

# A NEW REFERENCE FRAMEWORK FOR THE FRENCH VETERINARY DIPLOMA

In 2018, the national reference framework for the veterinary diploma, which has undergone significant restructuring, has been brought in line with the changes and challenges facing the profession and integrates the most recent international standards.

It has been redesigned using an approach based on the expected competencies for the young graduates.

## A single diploma\*

- awarded by the four French veterinary schools thanks to top-notch training,
- combined with a shared vision of essential competencies for young graduates.



The veterinarian is an expert in animals and their interactions with Man and the environment.

Governed by professional values, he/she makes both animal welfare and public health core factors in any diagnostic and therapeutic approach.

\*Diploma in Basic Veterinary Studies (DEFV)

## Veterinarian, activities and competencies



The veterinarian is the key actor in:

- caring for and protecting animals
- guaranteeing public health, especially by ensuring the health safety of animal-derived foods and the control of zoonoses
- protecting the environment
- developing research and training
- increasing harmonious Man-animal interactions in society

### The competencies approach is a dynamic notion developed in education to construct training programmes

The notion of competency goes beyond a compartmentalised disciplinary approach; it is a combination of knowledge, abilities and attitudes to be used by the young veterinarian, conveyed by behaviour that can be both observed and measured.

The new reference framework describes these competencies and fixes the performance threshold which needs to be reached for each one.



There are two documents in the reference framework:

- a professional activity reference framework or activity reference framework, which defines veterinary activities.
- a competencies reference framework stating the skills expected from young graduates at the end of the 4th and 5th years.

The diploma reference framework addresses the competencies relating to clinical practice and to veterinary public health. It takes into account all the possible careers for veterinarians, for example, entering a PhD course.

# Eight macro-competencies that the young graduate must have acquired by the end of his/her course

## Four specific

**Advise and prevent** for the health and welfare of animals and compliance with the principles of biosecurity.

**Establish individual or collective diagnoses**, including compiling information, formulating hypotheses and putting them into an order of priority in order to care for the animals or apply the approach to other professional situations.

**Care for and treat** by implementing appropriate care and treatment protocols.

**Act for public health** by watching over and guaranteeing animal health, food safety and animal production based on the "One Health" principle (animal, human and environmental).

## Four cross-disciplinary

**Work in a business** through everyday management of the economic, administrative, regulatory and human resource aspects in all areas of professional practice.

**Communicate** with animal owners, employees, professionals, competent authorities and the general public using appropriate means.

**Act scientifically** using an evidence-based information and critical analysis strategy.

**Act responsibly**, being totally aware of his/her health, ethical and social responsibilities, mainly in terms of sustainable development and animal welfare.



## A new reference framework - what is its purpose?

The previous diploma reference framework, developed in 2008 using a disciplinary approach, had to be updated to maintain international recognition of the diploma: the new EAEVE European guidelines provide for evaluating each student's achievement of skills on the first day of graduation (Day-One-Competencies).



## Planned preparation and validated output

- The Project was conducted in 2016-2017, facilitated by Agreenium and run by the directors of veterinary schools with their educational teams in association with the students and the profession.
- Employers of veterinarians and various institutional representatives were consulted to ensure the coherence of the professional activity reference framework.
- Working groups made up of lecturers-researchers and qualified persons constructed an initial version for each macro-competency. The consultation was then expanded into the schools and then to institutional representatives and recognised professionals in their specific fields.
- The reference framework was validated by the CNESERAAV\*\* and is the Annexe to the Ministerial Order of 30th April 2007 relating to veterinary studies.

## What is the next step after the renovation of the reference framework?

Work on inter-school cooperation and synergies is continuing for concrete and harmonised implementation of the reference framework. Implementation includes evaluation and certification modalities for awarding the diploma. An educational steering committee has met regularly to pool tools and methods and to follow a joint timetable for gradual implementation.

\*EAEVE: European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education

\*\*CNESERAAV: National Council for agricultural, agri-food and veterinary higher education and research