



THE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SCIENTISTS

MENTORS

- 1 The Board of Examiners recommends all Membership candidates develop a professional support network during their time preparing for the Membership examination in their chosen discipline. In particular, it is recommended that a specific relationship be established with an experienced person who will act as a mentor to the candidate. Mentors can provide encouragement and support for the candidate as well as more specific advice on preparation for examination and study progress. The mentor is not responsible for the candidate passing or for demanding him/her to study but will act as a recognised and available primary source of information and advice. The mentor is not required to teach the candidate about the discipline. The purpose of a mentoring system is to provide a candidate with an experienced sounding board to help them approach their independent learning activities. The mentor relationship aims to assist the candidate to appreciate the scope and standard of the examination; and to develop an effective study/learning plan.
- 2 There are many benefits from being a mentor. These include an opportunity to play an important role in a colleague's professional life, supporting your College Chapter and enhancing and refreshing your own knowledge and skills. Many current members of the College will have already benefitted from an effective mentoring system, and the College would encourage current members and those familiar with the examination process or equivalent systems to play an active role in supporting those striving towards the membership exam.
- 3 All College members will be asked on an annual basis on their membership renewal forms if they would be willing to act as a mentor.
 - 3.1 Mentors should be familiar with the examination procedures and levels of skill and knowledge required to pass the examination as explained in the relevant Subject Guidelines.
 - 3.2 Mentors should be approachable, supportive and available for discussion.
 - 3.3 Ease of contact and geographical location of the mentor are important. Frequent contact is considered important to a successful candidate/mentor relationship. Personal, face to face meetings are very effective in assisting candidates to prepare, particularly closer to the time of the examination. Other modes of contact including email, phone, internet video (Skype)/phone link or letter can also be very effective.
- 4 It is the candidate's responsibility to initiate contact with a mentor. Membership examination candidates will be directed by the College Office to a database of College members willing to act as mentors. The database will be located on a secure site within the college website. Each candidate is expected to approach a proposed mentor individually through the database. If a candidate has difficulty securing a suitable person to act as a mentor, the College office may help by contacting the relevant Chapter Examination Committee for assistance. Candidates

may alternatively nominate a particular mentor not on the database that they have identified from discussions with colleagues. In this case, chosen mentors should be highly trained in the field in which the candidate is sitting and preferably hold Membership or Fellowship qualifications themselves (or a similar level of qualification from overseas).

- 5 The following information should be provided to the mentor by the candidate:
 - 5.1 name, address and contact details (phone, Skype, email) for the candidate
 - 5.2 a copy of the candidate's C.V. to help the mentor appreciate the level of experience and preparation the candidate has already achieved.

- 6 Both the candidate and mentor must ensure they have access to:
 - 6.1 a copy of the current Subject Guidelines for the candidate's examination subject
 - 6.2 copies of recent examination papers in the subject.

- 7 During the examination preparation period, the mentor should be expected to discuss with the candidate:
 - 7.1 the general depth and breadth of knowledge required to pass the examination
 - 7.2 the style of examination
 - 7.3 a timeline for the candidate's preparation for the examination
 - 7.4 a study strategy or an approach to learning in the key areas identified in the Subject Guidelines' Learning Outcomes
 - 7.5 the allocation of time for library and other reference reading and making of synopses for revision
 - 7.6 the need to do practice examinations
 - 7.7 mentor's feedback on the candidate's progress in preparation for the examination
 - 7.8 mentor's feedback on the level of knowledge a candidate demonstrates in written and/or oral practice examinations.

- 8 Each mentor/mentee arrangement will vary. The following is suggested as a guideline only and should be tailored depending upon needs. A general expectation would be that a mentor be available for meeting in person or by phone a minimum of three times during the six month period of candidature. More extensive email correspondence may be sufficient to replace these meetings. It is recommended that the exact nature of the interaction be discussed and agreed to at the beginning of the mentorship. The first meeting might be used to establish the level of interaction and to discuss general aspects outlined above, particularly around a study/learning approach. The second meeting might be a progress meeting at which time might be allocated for the candidate to ask questions regarding specific learning areas. The third meeting might be to provide feedback on specific answers/tasks that the candidate may have prepared for the mentor in practice for examination.

- 9 If at any stage, a change in mentor is desired by the candidate, or a mentor is unable to continue to fulfill the duties described above; it is the candidate's responsibility to communicate the concern with the mentor and subsequently approach a replacement mentor from the list of available mentors on the College database. If necessary, the College office may help by contacting the relevant Chapter Examination Committee for assistance.