A Students Guide To Veterinary School In Budapest

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY
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Congratulations!

You’ve just made it one step closer to your dream of being a Veterinarian, and on behalf of the FSA (Foreign Students Association) at the Faculty of Veterinary Science, we would like to welcome you to what we hope will be the best years of your life.

We’ve cobbled together some information, from a student perspective, which we feel, might be useful to know, before you finally arrive to Budapest.

If you have any questions or simply just require a friendly chat with the current students, please do not hesitate to contact us at: fsa.vet.hu@gmail.com

The FSA is a student organisation by the International Student Community for the International students at the Faculty of Veterinary Science, Budapest. We organise events and activities, which offer cultural, sporting and professional interaction for the students of all years and we help the freshmen settle in and cope with their new life at the University. Additionally, we hold a seat on the University Senate, representing the International student body. The FSA operates purely on a non-profit basis.

To read more about us visit our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/fsa.vet.hu,

Or our webpage: http://fsabudapest.weebly.com
ABOUT THIS GUIDE:

Please do read the official student guide distributed by the University.

This is just a guide to your first year in Budapest, compiled by International Students in senior years, who remember how we felt when we first got here and is in no way intended as a substitute for the guide released by the University.

We’ve tried to summarise as much information as possible, but of course for more detailed information please do get in touch with us.

Moving to a new country is always a different experience. Whether you have just finished high school or travelled the world, dealing with a new country, culture and a demanding course can be quite a bit to handle in your first year here. However, most students adapt quite fast and Budapest itself has a unique and wonderful charm, which you will grow to love.

We will be happy to answer any questions you may have about living in Budapest and life as a student at our University. Here is a short summary of people, places and some basic inside information about the changes you are about to experience and some useful links for making life a bit easier.
ABOUT THE FACULTY:

The Faculty of Veterinary Science at Budapest is a truly international community where one can study Veterinary Medicine in 3 different languages, English, German and Hungarian. The university embraces nearly 1050 students from 42 nations around the world; with foreign students accounting for over half of the total student body. Visiting students are presented with an opportunity in which they might expose themselves to not only the traditions and customs of Hungary but also that of their fellow classmates, encountering different cultures on a global scale.

The school is currently going to enter its 228th year of continuous academic teaching in Veterinary Sciences and the University park boasts of many famous legends in the Veterinary World, not least Aujeszky and Marek.
Teaching:
The year is divided into two semesters: Autumn and Spring. Each semester is 15 weeks long followed by a 6 week exam period at the end. The exact schedule of the year is released prior to the start of the academic year in late August of each year. This includes all the exact dates of events and holidays recognised by the school.

At Szent István, the standard of teaching is very good, but like all other universities it is the amount of time and dedication you put in that will decide how well you do in your exams.

There are a lot of practical elements to our degree, especially in the higher years with regards to clinical work. During the theoretical course several subjects host midterm exam every several weeks, which keep you on your toes with studying, especially in the first 2 years where learning the basics is crucial to your clinical education in higher years (years 3/4/5).

Lecture notes and handouts are available from most departments and the first lecture in each subject will give you a basic idea of where and how to access necessary and pertinent information for each subject. There is a bookstore on campus where you can buy certain books for subjects. Others are made available on the internet. There is a copy shop opposite school where you can print/photocopy notes. A cheaper alternative though is Copy Guru; there are several branches across the city.

The number of practicals and lectures you can miss depends on the subject. These are usually announced during the first lecture and are usually mentioned on the individual department’s webpage. In most subjects, if you miss a practical, a retake is necessary before you get the “signature” in your “blackbook”. As a basic rule though avoid missing more than 3 lectures or 2 practicals in any subject if you are unsure about how many lectures/practicals you can miss.
Other informal or more spontaneous events are announced during the course of the academic year.

Facebook is currently the social network of choice for communication amongst the students at our university. Each year has a facebook group and several practical groups also create their own groups in order to facilitate the communication between the class representatives and the rest of the students. We have already created a group for your year. If you do not like to use facebook, we advise you to create an account anyway to follow the latest updates of change in lecture halls, practicals, and other activities (including those from the FSA). While facebook is certainly not compulsory it is at the moment the easiest means of communication between the students. As you are expected to stay on top of all new notifications the responsibility is yours if for some reason you were unable to follow a new change or development.

We are currently working with the University to create a more sustainable system for exchanging information.

Blackbook:
Your blackbook is a book which records your subjects and grades for every semester, and is usually stored in Mr. Peter Lessi’s office (building H, first floor).

You are required to bring your blackbook to every exam (for written exams as an Identification and for oral and practical exams, so that the grade can be entered there immediately).

Once all exams of the semester have been completed, it is to be returned to Mr. Lessi.

At the end of the semester, if you have completed the requirements for the semester (attendance, minimum grades in midterms, all the required practical courses etc.) you get a “signature” in the subject to indicate that you have completed that course and are eligible for the exam in that subject or allowed to take the subsequent course.
STUDENT CODE AND CARD

STUDENT ID CODE:
You will receive a student identification code at Mr. Lessi’s office during your first week. This ID links your Neptune account (for signing up for exams) and also for using Moodle (e-learning at the Faculty) and for the intranet of the faculty. Remember this code as you can be asked to write it on your exam sheets. Try and keep it confidential.

STUDENT CARD:
You will be provided with a student card that entitles you to some advantages e.g. reduced fares for public transportation, movie tickets etc. At the start of each semester you need to collect the semester sticker from the student’s secretariat in order for your student card to be valid. Failure to do so may result in a fine of over 8000 HUF and up to 25000 HUF, if you are caught with a student monthly pass for transport and your student ID is invalid.

With your monthly pass, you can use all the public transport in Budapest.

We do recommend trying your best not to lose your student card, as obtaining a new one is quite a time consuming process.
EXAMINATION

Exams can be held in one of three ways: **Written, Oral or Practical.** Depending on the number of lecture hours, practical hours and credit points allocated to a subject, they can be one or a combination of them to lead to your final grade.

Midterms are held in certain subjects during the course of the semester, and depending on whether the subject is a semifinal or final subject, your grade for the semester will be based either on the midterm results or in some subjects on the semifinal exam held at the end of the semester.

**Yes it does sound a bit confusing, but you will get the hang of it fast, don’t worry.**

More information can be found in the official student guide available at Mr. Lessi’s office.

The oral exams are something that took us a bit of time to get used to. They are a bit nerve wracking at first but now we have learned to appreciate them, since they will assist in building self-confidence and assertiveness which will stand you in good stead both in interviews and in your career, especially as a clinical veterinarian.

Another big plus to exams in our university is the fact that you can book your exam dates whenever you choose. The departments issues the dates of the specific exams and you may choose which date suits you best, which allows for great flexibility (and possibly longer holidays!).

All oral exams in Hungary are formal events, and you should be appropriately dressed for them. It’s worth investing in a set of formal clothes when you arrive just for exams, because more often than not, you can’t look at those clothes for the rest of the year.

The current International programme follows a 2+2 exam system. You are allowed to sit for any exam twice in a given exam period and you get an additional two chances for you to use at your own discretion. This gives you a total of 4 chances in each exam (written, oral and practical). If you however do not use the two chances offered in the first exam period the exam is offered in, you lose those two chances.
Just a tip from those of us in senior years, it’s usually best to avoid postponing too many exams, as catching up on them later can become an issue.

If you haven’t finished all your exams at the end of your 2nd year, you enter what is called an inactive student status, where you are no longer allowed to continue with your studies, until you have finished all your exams.

Once you enter your inactive period, you can resume your studies with the following academic year in September if you have caught up with your exams.

A similar system is in place at the end of 5th year.
The impressive building of the Veterinary Science Library is situated in the territory of the main campus, in building D. It is only necessary to register for borrowing books. Registration is free of charge for all students of the Faculty.

Located in probably the most beautiful building on campus the library boasts a large reading room with a splendid view of the park. (Reading room at our Library, Perenyi Janos, DVM)

Plenty of books are available to loan or for reference use only. Many e-books (including textbooks) and e-journals are accessible also from home if you register for VPN connection on the library homepage. Free Wi-Fi can be used with your own laptop, phone or tablet.

Additionally printing and scanning facilities are offered here too.

The library also has 15 computers and a computer room to one end, in case you need to access something urgently.

**Opening hours:**

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<th>Day</th>
<th>Mon - Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
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<th>Sat - Sun</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8:30-18:00</td>
<td>8:30-20:00</td>
<td>8:00-16:00</td>
<td>Closed</td>
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The Ervin Szabo Library at Kalvin Ter is another big library which you can use, free of charge.

If however, you would like to borrow books from them, a nominal fee is required and you will need a Hungarian Citizen to vouch for you.

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SPORTS, LEISURE AND OTHER ACTIVITIES:

Sports
The school has a well-equipped gym and sports facility on campus which is free for everyone to use.

Additionally if you are interested in a certain sport, do make enquiries or better still contact our sports coordinator and he’ll put you in touch with your team.

Sports clubs: GAA team, Women's rugby, ski trips, floor ball, Thai boxing, fencing, 5 a side soccer, basketball, volleyball, football, climbing society etc.

For other activities like Zumba, Yoga etc. teachers from outside come in (organised by the students) and you can use one of the smaller gyms on campus rent free. The prices for these classes, depends on the teacher hosting the class.

For further information contact the FSA sports officer on fsa.vet.hu@gmail.com

Language:
Language courses are offered by the Department of Foreign Languages (building N) one of the most popular is ‘Hungarian as a foreign language’. We personally recommend taking some basic Hungarian courses; it will make the course of your studies and fitting in much easier. Teaching a language helps foster a feeling towards the country, that will be your home for the next few years.

For more info please visit: www.univet.hu/english/units/languages/

Time Off:
There is a huge arts scene in Budapest with plenty of art galleries and festivals, inclusive of the Wine fest, Beer fest, and Palinka and Cheese festivals.

There is also the world famous Christmas market.

If you like cinema, all the usual blockbuster films come to town, in English with an average ticket cost of about 5 euro.
AUTHORS AND CREDITS

So these are the basic points we as students feel you should know about the University before you get here. Of course if at any point you feel that there is something you need to know and we’ve missed out on mentioning it, please do contact us.

If you ever need help you can always go to the International Student Secretariat’s office in Building H. They are wonderful people over there and they will always help you out. In addition, you just need to approach most members of staff in the event of any difficulty and if they cannot help you out, they will guide you to someone who can. Also, always feel free to approach an FSA member for guidance as we are always happy to help.

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