general subjects. Moving from classical to competency-based teaching and introducing as many innovative, student-centered novel teaching/learning methods as possible, complimentary soft competencies such as intellectual property protection/ entrepreneurship/ innovation/ the basics of telemedicine have been included in the curriculum. The students admitted before 2020 are being taught by the Curriculum, approved in 2017 (*Annex 1.4. B*). The last graduates of this programme will graduate in 2023.

Following the recommendations of the external experts and internal and external stakeholders and after the annual evaluation of the curriculum, **in 2020, the additional curriculum adjustments (not implemented in 2017) were made (*Annexes 1.4. C and D*)**. The current content of the VM curriculum has been adapted based on modern technologies and achievements in veterinary sciences. In principle, the content of all subjects is coherent to the latest scientific advances and research-based veterinary practice. Modern equipment, devices, and tools that meet high technological standards are used to implement the modules. Innovative digital technologies are used to teach all the subjects. To further ensure competency-based teaching, basic subjects and sciences previously taught more traditionally, have been intergrated and adapted to teaching by animal organ systems and areas. The volume of clinical rotation (taking place in the 9th and 10th semesters) has been increased up to 21 ECTS credits and will be performed after the students complete all clinical courses. The students will be divided into two groups for a month-long rotation which will be done through the entire academic year and two times per semester. Such a year-round continuous rotation will enable the student to get acquainted with animal diseases specific to different seasons of the year and acquire hands-on skills. The practice in the veterinary laboratory has been replaced with a Veterinary Public Health practice further to implement the provisions for the *One Health* concept. The acquisition of laboratory testing skills and data interpretation competencies will be ensured during the extended clinical rotations. The overall scope of the curriculum has not been changed. This curriculum has been in effect since September 1, 2020 (No. VF10-05, 25-02-2020)

The difference in study plans for LT and EN-speaking students is that for EN-speaking students in the 1st-2nd study years, a compulsory subject of LT language (total of 11 ECTS credits) alternative is taught, which is necessary during their clinical studies for communication with animal patient owners.

The differences between the distribution of credits in the study plans of 5.5 and 6 years duration for the years 2017 and 2020 are presented in **Table 1**.

**Table 1. Differences in subject volumes in the study programme plans of the 5.5 and 6 years duration studies**

Subjects (Subject groups)	5.5 year Study plan		6 year Study plan since 2017		6 year Study plan since 2020	
	ECTS	%	ECTS	%	ECTS	%
Basic Subjects	27.8	8.27	26.8	7.44	20.3	5.64
Basic Sciences	106.6	31.73	103.6	28.78	94.82	26.34
Professional Knowledge and Communication	21	6.25	21	5.83	36	10
Clinical Sciences: <i>of which Practices and Clinical Rotation</i>	103 <b>36</b>	30.65 <b>10.7</b>	131 <b>57</b>	36.39 <b>15.83</b>	137.88 <b>57</b>	38.3 <b>15.83</b>
Animal Production	27.6	8.21	27.6	7.67	17	4.72
Food Safety and Quality, Public Health, <i>One Health</i> Concept	32	9.53	33	9.17	39	10.83
Electives	18	5.36	17	4.72	15	4.17
<b>Total in the programme</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>100</b>

**The study programme is implemented through the groups of modules or subjects.** The modules combine several interrelated subjects. The consistency of the sequence of teaching and integration of subjects

is based on the horizontal and partly vertical connections and sequence of the content of study subjects. This enables students to acquire the knowledge and skills provided in the VM study programme, creates optimal conditions for a correct understanding of organ systems and processes and their correlation, and an effective understanding of their essence. Clinical studies are more focused on teaching by animal species and are vertically integrated with other general science subjects such as anatomy, histology, general pharmacology, biochemistry, pathology, etc.

**The compliance of the subject with the results of the VM study programme** is assessed by SPC and the subject is assigned to the respective semester. In the first-second semesters, students study basic subjects: medical physics, chemistry, animal biology, zoology and cell biology, feed and toxic plant biology, biomedical statistics, specialty language, introduction to the profession, and computer/information literacy. Simultaneously, basic veterinary science subjects are continuously studied through the entire 6 semesters: anatomy, histology and embryology, physiology, veterinary biochemistry, general and molecular genetics, agronomy, animal hygiene, pharmacology, pharmacy and pharmacotherapy, pathology, toxicology, parasitology, parasitology, immunology, epidemiology, professional ethics and communication, economics and management, animal ethology and welfare, animal nutrition. The subjects of animal production, including animal breeding, breeding and animal husbandry and herd management are studied in the 2-3 semesters. External pre-clinical practical training takes place respectively from the 4th semester. Clinical studies begin in the 5th semester with the study of propaedeutics and lasts until the 12th semester. During that period, practical skills in obstetrics, reproduction, clinical pathology, clinical pharmacy, anesthesiology, surgery, preventive medicine, visual diagnostics, pet therapy are acquired as well as clinical rotation in the VMF clinics and practical training in external bases are performed. The group of subjects on food safety and quality, public health and *One Health* concept is taught in the semesters 9-12 and covers such subjects as veterinary law and legislation, including official controls, forensic veterinary and certification, public health, the control of food, feed and animal by-products, zoonoses, food hygiene, food microbiology and food technology. During these semesters the VM students have the external clinical practice and prepare their master thesis and for the qualification exam. Such a sequence of the VM study programme plan enables the students to acquire competent knowledge and skills, learn to systematize theoretical knowledge and apply it in practice to effectively achieve the learning outcomes.

**Students have the opportunity to individualize their studies** in the semesters 1st-10th (studying in EN language since 3rd to 10th semesters) by choosing electives (*Annex 1.5.*), to freely choose to study other foreign languages, choose an practice place, the topic of the master thesis and supervisor, and thus individualize their studies. VMF does not apply the tracking system used in some EU countries, which allows choosing a specialization. In LT, this could pose a risk to a graduate's career in the future provided his/her needs change or other objective reasons arise, because the country is small.

The content of theoretical and practical training and the **credits** of the **VM programme** studies are compiled and allocated in such a way that all the intended learning outcomes are achieved. The **compliance of the subject content with the type of studies and academic requirements and the sufficiency of the study programme scope** to achieve the study outcomes is assessed by SPC by analyzing the subject descriptions prepared by the lecturers and placed in LSMU study informative system (LSMUSIS) (*Annex 1.6.*), and by evaluating the volume and ratio of theoretical, practical and independent work. Each subject is given enough credits in order to achieve the study results, considering the intended learning outcomes of the study programme. The needs for changes and corrections in the volume of credits in the subject are determined by the departments and SPC analyzing the study achievements, progress, the opinions of lecturers and external partners, and students' feedback on the implementation of the subject studies. **The learning outcomes of the study subjects (modules)** of the VM study programme are consistent with the study outcomes of the study programme and are formulated as a clear criterion for the assessment of achievements. This allows to decide which assessment methods and techniques should be used to demonstrate students' knowledge, abilities and skills in practice after graduation. The **study and assessment methods** used in the VM study programme are based on the concept of lifelong learning and promote continuous professional development, are effective and diverse, motivate students to rationally use their own and lecturers' time and material resources. The specificity of **study methods** depends on the purpose of the subject (module).

Student achievement **assessment methods** correspond to the intended learning outcomes defined in the subject (module) programme and are consistent with the content and methods of the study subject (module) (*more details in Chapter 4*). The coherence of the VM study programme outcomes with the outcomes of the study programme subjects and the evaluation of the compatibility of teaching (learning) methods are presented in *Annex 1.7*.

The preparation of the master theses starts in the 9th semester, according to the procedure of preparation of the master thesis of the VM study programme (in [LT](#) and [EN](#) ), and it is publicly posted on the LSMU VMF [website](#). The students prepare the master theses independently, with the consultation of a supervisor, collect material during internships, participate in research projects and carry out research in the VA laboratories. The students are provided with the opportunity to use the research equipment of departments, clinics, specialized experimental laboratories, open access centers, which is necessary for the quality research for the the master theses. VMF allocates funds to the departments to support the preparation of the students' FT based on the needs provided by the departments (*more details in Chapter 7*). Every year, a part of the FT is prepared by the order of social partners (in 2019 it was 3.97%, in 2020 – 6.2%, in 2021 – 4.73% of the total of the master theses). However, compared to other study programmes, this is not popular in the veterinary medicine field due to the field's specificity. The list of the FT defended in 2019-2021 is presented in *Annex 1.8*.

Expert recommendations provided during the last external evaluation related to <i>Study aims, outcomes and content</i>		
<i>1.</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Actions taken by the HEI</i>
	Provide the detailed concepts of the graduates' clinical skills and research in defining the study programme outcomes.	The VM study programme aims and outcomes are revised and specified according to the Descriptor of the study field of Veterinary and the ESEVT SOP recommendations, and follow the Provisions of the Directive 2013/55/EU 38, Article 38, Section 3, which partly amended the Directive 2005/26 / EC. The last revision and corrections were made in June 2020.
<i>2.</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Actions taken by the HEI</i>
	Expand the clinical part of the study plan and strengthen the implementation of clinical rotation in duration blocks of at least one week.	In 5.5-year, studies, Clinical rotation (12 ECTS) was performed during the 2nd-5th study years, 5 days per study year. In 6th year of the studies, since 2017, Clinical rotation (15 ECTS) is performed 10 days per study year, including 2 night shifts. For the students, enrolled from 2020, Clinical rotation (21 ECTS) will be scheduled in the 5th year with the duration of 1 month and 4 times per academic year (4 months per year in total). Since 2016, the VM study programme has been completed with taking a practical qualification exam, and since 2020 – taking an Objective Structured Clinical Examination ( OSCE).
<i>3.</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Actions taken by HEI</i>
	Bring more accuracy and to the clinical part of the study programme using the internationally recognized terminology rather than using the terms "infectious" and "non-infectious" diseases.	The terminology and terms of study subjects have been revised, corrected and adjusted to the use of internationally recognized terminology
<i>4.</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Actions taken by HEI</i>
	Analyze the possibility of increasing the horizontal and vertical integration of study subjects and increase the number of optional subjects in order to create a certain rotation means in the programme.	Partial interdisciplinary horizontal integration of the study plan has been implemented since 2017 and integration of the subjects according organ systems and animal species is implemented since 2020/2021. The plan of electives is renewed annually adding new subjects: 2020/2021 plan has been supplemented with 10 new electives and the 4 new ave been added for 2021/2022.
<i>5.</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Actions taken by HEI</i>
	Review the curricula of the first three study years with a focus on promoting	Study plans have been adjusted, a part of subjects have been integrated by teaching according to the organ system, in order to

and implementing a student-centered learning.

achieve competence-based teaching and to enable students to correctly understand the interrelations and essence of organ systems and their processes.

Please provide main results of the self-evaluation in the area of  
*Study aims, outcomes and content*

### Strengths

- Relevant and unique outcomes of the VM study programme;
- Integrated studies, implemented the horizontal and vertical integration of subjects in the modules;
- Trained specialists meet the needs of society and the labor market.

### Areas for Improvement

- To seek a closer cooperation with the social partners in the preparation of the master theses, i.e., by applying the model – scientific solutions to practical problems.

## 2. Links between science (art) and study activities

The strategic LSMU directions for research in the field of agricultural sciences are shown in **Fig. 1**. The identification and distinction of these directions in the context of LSMU ensure the implementation of a high-quality The VM study programme through the research carried out by the lecturers-researchers and their integration into the studies.



**Fig. 1. LSMU strategic directions for research in the field of agricultural sciences (2017–2021) (No 96-08; 22-12-2017)**

Veterinary sciences is a part of the field of Agricultural Sciences. The results of the 2017 and 2019 annual evaluation of research and experimental development of higher education institutions and the latest comparative expert evaluation of the university research and experimental development activities are published on the Research Council of Lithuania (LMT) website. The 2018 evaluation of the agricultural sciences performed by the Research and Higher Education Monitoring and Analysis Centre (MOSTA), now – the Government Strategic Analysis Center (STRATA), is published on the website.

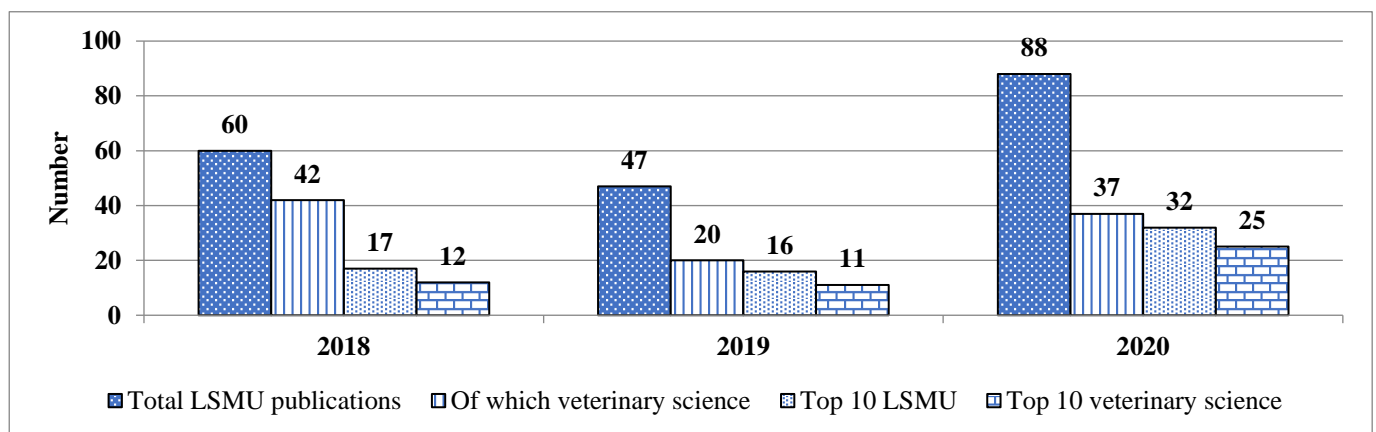
According to the results of the formal evaluation of the research works submitted for evaluation by the research and study institutions in the field of agricultural sciences published in 2020 by LMT, LSMU submitted 88 publications, of which 37 were in the field of veterinary sciences. According to the results of the formal evaluation of the research works submitted for evaluation by the research and study institutions in the field of agricultural sciences published in 2019 by LMT, LSMU submitted 46 publications, of which 20 were in the field of veterinary sciences (in 2018 – 60 and 42 respectively). The results of the formal evaluation of the TOP 10 works of Lithuanian researchers in the field of agricultural sciences published in 2010-2019 included a total of 16 LSMU publications, with 11 of them in the field of veterinary sciences.

In 2020 and 2019, LMT provided the results' summary of the formal evaluation of the scientific activities and research in agricultural sciences. The summary presented respectively: the weighted sum of points of the formal evaluation of the LSMU research in agricultural sciences – 414.66 and 147.21; the full-time equivalent of the institution's researchers in the field of agriculture – 51.85 and 51.767; the points per one

full-time equivalent researcher in the field of agriculture – 8.00 and 2.84; a formal evaluation estimate – 90.09 and 27.68; a formal evaluation estimate for the institutions whose full-time equivalent of researchers in the field of the institution was equal to or greater than five – 90.09 and 27.68. In 2018, the weighted sum of points for formal evaluation of the research in veterinary sciences at LSMU was 136.28, and the full-time equivalent of the researchers in this field at the institution was 16.7.

In 2020, LSMU received the funds of 342,540 EUR to implement the projects and contracts of international research programmes in agricultural sciences. The received funds of the R&D projects and contracts in 2019 were 27,550 EUR (in 2018 – 13,570 EUR). To execute the R&D activities of economic entities, in 2020, LSMU received 248,160 EUR and in 2019 – 295,030 EUR (in 2018 – 460,630 EUR).

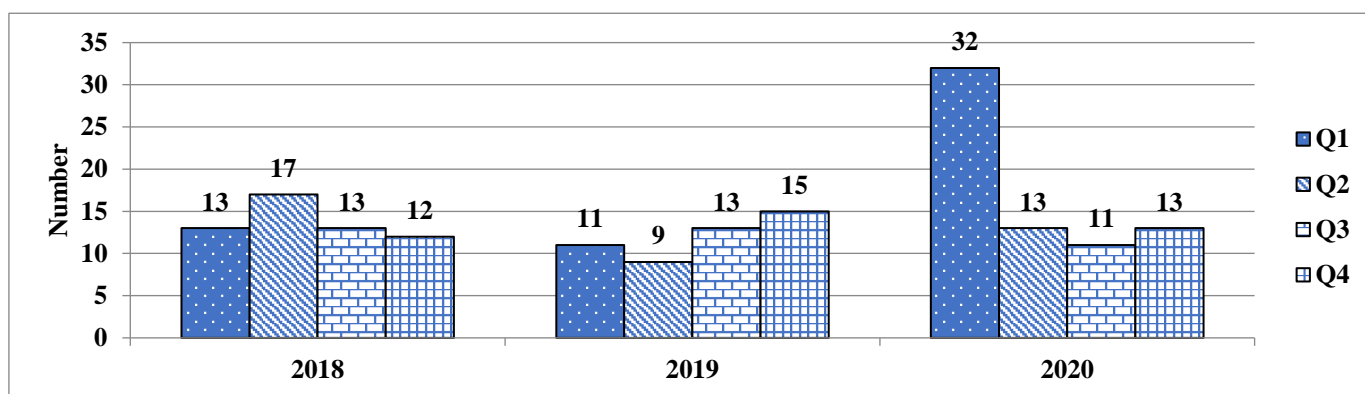
The LMT results of the formal evaluation of scientific works in the field of agricultural sciences submitted by LSMU, the results of the formal evaluation of the TOP 10 works of the LT researchers in the field of agricultural sciences published in 2008-2017, 2009-2018 and 2010-2020, and the results of formal evaluation of the field of agricultural sciences published in 2017-2019 are presented in **Fig. 2**.



**Fig. 2. Summary of the 2018, 2019 and 2020 LMT results of the formal evaluation of scientific works submitted by LSMU.**

The [MOSTA performed the evaluation](#) of the field of agricultural sciences at LSMU by evaluating the study fields of Veterinary Medicine and Zootechnics (currently Animal Sciences). In 2018, the field of veterinary sciences was assessed with 3 points by MOSTA. The economic and social impact of the R&D activities in this field was assessed with 3 points, and its viability – with 5 points. The MOSTA experts noted that the LT researchers carried out a high level research in the field of veterinary sciences, mostly recognized at the national level. However, according to the experts, the scientific articles and other scientific achievements (the main research results) were of a high quality.

The evaluation experts concluded that LSMU maintains close ties with non-academic, industrial, public and governmental organizations. The University develops close links and provides many joint projects and contracts with industry and agriculture. According to the experts, LSMU has great potential to achieve very good or excellent evaluation and to become well-recognized internationally in the field of agricultural sciences. The general strategic goals of LSMU in the field of agricultural sciences meet the needs of modern agricultural sciences, and the budget for the research is sufficient. The researchers are encouraged to publish their research results in high-level journals, to grant patents, to enter into the R&D contracts, etc. The teaching and research staff is highly competent and can attract more funding from the national and international projects. The MOSTA experts recommended: (I) a stronger focus on the research activities related to the *One Health* strategy; (II) to revise the research strategy; (III) to increase the internationalization. Following the expertise, the recommendations were taken into account by updating and approving the LSMU VMF strategy in 2019. The strategy is now more directed to a high-quality and outstanding and more international research, and to the preparation of high-level scientific publications to promote the internationalization of the research. The dynamics in the number of scientific articles last year (**Fig. 3**) was positive, i. e., in 2020 compared to 2018, 69.25% more of the articles were published.



**Fig. 3. Dynamics of the most important scientific publications that had a citation rate in the database „Clarivate Analytics Web of Science“ during 2018-2020 (according to [LSMU CRIS](#))**

Also, the number of the articles in the Q1 and Q2 quartiles increased even by 50% – from 30 articles in 2018 to 45 in 2020.

One of the indicators of the high quality research and publications is the number of articles with the foreign co-authors and the relative proportion of such articles, which shows the intensity of the international cooperation in research. There are also significant changes in this area, both in the total number of the publications with foreign co-authors and in the relative proportion of such publications. If, in 2010-2012, only several articles written in collaboration with the foreign researchers were published, that is, in 2018-2020, the proportion of such publications increased 6 times during the period and amounted to more than 40% of all published by the VMF scientific articles.

The research projects related to the VM study programme that have been carried out in the departments implementing the VM study programme since 2018 are presented in *Annex 2.1*. The lectures of subjects taught and the internships are annually improved and supplemented with the latest scientific information obtained during the research projects as well as the study descriptions are reviewed. Therefore, the integration of science into the studies is an integral part of the VM study programme.

**Students are involved in research activities** in compulsory and optional ways from the 1st year of the studies starting with a compulsory module “Development of General, Information and Communication Competences of the Profession”. While studying, the students are introduced to the rules of use of the library and databases of scientific literature. In the 2nd year of the study programme, studying the „Advanced Professional Foreign Language“ subject (for the students studying in EN the LT and other languages are optional), the students get to learn the terminology, read scientific publications, and the foreigners acquire listening and speaking skills in LT. In the 3rd year of the studies, a compulsory subject „Veterinary Biostatistics“ which allows the students to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for the application of statistical methods to data processing is taught. The 4th year students are offered an optional subject “Research Methodology” (3 ECTS). In the 5th year of studies, the study subject „Research Basics“ provides the students with special knowledge and skills necessary for the preparation and public presentation of the master thesis. The students involved in research activities are given the access to the facilities of clinics, specialized experimental laboratories, and open access centers necessary for the master’s thesis preparation.

The VMF researchers and VM students (6 students) participate in the LMT Measure’s No. 09.3.3-LMT-K-712 “Development of Scientific Competence of Scientists, Other Researchers, Students through Practical Research Activities”. In 2019-2020 there were no invitations due to the pandemic restrictions.

Through the research and research project activities, the VM students have the opportunity to involve into the working groups of experienced researchers and prepare a high-quality master thesis, publications and present the research materials at the students’ national and international scientific conferences. The master's theses of the VM study programme that are prepared by integrating students into the activities of research projects are presented in *Annex 2.2*. In 2018-2020, the total of 33 students were involved in the implementation of research projects. With students’ integration into research activities in 2018-2019 – 9

(6%), in 2019-2020 – 9 (8%) and in 2020-2021 – 15 (10.2%) of master's theses were prepared. The students presented the results of their research in three conferences and in two article publications that were referenced and had a citation rate in the database „Clarivate Analytics Web of Science“. Students are encouraged to participate in research by participating in the activities of the LSMU Student Scientific Society ([SSS](#)). During the period of 2018-2020, from 8% to 10% of students were regularly involved in the activities of the VM Scientific Club of this Society. The students carry out research, listen to lectures of the advanced researchers, prepare publications, are invited to participate and give presentations at various national and international student conferences or seminars organized by LSMU and the student organizations (*more in Chapter 3*). For being members of the SSS students get the additional points for admission to doctoral studies and residency.

Students demonstrate their scientific activity by organizing annual international seminars for the VM students, where lecturers and practitioners come to give lectures from Israel, Germany, Ireland, Sweden and other foreign countries, as well as the LT universities. VMF financially supports the organization of the event, pays for lecturers' travel expenses, transport, provides premises.

The LSMU Library and Information Center (BIC) annually organizes optional trainings for students to improve their skills in bibliographic search and reference use in research and clinical practice. The university organizes seminars such as “How to Write World-Class Research” and other topics to prepare the students for academic careers.

The lecturers of the VM study programme together with other VMF researchers actively cooperate with the social partners representing the veterinary science field, animal breeders and production processors. The most important of them are the SFVS, National Food And Veterinary Risk Assessment Institute (NMVRVI), the Lithuanian Association of Veterinary Surgeons (LVGA), VŠĮ Pieno tyrimai, ŽŪB Lytagra, ŽŪB Lukšiai, UAB Ruminaveta, Jakovo Veterinarijos Center and many other LT organizations and associations.

There is also an active cooperation with the LT and foreign research and study institutions. The main partners are: the University of Copenhagen (Denmark), the University of Helsinki (Finland), the University of London (UK) and others (*Annex 2.3. and 2.3.A.*). The main partners, i.e., the research and study institutions, are published on the LSMU [VA website](#).

The planning of VMF's research activities follows [LSMU strategic plans](#) and the [strategy of VMF](#), which have been publicised in the LSMU web page since 2016. The LSMU Research Centre participates in the research planning activities, it is a department which organises and coordinates doctorate studies and the research activities of the university, it participates in formulating and realising the goals of the university's research activities. The research activities of VMF are planned and coordinated by the Permanent Commission for Studies and Science of the VMF Council and the Doctoral Committee for Veterinary Science. The sources of finance for the execution of the VM's research activities and development are directly assigned by the state's budget for research purposes and also are sourced from projects and research orders from economic entities.

The direct assignments of the state budget to the University's departments are allotted annually, considering the received financing and evaluating the number of scientists, the evaluation of results of activities from relevant years and the results of the comparative peer review.

Information on calls for international and national research and development projects is publicised by the LSMU Development Department, the information is published in the LSMU weekly newspaper [Ave Vita](#) and also in newsletters, all researchers are informed by e-mail, other academics and scientists independently follow the information publicised in the [LMT website](#) and the [webpage of Agency for Science, Innovation and Technology](#) (MITA) and apply for financial support in the context of a relevant call.

In addition to external project funds for research financing the departments distribute, funds earned by departments from research orders of economic entities are also used i.e. revenue from services rendered. According to the Rector's order approved annually, the departments are allocated 80 percent of the funds they earn. The funds of each department are accounted for separately and used according to the approved estimate. The university has a Science Foundation, most of which goes to support PhD students research.

In 2020 the University allocated 414.2 thousand EUR (2019 – 382 thousand EUR; 2018 – 350.31 thousand EUR) This fund is formed from direct assignments of the state budget for science. Another possibility of additional funding is the [Open Foundation](#) of LSMU, the main purpose of which is to financially support PhD students, academic and research staff going on internships, to raise professional qualifications and to participate in conferences or similar events abroad. This fund is formed from the resources of the General University Fund.

<b>Expert recommendations provided during the last external evaluation related to</b> <i>Links between science (art) and study activities</i>			
<i>1.</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Actions taken by the HEI</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	-Develop more transparent funding conditions for the components of the study programme, particularly focusing on the financial support for the execution of internships and master's theses.	-A student discusses the topic of his/her master thesis with the supervisor and provides for the need for funds for the master thesis, which is then presented to the head of the department. The departments plan the need for funds for the study process annually, as well as for the execution of master theses.	-In that case when students carry out the research work together with the lecturers implementing the project, then the master thesis is prepared within the framework of the project.

<b>Please provide main results of the self-evaluation in the area of</b> <i>Links between science (art) and study activities</i>	
<b>Strengths</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Modern infrastructure of the University and VMF provides the opportunities for a complex research in the field of veterinary sciences;</li> <li>- LSMU VA is a specialized laboratory for the pre-clinical research and technological experiments, which employs competent specialists and the groups of scientists;</li> <li>- Students are given the opportunity to prepare high-level master's theses and publish the obtained results in high-level scientific journals;</li> <li>- Active participation of teaching staff in research activities allows to use their latest experience and improve the educational process of the students;</li> <li>- There are many research projects, the number of high-quality articles in the Q1 and Q2 quartiles, and the quality of scientific publications is constantly improving;</li> <li>- Close links with the social partners and scientific institutions.</li> </ul>	
<b>Areas for Improvement</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To increase the number of students engaged in the activities of SSS;</li> <li>- To encourage the students to participate even more actively in scientific conferences and present their research results;</li> <li>- To involve more students into the research projects.</li> </ul>	

### **3. Student admission and support**

The admission of the LSMU students to the VM study programme is executed according to the LR [Provisions](#) of the Studies, the [Order](#) of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sports of the Republic of Lithuania (LR MESS) and the [Rules of the Admission of Students](#) approved by the LSMU Senate in the current year. These documents set out the requirements for entrants. The University Council, on the proposal of the Deans, approves the total number of students planned to be admitted each year, and the order of the LR MESS Minister approves the [preliminary number of state-funded places](#) (in 2018, there were 80 state-funded places, in 2019, 2020 and 2021 – 84, 120 and 114 accordingly). Admissions to all LT higher education institutions are organized through the Lithuanian Association of Higher Education Institutions for General Admission ([LAMA BPO](#)). Applications and documents are submitted electronically only. The competition is open to all entrants with a documented education of at least high school/ secondary education or its equivalent. The competitive score is the main admission criterion. The competitive study subjects for admission are made public two years in advance. By the Order of the LR MESS Minister, the minimum competitive score is set annually (in 2020, it was 5.4). The entrants with a



lower score than the official one cannot participate in the competition for admission. The University has the right to raise the minimum competitive score. To enable the entrants to successfully study and achieve the study results provided by the VM study programme, the competitive score of admission to the VM study programme by the decision of the LSMU Senate since 2019 has been increased to 6.0 (**Table 2**). The applicants for both state-funded and not funded by the state places are subject to the minimum indicators for learning outcomes defined by the LR MESS.

**Table 2. Competitive scores of the admitted students to the VM study programme in 2018-2021**

Academic year	Minimum competitive score		Number of the admitted students	State funded places	Places not funded by state	Competitive score of the admitted students		
	Approved by LR MESS	Approved by LSMU Senate				Max	Min	Average
2018	3.6	4.5	142	74	68	9.46	4.58	7.12
2019	5.4	6.0	113	78	35	9.83	6.03	8.02
2020	5.4	6.0	124	110	14	9.87	6.90	7.95
2021	5.4	5.80	120	111	9	10.1	6.27	8.08

The competitive score is calculated assessing the grades of state maturity examinations of Biology, Lithuanian Language and Literature, including the grades of state maturity examinations or annual grade averages of Chemistry or Mathematics and of one freely chosen subject. An individual participating in the competition may indicate up to 9 study programme preferences in his/her application. Following to the procedure for satisfying the highest priority and considering the set number of places, the individuals with the highest scores in the competition queue are selected and invited to study. The individuals are admitted to both state-funded and not funded by state places in the same way. All admission procedures are performed digitally in the [LAMA BPO Information System](#). At the end of the general admission and when there are vacancies, an additional admission to state-funded places is organized. Only those applicants who participated in the general admission are subject to participate in the additional one.

Foreign students are admitted to the VM studies (in EN) according to the similar principles and criteria as the national students, i.e., using an analogous admission platform and applying the same admission rules approved by the LSMU Senate. Provided the entrants are educated in non - EU countries (including the UK), the EFTA countries, Canada or the US, then they shall present the legal certificates of education. Four main criteria apply to the admission of such foreign students: eligibility for higher education (verified by the Center for International Relations and Studies ([IRSC](#)) in cooperation with SKVC) according to the approved procedure; competitive score (entrance examination is taken or score is calculated on the basis of school graduation documents from the countries with a reliable education system); motivation to study at LSMU VM in the LT language (distance interview is obligatory for all applicants to the VM study programme); ability to communicate in English (EN) proven with official certificates, LSMU English testing, etc. Only individuals who meet the criteria above are admitted to study. The admission is executed by IRSC. IRSC in coordination with student search agencies abroad and organizes entrance examinations depending on the number of applications submitted in individual countries. All information about the admission procedure and conditions is published on the LSMU [website](#). The application period starts on 1 November each year and lasts on average until June 30th. All applications are submitted [online](#).

In the period of last 3 years, 542 entrants, who applied to the vf and 82 – to vnf places, have selected the VM study programme as their 1st preferred study programme (**Table 3**).

**Table 3. Number of preferences for the VM study programme**

Year	1st preference		1st-9th preference	
	State-funded place	Not funded by state place	State-funded place	Not funded by state place
2018	200	38	474	225
2019	192	6	450	158
2020	150	38	380	164

As reported, the VM study programme was among the study programme preferences of entrants in 1304 cases of state-funded and in 547 cases of not funded by state places. A slightly decreased number of applicants to the VM studies can be explained by the reduced number of the admitted ones to the VM study programme at the University and the lower number of high/secondary school graduates (according to the LAMA BPO data, in 2020, 20,879 students received the maturity certificates of general education schools, in 2019 – 21,983, and in 2018 – 23,640).

However, the VM study programme remains in Top10 of the most popular programmes and the tendency in number of the admitted students remains almost unchanged. During the period of last 4 years, a total of 499 freshmen were admitted to the VM studies (**Table 2**).

It is noticeable that number of the admitted to state-funded places is increasing compared to number of not funded by state places: in 2018, 52.1% of all admitted students filled the state-funded places, and in 2019 and 2020, this percentage increased to 69.0% and 88.7% respectively. These changes were determined by the 30% increase in number of state-funded places allocated by the government. Every year, the intended number of university entrants is invited to study in the VM programme. On average, 9% of the invited do not sign study agreements because, in their applications, the VM programme was not indicated as their first-second preferred study programme. The reason for this is that due to a possibility to indicate nine select study programmes in the system and inviting the entrants with the highest competitive score in order, the highly motivated students with the required but lower competitive score, unfortunately, are not invited to study in the VM programme. The decrease in the number of entrants applying to not funded by the state places is impacted by the increased tuition fee. University ultimately has reduced the number of admissions to 120. The government's decision to increase the number of state-funded places for the VM study programme is very welcome and beneficial because students with higher competitive score usually are better prepared for the difficult and complex VM studies. The total of 96.11% of all students in state-funded places and only 51.23% of ones in not funded by state places finish their studies. The raised minimum competitive score led to a significant reduction in number of drop-out due to academic failures (**Table 4**).

**Table 4. Number( per year) of the VM students who discontinued the studies**

Academic year	2018/2019		2019/2020		2020/2021	
Number of students (LT and EN studies)	883		830		860	
Measure unit	No	%	No	%	No	%
Total of the removed from the students' lists	63	7.13	48	5.78	31	3.6
• Including – due to academic failure	9	14.29	7	14.58	1	3.22

The number of students admitted to the VM study programme in EN has increased from 4 (admitted in 2011) to 32 (admitted in 2020). The number of countries from which the individuals come to study to LT is increasing every year (*Annex 3.1, Table 1*). The VM studies in EN mostly are chosen by the Swedish, Israeli and German nationals. The international students pay the tuition fee set by the University, but they also can apply to take state-funded place if they agree to study in LT and submit their applications through LAMA BPO. It is planned to increase the admission of the international students up to 40 students.

Students and other interested ones can access the information about the VM study programme on the [LSMU website](#). The information about the content of the programme, study results, admission procedure and requirements for national and foreign students, tuition fee, study plan and calendar, cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance and [improvement](#) of the study process is found there. All documents related to the quality of the studies are published on the [VMF website](#): the results of the external evaluation of the VM study programme ([LT](#) and [EN](#)), accreditation certificates and self-evaluation reports, study results, programme improvement plans, student satisfaction survey [results](#), the [VMF Council](#) and the [SPC members](#), plans and reports, the main documents approved by the VMF Council, information and contact information of the VMF establishments ([departments](#), [institute](#), [clinics](#), etc.), the most important documents approved by VMF ([LT](#) and [EN](#)). Individuals also receive information about the study programme at the [LSMU Admission Commission](#), [IRSC](#), [VMF](#), [LSMU Career Center](#) and the Study Center both by phone or e-mail. The event *Doors Open Days*, trips to schools and the tours for their students at the Faculty, projects publicizing the study programmes are organized annually, once or more times per academic year. In 2019,

more than 20 schools were visited, the groups of students from more than 20 schools of the country came to explore VMF. In terms of educational programmes, in 2019, VMF arranged and gave lectures to the 12 groups of students. However, in 2020, most of educational activities took place remotely, in total 116 meetings. Also, the event Career Days is organized, and the Faculty regularly participates in *Higher Education Study Fairs*. In recent years, these events have been moved to a virtual IT space using the MS Teams or Zoom platforms. The LSMU Career Center together with VMF organizes the *Doors Open Days* event twice a year (last year the event was held remotely). This event introduces the school students to the study programme, academic calendar, *Erasmus +* programme, career opportunities after the graduation, student welfare, study facilities and premises, laboratories and clinics. The future students can participate in practical classes organized by VMSC and perform simulation procedures by themselves, they are introduced to other activities as well. On average, over 200 school students attend this event. The VM study programme is being constantly publicized through the media and social networks. The information is published in the LSMU weekly *Ave Vita*, the success stories of the programme graduates are regularly posted on social networks and in the press, and information about the Faculty is daily provided on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) accounts, etc. The respondents of the surveys that are run frequently note that they receive most of the information through social networks (*Annex 3.1., Table 2*).

Similarly, the promotion and publicity of the study programme is active and for foreigners. The interested individuals receive information about the study programme at IRSC, from the student search agencies abroad, VMF, during the [Open Days for Foreigners](#), through [social networks](#). The IRSC employees participate in the Doors Open Days abroad and visit the local schools there. The information about the VM study programme is available in EN on the [LSMU website](#). The VM study programme (in EN) is advertised on the global portals (Keystones, Educations, Studyportals, etc.) and on the local Study in LT portal. The University has an LSMU [Ambassador Programme](#) and a [Parent Ambassador Programme](#), which aim to promote the VM studies with the help of international students and their parents in various foreign countries. The student ambassadors voluntarily advise those interested in the VM studies, sharing their experience, participating in Doors Open Days events in LT and the countries of origin. The ambassadors also participate in these events voluntarily, contacting prospective students and their parents in their home countries.

The **evaluation and recognition of the qualifications acquired abroad** at the University is carried out according to the [Order](#) of the LR ESS Minister. Credits of partial studies are evaluated according to the [Provisions](#) of the LSMU SR Chapters XI-XII. The qualifications and study results obtained abroad at LSMU are evaluated and recognized on the basis of the LSMU's [Internal Procedure for Academic Recognition of Foreign Qualifications and the Quality Assurance System for Decision-Making](#), prepared by SKVC [methodology](#) and [LR Government decision](#) and by consulting with SKVC in cases where no general recommendations have been prepared for the recognition of qualifications. For the evaluation of education acquired in foreign institutions and of subject equivalents the entrants may apply to SKVC. The recognition of partial study results of the students who have gone on international exchange programmes is executed according to the [Provisions](#) of the LSMU SR Chapter XII, Sections 1 and 3. According to the data of the IRSC Academic Mobility Division (AMD), there is no data on the cases of not credited partial studies of the VM students in foreign higher education institutions.

The VM students have range of opportunities to participate in the international mobility programmes and projects (*Erasmus +*, etc.) and leave to study: for the period of 3-12 months at the European and other world higher education institutions which have signed the inter-institutional [agreements](#); and/or for the period of 2-12 months on the internship to the selected foreign institution / company. The *Erasmus +* exchange programme is centrally administered by IRSC AMD, which regularly (2-3 times per year) organizes the public and transparent selection of *Erasmus +* participants following the selection [regulations](#) approved by the Rector and selection criteria announced in advance to the participants of a programme. The VM students are provided with a list of higher education institutions where they can go for part-time studies or internships. Also, they have the opportunity to do an *Erasmus +* internship at the institution found individually if it meets the VMF quality criteria and the needs of student academic aspirations in order to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The information on *Erasmus +* mobility programme opportunities,

international partner institutions and selection of *Erasmus +* participants in LT and EN is posted on the LSMU website ([News](#) and [International Activities sections](#)), on social networks (*Erasmus* LSMU [Facebook account](#)), through the LSMU Communication Department, LSMUSIS, is sent to the Faculty departments and students via their university e-mail addresses. The information is also available in the LSMU weekly "[Ave Vita](#)" and in the stands or noticeboards located in accessible for students places. The heads of *Erasmus* study and practice (in e-format), relevant information leaflets, educational video material how to register for *Erasmus* exchange are available to all students. Every year (in February), IRSC AMD organizes a 2-day *Erasmus Days* information event on study mobility opportunities, the Erasmus Student Network and mentor programme presentations, international university fair, the presentations of former exchange students' experiences. The IRSC AMD coordinators arrange the information sessions of the *Erasmus +* programme in the faculties, personal consultations on the possibilities of the exchange for the interested individuals take place throughout the year by directly in person and remote means (via e-mail, telephone, social networks, etc.). During 2018-2020, under the *Erasmus +* programme, in total 30 of the VM students went to study at universities abroad and 76 of them – for an internship; 20 students from other countries enrolled to the LSMU VM study programme, and 10 students from other countries came to do an internship (**Table 5**). During the past 3 years, under the *Erasmus +* study exchange programme (**Annex 3.1., Table 3**), students have gone to study in Germany, Hungary, Turkey, Finland, Slovenia, Serbia, Poland, Spain, Italy, the Czech Republic and Estonia. During the same period, students from Germany, Turkey, Spain, Italy and Belarus have arrived to study at LSMU VMF. The VM students have done an internship in 22 foreign countries. During the same period, students from 10 countries have come to do an internship at the VMF animal clinics. Since March, 2020, the study mobility programmes have been restricted due to the current COVID-19 pandemic situation in all countries. Currently, the agreements for the VM study programmes have been signed or initiated with the 20 EU [universities](#) (**Annex 3.1, Table 4**).

**Table 5. Number of the outgoing and incoming VM students under the Erasmus+ programme**

Academic year	Under the <i>Erasmus+</i> exchange programme to study		Under the <i>Erasmus+</i> exchange programme to do an internship		Left for an internship individually
	<i>Outgoing</i>	<i>Incoming</i>	<i>Outgoing</i>	<i>Incoming</i>	
2018 / 2019	10	4	44	8	8
2019 / 2020	14	13	21	2	8
2020 / 2021	6	3	11	0	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>28</b>

The VM students are provided sufficiently **with academic, financial, social, psychological and personal support**. The students in need of academic support are identified by evaluating their individual academic achievements at the end of each semester and year of study. According to the approved [procedure](#), confirmed in LSMU SR, Chapter IX, the students are given the opportunity to improve their academic results: retake the failed mid-term examinations, to retake the failed final examination twice, liquidate academic debts during the autumn, spring semester or annual debt week, repeat studies of a failed subject. After one year from the termination of a student's studies, the conditions to resume the studies are created by admitting him/her to a higher year of the study programme based on the study results achieved by a student. For objective reasons, all students may apply to the Dean for a change of group or lecturer. Students have the opportunity to study according to an individual study schedule. Due to illness and requiring further, or continued supervision, the students who cannot continue their studies shall provide proof of their health state or personal reasons and can be granted an academic leave. The students have the right to return after the academic break and resume their studies under the same previous conditions, e.g., retaining a funded-by-state place.

Students are eligible for the social and incentive scholarships. The [social scholarships](#) are granted to students: whose families or students themselves are entitled to or receive social benefits; who had custody before the age of adulthood or whose parents (or one of the parents) have died; with 45% or a lower level of working capacity or who have a severe or moderate level of disability. According to the [Resolution](#) of the LR Government, social scholarships are awarded and administered by the State Studies Foundation

(VSF) in cooperation with the University. According to the [Description](#) of the Procedure of Granting the Disability-Targeted Benefits to those studying in higher education, the students with disabilities have the opportunity to receive a financial aid. They can be granted such **Disability-Targeted Benefits** that allow to satisfy their special needs; partially cover or reimburse study expenses if a student has been admitted to not funded by state place; to purchase study materials; to get social scholarship; to reduce the tuition fee by getting an exemption from paying a tuition fee at the time of admission to the studies; to reduce a dormitory rental fee; to receive an additional grant for the *Erasmus* study exchange mobility. The students with any level of disability who have studied funded by state and have discontinued their studies are exempted from paying back the tuition fees to the State. The individuals, who have been declared incapable of work or unable to pay back a tuition loan to the State due to disability, illness or injury, may be exempted from paying back a tuition loan or part of it to the State thereof. Based on the Scholarship [Regulations](#), **incentive scholarships** are awarded to the best-performing students for the highest competitive admission scores or their advanced study results (**Table 6**). Scholarships are fairly distributed on a percentage basis (on average, 21% of students receive them). An one-time [incentive scholarship](#) can be granted once per semester to the advanced students. The VM study programme students are supported with Veterinary Pharmacy Association, LVGA, UAB Magnum Veterinary etc., the LSMU VA Alumni and their descendants (the nominal scholarships named after J. Brundza, M. Veitas), the mayors of districts; the State (the president J. Grinius's scholarship) and others. Since 2021 the students who contribute to and are involved in the development of the University's internationality can get nominal scholarships as well.

Financial support such as a reduction of tuition fees can be granted to orphan students studying in not funded by state places, to students from large and low-income families, to those raising children and to students with disabilities, etc. The financial aid and support (**Table 6**) are granted according to the Student Support [Regulations](#). Following the [Resolution](#) of the LR Government, the VM programme students paying for their studies have the opportunity to receive a state-supported [loan](#). The tuition fees paid to students may be reimbursed by the VSF complying with the [Procedure](#) for the Reimbursement of Tuition fee and the Procedure for Forming a Competitive Queue stipulated in the [Provisions](#) of the LSMU SR Chapter X, Section 2. Children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the foreigners of the LT origin studying in the VM programme can receive a [financial support](#) according to the [Description](#) of the State Support for the LT Studies Abroad.

**Table 6. Number of scholarships and financial aid granted to the VM students in 2018-2021**

2018/2019		2019/2020		2020/2021	
Autumn semester	Spring semester	Autumn semester	Spring semester	Autumn semester	Spring semester
<i>Number of scholarships</i>					
198	120	175	127	203	150
<i>Number of financial aid</i>					
5	8	9	13	17	12
<i>Number of nominal scholarships</i>					
2	5	3	3	3	7

All VM students are insured against the accidents (Insurance contacts No 710-770-2231472 and No. 710-770-2231473) that may occur during their studies and internships and travel to and from the location of studies, regardless of the country. The VM programme students, if desired, are accommodated in one of the nine University dormitories. Accommodation in dormitory is [provided](#) according to the LSMU Student Dormitory Regulations, which are administered by LSMU SU. The applications for accommodation are submitted through [LSMUSIS](#). The VM students have the opportunity to receive a [psychological support from the experienced psychologists](#), to participate in the project "LSMU Model of Psychological Counseling and Emotional Support for Students". A system of psychosocial adaptation for the LSMU international students is being implemented, in which national students also participate: [Ambassador Programme](#), [Mentor Programme](#), [Tutor Programme](#), [Parent Programme](#), coordinators, [psychologist counseling](#), psychological adaptation research.

In addition, the VM students have the opportunity to implement their ideas and initiatives by participating in the activities of student organizations. LSMU Student Union ([SU](#)) makes suggestions and proposals to the heads of the university and VMF and implements those proposals in students' social and academic welfare. The VM students also actively participate in the activities of the VA Student [Association \(VASA\)](#) (74 members), the [International Veterinary Students' Association \(IVSA\)](#), and the [IVSA Lithuania](#) (30 members). Foreign students join the Lithuanian international veterinary student union ([LIVSU](#)) (11 members) and the [SSS](#). The VMF financially supports students' social and research initiatives and participation in exhibitions and conferences, provides transport for travel, etc. Students have the opportunity to participate in various voluntary activities, such as volunteering at the VMF animal clinics and private veterinary clinics and/or animal shelters, to perform the additional internships in LT and abroad. The students also receive the information about the employment opportunities from the LSMU [Career Center](#), which regularly organizes seminars, courses, lectures and the Career Days event in helping the graduates to find the employment by specialty, as well as it organizes the meetings with future employers (Career Days).

The VA, in the premises of the building No.5, hosts a student leisure space, for which the premises have been allocated by the University, and the social partners UAB Royal Canine have equipped them, and the VMF has also provided the funding. In the VA campus, there is the University Sport Center where the students spend their leisure time physically active. The students participate in the activities of the University art groups: the choir "Neris", the folk dance groups "Džigūnas" and "Ave Vita", and the sports dance group "SALTO".

The University and VMF provide sufficient information to the students about their studies and advise on any issues that arise. After the end of student admission, LSMU hosts an Introductory Week for the admitted, a Freshman e-Guide is prepared and published on the page for entrants. SU appoints the mentors (volunteers) selected from specially trained senior students to each group of the LT students, and IRSC does the same to the groups of foreign students. The mentors help newly enrolled students to integrate into the University community. A Freshman Camp is organized annually – VASA arranges it for the LT students, the IRSC – for foreign students. In the first year of studies, the students enrolled in the VM study programme are taught the subject “Introduction to Veterinary Studies”. During the course of this subject, the Dean of VMF, the Vice-Dean and the Coordinator of International Programmes (for students studying in EN) meet with students and introduce them to the Provisions of the LSMU study regulations, including the Procedure of Granting Student Support and the main study rules. In order to identify the problems in a timely manner and increase students' awareness and opportunities to attain the study results and progress, the VMF first-year students are assigned a lecturer-curator, who performs all his/her duties and activities according to the [Regulations](#) for the VMF Student Mentoring Activity. The curator meets with his/her supervised student group at least once per month and advises on time planning and learning, individual work organization, etc., issues. The students can communicate with the curator by e-mail, mail or meet face-to face.

The detailed information about the study aims and the objectives of taught subjects is provided in the subject descriptions are published and periodically updated in the [LSMUSIS](#). Until 2019, the group work system FirstClass was operating. Currently, the students are using the [Moodle](#) virtual learning environment in the LSMU system. Whether students receive the necessary information is known in several ways: during meetings with curators, during student surveys conducted by the Study Center and SPC, and during the meetings of the VMF Dean and administration with students. Academic information is provided to the students by the VMF Dean's Office [Administration](#), SPC, the [Study Center](#), and [IRSC](#). With the onset of pandemic and moving the study process online, meetings with the student groups are organised more frequently.

### Expert recommendations during the last external evaluation related to

#### *Student admission and support*

1.	Recommendation	Actions taken by HEI
Not available		

## Main results of the self-evaluation in the area of Student admission and support

### Strengths

- VM study programme is very popular among entrants and the number of entrants is sufficient;
- Well-organized the admission system of national students;
- Student information and support system at the University is organized properly;
- All VM students have equal opportunities to participate in the international mobility programmes and projects, and information about these opportunities is published in a transparent and clear manner;
- A great number of *Erasmus +* agreements that have been signed with foreign universities for the VM study programme provides a vast range of opportunities for students to gain international experience related to the field of VM studies.

### Areas for Improvement

- To attract more incoming exchange students to the VM study programme to do an internship.

## 4. Studying, student performance and graduate employment

The evaluation of the teaching/learning and achievements of the students of the VM study programme is regulated by the LSMU SR and the [Descriptor of Veterinary Studies](#). VM studies are being conducted only in permanent form. In the extreme conditions of the COVID 19 pandemic, the form of studies has temporarily adjusted: a theoretical part has been delivered by remote or mixed synchronous and asynchronous methods, a practical part - by the contact or distance synchronous method. The implementation of the programme uses teaching/ learning assessment methods that encourage students to be active participants in the study process.

**The teaching of VM subjects** is founded on knowledge transfer in such a way that the necessary skills develop and improve and enable a student to understand and acquire professional skills. The teaching is therefore based on the fundamental veterinary knowledge closely correlated with the constantly changing latest achievements in veterinary science. In addition to **traditional theoretical teaching methods** (lectures, seminars) designed to acquire more fundamental knowledge, in the VM studies, the **active teaching/learning methods** for students studying in small groups dominate. The students learn to work in a team in collaboration with each other, perform and simulate the real veterinary cases and situations, use simulations and mannequins. Pre-clinical study methods include tissue preparation, the evaluation of microbiological, histological, or histopathological preparations, animal examination, the evaluation of animal housing conditions and welfare. The active teaching/learning methods related to clinical practice are prevalent during clinical studies. The students develop and master clinical skills (collection of medical history, interpretation of test results, prescribing and dosing injections, wound dressing, simple surgical operations supervised by a lecturer, mini clinical tasks, etc.) through practical work with animal material, animal cadavers, carcasses, and through the on-site work and tasks with patients at the VMF animal clinics animal farms, slaughterhouses, external practice bases at the period of compulsory practical clinical training. The methods such as reflection, case study, master thesis, and others that induce self-study, are very important. All VM students carry out research activities required for the preparation of a master thesis.

**The strategy of evaluation of students' achievements** in the VM studies allows to objectively assess the study results and competencies acquired by students in the programme and to ensure that the assessment process is clear and transparent, and its implementation procedures and structure are introduced to the students before a start of their studies (the information is uploaded in the LSMUSIS and provided in the subject description in Moodle and disseminated orally). The studies of each subject (module) are completed with an exam or a student's independent work (project). An intermediate credit is the interim form of assessment of study subject achievements. The schedules of tests/examinations are released at least 2 months before the start of the test/examination. The study results of VM students are assessed according to the ten-point criterion evaluation system (*Annex 4.1*). The VM students' achievements are evaluated using diagnostic (used to assess the initial level of student's knowledge and skills), formative (study programme parts that focus on practical skills, the solutions of clinical issues), and summative (sums up and summarizes the students' achievements and acquired study results, shows their level, encourages students to be active throughout the study process) assessment methods. The cumulative score is a part of summative assessment,

which must be at least 50% of the final grade of the exam. When applying a cumulative assessment method, a final assessment result accumulates by assessing in components the specific intended outcomes of the study subject (module) in the programme. The different parts of a cumulative assessment assess different learning outcomes. A student may not take the final examination if he/she has accumulated a score sufficient to obtain a positive grade during the studies. The lecturers, preparing a teaching subject (module) in the programme, plan a strategy of the evaluation of students' achievements and provide it in the Subject Description. This strategy covers the content of a subject, the competencies to be developed and the results approved by the SPC to be achieved. The SPC and Innovative Education Department (InoEdu) consults the lecturers. The assessment strategy is published and available for students in the subject descriptions in the LSMUSIS and Moodle, in the procedures for subject courses, clinical rotation, practical training, master thesis, and qualification examination. At the beginning of subject studies, the lecturers acquaint students with the description of the subject and assessment strategy, the provisions of academic integrity, and the biosafety requirements. Depending on a subject and the intended learning outcomes and competencies, different **forms of assessment** (exams in written, colloquium, the evaluation of laboratory or practical work, test, case study, reflections, semester paper, practical training report and its defense, qualification exam, master thesis, and its defense, mini clinical assessment, direct observation of procedural skills (DOPS)) are applied to evaluate students' achievements. During the rotation, a student fills in the rotation logbook, registers the patients he/she has and notes the acquired intended competencies, writes a reflection, and reports practically. For evaluation of internship, a student fills in the patient registration journal and writes a report, which is evaluated by the internship supervisor and the Commission. The master thesis is reviewed, and defended in public. The level of professional preparation of students graduating from the programme, their level of capability to work individually, an ability to apply the acquired specialty knowledge, the skills necessary to obtain the qualification of veterinary doctor are assessed by taking an objective structured clinical examination (OSCE).

**Hours for self-study work** are designated for the preparation of the theoretical and practical studies: colloquium, tests, collecting reports and material for master thesis, writing reports on practice, preparing the master thesis, etc. Self-study work is controlled by a subject lecturer through the interim assessments or interim credits. According to the description of the field of veterinary studies, the scope of self-study is determined by considering the specific features of subject content and on average is no less than 30% (e.g., in clinical subjects, the volume of contact work is bigger as skills shall be acquired by working hands-on with animals, carcasses or models under the direct supervision of a lecturer or veterinarian). The students independently develop their practical skills at the VMSC and in the laboratories (*Annex 4.2*) and centers of the departments. The students pre-register and book the VMSC (*Annex 4.3*) specific stations through the registration system – [Microsoft Bookings](#). The information is uploaded on the [LSMU website](#). The descriptions in LT and EN are prepared for each station. Some descriptions have QR codes that allow the students to view the visual information. Using the QR codes, an initial version of self-control tests has been also developed – students can evaluate their skills before and after work at the station, as well as the theoretical questions related to the station. The center employs a permanent staff member who advises the students regularly. When organizing students' self-study work, **the support of the academic staff** for the student is provided. The lecturers of the departments responsible for the formation of practical skills have drawn up the schedules of students' self-study work, and the individuals responsible for the registration and supervision of students during their independent work have been appointed. The specific descriptions of practical tasks are prepared and the necessary equipment for student work is provided (*more details in Annex 4.2*). The Students have the opportunity to consult on the performance of self-study tasks and assignments directly or remotely, at a scheduled time. Also, students' self-learning and self-assessment tools (tests, tasks, questions in the Moodle) have been implemented **in the subjects** of the VM programme.

The VM programme graduates can continue studying in the **VM residency and/or doctorate**. VMF executes the 13 VM residency programmes (from 2022/2023 – 14). Since 2019, the status of VM residency students has changed ([Order No. 3D-958 of the LR ŽŪM, December 27](#)) – students residents are employed as veterinary residency doctors in the VMF animal clinics and they are paid a salary (before this change, the residency students had a status of the student). The work of the VM residency students is carried out



according to the provisions of the job. In 2018, there were 12 places of the VM residency, and in 2019 and in 2020 – 14 each year. Currently, 28 students are studying at the VM residency. The 43.9% of the VM residency graduates stay and build their career at the University or enter doctoral studies. There are currently 28 doctoral students in **the doctoral programme in the field of agricultural sciences and veterinary** (8 doctoral students are funded by the EU structural fundings). The graduates who have obtained a doctoral degree are employed at the VMF (*more details in Chapter 5*).

**The LSMU is an open university and ensures equal study conditions for all students**, including socially vulnerable groups and the disabled. Students with disabilities register with the VSF and the LSMU Study Center. The University has a Coordinating [Commission](#) for Students with Disabilities. Assistance for students with disabilities is also provided by the municipalities and associations for the disabled, e.g. ensures their transportation, etc. According to the Provisions of the LSMU SR Chapter III, Clause 25.8 and the [Procedure](#) and its [Annex](#) for submitting documents and reporting in alternative ways for the LSMU students with special learning needs, the alternative assessment tools, that assure the achievement of study aims and results are applied to the students with disabilities who cannot be subject to normal assessment procedures. The goal of the VMF is to identify the problems of the students from socially vulnerable groups and with special needs in a timely manner and increase the opportunities in achieving learning outcomes and progress. Students with special needs, like all others, receive the same academic, financial, social, psychological, and personal [support](#) (*more details in Chapters 3 and 6*).

**The assurance of the effective and transparent system of assessment of student's achievements, the monitoring of progress, and academic honesty** is ensured according to the LSMU SR Provisions of Chapters IX and X and the [evaluation strategy](#) of study programme subjects, which may be changed and/or adjusted before the start of teaching. The monitoring of study progress of VM students is performed by discussing and considering the progress of the subject studies at the departments, by submitting the monitoring report of VMF study progress (depending on the programme level) to the SPC and VMF Council every semester, and once a year to the LSMU Rectorate where a report is submitted by the VMF Dean. The report reviews the academic performance of students during the academic year, assesses the progress and needs to improve learning, teaching, or assessment methods. This report is also discussed by the Dean with the students. The results of the assessment of study achievements are stored in the LSMUSIS. At the end of the academic year, a students' progress is evaluated by placing a student to a certain level of achievement (the LSMU Study Regulations, Chapter X, Clause 309). After summarizing the assessments of study subjects, the level of learning outcomes of the assessed period is determined. All students participate in the procedure, except for new entrants. There are 3 levels of study achievements (**Annex 4.1.**). Students are informed about the achieved level via e-mail. A good student is considered not having academic failures and/or debts, having fulfilled all the requirements for the study programme during the assessed period, and achieving an excellent or typical level of achievement. The goal of this process is to identify the best students, foster leadership and motivation, and enable them to qualify for or retain state funding. A student who reaches a threshold of negative level loses a state-funded place and this place is passed to a student who has achieved excellent study results but has studied in not funded by state place. The students with academic debts also lose funding. These students are given the opportunity to progress and are allowed to repeat the course of the subject(s). Those who repeat the study subject(s) course are not transferred to a higher year of the study programme. A student may repeat the same study semester or study subject course no more than two times. Monitoring academic progress each semester gives the possibility to identify the students who are having a harder time learning and who need help to achieve better learning outcomes. Monitoring progress also allows identifying the successful students who then are motivated to engage in research activities. **The VMF has implemented a reasonably planned procedure** that creates conditions and helps students to improve their study results during additional activities (**Annex 4.2.**).

The University has adopted an official graduation procedure that helps the students who fail and get behind the study programme schedule to complete unfinished assignments and still to improve their academic performance: to retake the exam twice during the week of debts of semester or of the year.

**The VM students are provided with continuous [feedback](#) on study achievements and study progress planning.** The feedback is provided at the University, Faculty, and/or through individual lecturer-

student interaction. Each student receives feedback on the achieved study results in the LSMUSIS system individually. An explanation of student assessment is organized no later than 1 working day from the release date of the assessment results, indicating the specific date and time of the subject in the Moodle course. Once a year, the VM SPC meetings are organized with the VM students of different programme years where the issues of improving the quality of studies and ensuring the study progress are discussed. The programme lecturers are also invited to participate in the meetings. The feedback for the first-year students is also given and received through the study lecturers-curators (*more details in Chapter 3*). The VMF Dean annually organizes a meeting with the VM students and presents the current changes, new changes, and innovations regarding the studies, acquaints the students with the study results of the respective study programme year.

**The LSMU Career Center and VMF monitor the employment and further career of the VM graduates.** The career monitoring surveys are designed to provide feedback and find out how the VM graduates manage to establish themselves in the labor market, to what extent they are satisfied with the work they have completed. Also, the LSMU Career Center sources the information from the Employment Service under the LR Ministry of Social Security and Labor, the career management information system ([Career.lt](http://Career.lt)), and the SFVS. According to the data of the LR Employment Service, 12 months after graduation, in 2018, there were no The VM study programme graduates registered in the Employment Service system, in 2019 and in 2020, there was one graduate each year. Analyzing data from the career management information system (12 months after the award of the diploma), the employability of VM graduates (the LR citizens) in 2020 reached 78.76%, in 2019 – 78.01% and in 2018 – 74.19%. Based on the results of the surveys conducted by the LSMU Career Center, in the period of 2018-2020, within 12 months after the diploma had been awarded, 100% of the VM graduates were employed. The data of the SFVS showed that 22.53% of the graduates got employed as veterinary doctors in other countries of the European Economic Area in 2018, 8.57% of them left in 2019, and 5.88% – in 2020. Such migration of the majority of graduates is related to their families living abroad. Naturally, the graduates who come to study in LT from other countries return to work in their home countries. Only one graduate, who graduated in 2019, has stayed in LT and works as a veterinary doctor here. According to the survey, 91% of the VM graduates (studied in EN) who graduated in 2020 and 2021 are employed as veterinarians, 70% of them had employment before graduating and getting the diploma, 10% - soon after receiving the graduation diploma, 10% – within six months after the graduation. 80% of these graduates work with small animals, and 20% of them – with large animals.

The LSMU Career Center conducts surveys of the employers on the professional preparation of graduates and their acquired competencies upon graduation at least every 3 years. In 2019, the survey results showed that 88 respondents out of 144, and in 2021 – 27 out of 57 are completely satisfied with the specialists being trained in the LSMU The VM study programme. On average, 80% of the employers believe that the training of the VM students is changing fundamentally and is greatly improving as the graduates get much better prepared for the practical work.

According to the surveys of the VM programme graduates of the last 3 years, on average, 70% of the respondents have rated the quality of studies as excellent, very good and good. Professional lecturers, high-quality study materials, and good organization of internships and trips during the studies have been mentioned as the biggest advantages of the programme. The graduates would like to have more time for internships in the study programme (this is already done, **Table 1**). Due to the extreme restriction conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, some practical work was performed in a virtual way and despite the fact that the students were given the opportunity to acquire the practical skills during the summer break, in the period of 2021, the level of satisfaction with studies for some graduates has decreased by 6%.

**LSMU adheres to the principles of academic ethics and integrity**, which are regulated by the LSMU SR Chapters IX and XIV. In order to ensure fair student behavior, the first-year students sign an academic integrity pledge before the beginning of their studies at the university, and then the student signs the pledge in the Moodle system for the relevant subject course before each assessment. The lecturer, noticing the dishonest behavior, terminates the examination and writes an official report to the Dean, who, after examining the case, forms a commission of 1-3 of the university lecturers, 1-3 of the faculty administration

representatives, and 1-3 of the students delegated by LSMU SU. Upon confirmation of the fact of academic dishonesty, the Dean of the faculty submits a decision to the Rectorate for consideration to expel a student from the university. A student who does not agree with the decision has the opportunity to appeal it by applying to the LSMU Dispute Resolution Commission, the LSMU Senate and/or the court according to the LR laws. Pursuant to the decision of the commission and the decision of the Rectorate, a student is expelled from the university. After one year, a student expelled due to academic dishonesty may renew his / her studies and continue them by paying the tuition fee. During the last 3 years of the study programme, the 3 official reports were received regarding student dishonesty during the examinations, which were held by the commissions and found to be unfair and those students have been expelled from the university with the right to resume their studies after one year. One case of fraud was identified after the student had submitted a forged certificate of medical examination (this incident was prior to the Law on Personal Data Protection entered into force and the medical examination certificates were still collected). After the investigation of the case, the commission proposed a severe reprimand to the student, and mandatory individual free consultations with the LSMU psychologist were recommended. In 2020 the three occurred allegations of data plagiarism have not been substantiated based on the findings that the medical history descriptions in practical work reports differed from each other, only the actual data were the same. The cause for this case was that the students did the internship in the same internship base and described the same patients. Currently, the procedure for writing a practice report has been revised and clarified in order to avoid similar mistakes

LSMU VMF has formed a study and work environment that fosters social and cultural diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all members of the university community in order to create the dignified, needs satisfying, quality conditions to the individuals of different nationalities and faiths, as well as to the individuals with disabilities to study and work at the university. The VMF also strives for gender equality between employees and students. The measures allowing to synchronize the studying process and private life responsibilities such as motherhood, parenthood, etc., (*more details in Chapter 3*) have been also implemented. The university fosters unity and communality and respect for each other. Pursuant to the LR Law on Equal Opportunities, which affirms the list of the grounds for discrimination, and the LSMU SR (Clause 376.6), according to which the discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, race, nationality, language, origin, social status, religion, belief or opinion, and/or incitement to such behavior shall be considered a serious offense, and for this, a student may be expelled from the university and the employment contract with an employee may be terminated. No such cases at the VMF were identified.

The procedure for appeals on the organization of student achievement assessment and the crediting of study results is transparent and stipulated in the LSMU SR Chapter IX, Section 8 and Chapter XII, Section 3. Provided a student objects to the assessment of the study achievements and its explanation or procedures, then he/she has the right to appeal to the Dean within one working day (in case of the interim assessment) or within two working days (in case of the final examination). The Board of Appeal consisting of delegated representatives of LSMU SU and representatives of the administration and/or lecturers take the decisions specified in the LSMU SR Chapter IX, Clause 278 by consensus. The decision shall be communicated to the appellant electronically. The decisions of the Board can be appealed to the LSMU Dispute Resolution Commission. In the past 3 years, 3 appeals (in 2019) have been received regarding the assessments of the qualification exam. The Commission has found that the appeals did not have reasonable grounds due to the inconsistencies in the information provided by the appellants, unsubstantiated interpretations, and a mismatch between the available written and oral statements. A decision to dismiss the appeals was made and the initial assessment was upheld.

**Expert recommendations of the last external evaluation related to  
*Studying, student performance and graduate employment***

1.	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Action taken by HEI</i>
	Establish a study quality assurance system as the means to promote the innovation and update of the study programme by	LSMU has developed a sustainable study quality assurance system based on the <a href="#">LSMU study quality assurance regulations</a> and <a href="#">LSMU Study Quality Assurance Manual</a> (LT) LSMU Study Quality Monitoring and Improvement Commission (2 representatives of VMFM) coordinates the monitoring, evaluation, and improvement of the LSMU study quality. The LSMU Innovative Education

	taking into consideration the changing needs of veterinarians.	Department of the Study Center ensures efficient and innovative study and teaching processes, to collect and analyze feedback, and to present it. The Career Center conducts a regular survey of graduates and employers, which helps to improve the content of study programmes and other quality processes. At the level of the programme, the study quality assurance activities are performed by SPC. Material study resources are constantly updated, supplemented, and improved.
2.	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Action taken by HEI</i>
	Apply the clearer funding conditions of the study programme complex components to the internship bases.	Clinical practice is an integral compulsory part of the VM programme, funded according to the current procedure for funding of the VM programme. For bases of this Internship fundings are allocated to pay an internship supervisor's salary according to the triparty internship agreement. During the clinical internship, students are insured against accidents and are paid scholarships if they have been granted.

**Please provide main results of the self-evaluation in the area of**  
*Studying, student performance and graduate employment*

**Strengths**

- VM study programme applies the advanced teaching/learning methods that encourage students to be active participants in the study process;
- University has a regular and efficient system for collecting student feedback in all levels: students, lecturers, staff, social partners;
- Study process is transparent, ensuring a policy of academic integrity, tolerance and non-discrimination;
- Careful monitoring of further career of the VM study programme graduates is well maintained;
- Appropriate study conditions are created for all students, including the individuals with special needs and the disabled;
- VMSC, established in 2018, is incorporated in the core curriculum;
- VM studies are completed by OSCE and the master thesis defence;
- VM graduates are in demand in the labor market and are valued well, and their employability within 3-12 months after graduation is high.

**Areas for Improvement**

- Encourage employers to become more involved involvement in providing regular feedback and in the improvement of the study process.

## 5. Teaching staff

The competence and teaching quality of the lecturers is ensured according to the unity principles of science, studies and practical activities, the certification of lecturers, the improvement of their professional qualification and educational competencies, and the assessment of students' study results. The main criterion for the selection of the teaching staff for teaching in the VM study programme is the competencies acquired by them in the respective field of study allowing implementation of the study programme aims and achieving the intended learning outcomes. Lecturers are employed for a five-year term by competition according to the requirements of legal acts: the [LR Labor Code](#), the Procedure for Establishing Qualification and [Attestation Requirements](#) for Lecturers and Researchers, the [principles of LSMU employee selection and evaluation](#), and the [LSMU work rules](#). The pedagogical, scientific and practical experience of teaching staff is evaluated at the time of lecturer attestation, which is conducted every 5 years. The Procedure sets out the qualification requirements for the lecturer and researcher positions. The requirements include the number of scientific articles with the citation rate indicator published in the database CA WoS, the scientific activities and training of researchers, preparing methodological material, improving educational competence for not less than 30 hours, and practical and pedagogical activities; also the procedure for announcing, organizing and executing competitions for available or needed positions; the procedure for regular and extraordinary attestation; the procedure for managing a competition and attestation commissions work. The applicants who have won the competition for the second term as a professor or associate professor may be awarded an appropriate [pedagogical title](#). The qualification of all VM study programme lecturers is appropriate to achieve the programme aims and results, their field of research

corresponds to the subjects they teach. **The information on the lecturers of study field subject (working at least part-time position and having at least 3 years of teaching experience)** employed at the University permanently, and on their practical work experience in the field of the taught subject is presented in *Annex 5.1*. In the VM studies, the current **ratio of students per lecturer is 5.7:1**. The efforts to reduce this number to 5 have been made continuously from 2021. The higher normative tuition fee of the VM studies is likely to allow reaching the intended ratio (**Table 7**).

**Table 7. Number and the students-lecturer ratio in the VM study programme**

Academic year	2020/2021			2019/2020			2018/2019		
	LT	EN	Total	LT	EN	Total	LT	EN	Total
Language of instruction in the programme									
Number of students in the programme	722	137	<b>859</b>	731	123	<b>854</b>	782	106	<b>888</b>
Lecturer : student ratio	1 : 5.7			1 : 5.9			1 : 6.3		

The lecturers are competent and can link the study subjects' educational process professionally with an evidence-based scientific practice involving students actively. During the preparation of the master theses, one lecturer supervises on average 2 (2.16) students. It depends on the lecturer's employment and other workloads. This ensures that the lecturer can properly advise the BD students and that a student receives the qualified advice promptly.

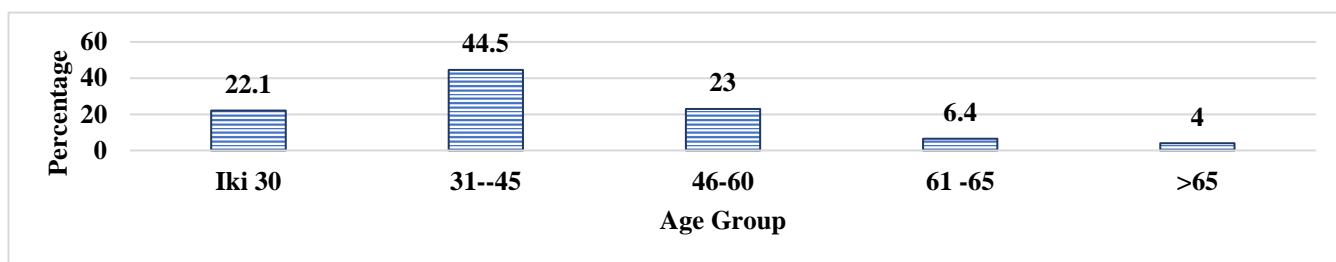
**The total number of lecturers teaching the VM students and working at least 0.5 full-time** in 2021 is 79.25%. In 2020, it was 76.19%, in 2019 – 75.54%, and the remaining part of lecturers during this period worked 0.25 full-time (20.75%, 23.81%, and 24.46%, respectively). The number of such employees is declining. The majority (87.25%) of the VM programme lecturers, selected through a public competition, work under a 5-year term permanent employment contract. The others are invited to work under fixed-term contracts for a maximum of 2-year terms. Subsequently, those lecturers who wish to continue their teaching career, following the [Procedure for competition and attestation](#) described above, must participate in the competition for the relevant position. Pursuant to the LSMU Statute, Clause 149, visiting lecturers and researchers are not subject to the appointing to position procedure established by the Statute, however, even when selecting employees for a short period (the selection is made by the head of the department and approved by the Dean), the employees shall meet the qualification requirements set by the University documents. Fixed-term employment for a maximum period of 2 years is applicable because of the changing number of students admitted and changes in the funding of studies; it would be complicated for the University to employ all lecturers for a 5-year term.

**The ratio of structural parts for a position** of a lecturer is distributed by the head of the VMF structural unit, considering the provisions of the LR MESS Minister's Order [“On Approval of the Recommendations for a Working Time Structure of the Lecturers of Higher Education“](#), and the provisions of job duties. This ensures the implementation of the study process and study-related activities carried out by the unit, and the conditions created for the lecturers within their term to meet the minimum requirements of the procedure for competition and attestation. The VM lecturers plan, organize and execute the studies, carry out research, activities related to the study process, and other activities significant for the University and its departments according to the approved schedule and individual workload agreed with the study department. Their workload is distributed accordingly – 67% is for teaching, preparing for lectures, and maintaining educational development, and 33% is for research activities. The duration of the employee's working week cannot exceed [30 hours](#).

**The acquisition of practical competencies** in the studies of the VM programme is one of the most important integral parts of the programme. For this purpose, the 47 veterinary doctors practitioners who annually improve their competence in education and hold permanent positions at the university work with the students during clinical rotations and internships at the University. It should be noted that some subjects in the VM programme are taught by the foreign graduates (4 of them are from Europe and 1 – from the USA): parasitology, equine osteopathy, neurology and dermatology (European and American)). The 3 VMF lecturers are currently studying at the EU Veterinary Residency in Switzerland (parasitology, neurology,

surgery) and are also teaching students. Specialized veterinarians who are national residency graduates in veterinary medicine occupy 18.25 FTE lecturer positions in the programme. The most VMF veterinary medicine doctors hold a doctor's degree of science and/or have completed veterinary residency studies in LT. This confirms the high qualification of the teaching staff and the necessary professional scientific competence to base the studies on the latest research and practical achievements in the field of veterinary medicine. **The dynamics of the number of lecturers working as a practicing veterinary doctor or another practical work** corresponding to the subject taught and teaching the subjects of the study field have changed insignificantly during the last 3 study years: 2018-2019 – 38.84% (54 lecturers); 2019-2020 – 37.5% (54 lecturers) ir 2020-2021– 38.84% (55 lecturers). In order to ensure the transfer of practical knowledge to students in the study programme the modules, especially clinical ones, a significant part of the studies consists of internships carried out in external practical training bases under the direct supervision of a supervisor who is a veterinary doctor and has at least 3 years of practical work experience (funded by the VMF, signing the triparty fixed-term internship agreements).

**The substitutability of the lecturers and the education of young lecturers** are ensured by the third cycle studies (doctoral studies) in the study programme. Currently, 28 doctoral students are studying for a doctorate degree in the field of VM (002A). The percentage of teaching staff who have completed doctoral studies and are continuing their teaching and research careers at the University reaches 80%. It should be noted that 100% percent of the effectiveness of doctoral studies has not been reached yet because some doctoral students start families and raise children for a period of time and graduate 1-2 years later than expected. The distribution of lecturers by age groups also shows a consistent change. (Fig. 4).



**Fig. 4. Lecturer distribution by age groups**

**The number and qualification of lecturers comply with requirements of the legislation** and the provisions of the [Descriptor of the field of veterinary studies](#): 71.8% of all lecturers of the subjects of the integrated The VM study programme hold a doctoral degree and 100% of those lecturers carry out the research in the science field which corresponds to the field of subjects they teach. In the VM study programme, 22.1% of academic staff, engaged in teaching with not less than 0.5 full-time, are professors, 19.5% – associate professors, 30.2% – lecturers holding a doctoral degree, 11.4% – lecturers without a doctoral degree, but most of them study for a doctorate, 16.8% – assistants, most of whom are veterinary doctors with more than 3 years of practical work experience and have completed a residency in veterinary medicine. A total of 79,25% of lecturers in the VM study programme have at least 3 years of practical work experience and work at least part-time at the University. Changes in the number of lecturers during the period of 2018-2021 presented in **Table 8** shows that the number of lecturers is constant, their qualifications are sufficient and meet the requirements for the study field.

**All lecturers and practitioners teaching the VM programme in EN** speak at a minimum level of B2. The overall percentage of EN-speaking teaching staff, out of all lecturers, is increasing and currently reaches 93% (in 2018 it was 80%). A significant part of the teaching staff can also communicate with the students in EN. The VMF administration also speaks EN. Since 2019, all 100% of the documents governing veterinary studies are translated into EN.

Various programmes and projects are offered to raise the competencies of lecturers, improve the quality of the studies and promote international cooperation, which is coordinated by the IRSC AMD. **All VM lecturers have the opportunity to participate in international mobility programmes** and projects (*Erasmus +*, etc.) and to leave for teaching and/or learning period from 2 days up to 2 months to European

and the other world higher education institutions, chosen foreign institutions and /or companies with which the inter-institutional agreements have been signed.

**Table 8. Change in the number of lecturers in the academic years of 2020/2021, 2019/2020 and 2018/2019\***

Academic Year	2020/2021		2019/2020		2018/2019	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Professor	33	22.1	34	23.6	35	25.2
Associate Professor	29	19.5	26	18.1	32	23
Lecturer	45	30.2	49	34	46	33.1
Lecturer not holding PhD degree	17	11.4	17	11.8	11	7.9
Assistant	25	16.8	18	12.5	15	10.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>100</b>

\*excluding the lecturers working less than 0.5 full-time.

Mobility opportunities for the LSMU teaching staff are presented on the [LSMU IRSC webpage](#). It is also possible to invite lecturers from foreign higher education institutions for a [teaching visit](#). VMF invites members of the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS) to deliver lectures to the VM students on the individual topics or on their parts. The visiting lecturers are employed by the faculty under a fixed-term employment contract or arrive to teach without the employment agreement. According to the procedure approved by the University, their travel and accommodation expenses are reimbursed by the University or through the Erasmus + programme. For example, in 2018, at the LSMU VMF, the lecturers and practical activities were delivered by prof. dr. J. Pringle, a graduate of the European College of Equine Internal Medicine and the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine and a professor at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, prof. dr. J. Ceron from the University of Murcia (Spain), and K. Tomsa, a veterinarian and a graduate of the College of Clinical Veterinary Sciences. In 2019 – prof. dr. D. Matičić a graduate of the College of Small Animal Internal Diseases and a professor at the University of Zagreb (Croatia), and, in 2020, – a resident of the European College of Veterinary Surgery prof. dr. D. Vnuk. From 2017, under the Erasmus + programme, prof. dr. L. Kovalcuka, a member of the Eastern European Society of Veterinary Ophthalmology and the European Society of Veterinary Ophthalmology and a professor of Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies comes to teach every year. A. Tvarijonavičiūtė from the University of Murcia (Spain) was employed to teach at the VMF and her teaching visit was funded by the Education Exchange Support Foundation project for short-term teaching visits of highly qualified foreign lecturers. **The University has the [LSMU Open Foundation](#)** which supports research trips to conferences and internships. The [Science Fundation](#) funds research for researchers, doctoral and doctoral students, promotes productive and active researchers and doctoral students and supports publishing their articles and theses in scientific journals. The VM resident veterinarians can receive financial support for training to raise their qualifications through the LSMU Resident Mobility Fund. The academic mobility of the VM academic staff over the past three years remains stable. On average, 16% of the academic staff teach and improve their competencies abroad every year (**Table 9**).

**Table 9. Mobility dynamics of outgoing lecturers**

Academic year	Number of outgoing lecturers	Countries
2018/2019	36	Portugal, Germany, Finland, Denmark, Spain, Estonia, Poland, Latvia, Turkey, Italy, Norway, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Croatia, Netherlands, Czech Republic
2019/2020	29	Estonia, Denmark, Latvia, Spain, Poland, Germany, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Italy
2020/2021	25	France, Tajikistan, Germany, Belgium, Croatia, Greece, Serbia, Finland, Portugal, Austria, Sweden, Ireland, United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, Poland

During the last 3 academic years, 27 lecturers from other veterinary universities came to the LSMU to teach in the VM programme (**Table 10**).

**Table 10. Mobility dynamics of incoming lecturers**

Academic year	Number of lecturers (number of them from EBVS)	Countries
2018/2019	12 (4)	Norway, Switzerland, Poland, Portugal, Turkey, Spain, Sweden, Finland
2019/2020	11 (3)	Croatia, Poland, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Germany, United Kingdom
2020/2021	4	Israel, Ireland, Spain

Lectures and internships for the VM students and lecturers from the EU and world-recognized European Veterinary Colleges significantly strengthened the VM studies' quality. It should be noted that the lower number of outgoing and incoming lecturers in the period of 2020-2021 was due to the COVID 19 pandemic, consequently the scheduled visits and trips were canceled.

The LSMU VA is a member of the [BOVA university network](#), therefore the VMF lecturers and researchers have the opportunity to participate in these teaching activities. The 13 lecturers used opportunity during 2018-2019, unfortunately, due to the pandemic restrictions, in the period of 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 such possibility was available. The academic mobility of staff and the benefits of international academic exchanges provide experience in developing advanced study programmes incorporating modern teaching methods and tools and developing research potential and collaboration.

According to the procedure for [Procedure for Ensuring the Educational Competence of LSMU Lecturers](#) established by the LSMU Senate, the University employees are provided with **conditions to improve their professional, educational, and IT qualifications**. In order to develop educational competence, the LSMU hosts the [InoEdu](#), which constantly monitors and improves educational competence. The training plan for lecturers organized by the IES is updated every academic year. Improving the educational competence of lecturers and teaching staff is paid for by the VMF. During the 5-year term, all lecturers shall maintain and improve their educational qualification by at least 30 academic hours. The VMF lecturers are especially active and consistently increase their educational competencies: in 2018 – 81, in 2019 – 171, in 2020 – 111 lecturers improved their educational competence in training organized by the IES. The organization and implementation of professional development of lecturers and teaching at the LSMU are provided by the [LSMU Regulation of Professional Development](#). The activity is administered by the [LSMU Postgraduate Study Center](#) (PSC) and implemented by VMF. The University conducts annual training cycles for academic and assistance staff (Education Spring and Education Winter) where which the employees are introduced to a wide range of relevant topics. From the year 2020-2022, competence development for all University employees is performed by implementing a project “Improvement of the Quality of the LSMU Studies and Related Processes by Increasing the Potential of Human Resources No. 09.3.1-ESFA-V-738-04-0001 ” funded by the EU and the LR.

All **practicing veterinarians** of the VMF animal clinics involved in the implementation of the VM study programme, according to the [description](#) of the procedure for raising the qualification of veterinarians holding a veterinary practice license, shall constantly deepen the knowledge, abilities, and practical skills that are necessary for their professional activities. Each veterinary doctor shall improve his/her professional competence and acquire at least 32 hours of in-service training every two years. Some training (such as the rational use of antimicrobials in veterinary medicine, animal welfare, and protection requirements, ensuring biosecurity requirements) for veterinarians is mandatory. The veterinarians working in the VMF and alumni improve their professional qualification in courses (**Annex 5.2.**), seminars, internships, scientific-practical conferences, training in the respective field at foreign universities and private foreign clinics under the guidance of the diplomates of European Veterinary Colleges. Veterinarians who manage external practices and do not have a permanent employment contract with the University are provided with



educational training by the VMF and raise their professional qualifications according to the procedure described above.

<b>Expert recommendations during the last external evaluation related to Teaching staff</b>	
<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Actions taken by the HEI</i>
1. Support internationally competitive research in order to preserve the idea of research-based teaching.	LSMU has the <a href="#">Open Foundation</a> to supports lecturers' trips to conferences, and the <a href="#">Science Foundation</a> to fund research by groups of researchers, scientists, and doctoral students and promote the most productive lecturers and doctoral students. Properly regulated proportions of parts of the teaching staff structure allow for a combination of teaching, research, and practice activities. The University has an The LSMU lecturers-researchers publish articles in a high-level database CA WoS that have citation indicators in journals. The scientific article publishing costs are funded by the Science Foundation (more details in Area 2).
2. More the VM practicing doctors, preferably at EU level, should be employed in the core training modules.	Acquisition of practical competencies in the VM studies is one of the most important parts of the programme. For this purpose, during clinical rotations and internships at the University, currently, 47 veterinary doctors are also working with the students in permanent positions at the University. The graduates of four European and one American veterinary colleges (specialized veterinarians) teach in the VM programme. Three VMF lecturers are currently studying in the residency (parasitology, neurology, surgery) at the European Veterinary College in Switzerland and are teaching students. The graduates of the international veterinary colleges are actively invited to visit on teaching the relevant parts of the course for a 2-7 days period (7 cases).

<b>Please provide main results of the self-evaluation in the area of Teaching staff</b>
<b>Strenghts</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number and qualifications of the VM study programme lecturers are appropriate for achieving the study aims and results and complies with the provisions of the Descriptor of the VM study field: over 70%. all lecturers of the programme hold a doctoral degree, 100% of them carry out research activities in the field of the study subjects that correspond to the subjects they teach.</li> <li>- Lecturers actively use the means used at and the conditions created by the University in order to raise and improve educational and professional competence.</li> </ul>
<b>Areas for Improvement</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is becoming difficult to compete with the private veterinary businesses and attract specialists to pursue a teaching-research-practice career at the University due to a low salary.</li> </ul>

## 6. Learning facilities and resources

LSMU VMF is located on a 5.95 ha area of closed-type territory and forms a student campus (*Annex 6.1.*). Movement between buildings takes from 5 to 7 min. The study premises are adapted for the VM studies and they are sufficient. The number and size of the rooms correspond to the number of students. VMF has the Anatomicum, Large Animal and Small Animal Clinics, the VMSC, a library, a Pathology Center, auditoriums, scientific research, and practical training laboratories and other training areas with the appropriate laboratory, clinical, and video demonstration equipment. The study work is organized according to the schedules prepared by the SC and the practical training schedules coordinated with the VMF. The VA lectures, seminars, conferences use 7 main auditoriums (up to 46-200 seats each) equipped with modern audio and video demonstration equipment. The VA central building and building No. 5 have conference halls, and building No. 4 has an assembly hall for mass events. The lobby of this hall (Žalčio Hall) also has the necessary equipment for lectures and seminars.

Depending on the specifics of the subject taught, seminar/group work rooms, practical work /laboratory rooms (59 rooms of various sizes designed for group work) and diagnostic/scientific research laboratories are equipped with a sufficient number of individual 1307 workplaces with the adapted equipment and

furniture. In each practical training room, it is possible to work with a group of 10-36 students at a time, depending on the specifics of the work. The VM student groups are no larger than 9-12 students each, if necessary, during clinical studies, they are divided into subgroups. There is still a sufficient number of premises and in terms of the restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The study premises and the number of workstations used in the VMF study programmes are presented in *Annex 6.2*. All study premises meet the applicable occupational safety and hygiene requirements. The rooms where chemical and biological materials are handled are equipped with eye showers, laminar boxes, and reagent storage cabinets. The emergency exits, first aid kits, fire extinguishers, and other necessary safety equipment is set up and found in all study spaces. In all building corridors, there are emergency evacuation plans and signs, and the fixed fire-fighting systems (SGG systems) are installed there as well. All buildings are equipped with sanitary rooms, utility rooms, toilets, a cloakrooms. The assurance of the VA biosafety and biosecurity is implemented according to the VMF Biosafety and Biosafety Standard Operating Procedures ([Biosecurity SOP](#)). The VA Biosafety and Biosecurity Committee (Biosecurity Committee) is responsible for the implementation and timely enforcement of biosecurity requirements in response to new risks or needs. All premises are equipped with biosecurity equipment and disinfectants, depending on the activities and area. The VM students are introduced to the Biosecurity SOP in the first year of their studies by having the subject "Introduction to the VM Studies" (2 hours). Moreover, before the start of each subject and in each VA department, the students affirm that they have received the instructive information by signing. By the decision of the Biosecurity Committee, each faculty department has a person responsible for coordinating the requirements of the Biosecurity SOP in the department. For the prompt resolution of biosafety issues, an e-assistance tool with the email address [va.biosauga@ismuni.lt](mailto:va.biosauga@ismuni.lt) has been developed and launched for use.

The specialized laboratories which are used for the VM studies have a sufficient number of necessary equipment, sufficient to ensure the quality of the VM study process (*Annex 6.3.*). The main premises, study rooms, and sections are the following:

**The Anatomicum** (area of 751 m<sup>2</sup>) hosts the Prosectorium with 26 workstations, a room for the preparation of animal corpses and carcasses with 10 workstations, 3 laboratories with 52 workstations, one of which is designed to study Histology, a 26-workplace amphitheater auditorium for practical training in Anatomy. The Osteology auditorium-museum possesses and exhibits 30 skeletons of different animals, 107 skulls, a lot of bone structure sets of all body parts, 120 macro specimens of internal animal body organs preserved in fluid, muscle specimens, organ moulages, stands with the vascular system and blood circulation, nervous system specimens, plastinates of the dog's brain and pig's heart. The laboratory of Histology hosts 22 individual workstations equipped with the microscopes. A histological specimen preparation room stores the collections of histological specimens, a stereomicroscope Olympus SZX-10 and microscope Olympus Bx43 that are used for the image analysis, the computer programmes for the analysis of micro specimens.

**The Veterinary Medicine Simulation Center (VMSC)** with an area of 172.17 m<sup>2</sup> is located on the underground floor of the VA central building. The entrance to the VMSC premises is adapted for the disabled. Student practical training takes place in 4 rooms: Large Animals and Ultrasound (4 workstations), Internal Medicine and Surgery (15 workstations), Propaedeutics and Microscopy (17 workstations), and OSCE Station Cabinet (4 workstations). The premises contain 62 moulages and many other means for the pre-clinical and clinical studies. The center has individual lockers for student belongings.

**The Pathology Center** with an area of 972 m<sup>2</sup> is adapted for a pathological anatomical (necropsy) and histopathological examination of animal carcasses. The Pathology Center has two autopsy rooms (20 and 10 seatings) and a 10-seat surgical preparation room, changing rooms for students and teaching staff. The 2 microscope classes (25 and 10 workstations) were installed to analyze and examine histological specimens and an archive of wet macro specimens of pathological anatomy. The 2 laboratories with the equipment for the preparation and evaluation of histomorphological and histopathological specimens are intended for the research necessary for the master theses being prepared by students, students in residency, and doctoral students. Pathology Center is equipped with all the necessary equipment to ensure the studies and it is sufficient. The Pathology Center autopsy halls have 6 autopsy tables, 2 lifts for hanging carcasses

of large animals vertically, autopsy toolsets, biosecurity devices, scales, 3 different electric saws. There are 2 freezer rooms for storing the cadavers, 2 refrigerators, the containers for storing animal cadavers, carcasses and their waste, special vehicles for transportation of carcasses, 4 fume cupboards equipped with sewage disinfection system and other equipment needed for the VM studies and practical training.

VMF has clinics for Small and Large Animals. By the decision of the LSMU Council in 2020, the decision to build a new animal clinic was decreed (*more details in the last section of this Chapter description*). Currently, the clinical activities, training, and studies are being performed at the **LSMU VMF Dr. L. Kriaučeliūnas Small Animal and Large Animal Clinics**. During the reporting period, the equipment of both clinics have been substantially renovated and expanded (**Anex 6.4.**) allocating funds for the purchase of new equipment.

The **Dr. L. Kriaučeliūnas Small Animal Clinic** has the departments of internal medicine, surgery, infectious diseases and diagnostics, a pharmacy, and a laboratory. The departments include the sectors of emergency care, intensive care, cardiology, dermatology, dialysis, ophthalmology, neurology, and rehabilitation. All of the departments are divided into sectors complying with the biosafety requirements. All workstations in the treatment rooms are adapted to work with computers. The computers have a patient registration programme installed.

Practical training in surgery is carried out in 3 surgery rooms with new modern surgical equipment: new surgery room lightings have been installed, new anesthesia machines have been purchased, the surgery tables have been adapted for laparoscopic surgeries, monitoring systems, etc. One surgery room of the clinic has been adapted for the endoscopic procedures with newly purchased endoscopy equipment. The seminar room equipped with a monitor has been directly connected to the surgery room of the clinic via a video system which allows observing the surgical procedures and instant discussions on the ongoing surgery with the students. In the renovated intensive care premises, the package of emergency care equipment (defibrillator, infusion pumps, monitoring, oxygen generator, etc.) has been also renewed. General surgery practical training and activities for students take place not only in the premises of the clinic but also in the premises of the Biological Research Center, in the surgery rooms adapted for that purpose.

The Department of Internal Medicine has 6 examination rooms that have been provided with the necessary equipment for dermatological and disease diagnostics, the equipment, and devices for the animal dialysis have been purchased and the intended facilities have been customized for that purpose. A cardiology room has been updated with a new Doppler ultrasound machine. For more comfortable and healthier conditions for the students in study training, a new conditioning system has been installed in the recently renewed laboratory for clinical research. The laboratory has been enhanced with new supplemental diagnostic devices, laminar flow cabinet, IDEXX Procyte, plasma extractor, electronic blood scales - mixer, blood bag tube sealing device, plasma freezer, etc. The clinic has separate rooms designated for the examination and treatment of exotic animals. The premises that are set up for acquiring professional skills in animal propaedeutics have been improved as well.

For the studies and practice in diagnostic imaging, the 3 ultrasound scopes and a digital X-ray are used. The newly purchased MRI device allows expanding the application possibilities of diagnostic imaging and supplementing the study process with the collection of high-quality images and detailed case analysis.

The clinic also has renovated premises for rehabilitation procedures (acupuncture, massages, etc.) and an animal hospitalization department. The installed video system allows the doctors and students to monitor patients remotely while working 24/7. A new medical instrument washing and sterilization room with new autoclaves, distillation equipment, and sterilization cabinets has been set up. An elevator for lifting animals and people to the second floor facilitates the movement flow in the clinic.

New isolation rooms for small animals (with an area of 148 m<sup>2</sup>) have been newly designed in a separate building according to the requirements of Biosafety and Hygiene Standards. The premises have been adapted for 4 risk types of infectious diseases, to quarantine and treat different animal species.

At the **Large Animal Clinic**, the VM students' work is performed in 2 clinical diagnostic laboratories and 2 study rooms. The clinic has a diagnostic laboratory, where the research necessary for the preparation of master theses is carried out, and the 3 workstations are set up for forming the practical skills in propaedeutics. A manege, 2 inpatients facilities for horses, cattle, and small ruminants, and 3 surgery rooms

for small ruminants and cattle are used for the medical examination of patients. This gradually is developing the clinical practical skills of students. Each department and surgery room has separate procedural rooms. The horse surgery room is equipped with the pre-surgery premises and post-surgery padded drop-down stall. The preparation for surgeries takes place in a preparatory sterilization room fully equipped for the sterilization of medical instruments and tools. The clinic uses an electronic patient registering and accounting system (GYKIS). The Animal Reproduction Laboratory of Large Animal Clinic has a seminar /group work room with a capacity of up to 30 student seatings. A modern laboratory for the research of fresh and frozen sperm is improved by installing advanced laboratory equipment, microscopes with sperm counting software, a flow cytometer, a microscope study room (with 20 workstations), a cow's genital palpation moulage, and other equipment which is necessary for practical training and the studies.

The isolation rooms for large animals are installed in the building next to the clinic, according to the requirements of biosafety and hygiene standards, with a ventilation system with protective HEPA filters. In order to ensure biosafety requirements and restrict the access of the unauthorized public to the clinic, a magnetic lock system was installed. On the attic floor of the clinic, there are changing rooms for students and teaching staff. Each changing room has separate showers and toilets.

To ensure biosecurity requirements, the Small and Large Animal Clinics have enlarged the changing rooms for students and staff and expanded, installing more showers and lockers. Both clinics are equipped with shoe disinfection equipment (bacteriocidal cabinets) for drying and disinfecting the work footwear of students and staff. A new laundry room has been set up on the VA territory to wash the work clothes of the teaching staff and students used in the VA clinics and pathology center.

The VM students participate in the activities of mobile outpatient care (5 vehicles). A total of 12 other vehicles are used to transport students to the internships: 4 (with 7 seats) and 2 (with 15 seats) minivans, 1 bus (with 28 seats), and 5 economy cars (with 5 seats). An SUV and 2 trailers for animal transportation for special purposes are used to transport patients (separate trailers are used to transport horses and cattle). If necessary, the LSMU Transport Department creates conditions for the use of other University vehicles for clinical activities. To ensure optimal use of vehicles, a GPS system has been integrated into all vehicles, and it enables with the means of which a vehicle booking system ([www.ecofleet.lt](http://www.ecofleet.lt)) and identification of drivers (veterinary doctors) are available and working.

VMF has a separate container-refrigerated container for bio-waste storage.

Food sample tests are done in the **Food Research and Food Technology Laboratories**, adapted to work safely for 30 students. The students work in subgroups of 2-3 students, wearing cotton gowns and disposable gloves if needed. During the Food Hygiene and Technology studies, the students perform not complicated tests, trichinellosis testing by the compression and gastrointestinal methods using a glass compressor, trichinoscope SMZ 168T + Moticam 580. Also, in groups (10 students each), they go to one of three slaughterhouses. The slaughterhouse facilities are spacious and well-adapted for student training. During the practical visit to the slaughterhouses, the VM students observe the slaughtering of at least 100 pigs, 50 cattle, or 20 horses. The students use simple equipment and methods to evaluate milk and dairy quality parameters and test primary milk quality with Milkoscan, Somascope, Delvotests used at dairy factories. The fish tests include binoculars, microscopes, compressor glasses, pH meters, water activity meters, heating cabinets, and fish smoking equipment.

The **Laboratory of Sensory Research** has four booths equipped for individual work, a place for discussions, a preparation room, disposable lab dishes/containers, and storage of samples.

Two **Microbiology Laboratories** are equipped with incubators, safety cabinets, water baths, homogenizers, refrigerators, various small equipment (e.g., vortex, electronic balances, pipette holders/trays, etc.). The Mycotoxicology Laboratory has a sterile room for microbiological testing of food and feed materials, food and feed. The modified chromatographic methods, collected reference material, standards, and enzyme-linked immunosorbent assays are used to test mycotoxins.

The **LSMU Practical Training and Testing Center (PMBC)** is used for the VM pre-clinical and clinical practice studies. The 2 PMBC cattle farms are used to ensure the acquisition of practical skills for students. In a cold-housing type farm, where a loose-housing type for cows is used, a robotic automated feed delivery system is applied. Cows are milked on-site, all data is recorded in the herd management

system Afimilk. The students can use the data of this programme to study internal diseases of cattle, reproductive disorders, herd management, and other subjects. In a warm-type housing farm, cows are kept tied up. Both farms are equipped with student changing rooms, showers, and it is possible to separate the cows used in the study process from other animals kept in the farm. In order to ensure a proper organization of the studies in the farms, the students work in small groups.

VMF also has signed a sufficient number of **cooperation and service agreements** (*Annex 6.5*) with the external farms and companies of different animal species, where the students are trained hands-on under the VMF lecturers supervision, and shelter (presents companion animals for treatment to Small Animal clinic of VMF). All patients of the Clinics are registered in the Electronic Patient Record Systems and are used in the teaching process. The owners sign a consent form allowing the participation of students in the animal treatment process.

There is a **student leisure space** with an area of 70.63 m<sup>2</sup> and a cafe/cafeteria - of 36.74 m<sup>2</sup> and the VASA office on the premises of building No. 5. In terms of convenience and physical activity, the VMF students and teaching staff can use the LSMU Sports Hall complex and sports gym, fully equipped with different sports equipment, and all these amenities are found on the territory of the LSMU VA campus.

The VMF has 4 **computer classrooms** with 79 computers (in 22 computers the SPSS Statistics and in 20 of them the PhysioEx and Physiology Simulators programmes have been installed). In addition, the VA library has a computer room with 24 computers (5 of them have the SPSS Statistics installed). The VMF also uses 6 co-university computer classes with 149 computers, video projectors, and the installed R Statistics package, SPSS, and NetSupport School software. All these premises are located in the VA campus area. All VMF classes, auditoriums, and rooms have computers connected to projectors (3 of them have interactive whiteboards). All employees have IT-equipped workplaces and the opportunity to work, teach and train remotely when needed is also available. Computer class software is constantly updated to meet all the latest safety requirements. There is a wireless network (Wi-Fi) and 145 access points to it. All dormitory rooms have internet access as well.

Many different programmes/software and databases corresponding to the VM study programme are used for the comprehensive training of the VM students. Depending on the specifics of the subject, the following electronic sources (databases) are used: e-tar (a register of the national legislation), EUR-Lex (a register of the EU legislation), OIE-WAHIS (Global Animal Health Information System), RASFF portal Alert System for Unsafe Food and Feed), animal breeding information systems ([www.vic.lt](http://www.vic.lt) and <https://e.kinologija.lt>). The students also learn how to make feed rations for different animal species using the computer programme HYBRIMIN® Futter. The programmes Physio Ex and Physiology Simulators help to develop laboratory skills in physiology. The Kahoot programme is used as training and an achievement assessment tool in various VM subjects. Various instructional videos such as the Inside the Factory (BBC) or the Food Insider (YouTube) are used for the Food Hygiene and Technology lectures and hands-on training.

The LSMU used the funding for the project of the Operational Programme for EU Structural Funds Investments for 2014-2020 not only to ensure the accessibility of education for students with special needs but also to **improve the study conditions and quality of students with disabilities**. The LSMU organizes and implements training for employees to improve their qualifications and abilities to work with disabled students, purchases equipment and furniture for the installation of specialized workstations for students with disabilities, and adapts the infrastructure. The VMF conditions for the disabled are being constantly improved. The Library purchased The *Bellman Audio Domino Pro* system for the hearing impaired, the *WinTalkerVoice1.6* software, and the *JAWS 14 for Windows* software which analyzes the information on the screen and passes it to a speech synthesizer that converts text into audio. The VA library has been adapted and equipped for students with special needs: specialized desks, video magnifier – *Freedom Scientific Topaz XL HD*, audio equipment – *Freedom Scientific SARA CE* (analyzes information on the screen and transmits it to a speech synthesizer that converts text into LT and EN) and the *Humanware Brailiant Braille* display with *VoiceOver* function which provides on-screen audio. The availability of the physical environment also is being improved steadily. The stair ladders, folding and stationary ramps, additional lifts, elevators, etc., have been purchased. The new buildings are built according to the principle of universal design, and the renovated ones have been adapted for the disabled by installing elevators,

ramps, emergency calls. More and more dormitories are being adapted for students with mobility and other disabilities.

The students perform **extramural internships** in the SFVS, the National Institute of Food and Veterinary Risk Assessment laboratories, the SFVS-controlled meat processing plants, slaughterhouses, private small animal clinics, foreign university clinical bases and private clinics, the LSMU PMBC, the agricultural companies and specialized farms where a veterinary doctor with at least 3 years of practice in veterinary activities works. The University has also signed long-term cooperation agreements with most practice bases, which also regulate the performance of the studies in the base (*Annex 6.6. Tables 1-4.*). Practical training bases are selected according to the established criteria, which are described in the procedures of an internship: the number of different patients treated per year, a variety of cases, the need for diagnostic equipment and its sufficiency, the qualifications of specialists. The VM students are provided with a list of the recommended external internship bases for each internship in their course description *in Moodle*. A student can choose the practice base on himself/herself after the VMF has assessed its suitability. Students also have the opportunity to do internships abroad. They can go on internships in the chosen *Erasmus +* practice bases abroad or have additional practical training organized by the LSMU Career Center (both in LT and abroad) at the individually chosen external practical training base.

The **LSMU Library and Information Center (LIC)** meets the requirements for a library at a higher education institution. The LIC has 544 workstations (including 143 computerized workplaces), five group-study rooms, two workshop rooms, four open-stock reading rooms. There are 72 computers available in the Library (20 of them have the SPSS software installed). The VM students usually use the substantially renovated Library of the LSMU VA, which is located in the VA building No. 4. The area of the library is 578 m<sup>2</sup> and seats 139 students. The readers can use the textbook fund (under subscription) and the system tool for book issuance and return. Databases, textbooks, and other documents and resources for science and studies are compiled centrally, i.e., by providing the needs of the VA library to the LSMU LIC document acquisition and storage department. The needs are found out by gathering information from the study departments. It is possible to order books for the research and studies via an electronic book order form. The VA library funds contain over 25,000 titles and about 76,000 copies of the printed documents. New collections are being constantly added to the library's fund. In 2020, the Library provided users with 17,768 documents, including 67 books of new titles and 271 copies of scientific journals. Most of the publications purchased (monographs, textbooks, magazines) were in the field of veterinary and animal sciences. The 65 databases have been already ordered (50 +15 (EBSCO – 10, Cochrane – 7, Cabi – 2)). In total, The LSMU LIC subscribed databases contain 21,951 full-text e-magazines 355,368 e-books, and 43,617 other subscribed publishing works (compatible with the Lithuanian Research Library Consortium (LMBA) data). The books and copies of necessary scientific articles, in case they are not available at the university library, can be borrowed from other LT or foreign libraries through an interlibrary membership (IBA) at set rates. All publications in the library or publications in the above-mentioned subscribed and open-access databases can be found by the VM students, lecturers, and researchers directly through separate databases or using the unified search portal the LSMU virtual library. This search portal, which is an integrated part of the search system, allows searching in the LSMU Library resources, in the LT academic electronic library eLABa, in subscribed databases, other databases, and electronic resources by signing in with the same names and passwords, which are used to sign in to the LSMU information systems (Moodle, LSMUSIS, LSMU e-mail, etc.). This makes it possible to order the publications stored in the library, set up an automatic news sending by e-mail, upload to one's e-mail shelf the received search results and submitted queries, etc. All databases can be accessed by university students and employees without passwords from LSMU computer networks, and when connecting from home, they connect via the LSMU library's virtual network service – Virtual Private Network or EZproxy. Students use the LSMU electronic catalog, the LSMU scientific publications, and LSMU CRIS, where they can read e-journals, e-books and use the tools for citation. Students use the RefWorks bibliographic information management tool to process the information they collect for the preparation of their master thesis. The library has a text-matching tool (checker for plagiarism), Oxsico, for checking the text matchings in the master theses (ETDs) (a user guide is available).

**The VA Library has acquired 70 of the 3D software licenses** allowing the use of [virtual models](#) for studying the anatomy of horses, cattle, pigs, dogs, cats, birds, and rodents. The programme licenses have been also installed on the VMF Animal Clinics and Anatomicum computers. The VA Library has subscribed to the specialized veterinary database Vetstream for the study improvement of the VM students. This database provides theoretical and practical information on the diagnosis and treatment of diseases in dogs, cats, exotic animals, rabbits, horses, and cattle. In addition, two collections (Nutrition and Food Sciences and the Descriptions of Fungi and Bacteria) of CABI database have been subscribed. In 2021, the library purchased the [3D anatomical models of animals](#) for the advance of the VM study process: domestic cat, domestic chicken, fish, horse hoof, cow hoof, cow tooth set. The entire VA community is periodically informed about the newly subscribed databases, received prints and documents: the book exhibitions are held, the VA e-mails the lists of new books with annotations to the whole academic community, all information is published and freely accessible to students and lecturers on the LSMU library website.

**The management of material resources is regulated by [the LR Law on Higher Education and Research](#) and by the [LSMU Statute](#).** After the annual evaluation of the state of the infrastructure, the intended funds are provided for its maintenance, renewal, and development. The decisions related to the management, use, and disposal of the University's funds and assets are made by the Rector of the University. The strategic decisions on the management and development of infrastructure resources are made by the University Council after considering the suggestions of the Senate.

VMF has autonomy to use the financial resources provided by the university budget, and to plan its expenditures. The FVM Dean decides on using the assigned funds on purchases and services related to the organization of the studies. The process takes the following steps:

1. The VMF Units, bearing in mind the FVM Strategic goals and the needs determined by internal and external monitoring and following the SPC recommendations for the VM programme improvement and the QA of the studies, draft the plans of the necessary equipment and services for the upcoming year. The expense plans are submitted to the Dean before October 1 of the current year.
2. In the third quarter of the year, the EPS provides the Dean with a plan of the required funding to be assigned for purchases and services in the upcoming year.
3. The Dean plans and distributes the budget, which meets the FVM Unit's needs for implementing the strategic plan, adjusts it to the curriculum, and prepares an estimate of expenditures for the purchases intended for the upcoming year lining up.
4. FVM always has the reserve fund for unplanned/unexpected purchases.
5. The Dean provides the estimate of expenditures to the FVM Council for discussion and approval.
6. The estimate approved by the FVM Council is then adjusted with EPS and submitted for approval to the Administration and Finance Director.
7. EPS reports on implementing the estimate to the Dean every six months to monitor and control expenditures.
8. At the end of the year, the Dean submits the report on the implementing the estimate to the VMF Council for consideration and approval. The meeting is open to the all community members.

The funds related to the maintenance of studies, science/research, and administration infrastructure, i.e., expenditures for utilities, are planned and included into the estimate on a centralized basis. VMF is not independent to operate these financial resources individually. In case of a financial need for the development of infrastructure, purchases and equipment exceeding the VMF financial capacity, the Dean submits a request, discussed with the VA Chancellor, to the University administration for consideration. The administration decides to support the request acknowledged as justified and adequate to sustain the requirements for VMF so that it fulfils its mission and achieves the objectives for infrastructure development and education. In this way, considering the reasonable grounds, funds for the purchase of clinical equipment, the renovation of the Large Animal Clinic and isolation facilities of Small Animal Clinic, etc., were executed.

The decisions on the financial support of crucial high-cost objects to sustain achieving the strategic goals are made by the LSMU Council after prior discussions at the Rectorate and the Senate. The set of estimates for the University's financial year is prepared by December 31 of the current year. This process is performed thoroughly following the LR Law on Public Organizations Accountability, the standards of accounting and financial accountability of the public sector, and other legislative documentation regulating the preparation of financial reports by subjects of the public sector. After the LSMU Council's approval, the Rector reports

on the estimates of the University's income and expenditures and the course of their implementation. The financial activities of the University are made public and are a constituent part of the annual report of the LSMU activities. It is accessible to all community members and the society outside the Establishment.

**The renovation of the infrastructure of the Large Animal Clinic and the development of the Small Animal Clinic** have been among the strategic development priorities of the LSMU in 2017–2021. By the University Council Resolution No. UT-1-24-4, August 31, 2018; the amount of 4,000.00 EUR from the university funds allocated for the renovation and development of the premises and equipment of the existing animal clinics. The financing of the State Investment Programme approved for the establishment of the clinic will reach more than 8,708.00 EUR (the LSMU VA VMF investment project “Development of infrastructure for the Animal Clinic required for the implementation of the study programme in veterinary medicine”). At present, the detailed concept of the clinic has been approved, the technical design task has been prepared, and the procurement of design works is in process. The planned estimated total area of the clinic is 5216.0 m<sup>2</sup>, of which about 4344.0 m<sup>2</sup> will be for the clinic's premises set out for practical veterinary activities and the development of students' clinical skills. This 3 ha land lot will house both a modern, meeting the highest level requirements veterinary clinic of small animals with the necessary premises and equipment for the VM studies, and the equine disease diagnostics and equine orthopedics sections. The term planned for the full implementation of the project is 2024–2026<sup>1</sup>.

Another ongoing strategic project is the modernization of the PMBC practical training base. LSMU is planning to set up a new cattle farm and a separate functional training building with individual training farms of small ruminants, horses, and pigs to acquire practical skills for students. The PMBC development and expansion were discussed in the LSMU Council in 2021, and the preliminary decision on this matter is planned for January 2022.

Expert recommendations provided during the last external evaluation related to <i>Learning facilities and resources</i>	
<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Actions taken by the HEI</i>
1. Renovate clinical facilities and equipment, the Small Animal Clinic and the Large Animal Clinic in particular.	Implementing the planned goals of the LSMU strategic plans and the VMF, the infrastructure and equipment of both Clinics – Small Animal and Large Animal – have been renewed and modernized (more details in Chapter 6).

Please provide main results of the self-evaluation in the area of <i>Learning facilities and resources</i>	
<b>Strengths</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LSMU has a sufficient number of premises for the VM studies (auditoriums, clinics, library, laboratories for practical training and offices); Spaces for practical training along with appropriate laboratory and clinical equipment allow ensuring a high quality study process;</li> <li>- Students have free access to study and scientific literature in the modern LSMU library, where students also have the opportunity to use statistical data processing programmes. The diversity of educational and academic literature is broad and sufficient for the studies as well as for ensuring the achievement of study aims and results;</li> <li>- Buildings and the equipment used for the VM study and practice have been renovated.</li> <li>- Established (2018) and developed VMSC.</li> </ul>	
<b>Areas for Improvement</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As the general study environment improves, it is especially important to implement the priorities set out in the LSMU Strategic Guidelines and to build a new Small Animal Clinic in the near future and to further upgrade the infrastructure of the Large Animal Clinic, and the modernization of the PMBC practical training base.</li> </ul>	

## 7. Study quality management and publicity

University's internal quality assurance system of studies is based on the unity of study quality planning, implementation, evaluation, and improvement measures. The **basis of study quality consists of the 4 main components**: 1. A quality study programme; 2. Subject and pedagogical competencies of teaching staff; 3. Sufficient material resources and modern equipment and tools; 4. A study process that meets the needs of

<sup>1</sup> The deadline is dependent on the flows of the State funding (State investment programme).



students. To ensure the quality of studies, the VMF applies the following main **principles of quality assurance**: 1. Participation of students and social partners in decision-making; 2. Collection, analysis, and evidence-based decisions on relevant information for the assessment of study quality; 3. Collecting feedback from the academic community and providing feedback to the academic community on the assessment and improvement of the quality of studies.

The basis of the study quality assurance system at the University consists of the strategic documents providing quality assurance principles and the assessed quality indicators: the [LSMU Statute](#), the [LSMU strategic development guidelines](#), the [LSMU Study Quality Assurance Manual \(in LT\)](#), the [LSMU study quality assurance regulations](#), the [LSMU SPC regulations](#), the [Procedure for development, improvement and management of study programmes](#), an [organization procedure of feedback on improving the quality of the LSMU studies](#), the [VMF strategy](#), the [LSMU VMF regulations](#).

The detailed procedures for implementation of the quality assurance provisions for the study process are defined by the [LSMU Study Regulation](#), which implement the principles of ESG2015 in in the study process.

At the **University level**, the study process quality assurance policy is formed by the [University Senate](#), and the Rector is responsible for the implementation of the quality assurance policy of the study process. The monitoring, evaluation, and improvement of the university study quality are coordinated by [Commission for monitoring and study quality assurance](#), which is headed by the vice-rector for study programmes. The Commission consists of the 2 representatives of VMF and the members of LSMU SU. The activities of the **LSMU Study Center** include study planning, coordination, an organization at the university level through study accounting, monitoring, and analysis, student admission, improvement of lecturers' educational competencies and internal study quality assurance, the administration, and development for distance learning. For studies in a foreign language, these functions are performed at the university level by **IRSC**.

At the **Faculty level**, the assurance policy of quality management of the VM study programme is formed by the VMFC. The **VMF Dean** is responsible for the implementation of the study quality management policy and other faculty activities, ensuring the implementation of the Senate resolutions and Rector's orders at the Faculty by the specified time terms. The Dean is an ex-officio member of the [VMF Council](#) which operates according to the [VMF provisions](#). The Council must be chaired by the Chair and approves study documents, study plans, consider the candidacies for the positions of a dean and department heads, consider the reports of the Dean, SPC, and departments, as well as purchases and expenditure estimates, providing recommendations to the Dean, the Rectorate and the LSMU Senate.

The **VMF Dean** evaluates the suggestions expressed by the heads of departments and SPC regarding an update of study material resources, the acquisition and/or renewal of devices/tools, or an addition of new lecturers. After evaluating and considering all VMF departments' funding needs, the Dean distributes the funds reasonably and the departments shall use the funds on the implementation of studies and the preparation of master theses respectively. The collegial decision tends to be made considering a high necessity of VMF to ensure the quality of studies (*more details in Chapter 6*). Such additional allocation of funds was for the purchase of equipment for VMSC, the repairs of the Large Animal Clinic, an installation of laundry and isolator, etc. Each year, the Dean submits the annual report on the VMF study results both to the Rectorate and to VMF Council, and reports to the entire VMF community and students following the VMF strategic guidelines. Within the limits of their competence, 2 vice-deans, 2 employees of the Dean's office administration and the VMF international studies coordinator assist the Dean in coordinating the quality assurance of the studies, the preparation of reports, study administration, and other VMF activities.

At the **study programme level**, the VM programme is coordinated and the quality assessment and improvement are performed by VM [SPC](#) according to the [regulations of the SPC](#) and the [Procedure for Development, Improvement and Management of Study Programmes](#). The activities of SPC are organized by the chairman of SPC, and the decisions are made collegially. The activity plan of SPC is drawn up annually. SPC is responsible for the implementation of the study programme and the continuous monitoring of the quality of the study programme. SPC, in cooperation with the **Career Center**, conducts surveys of Alumni and employers, analyzes the needs of the labor market and the suggestions of employers regarding

the need for the trained specialists and the improvement of the programme. After each semester, the Chairman of SPC submits a report on the activities of the committee to the Dean and Vice-Rector for studies, and also reports annually to VMFC on the activities of SPC of the previous year. [SPC plans and reports](#) are published on the LSMU website.

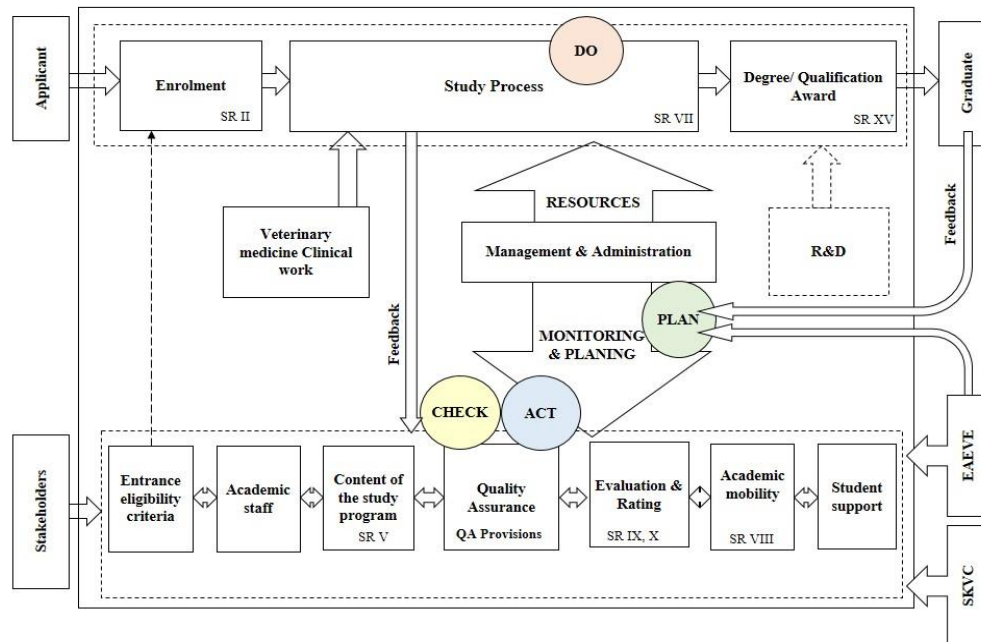
The **departments conducting the studies** in the faculty (departments, clinics, centers, institutes) and their heads: organize the pedagogical and scientific activities of the department; are responsible for the control of the study process; appoint the lecturers to coordinate subjects/modules; plan adequacy of study resources and lecturers; collect and evaluate information and submit annual report to the VMFC. The VMF departments, when planning the estimated costs for the next calendar year, annually assess the needs for the renewal of means and infrastructure required for the implementation of studies at the department. The estimated expenses of the departments, considering the strategic activity plans, are included in the VMF cost estimate, which is presented by the Dean and approved by VMFC (Minutes No. VMF10-01 of January 7, 2020; Minutes No. VMF10-20 of November 17, 2020). The departments conducting VM studies and their coordinated subjects are presented in **Annex 7.1**.

The **coordinating lecturers** are responsible for the preparation of the subject/module description in the LSMUSIS database, coordinate the organization and implementation of the subject/module studies in coordination with other lecturers, plan and implement the measures to improve the subject/module quality, provide the information and suggestions on the subject course to the head of the department and SPC. All **lecturers** are actively involved in research by ensuring the research and evidence-based studies. Teaching staff implements the studies of subjects/modules. The lecturers evaluate and are responsible for the content of the subject, the quality of the study material, the choice of implementation methods and teaching/learning methods, and their consistency with the study results and provide a subject coordinating lecturer with suggestions on how to improve the module and study quality.

The participation of **stakeholders (students, social partners, and other interested parties)** in the internal quality assurance of studies is very significant. The participation of **students** in the governing bodies, advisory, and dispute resolution structures of the University and its departments is stipulated in the [LSMU Statute](#). Students are involved in the improvement and management of the quality of studies at all management levels by having the right to vote through the LSMU SU delegated representatives. LSMU SU delegates student representatives to the University Council (1 representative), the Senate (10 representatives), Commission for Monitoring and Study Quality Assurance (3 representatives), the LSMU Dispute Resolution Commission (3 representatives), the VMF Council (3 representatives), SPC (3 representatives), to a working group of the VMF Strategic Development Guidelines and their Implementation Plan (2 representatives), and the VA Biosafety Committee (2 representatives). Students also participate in all other collegial bodies of the university and faculty: committees, commissions, and working groups. Students directly participate in the preparation, improvement, and approval of study regulations, study plans, and documents regulating studies, submit suggestions, and involve actively in all other management and decision-making processes of the University and the Faculty. They are responsible for the study results, adhere to academic discipline, university ethics, other requirements of the University community to ensure the quality of the study process. Every autumn, all VMF students are introduced to the annual study results and progress of the programme. Students can express their opinion about the study process by participating in surveys conducted no less than once a year (the surveys are more frequent). The "Quality Thermometer" survey in the LSMUSIS system works continuously.

The study quality management process involves **external stakeholders** (future employers) as well. They take part in the activities of the University Council (5 representatives), VMFC (1 representative), SPC (1 representative), and have the right to vote. Employers also participate in the organization of practical training and the master's thesis defense commissions. As a result, they have a direct opportunity to evaluate students' knowledge and skills and give feedback to the Faculty. In this way, the employers learn about the VMF achievements and challenges and can provide recommendations for the improvement of the study programme. Every year, VMF prepares memos to the practical training supervisors, organizes training for them, and introduces them to the activities of the faculty, changes and news in the programme, plans and expectations of VMF. During the training, the analysis of the survey results is presented, the educational

and communication competence deepening lectures are delivered. In this way, the VMF obtains the opinions of the department heads and makes improvements to the internship process following the recommendations provided. The VM study programme quality management, assurance, and improvement cycle, in which, depending on the competence, all levels of responsible parties of the University and Faculty, departments, commissions, students and employers participate, is presented in **Fig. 5**.



**Fig 5. Study quality management, assurance and improvement cycle** (SR – Study Regulation)

VMF closely cooperates with SFVS (signed cooperation agreement). In the VM studies, SFVS participates in assigning internships to the VM students in slaughterhouses, discusses the need for VM residency places, presents career opportunities at the SFVS meetings with the VM students, delegates the representatives to various working groups and student evaluation commissions, conducts external biosafety compliance audits in VMF, participates in planning students' careers, provides information to the faculty on the need for veterinary doctors, and receives information on the number of students from VMF. Following the proposal of SFVS, the programme has strengthened the focus on the extension of antibiotic resistance and animal welfare issues, and a new residency programme in Animal Welfare has been developed. SFVS invites VMF representatives to participate in national veterinary-related activities, commissions, working groups. At the request of SFVS, LVGA and Veterinary Pharmacy Association (VMFA), VMF organizes mandatory training for veterinary doctors, and at the same time decides and makes decisions on issues relevant to the studies and practice. The VMF Dean and lecturers are invited to participate in the meetings of the LVGA Board in resolving veterinary issues (signed cooperation agreement). LVGA and VMFA provide financial support to students through nominal scholarships. VMF communicates with business representatives and companies. The 53 cooperation agreements have been signed (**Annex 6.5**). At the meetings with the representatives of the VMF administration and students, the representatives of business partners: present future jobs, acquaint students with an internship and info about the available opportunities for financial support (targeted and nominal scholarships), attend the diploma ceremonies, etc. (UAB Magnum Veterinary, UAB Vilkijos Farm, UAB Agrokoncernas and others). This is the best way for students to learn about the company activities, gain experience, and the most essential factor is that the business partners/future employers offer employment to the VM study programme graduates. The social partners provide feedback by participating in regular surveys conducted by the LSMU Career Center and SPC, by participating in the meetings with students or representatives of the administration organized by VMF, and in the LSMU Career Planning events.

VMF cooperates with **lecturers and researchers in veterinary medicine studies at foreign universities**. International cooperation is ensured through the [Erasmus+ Teaching Staff Mobility programme](#) (*more details in Chapter 5*), employment of foreign lecturers in the VMF departments and scientific activities (*Annexes 2.3 and 2.3.A.*).

To ensure the quality of the VM study programme, **an external quality assessment of the VM study field** is carried out. At the **national level**, it is implemented by [SKVC](#) through periodic evaluation and the accreditation of study fields and annual monitoring of study fields. The VM programme was last evaluated and [accredited for a maximum term in 2011](#). The accreditation is still valid. [At the international level, the VM programme was accredited in 2019](#) by EAEVE experts.

Human and material resources are ensured for the effective management and improvement of the VM studies, which are regularly monitored, evaluated, and improved. The assessment of the sufficiency and availability of the resources required for studies is organized according to the criteria of institutional assessment, the results of departmental surveys, and self-analysis. The LSMU funds are managed according to public sector accounting and financial reporting standards, other valid LR legal acts, the [University Statute](#), and approved accounting rules. The main source of funding for the university is the direct appropriations from the State budget, which was 37.28% in 2020. Also, 38.67% of the revenue from services provided and 24.05% of total funding from projects and other intended use funds were received. In 2020, as compared to 2019, the volume of funds received from sources other than the State budget direct appropriations increased by 5.06%. and accounted for 62.72%. Information on funding sources is published in the [University's annual activity reports](#). Resources from internal and external sources are also attracted. VMF, as one of the largest departments of the University, also contributes to attracting additional funding from international projects, the projects financed by LMT and the LR Ministry of Agriculture, and outsourced projects of economic agents. The revenues are also accumulated from the activities of the LSMU VMF Veterinary Clinics, expanding the range of veterinary services for consumers. And a strategic goal of veterinary clinics is to increase the amount of money earned every year and this is directly related to the most important goal of the clinics - to attract as many patients as possible and to have the largest possible number of different clinical cases to ensure the quality of the VM studies. The income earned by animal clinics serves for studies and research. The VMF's additional income is also earned through the development of lifelong learning services.

To implement the task set in the LSMU Strategic Development Guidelines, "To Improve the Distribution of Financial Resources for Enhancement of Financial Sustainability," the University has undertaken elaboration and introduction of the total costs model along with improving the distribution of earnings and precise assignment of expenditures to the LSMU units. To implement this task, the build-up of reserve funds started with 2.5% from income generated by provided services financial means per year, increasing the savings every year by 0.25%. In 2021, the reserve funds have accumulated 3.5% of revenue generated by provided services financial means per year. This fund focuses on gathering required financial resources to implement the university strategic projects, including the development of the Large and Small Animal VTHs' infrastructure (University's Council decisions: 31-08-2018 No. UT1-24-4; 21-04-2019 No. UT1-29-2; 25-04-2019 No. UT1-30-6; 13-06-2019 No. UT1-31-3).

Rational allocation from the budget for research, studies, administration and property management, human and animal health care, and the University development is within the competence of the LSMU EPS and the Director of Administration and Finances. The annual budget is discussed in the Senate and approved by the LSMU Council. The budget formation for the upcoming year begins in October, a year in advance. EPS by orders of the Rector "On Approval of the Description of the Distribution of the LSMU Incomes Generated by Services" (No. V-797, 31-12-2020) and "On the Allocation of Part of the LSMU Tuition Fee for Remuneration of Support Staff, Goods and Services" (No. V-0371.1, 06-23-2021), takes into consideration the intended volume of research and uses the LSMUSIS data to make precise calculations and provide the University's with required funding for assigned salaries, planned purchases, and services needed for the upcoming year: 1) The bulk of the budget goes to the implementation of study-related activities and salaries of the staff. The University has an Open Fund (Resolution of the Senate No. 8-10, 15-04-2011) supporting the mobility of researchers and Ph.D. students, and a Residency Mobility

Fund (Resolution of the Senate No. 32-06, 06-07-2013) supporting the mobility of resident students. In addition, the University allocates about 49,800.00 EUR to conduct cultural, sports, and social activities. 2) The University constantly pursues optimization of expenditures and build-up of investments to develop scientific and study infrastructure and renovation of the buildings. The expenses on the infrastructure renovation increase every year to ensure the implementation of the objectives set in the Guidelines for the strategic development. In general, FVM operates the revenues earned from the services provided and from the research grants following the University's law described above and uses about 80% of it for the VFM needs (main activities). The other 20% is used for general and reserve funds. About 16.5% goes to the University Open Fond, and 3.5% is for the other (further) strategic remodelling and/or renovation of the infrastructure.

In order to ensure the compliance of real resources with the study conditions and organizational quality requirements related to the composition of the VMF staff, its structure, and qualifications, the composition of the faculty's staff is balanced. The decisions on the use of funds for salaries are made by the head of the relevant department. The heads of the Units decide on using the remuneration fund following the "Remuneration and award procedure of the LSMU lecturers, researchers, administration, and other employees" approved by the LSMU Council Decision No. UT1-26-2, 29-11-2018. When the calculated remuneration fund is smaller than the number of positions occupied by competition in a Unit, the factual remuneration fund is reserved for a Unit until the end of the official term, i.e., the end of the employment contract. An open-ended contract may be terminated at the person's request, by agreement of the parties, or by waiving all resulting guarantees for the employee. Employment of new employees in the departments is planned by considering the study plan implementation strategy and quality assurance. Detailed information on the composition, selection, regulatory documents, and professional development, and the promotion course of the FVM staff is described in the Area 5 of this Report.

At the University, the storage system of the information on study programmes, study subjects, study results, lecturers, the results of study quality evaluation, students 'and graduates' opinions on the studies and employment is ensured as well as the publicity of this information. Information about the study programmes and publicity channels for its implementation at the University and the Faculty is provided in Area 3 of this Report. Stakeholders (SFVS, LVGA) also participate in the publicity of the programme. The opinion of graduates and employers on the quality of studies and the results of career-monitoring are presented in Area 4 of this Report. To summarize the survey data, the University's websites are published in the [SPC reports](#) and during meetings with students.

The conclusions of external evaluation of the study field programme are published externally on the websites of [SKVC](#), [Open vocational information, counselling and guidance system](#) and [EAEVE](#). VMFC prepared and approved the action plans for eliminating the areas for improvement indicated in the external evaluation report, and appointed the responsible parties and persons (Minutes No. 12, 2013-01-17, Protocol No. 15, 2013-04-04 and [Minutes No 66](#), 2019-09-10). The process and the results of elimination of areas for improvement were presented in the Rectorate, in the report of the VMF Dean and discussed in VMF Council.

Information from stakeholders (students, graduates, lecturers, staff, employers) is collected in various ways: questionnaires, discussions, interviews, round table debates, forums, etc., according to the [Feedback organization procedure for improving the quality of studies at the LSMU](#). Respectively, the information on the quality of the subjects/modules taught in the programme, study processes, internships, practical training bases, and information dissemination is gathered. The feedback data is analyzed, summarized, and the results are stored and made public by SPC and the University departments that organize the collection of specific feedback from stakeholders. The summarized results of the surveys are presented to the students, lecturers, graduates, or other social stakeholders participating in the survey and are published on the University website, intranet, the LSMU information systems, by e-mail, and other publicity channels. Based on the results of the feedback data analysis, the activities for study quality improvement have been properly planned and successfully implemented.

Most of the practical training supervisors in the student assessment questionnaire have noted that the students of the VM study programme are well prepared in theory, have good communication and leadership

competencies, but some of them have pointed out the duration of practical training shall be extended. According to the surveys conducted in the period of 2018-2019, the graduates also recommended extending the time/duration of both clinical practical training and the preparation of a master thesis. Therefore 6 ECTS credits were assigned for the clinical rotation, the clinical practice has been extended from 15 to 24 ECTS and the time for the preparation of the master thesis – from 15 to 21 ECTS. Evaluating the opinions of graduates and employers expressed in 2019 on the need for pre-clinical internships in the VM study programme, the study plan for the 2020-2021 academic year has been supplemented with 2 new pre-clinical internships (*more details in Chapter 1*). Taking into consideration the opinion of the 6th year students, the formula for the assessment of Food Hygiene practice has been adjusted and the procedure of this practice has been supplemented with an annex - a diary for marking daily activities. Following the recommendations of the EAEVE experts and the VM students, the diary for practical skills has been revised, improved, and clarified. Currently, the transfer of the records of clinical rotation results and the diary completion into the digital space is being performed, and the clinical practice agreements are being signed electronically. After students expressed their opinion about the inclusion of an optional study subject *Reptiles* into the 1st and 2nd-year studies since 2021 such a subject has been included in the optional subject plan. Considering the expressed objective opinion by students about the improperly organized individual travel to the PTTC practice bases for the clinical rotation, the conditions of this have been changed. Students are transported centrally by university transportation. The schedules have been supplemented in response to students' suggestions for more internships at VMSC.

SPC, considering students' preferences to make surveys attractive and easily accessible to every student in a variety of ways, in the LSMUSIS environment since 2019 and further conducts a short module/subject evaluation "Quality Thermometer". From September 2019 until May 2021, 61.82% of the VM (LT) study programme students and 31.78% of the students of the VM (EN) study programme participated in the survey. The students submitted 2095 responses. Analyzing the survey data of 4 semesters, the total average evaluation of the modules/subjects by VM (LT) study programme students and the students of the VM (EN) was +0.99 points on the evaluation scale from -2 to +2. Satisfaction with the taught module/subject (content, intended learning outcomes, learning materials, assessment criteria, duration) was evaluated with +0.86 points. The students also assessed the quality of teaching (lecturer's ability to interest students and transfer information, applied teaching methods, the consistency of tasks with a study content, feedback provided, communication culture, consultations, support, and punctuality). It was +0.95 points. The clarity and consistency of the module/subject schedule were assessed by the VM students with +1.12 points. A satisfaction with study resources (suitability of classrooms/laboratories, adequacy, and the quality of teaching/learning tools) was assessed with +0.95 points. At the end of each semester, SPC analyzes the results of the surveys and discusses with the lecturers the possibilities and means for improving the quality of the subject.

**Expert recommendations provided during the last external evaluation related to**  
*Study quality management and publicity*

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Actions taken by the HEI</i>
<p>1. - To create a study quality assurance system as a means to promote innovation and study programme development considering the changing needs of practicing veterinary doctors.</p>	<p>- LSMU study quality assurance is carried out in accordance with the <a href="#">LSMU Study Quality Assurance Manual</a> and study quality assurance regulations governing the internal study quality assurance system procedures which stipulate the internal procedures, methods and measures of the study quality assurance system designated for the implementation of the study quality assurance policy and fostering the spirit of quality culture.</p> <p>- Level of study quality at the University is ensured by the participation of the students and social partners in decision-making, the collection and analysis of information relevant to the assessment of study quality, and by providing feedback on the assessment of study quality and its improvement to the academic community.</p>

**Please provide main results of the self-evaluation in the area of**

*Study quality management and publicity*

**Strenghts**

- University has established a well-functioning system of study programmes and internal quality management, where responsibilities and duties are clearly divided;
- Sufficient material resources are allocated for the effective management and improvement of the study field, the number of highly-qualified lecturers in the composition of teaching staff is properly balanced;
- Feedback on the assessment and improvement of study quality to the academic community, students and employers is ensured and provided regulaly;
- Information about the study programme, its management and the improvement of its quality is publicly available on the University website, LSMU information systems and other publicity channels.

**Areas for Improvement**

- To constantly improve the processes of quality assurance for the VM study programme.

## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>BIC</b>	LSMU Library and Information Center
<b>Biosecurity SOP</b>	The VMF Biosafety and Biosecurity Standard Operating Procedures
<b>BOVA</b>	The Baltic Forestry, Veterinary and Agricultural University Network
<b>CA WoS</b>	Database Clarivate Analytics Web of Science
<b>EAEVE</b>	European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education
<b>ECCVT</b>	European Coordinating Committee on Veterinary Training
<b>ECTS</b>	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
<b>EN</b>	English
<b>EPS</b>	The Economic and Planning Service
<b>ESEVT</b>	European System of Evaluation of Veterinary Training
<b>ESG</b>	Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>InoEdu</b>	Innovative Education Department
<b>IRSC</b>	The Center for International Relations and Studies
<b>IRSC AMD</b>	IRSC Academic Mobility Division
<b>IT</b>	Information technology
<b>IVSA</b>	International Veterinary Students 'Association
<b>LAMA BPO</b>	The Lithuanian Association of Higher Education Institutions for General Admission
<b>LIVSU</b>	Lithuanian International Veterinary Student Union
<b>LMBA</b>	Lithuanian Research Library Consortium
<b>LR</b>	Republic of Lithuania
<b>LR MESS</b>	Ministry of Education, Science and Sports of the Republic of Lithuania
<b>LSMU</b>	Lithuanian University of Health Sciences
<b>LSMU CRIS</b>	LSMU Research Management System
<b>LSMUSIS</b>	LSMU Study Information System
<b>LT</b>	Lithuania(-n)
<b>LVGA</b>	Lithuanian Association of Veterinary Surgeons
<b>MITA</b>	The Agency for Science, Innovation and Technology
<b>MOSTA</b>	The Center for Monitoring and Analysis of Science and Studies
<b>NMVRVI</b>	National Food And Veterinary Risk Assessment Institute
<b>PSC</b>	Postgraduate Study Center
<b>PMBC</b>	The LSMU Practical Training and Testing Center
<b>QA</b>	Quality Assurance
<b>LMT</b>	The Research Council of Lithuania
<b>SC</b>	Study Center
<b>SFVS</b>	State Food and Veterinary Service of Lithuania
<b>SKVC</b>	The Center for Quality Assessment in Higher Education
<b>SPC</b>	VM Study Programme Committee
<b>SSS</b>	The LSMU Student Scientific Society
<b>VA</b>	Veterinary Academy
<b>VASA</b>	VA Student Association
<b>VM</b>	Veterinary Medicine
<b>VMF</b>	Veterinary Medicine Faculty
<b>VMSC</b>	The Veterinary Medicine Simulation Center
<b>VSF</b>	The State Studies Foundation



## ANNEXES

- Annex 1.1. Aims and learning outcomes of VM programme.
- Annex 1.2. Tables 1-2. Numbers of farm and companion animals.
- Annex 1.3. Tables 1-2. Numbers of economic entities controlled by SFVS.
- Annex 1.4. A. Study plans of 5,5 years term LT, EN (n.a.)
- Annex 1.4. B. Study plans of 6 years term since 2017\_LT, EN.
- Annex 1.4. C. Study plans of 6 years term since 2020\_LT, EN.
- Annex 1.4. D. Study grid LT, EN\_since 2020.
- Annex 1.5. List of Electives.
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- Annex 1.8. A list of master theses of VM programme, 2018-2021.
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- Annex 2.3. Cooperation agreements with research institutions.
- Annex 2.3.A. Top collaborating academic organizations.
- Annex 3.1. Tables 1-4. Countries, publicity, exchange and contracts with universities.
- Annex 4.1. Grades and their meanings.
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- Annex 4.3. Veterinary Medicine Simulation Center
- Annex 5.1. Lecturers of VM study programme.
- Annex 5.2. Postgraduate courses for veterinarians organized by VMF.
- Annex 6.1. Campus plan of the LSMU VA VMF.
- Annex 6.2. Facilities for VM study programme.
- Annex 6.3. List of equipment for VM studies and research.
- Annex 6.4. Equipment purchased at the LSMU VF Animal Clinics in 2018-2021
- Annex 6.5. VMF cooperation agreements with business representatives
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- Annex 7.1. VM units and their coordinated subjects