

Challenges for accreditation: how to harmonise mechanisms at the global level and how to adopt OIE guidelines in the mechanisms

Stephane Martinot

Directeur Général/Dean, VetAgro Sup, 1 Av Bourgelat, 69280 Marcy L'Etoile, France stephane.martinot@vetagro-sup.fr

Accreditation of Veterinary Education Establishments (VEEs) was established in the last 30 years in many areas of the world. Although the processes were conducted independently, the principles used for the evaluation process are quite similar. The accreditation process usually relies on a visitation by highly qualified experts from VEEs and non-academic veterinary professionals, where the VEE and its curriculum are evaluated against standards of quality in Veterinary Training, and addressed in strong Standard Operating Procedures, to ensure the quality of the system. Regularly, discussions amongst existing accrediting organizations, organized as the International Accrediting Working Group (IAWG) help to compare their systems and learn from each other. The IAWG is not looking for homogeneity, since it would be difficult to set the same rigid standards worldwide, but aim on harmonization. It is simply not possible to adopt a common accreditation process through over the world because the standards must include important specific criteria to meet the needs of a particular country or region. The IAWG meetings focus on sharing the know-how with respect to each system.

The development of the OIE recommendations on the Day 1 Competencies of graduating veterinarians assure National Veterinary Services of quality and refer to the OIE specific focus on safeguarding animal health and public health through highly qualified Veterinary Services. These competencies are totally devoted to develop the One Health approach. As they represent a basis on which national needs and circumstances could be added, it is important that they are included in each standard of the accreditation systems. During the evaluation process of a VEE, compliance with each standard must be evaluated in the context of ensuring fulfilment of the Day 1 competencies of new graduates. Some accrediting bodies are already engaged in supporting the OIE in its process to implement the guidelines on Veterinary Education Core Curriculum. This is the case for EAEVE which promotes consultative visits based on its standards and experts, visiting VEEs upon request and providing advice about compliance with the EAEVE standards that incorporate the OIE guidelines. This opens the opportunity for VEEs from developing countries to receive feedback in order to develop a strategy to reach, maintain or increase their educational level in compliance with international minimum standards of quality. Such a process should rely on all accrediting bodies as the best way to support OIE in its goal to promote the implementation of Day-1 competencies among its members.

Keywords: evaluation – education – standards – day 1 competencies – quality.