

## LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR THE EXTERNSHIP PROCURER

**Concerns:** Introductory externship in the students' second year of the master's programme in veterinary medicine

To the externship procurer,  
Dear colleague, Madam, Sir,

Ghent University's Faculty of Veterinary Medicine would like to thank you for offering one of our students an **introductory externship** that extends over a 40-hour period in your practice. To place this externship in context, we have listed the objectives below.

The externship is offered to students in their second year of the master's program (so in their fifth year of education). Since these students have not had any clinical training before, this traineeship introduces them to the day-to-day operation of a veterinary practice. What's more, since the students are required to choose between a major in large or small animals during this academic year, this traineeship is extremely well timed and will help them make an informed decision. That is why this traineeship primarily focuses on learning through **observation**, although it goes without saying that it is highly appreciated, of course, both by the students and us, if the trainee is given the opportunity to carry out routine healthcare procedures.

The **objectives** are as follows:

- The students gain an insight into the organization, and are involved in the day-to-day activities of a veterinary practice, not only turning their attention to the clinical activities, but also to the administrative tasks and responsibilities;
- They help the vets during consultations, with an emphasis on primary-care cases;
- The students are given the opportunity to try out the knowledge they have acquired in practical situations;
- They learn to develop social skills (not least through contact with their externship supervisor, other staff members at the veterinary practice and patients);
- They gain an awareness about their own behavior.

**Students** are expected to:

- show a deep commitment and an eagerness to learn;
- observe all agreements with the supervisor meticulously;
- respect the code of ethics of the veterinary profession (which includes confidentiality of the patient's files);
- develop conversational skills for effective communication with the supervisor, other staff at the veterinary practice or patients;
- be open to criticism.

**Supervisors** are expected to:

- make arrangements, during an intake interview, **before the externship**, with the student about:
  - the timeframe of the externship, in which the total duration is 40 hours and preferably to be carried out in one continuous period.
  - tasks which will be assigned to the student. The idea being that students are exposed to as many facets of the veterinary practice as possible.
  - the ways in which the goals of the student can be achieved during the externship.
- guide the student, give feedback and actively involve them during practical activities **during the externship**.
- evaluate the student and sign the logbook (if approved) **at the end of the externship**.

The student will write a **report** at the end of the externship, which includes the **logbook**, contains an **interesting case** they encountered during their externship period and describes the structure and management of the practice. Finally, the students reflect on the externship period and the externship post, primarily in the light of the students' future professional activities. The confidentiality of all data will prevail at all times. This **confidentiality** relates to the veterinary practice, the veterinarians and pet owners and should be reflected in their reports.

Ghent University provides the necessary **insurances**, covering risk of physical injuries to, from and at the externship as well as the civil liability at the externship post. The modalities are stipulated in the externship agreement.

The flow of the externship will go via our **online platform** (all approvals will replace the signatures on printed documents):

- Read and approve the intake document (a short written report about the intake interview drafted by the student)
- If necessary, adjust the risk analysis form, and approve
- Approve the externship contract
- Approve the online logbook
- Evaluate the student

The student will write down the feedback he receives.

We are aware that the guidance of a student can be an additional strain upon your workload. We are convinced of the added value for the students' education and therefor highly appreciate your cooperation. To acknowledge this cooperation the faculty has a moderate **compensation** for the externship procurers. For each signed externship agreement you will receive a free participation to all activities of the Academy of Veterinary Medicine. You will be contacted in this matter by the faculty on the basis of all registered externship agreements (in the academic year following the internship).

When in doubt or with additional questions do not hesitate to contact our policy advisor on international affairs:

Tanya Struik, Dean's Office, Tel. +32 264 77 72, Email: [internatvetmed@ugent.be](mailto:internatvetmed@ugent.be)

Therefor we sign with special thanks for your cooperation, yours faithfully,

Prof. Dr. Sylvie Daminet

Externship coordinator small animals

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