



**THE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND  
COLLEGE OF  
VETERINARY SCIENTISTS**

***MEMBERSHIP  
CANDIDATE HANDBOOK***

**2023 edition**

*The ANZCVS recommends that candidates access the most up to date copy of this handbook from the College [website](#)*

*Last updated: November 2022*

You have chosen to undertake a membership examination in a specific discipline within Veterinary Science. This handbook is designed to provide all the **general** information you will need to understand the process, apply for and sit this examination. For **specific** subject information such as learning outcomes and reading lists for your subject; please refer to your specific subject's set of *Subject Guidelines*.

The College Council, Board of Examiners and College office staff are all at your service to assist you towards your goal. If this handbook leaves any question unanswered, please contact us at the College office.

### **BOARD OF EXAMINERS**

Please refer to the College's website for information regarding each of the Board of Examiners [members](#)

### **COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Please refer to College [website](#)

### **COLLEGE ADMINISTRATION**

Please refer to College [website](#)

### **CONTACT DETAILS:**

Telephone: International +61 (07) 3423 2016  
Email: [examinations@anzcvs.org.au](mailto:examinations@anzcvs.org.au)  
Web: [www.anzcvs.org.au](http://www.anzcvs.org.au)  
Postal Address: Building 3, Garden City Office Park, 2404 Logan Road  
EIGHT MILE PLAINS QLD 4113 Australia

© 2022 Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists ABN 00 50 000894 208

This publication is copyright. Other than for the purposes of and subject to the conditions prescribed under the Copyright Act, no part of it may in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, microcopying, photocopying, recording or otherwise) be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted without prior written permission. Enquiries should be addressed to the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists.

# INDEX

	PAGE
1. MEMBERSHIP DEFINITION.....	4
2. ELIGIBILITY .....	4
3. STANDARDS OF MEMBERSHIP .....	7
4. EXAMINATION SUBJECTS.....	7
5. MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (AVAILABLE FROM THE COLLEGE WEBSITE)..	8
6. EXAMINATION FEES.....	9
7. MENTORS .....	10
8. ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION FEES.....	12
9. MAINTENANCE OF CREDENTIALS.....	12
10. STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS .....	12
11. EXAMINATION TECHNIQUE .....	13
ORAL .....	13
12. MISCONDUCT OF CANDIDATES FOR EXAMINATION .....	13
CODE OF CONDUCT.....	14
13. THE EXAMINATION .....	15
14. SUPPLEMENTARY PROCEDURE .....	22
15. EQUITABLE ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE POLICY .....	23
16. EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES POLICY .....	24
17. APPEAL PROCEDURE.....	25
18. CHECKLIST FOR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION .....	26

Please refer to the College [website](#) for the necessary documentation to apply for membership examinations.

## **1. Membership Definition**

1.1. The award of Membership of the College is conferred upon a veterinarian who is eligible to sit and successfully passes an examination in a given Membership subject.

1.2 Membership of the College should signify the following:

"Membership of the College is an official recognition of a veterinary surgeon's knowledge and experience in a designated field of veterinary science. Membership is an indication to the profession and the general public of an advanced practitioner, representing a middle-tier of knowledge, competence and experience in a specific area of veterinary practice. Membership is not a specialist qualification. Membership requires examination with members signified by post-nominals MANZCVS."

Although Membership of the College indicates that the member has some expertise and competence in the nominated area, it is important to note that Fellowship is the College qualification that signifies the standard required by those seeking veterinary specialist registration.

1.3 Subject Definition: The content of the examination is defined by both the subject title and the subject guidelines.

## **2. Eligibility**

2.1. Candidates for Membership of the College should be eligible for registration as a veterinarian in an Australian State or in New Zealand.

2.2 At least three and a half years must have passed between graduation and taking the examination. This is a requirement of the College Constitution and cannot be waived.

2.3 Depending on a candidate's circumstances and work situation, including exposure to the subject area and mentorship, longer periods of preparation might be advisable.

2.4 Council may at its discretion approve a candidate who has veterinary qualifications recognised in any other part of the world providing he or she has fulfilled such other conditions as may be determined from time to time by Council.

**APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP BY VETERINARIANS WHO HAVE QUALIFICATIONS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR GENERAL REGISTRATION IN AUSTRALIA OR NEW ZEALAND.**

- a. Individuals who have veterinary qualifications not eligible for general registration in Australia or New Zealand, but which are recognised in any other part of the world, may apply in writing to College Council to sit College Membership examinations and attain Membership of the College.

Application letters must be accompanied by:

- i. a current curriculum vitae, which includes a list of national and international professional conference attendance since graduation or during the last five years (if greater than five years have passed since graduation).
  - ii. a letter of support for the applicant from a member or the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists or another veterinarian registered in Australia or New Zealand.
  - iii. a certified copy of the testamur of the applicant's veterinary degree (English translation) which allows him/her to register to practice in the country of origin
- b. In the case of applicants whose first language is not English, it is strongly recommended that the applicant's competency in reading, writing, speaking and listening to English be at a level at least equivalent to an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) score of 7.0 in all sections in the academic (not the general) module. Lack of competency in English cannot be used as a reason for appealing a Membership examination result.
  - c. Approval to sit Membership examinations is granted at the discretion of Council.
  - d. Successful applicants are notified within 7 days of the decision by Council.
  - e. Applicants are advised that passing the College Membership examinations and being granted Membership of the College does not entitle him or her to register to practice as a veterinarian in Australia or New Zealand.

**APPLICATIONS FOR UK/EUROPE MEDICINE OF CATS MEMBERSHIP BY VETERINARIANS WHO HAVE QUALIFICATIONS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR GENERAL REGISTRATION IN AUSTRALIA OR NEW ZEALAND**

- a. Individuals who have veterinary qualifications not eligible for general registration in Australia or New Zealand, but which are recognised in any other part of the world, may apply in writing to College Council to sit College Medicine of Cats Membership examinations and attain Membership of the College.

Application letters must be accompanied by:

- i. a current curriculum vitae, which includes a list of national and international professional conference attendance since graduation or during the last five years (if greater than five years have passed since graduation).
  - ii. a letter of support for the applicant from a veterinarian registered in Australia or New Zealand or a veterinarian who is a member of the International Society of Feline Medicine.
  - iii. a certified copy of the testamur of the applicant's veterinary degree (English translation) which allows him/her to register to practice in the country of origin.
- b. In the case of applicants whose first language is not English, it is strongly recommended that the applicant's competency in reading, writing, speaking and listening to English be at a level at least equivalent to an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) score of 7.0 in all sections in the academic (not the general) module. Lack of competency in English cannot be used as a reason for appealing a Membership examination result.
- c. Approval to sit Membership examinations is granted at the discretion of Council.
- d. Successful applicants are notified within 7 days of the decision by Council.
- e. Applicants are advised that passing the College Membership examinations and being granted Membership of the College does not entitle him or her to register to practice as a veterinarian in Australia or New Zealand.
- f. Successful applicants for Membership in Medicine of Cats are expected to demonstrate a high level of interest and competence in Medicine of Cats. This is judged by that standard of knowledge and understanding, practical skills, attitude, methodology and communication which would make the person suitable to give professional advice to veterinary colleagues not similarly qualified on problems or procedures often encountered or used in general practice, in the relevant area of Medicine of Cats.
- g. Applicants are advised that College Membership in Medicine of Cats is not a Specialist level qualification. Further training, publication and examinations towards Fellowship of the College make up the required pathway for potential specialist status.

### 3. Standards of Membership

- 3.1 Applicants will be assessed on their knowledge and skills at the Membership examination. Performance in the Membership examination is assessed on the basis that the candidate shall achieve a pass mark of 70% or above as detailed in section 13.9 and 13.10
- 3.2 Although Membership of the College indicates that the member has some expertise and competence in the nominated area, it is important to note that Fellowship is the College qualification that signifies the standard required by those seeking veterinary specialist registration.
- 3.3 The depth and breadth of each Membership subject are clearly described in each subject's specific set of Subject Guidelines, available from the College website. Candidates should refer to the Subject Guidelines for information on learning outcomes, recommended reading lists and the examination itself. The Membership examination will specifically test the depth and scope of the subject, as described in the specific subject guidelines.

### 4. Examination Subjects

#### 4.1 Membership Examination Subjects:

**Category 1:** The following subjects are supported by a Chapter where frequent examinations are held annually. Please submit your examination application and examination fee before October 31<sup>st</sup> the year preceding your intended year of examination.

- Small Animal Medicine
- Small Animal Surgery
- Veterinary Behaviour
- Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care
- Veterinary Practice (Equine)
- Veterinary Practice (Small Animal)
- Veterinary Radiology (Small Animal)

**Category 2:** The following subjects are supported by a Chapter where frequent examinations are offered biennial. Please refer to the current year's offering on the College website <https://www.anzcv.org.au/membership/membership-subjects-2021-and-2022/> or contact the College office before submitting your examination application.

- Animal Nutrition (Ruminant)
- Animal Reproduction
- Animal Welfare
- Avian Health (Poultry)
- Avian Medicine and Surgery
- Equine Dentistry
- Medicine and Management of Aquaculture Species
- Medicine and Management of Laboratory Animals
- Medicine and Surgery of Unusual Pets
- Medicine of Australasian Wildlife Species
- Medicine of Beef Cattle

Medicine of Cats  
Medicine of Cats UK  
Medicine of Dairy Cattle  
Medicine of Goats  
Medicine of Horses  
Medicine of Sheep  
Medicine of Zoo Animals  
Pig Health and Production  
Small Animal Dentistry and Oral Surgery  
Surgery of Horses  
Veterinary Anaesthesia and Analgesia  
Veterinary Epidemiology  
Veterinary Pathology (includes Anatomical and Clinical Pathology)  
Veterinary Pharmacology  
Veterinary Public Health  
Veterinary Radiology (Large Animal)  
Veterinary Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation (Canine)  
Veterinary Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation (Equine)

**Category 3:** The following subjects have historically been offered however it is unlikely that an examination in these subjects will be possible without direct support from a relevant Chapter. Please contact the College office to discuss the possibility before considering submitting your membership examination application.

Animal Breeding and Genetics  
Medicine of Deer  
Medicine of Dogs  
Veterinary Microbiology and Microbial Diseases  
Veterinary Parasitology and Parasitic Diseases

- 4.2 Subjects might not be offered every year. Some subjects may not be available again, so it is wise to check with the College office before commencing your study program.

## **5. Membership Application** (available from the College website)

- 5.1 The membership application form plus supporting documentation (if required), the Access to Information Agreement (also available from the College website), an up to date curriculum vita and the appropriate membership examination fee must be submitted to the College office by **31 October** in the year preceding examination. Information on the fee for membership examination is available from the College office or from the College web site (<http://www.anzcvs.org.au/membership/>).

### **5.2 Policy: Late applications**

1. Applications for examinations close on 31 October in the year preceding the examination.
2. A late application may be considered between 01 and 30 November in the year preceding the examination, when accompanied by a late fee.
3. No applications, under any circumstances, will be accepted after the 30 November in the year preceding the examination



5.3 Written examinations for Membership candidates will be held in June/July each year, in one of a number of venues throughout Australia, New Zealand and other parts of the world. Dates of examination for the following year will be advertised on the College [website](#).

Oral examinations will be held in June/July.

5.4 Requests for withdrawal from the examination should be lodged with the College office. Candidates should be aware that withdrawal from the examination will be associated with a financial penalty (see section 6).

5.5 Candidates may not defer sitting the examination once they have submitted a completed application form to the College and paid the examination fee.

5.6 No written results will be released to candidates before oral examinations are completed and results have been ratified by the Board of Examiners.

5.7 Candidates are urged to consult the College web site prior to the written examinations for copies of past examination papers, subject guidelines including the learning outcomes, and reading lists and the Membership Candidate Handbook.

5.8 Candidates may register their "**intention to sit**" for the Membership examination. They do so by submitting the Membership application form plus supporting documentation (if required), the Access to Information Agreement form (both documents available from the College website) and an up-to-date curriculum vita. Candidates who give notice of intention to sit are encouraged to seek a mentor who will assist with advice and guidance in the examination subject.

## **6. Examination Fees**

6.1 Each year's examination fee is advertised on the College website in Australian dollars.

6.2 The fee for Membership examination is payable on or before 31 October in the year preceding the year of examination. The Membership fee has two components: an administration component and an examination component.

6.3 The administration component is 25% of the Membership examination fee. The administration component is non-refundable in the event of withdrawal from the examination.

6.4 75% of the examination fee is refundable if the candidate withdraws more than 100 days prior to the date of the written examinations.

6.5 The examination fee will be forfeited if the candidate withdraws 100 days or less before the date of the written examinations.

6.6 The fee structure is imposed by College Council which retains the discretion to refund examination fees on compassionate or medical grounds.

6.7 Examination fees do not attract GST.

## 7. Mentors

- 7.1 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.
- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 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.
- 7.3.1. 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.
- 7.3.2. Mentors should be approachable, supportive and available for discussion.
- 7.3.3. 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 or internet video (Skype)/phone link.
- 7.4 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 relevant Subject Standards Committee (SSC) members for assistance. Candidates may alternatively elect for themselves 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).

- 7.5 The following information should be provided to the mentor by the candidate:
- 7.5.1 name, address and contact details (phone, email) for the candidate
  - 7.5.2 a copy of the candidate's C.V. to help the mentor appreciate the level of experience and preparation the candidate has already achieved.
- 7.6 Both the candidate and mentor must ensure they have access to:
- 7.6.1 a copy of the current Subject Guidelines for the candidate's examination subject
  - 7.6.2 copies of recent examination papers in the subject.
- 7.7 During the examination preparation period, the mentor should be expected to discuss with the candidate:
- 7.7.1 the general depth and breadth of knowledge required to pass the examination
  - 7.7.2 the style of examination
  - 7.7.3 a timeline for the candidate's preparation for the examination
  - 7.7.4 a study strategy or an approach to learning in the key areas identified in the Subject Guidelines' Learning Outcomes
  - 7.7.5 the allocation of time for library and other reference reading and making of synopses for revision
  - 7.7.6 the need to do practice examinations
  - 7.7.7 mentor's feedback on the candidate's progress in preparation for the examination
  - 7.7.8 mentor's feedback on the level of knowledge a candidate demonstrates in written and/or oral practice examinations.
- 7.8 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.
- 7.9 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 Subject Standards Committee (SSC) members for assistance.

## 8. Annual Membership Subscription Fees

The costs of administration of the College are met by the members of the College. The annual Membership subscription fee is increased annually by CPI.

## 9. Maintenance of Credentials

Once Membership has been achieved, candidates have the responsibility to maintain their qualification.

Maintenance of Credentials (MOC) requirements will apply to all Members who are awarded their qualifications from 2021 onwards. At the end of each 5-year period, each Member must have met the MOC criteria to demonstrate that they have maintained their credentials, or their Membership will be categorised as inactive. Guidelines for MOC can be found [here](#) with an accompanying frequently asked question document [here](#)

## 10. Study Recommendations

- 10.1 Some sort of structured study regime is strongly recommended. It must be individually tailored to suit the candidate's own specific needs.
- 10.2 It is suggested that the candidate devise a suitable study plan. In this regard, consider the following:
  - formulate a written, master study plan
  - invest sufficient time and thought in developing an effective and realistic study plan
  - write the plan in outline form; be specific
  - include a timetable with dates; chronologically indicate the beginning and conclusion of each area of study; adhere to the timetable
  - maintain frequent contact with your mentor
  - adhere to the study plan
  - refer to the study plan frequently
- 10.3 It is suggested by some that the study plan cover a two-year period. This is probably a realistic time frame. Others feel that a shorter study period is sufficient. Each candidate must make his/her own determination in this matter. It is strongly recommended that time be set aside each week for some aspect of the study.
- 10.4 It is recommended that candidates check the College web site prior to the examination for copies of past examination papers and for advice on examination format in the relevant subject guidelines.
- 10.5 Candidates should prepare for questions that require answers in essay or short note format, but multiple-choice type questions may be used (see 13.2 or 13.7 below).

## 11. Examination Technique

- 11.1 Candidates should aim to communicate clearly, using appropriate technical (rather than colloquial) terminology in both components of the examination.
- 11.2 Many candidates for the College membership examinations have not taken formal examinations for many years and may need to revise their examination techniques. There are no fixed rules to good written examination technique but some techniques to consider are:
- a. using the perusal time to read each question carefully;
  - b. making an outline of each answer that incorporates important points and presents that information in a succinct and orderly manner,
  - c. writing clearly and briefly.
  - d. taking care to answer all parts of the question being asked, using the format requested e.g. essay form, short notes, lists etc.
  - e. candidates might consider writing sample questions and then answering them under time constraints.

### Oral

Many candidates find the oral examination the most difficult. It is important to prepare as fully as possible for this component. One suggestion is to have practice oral examinations with previously successful candidates, your mentor or University colleagues experienced in giving oral exams. Information to assist candidates prepare for the oral examination are available from the College [website](#).

## 12. Misconduct of Candidates for Examination

The highest standard of conduct is expected of candidates seeking Membership or Fellowship of the College. On their applications for examinations Candidates are required to read and sign an agreement to be bound by the College's rules, regulations and guidelines.

Participating in any improper conduct such as cheating, attempt to cheat, assisting others to cheat, participating therein is a serious violation and will result in the College disqualifying the candidate's paper and other disciplinary action as may be deemed appropriate, including, but not limited to, forfeiture of examination fees and/or exclusion from the College. This includes before during and after the examinations.

Candidates must not give or receive assistance of any kind during the examination.

During the examinations Candidates are expected to behave with integrity and follow all proper and reasonable instructions whether given in writing or by any College Officer including examination Invigilators and Observers.

Examples of improper conduct include but are not limited to:

1. Attempting to gain unfair advantage by ascertaining the content of the examination before the examination period.

2. Sharing information about the content of the examination during the period in which Candidates have been requested not to disclose it.
3. Sharing or attempting to share answers with other Candidates during the examination.
4. Attempting to obtain assistance with answering questions by any means including the use of notes or phones.
5. Presenting false information in the application or any other documentation.
6. Failing to follow the proper and reasonable instructions of College Officers.

The Board of Examiners Examination Committee will investigate any irregularity or suspected violation of examination discipline, and a determination by the Board of Examiners will be made regarding the matter.

## Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to all Members (including Associate Members) and Fellows, as well as those seeking to become a Member of the College.

As veterinary science is a profession, the College requires those who have been admitted to the College, as well as those seeking to join the College, to display the highest standards of conduct which the public would expect to see from professionals. These standards of conduct include demonstrating high standards of personal behaviour and conduct, such as:

- Treating College staff, Members, Fellows and candidates, together with co-workers, employees, clients and the public with courtesy, respect and honesty;
- Ensuring that the person does not unlawfully discriminate against, harass or vilify (as defined by any Australian or New Zealand common or statutory law) any other person;
- Maintaining respect for, and compliance with the law;
- Upholding high ethical standards, particularly in their professional business dealings;
- Complying with the College's policies and the provisions set out below.

All Membership candidates, Members (including Associate Members) and Fellows should note that the Constitution of the College states that Council may take action against any Member who has, in the opinion of the Council, engaged in *conduct which is unbecoming of a Member or prejudicial to the interest of the College*. These include:

- a serious breach of this Code of Conduct;
- a deliberate or serious breach of the Constitution;
- any significant disciplinary action taken by the member's registering authority, in any jurisdiction;
- serious professional misconduct; and
- infamous conduct including conduct discreditable to the profession of veterinary science.

Candidates for Membership should note compliance with this Code is a condition of eligibility under 5.5.1.3 of the Constitution, including the above provisions regarding *conduct which is unbecoming or prejudicial to the interest of the College* which apply to candidates to the same standard as they apply to Members.

## **13. The Examination**

### **13.1 Examination Components**

The Membership examination has two independent components - 50% of the overall grade is derived from each component.

#### **Component 1**

Written Paper 1 (two hours)

Written Paper 2 (two hours)

Written Paper 1 and 2 are two parts of this component

#### **Component 2**

Practical/Oral.

For most disciplines this is a single oral examination, but some disciplines e.g. Pathology and Radiology have practical examinations. The length of the oral examination varies but it is usually approximately 45 minutes - 1 hour.

### **13.2 Examination Structure**

The structure of each component of the examination shall be included in the subject guidelines for the information of candidates and examiners. Information to be provided is listed below. Chapters may include more detail if they wish.

For written examinations:

- The number of main questions
- The total marks for the exam
- The duration of the exam
- Whether the examination contains a choice of questions (for subjects with electives only)
- The question types which will be included (e.g. long answer, multiple choice).
- The marks per main question. This may be a range where main questions are not of equal value.

For practical examinations:

- The number of main questions
- The total marks for the exam
- The duration of the exam
- The question types which will be included (e.g. long answer, multiple choice).
- The marks per main question. This may be a range where main questions are not of equal value.

- How the questions will be delivered (e.g. on paper, on a slide show)
- The type of ancillary materials used (e.g. images, digital radiographs, histopathology slides).

For oral examinations:

- The number of main questions
- The total marks for the exam
- The approximate duration of the exam
- The marks per main question. This may be a range where main questions are not of equal value.
- The type of ancillary materials used (e.g. images, digital radiographs, laboratory results).

Revisions to examination structure can be planned as part of subject guidelines review and must be submitted to the College Office by 31<sup>st</sup> October in the year preceding examinations. Changes to examination structure are not permitted after this date.

Examination structure is subject to the following limitations:

- The maximum duration for each written examination paper is two hours for membership examinations
- Both written papers must be of the same total marks
- It is recommended that there be 60 marks allocated per hour of examination
- All questions and sub-questions must be out of a whole number of marks
- The perusal time for written exams will be 15 minutes for membership examinations. During perusal time candidates will be allowed to write on scrap paper only
- There will be no perusal time for practical examinations
- No choice of questions or parts of questions is permitted except in subjects for which the subject guidelines specify that candidates can elect to meet some learning outcomes and not others. For such subjects, choice is permitted across the electives but not within the elective.
- No more than 20% of an examination component shall be multiple choice question type unless by approval by the Chief Examiner
- The following question types are primarily used to test fact-recall rather than higher order thinking and thus are unlikely to be acceptable for fellowship and membership examinations: true-false questions, matching questions, short answer (fill in word or single sentence) questions.
- If there are multiple choice questions these must be put together in one section
- Ancillary materials used in examinations must be of very high quality and contain adequate information for interpretation (for example an indication of magnification on micrographs).



### 13.3 Examination Location

- 13.3.1. Written and practical examinations will be offered in selected venues. Oral examinations are currently conducted via zoom.
- 13.3.2. Once having indicated that he or she will sit the examination, failure of a candidate to attend will be recorded as a fail except in extenuating circumstances. Exceptions will be at the discretion of the Chief Examiner.

### 13.5 Calculator Policy

Refer to the College website Policy Library: [Calculator Policy](#)

### 13.6 Common Terms used in College Examinations

In the context of an examination question, the College recommends that these terms are intended to elicit the following type of information in a candidate's response:

- **Aetiology:** the candidate should provide information on the cause(s) of disease.
- **Pathogenesis:** the candidate should provide information on the development of disease; specifically the combination of mechanisms that operate at biochemical, cellular, anatomic and physiologic levels to cause the structural, functional and/or clinical manifestations of disease as relevant to the question.
- **Aetiopathogenesis:** the candidate should provide information on both the cause and the development of disease (as listed above under pathogenesis).
- **Pathology:** the candidate should provide information on the structural and functional manifestations of disease; changes in body tissues and organs which cause, or are caused by, disease.
- **Pathophysiology:** the candidate should provide information on functional changes and perturbations of normal physiology attributable to the disease process; or a description of the physiology of the disordered [diseased] state as relevant to the question.
- **Clinical examination:** the candidate should provide information on the general physical examination (including observations, auscultation, palpation, percussion and objective parameters such as heart rate, respiratory rate, temperature) along with neurological, orthopaedic and ophthalmic examinations where relevant. Blood pressure measurement may also be considered part of the clinical examination in small animals.

*NB. Diagnostic tests, such as laboratory tests and diagnostic imaging, -are not considered part of the routine clinical examination and candidates should be prompted to consider additional diagnostic testing, or a broader term (such as clinical findings, see description below) should be used.*

- **Clinical findings:** the candidate should provide information on all relevant findings reasonably associated with a condition from owner / agent anamnesis (signalment, history, presenting problem) to clinical examination, results of laboratory tests, diagnostic imaging findings and any other relevant investigative processes.

### 13.7 Written Examination

- 13.7.1. Examiners from both Australia and New Zealand (and on occasion from other countries) may be involved in drafting the examination where appropriate. Candidates will not influence the choice of examiners.
- 13.7.2. The written examination will comprise two two-hour written papers taken on the same day. There will be an additional 15 minutes perusal time for each paper. Each paper should require candidates to answer several questions within the two-hour period. Questions may have subsections.
- 13.7.3. The structure and content of each paper will be based on information contained in the Subject Guidelines for that particular subject.
- 13.7.4. Paper One will be designed to test knowledge and understanding of concepts and principles relevant to the subject. Paper Two will address the practice and clinical applications of the subject.
- 13.7.5. The examination will explore the entire breadth of the subject as described in subject guidelines. Choice within the examination in the subjects where it is allowed will not allow an excessive degree of specialisation.
- 13.7.6. Examinations will not be biased towards any candidate's special interest.
- 13.7.7. Questions may be essay type, a series of small parts or multiple choice. A clear indication of the marks allocated to each question or subsection will be provided.
- 13.7.8. Examiners for a particular subject will mark the written papers independently.
- 13.7.9. All examination papers will be destroyed six months after the examination date.

### 13.8 Oral Examination

- 13.8.1. For most oral examinations the candidate, and two or in some cases three examiners, and an observer representing the Board of Examiners, will participate.
- 13.8.2. Candidates will not influence the choice of examiners or observers.
- 13.8.3. On occasion, it may be necessary to recruit an alternative examiner for oral examinations at short notice due to sudden illness of the intended examiner. In these cases, it is unlikely the College office will have time to notify candidates of a change in examiners.
- 13.8.4. The oral examination usually takes the form of a discussion between the examiners and candidate. Case material for discussion may be presented using for example digital images, photographs, radiographs, videos or histology slides. The candidate will be assessed on his/her knowledge of theory, ability to interpret data and solve problems, and communicate orally.
- 13.8.5. The oral examination will usually begin with straightforward questions and progress to more difficult ones.
- 13.8.6. Only the notified examiners and the Board of Examiners appointed observer will be present with the candidate during the practical and oral examinations. If for any reason the Head Subject Examiner wishes to invite

an additional person to be present, he/she must write to the College office to seek approval from the Chief Examiner. This approach must be made prior to the examination and must explain the reasons for inviting the additional person. If approval is granted, the College office will inform the candidate(s) in writing prior to the week of the Oral examinations:

- that there will be an additional person present with the Chief Examiner's approval and the name of that person;
- the reason for the additional person being present;
- that the additional person will not take part in any aspect of the examination.

Candidates will be asked to contact the College office immediately if they have any objection to the additional person's presence.

The additional person must be placed in the meeting in such a position that he/she is clearly not actively involved in the examination process nor likely to distract the candidate. The additional person must not under any circumstances speak to anyone in the room during the examination and specifically must not be involved in asking questions of the candidate.

The Board of Examiners observer will ask the additional person to leave if it is their opinion that the presence of the additional person is causing distress or distraction to the candidate or the examiners.

- 13.8.7. The oral examinations for each candidate within a subject will be standardised so that each includes the same number of questions of similar scope and depth of areas assessed and addresses the same learning outcomes.
- a) The same examination questions will be used for all candidates examined in a subject on the same day and by all examining teams in that subject working concurrently on the same day.
  - b) For subjects in which oral examinations span more than one day of examining, the questions must be changed after each full day of examining, while maintaining the number of questions and the similarity in scope, depth and learning outcomes assessed.

The degree of sameness of the examinations within a day will be such that the same content, materials (scenarios, images, radiographs, etc) and qualifiers will be used by all examiners and the questions will be as much the same as possible while still allowing for examiners to individualise the examination to explore the knowledge of each candidate. Specific guidance is given in the Guidance notes for oral examinations.

- 13.8.8 Membership oral examinations will be designed to last approximately 45 minutes as specified in the Subject Guidelines. The exact duration of the examination for each candidate may vary depending on the speed with which the candidate proceeds through the questions.
- 13.8.9 Candidates will not be allowed unlimited time to answer questions, and examiners will move ahead to the next question after a reasonable time if candidates cannot answer.

- 13.8.10 Candidates are expected to present themselves for examination composed and ready to begin. Delays by the candidate at the start or during an examination of more than five minutes will not be allowed.

### 13.9 Assessment and Reporting - Procedure

- 13.9.1. The two written papers will be graded independently as a percentage by each of the examiners. The mean of both examiners' grades will provide a grade for each of the written papers. The mean of written paper 1 and written paper 2 will then provide the overall grade for Component 1.
- 13.9.2. A candidate's marks for the written component **will not** be released to a candidate before completion of the oral examination.
- 13.9.3. The Oral examination will be graded independently as a percentage by each of the examiners. These grades are averaged to give a single overall grade for the oral examination (Component 2)
- 13.9.4. The mean of the overall written component grade (Component 1) and the overall oral component grade (Component 2) is the candidate's combined final result.
- 13.9.5. All candidates receive their final result, on the same day, date to be announced.

### 13.10 Assessment and Reporting - Interpretation

COMPONENT MARK			EXAM GRADE
Either Component (Written, or Oral)	Other Component (Written or Oral)	Average (Components 1-2)	
≥55	≥70	≥70	PASS
≥55	≥70	<70	SUPPLEMENTARY*
Candidate fails to fulfill the above conditions of PASS or SUPPLEMENTARY			FAIL

\*need ≥70 to pass Supplementary

- 13.10.1. A **PASS** will be awarded if the candidate achieves at least 55% in one component (Written or Oral) **AND** at least 70% in the other component (Written or Oral) of the examination, **AND** achieves an overall average mark of at least 70%
- 13.10.2. A **SUPPLEMENTARY** examination will be allowed in only one component if the candidate achieves at least 55% in that component **AND** at least 70% in the other component but achieves an overall average mark of less than 70%.
- The Supplementary examination will be offered at the next College examination period.*
- 13.10.3. The candidate will **FAIL** if he/she does not fulfill the conditions of a **PASS** or **SUPPLEMENTARY** examination grade.

### 13.11 Examination Recording and Reporting

- 13.11.1. Examiners record candidate marks and written feedback for candidates within the Examination Results and Reporting System (ERRS).

- 13.11.2. Details of whether the candidate has passed, failed, or is to be offered a supplementary examination are calculated through the ERRS.
- 13.11.3. In the event of a 'fail' or 'supplementary' result candidates can request the examiners comments which are intended to advise the candidate the reason for their failure and give guidance for re-sitting the examination. Please see 13.13

### 13.12 After the Examination

- 13.12.1. Candidates access the ERRS to retrieve their examination result. The Chief Examiner will also advise candidates of their results in writing within 30 days of the Oral examination.
- 13.12.2. Candidates may not contact examiners before or after the examination or contact observers after the examination. Examiners or observers that are contacted by candidates are asked to direct all enquiries to the College office.
- 13.12.3. An appeal process is available to unsuccessful candidates (See section 15 below). All enquiries should be directed to the Chief Executive Officer care of the College office.
- 13.12.4. Candidates that fail to attend or complete any examination component/s for the examination year or receive Extenuating Circumstances for a component cannot apply for the information provided to unsuccessful candidates in 13.13.1

### 13.13 Unsuccessful Candidates

- 13.13.1. Unsuccessful Membership Examination Candidates may make a written request for the College to provide information, and access to certain documents relating to unsuccessful examination component(s).

The purpose of releasing such information and providing access to such documents is to assist unsuccessful Candidates identify areas of weakness or poor performance that they can address if they reattempt the Membership Examinations. Details of a passed examination component will not be released.

The process of requesting examination information is separate from the appeal process. The lodging of an appeal cannot be delayed until after access to examination information and written papers is provided.

The following conditions apply to the release of the examination information:

1. Candidates must make written request for examination information and access to papers (separate from the signing of the Access to Information Agreement). Written request must be made to the Examinations Officer **no earlier than ten days and no later than sixty days** of the date of notification of their examination results.
2. The earliest the examination information and access to papers may be requested is ten days after the date of notification of the examination results (except in extenuating circumstances at the discretion of the Chief Examiner).

3. The following examination information will be made available to candidates:
  - a. The mean mark for each question in the Written Papers, the overall mean mark for the Practical examination (if applicable) and the overall mean mark for the Oral examination.
  - b. Examiners written comments (if any) for the Written and Practical Components of the Examination. These may be general comments which pertain to the Component as a whole or may be specific comments addressing particular questions where the Candidate's performance was unsatisfactory; and
  - c. Examiners' written comments regarding any areas of deficiency in the Candidate's performance in the Oral.
4. Access to the candidate's Written component examination papers, the Practical written examination papers and material (if available) will be granted only under the following conditions:
  - a. Candidate's access to examination papers will be supervised by, and in the presence of a member of the Board of Examiners or a nominee of the Chief Examiner.
  - b. The candidate's nominated mentor may attend the viewing of papers with the candidate.
  - c. The candidate's access will be limited to 120 minutes at a single sitting.
  - d. Candidates are not permitted to use any method or media to record or recreate the examination papers or other examination material, e.g. photocopying, photographing or voice recording. Candidates are permitted to make handwritten notes during the period of access.
  - e. Candidates wishing to view their papers, must do so by 31st October in the year that the examination was completed.

## **14. Supplementary Procedure**

- 14.1. A Membership candidate may be offered a supplementary examination according to the conditions set down under 13.10.2.
- 14.2. A supplementary examination will be offered in one component of the examination only; that is either (a) the written papers or (b) the oral component of the examination. The entire component of the examination must be completed.
- 14.3. The supplementary examination must be taken within two calendar years of the date of offer of the supplementary.
- 14.4. The Supplementary Examination Fee will be 50% of the membership examination Fee in the year the Supplementary Examination is taken. The Supplementary Examination Fee will apply at the discretion of the Chief Examiner.
- 14.5. A candidate wishing to take advantage of a supplementary examination must notify the College in writing on or before the closing date for lodging an application for Membership examination.
- 14.6. The supplementary examination will be prepared and graded in the same manner as any other College Membership examination. The examiners may or may not be the same examiners as those who conducted the primary examination. A pass will be

awarded if the candidate achieves at least 70% in the supplementary examination, or at least 55% in the supplementary examination AND at least 70% in the other component that was passed at the previous attempt AND the **overall average** of the supplementary mark and the previously passed component is at least 70%. If these conditions are not met, the candidate will fail. A second supplementary will not be allowed from a supplementary examination; rather the candidate must sit all examination components again.

14.7. These regulations are at the discretion of the Chief Examiner.

## 15. Equitable Assessment Procedure Policy

The Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists is committed to allowing all candidates for examinations access to equitable assessment procedures. If a candidate believes that the circumstances, locations or systems of the examination procedures (written, oral and / or practical) do not allow them to fully display their professional knowledge, skills and behaviours, they are **strongly encouraged** to submit a request for variation of assessment procedures.

Requests for variation of assessment procedures should be made in the form of a draft plan which must:

- Be directed to the Chief Examiner via the College Office and submitted by 28th February in the year of the examination, or earlier.
- Be accompanied by a letter of support from their health professional<sup>1</sup> or professionals outlining measures requested to enable the candidate to fairly display what they know and have learnt during the examination process, in addition to those routinely provided to all candidates. This letter needs to include specific areas where changes to standard practices are requested - some examples might include;
  - Large print examination papers.
  - High contrast materials (papers, photographs, slides).
  - Increased lighting.
  - Extra reading time.
  - Use of a scribe or keyboard or other data entry device.
  - Extra toilet breaks or rest periods.
  - Wheel chair access.
  - Ergonomic furniture.
  - Measures to allow increased audibility (i.e. in oral examinations).

In consultation with the candidate, a plan which accommodates as many of the candidates' requests as are possible will be developed. Note that this plan will take into account;

- The contents of the professionals' letter of support.
- Costs, locations and timeframes.

---

<sup>1</sup> Including registered General Medical Practitioner, and appropriate Specialist Medical Practitioner (*e.g.* Ophthalmologist, Physician, Psychiatrist), Optometrist, Audiologist, Occupational Therapist, Psychologist.

- Fairness to the other candidates in the examination system.
- Whether the candidate wishes their examiners to be informed of the reasons for modifications to their examination.

Modifications to the examination process can only be made in areas that the examination was not intending to measure. Assessment procedures such as marking proformas, marking schemes, assessment keys and ‘fail/pass/supplementary mark levels’ will not differ between candidates in each examination stream. The subject guidelines outline the areas that are to be examined for every candidate.

Note that all examinations will be carried out in English. Requests for variation of procedures that include translations to a foreign language will not be permitted.

The plan for variation of examination procedures will be agreed and signed by the candidate and the Chief Examiner prior to 60 days before the written examination date.

Excepting small, incidental changes on the day, neither party may divert from the previously agreed plan during the examination process. The Chief Examiner or their delegate(s) will monitor examination procedures to ensure that the agreed plan is adhered to.

Strict provisions of confidentiality will be applied to notification by any candidate to the College.

The College cannot act to accommodate variations for candidates who do not submit a request for variation of examination procedures.

The Board of Examiners will strive to provide a fair process of assessment to all candidates, however if a plan cannot be developed and agreed to by both parties, the matter may be referred to Council for resolution.

## 16. Extenuating Circumstances Policy

This policy allows Candidates to defer or resit (an) examination component(s) in the event of appropriately documented extenuating personal circumstances without incurring additional College fees.

Candidates who are **unable to prepare for and complete** any or all components of a Membership examination because of a serious medical or critical personal circumstance may apply for permission to attempt the examination component at the next examination sitting.

Candidates who **sit (an) examination component(s), but whose performance may have been impaired** because of a serious medical or critical personal circumstance, may apply for permission to attempt the examination component at the next examination sitting. If the application for consideration of extenuating circumstances is successful, the affected component(s) will not be marked.

Critical personal circumstances are those which have a “substantial” effect on the “normal” functioning of the candidate for a significant portion of the study period or the examination day. Critical personal circumstances include (but are not limited to) illness, injury and bereavement. Critical personal circumstances occurring more than four weeks before the examination date will not normally be considered.

If the application is successful the candidate will be offered an examination of the affected component(s) at the next planned offering in the following year, or two years



later for subjects offered every second year. Examinations will not be offered outside of the normal examination periods.

All applications for extenuating circumstance require certification by an appropriate registered health professional and must be made on the application [form](#) available from the College website.

All applications must be made within 14 days before and 2 days after the examination component(s) affected.

The CEO will consider all applications on a case-by-case basis. No guarantees of an application's success can be made.

In the event that a determination cannot be made, the CEO will call on the Chief Examiner and President to determine the application.

The maximum period for completion of all components of the examination may or may not be extended at the discretion of Chief Examiner on a case-by-case basis.

It is not possible to apply for extenuating circumstance under this policy and also lodge an appeal for the same examination in the same year.

## 17. Appeal Procedure

### 17.1. Appeals generally:

Below is a summary of the grounds to lodge an appeal against a failure to pass any aspect of an examination, or any other adverse decision of the College affecting the Candidate. The latest and complete version of the [Appeal Policy](#) can be found in the College's Policies and Procedures, which can be found under the 'Publications' tab of the website or may be obtained by contacting the College.

It is the Candidate's responsibility to ensure that they are referring to the current version of the *Appeal Policy* when lodging an appeal with the College.

### 17.2. Appeal summary

A person may appeal the following decisions made by the College:

- denial of approval of a Candidate's Fellowship Training Program
- denial of a Candidate's Fellowship Credentials
- failure of an examination undertaken by a Candidate
- refusal to confer Membership or Fellowship where all examination and credentials (for Fellowship) requirements have been met
- any other decision of the College specifically affecting the person.

Candidates should note the following:

- an appeal relating to the failure of an examination can only be based on procedural irregularities relating to the examination or decision-making process
- no appeal will be allowed based on dissatisfaction with the academic judgement of the examiners (such as the choice of examination questions, marks or recommendations)
- no appeal will be allowed on grounds relating to circumstances affecting the Candidate's performance. (The person may instead make an application for extenuating circumstances: see section 16 above), and

- a person can **either** make an application for extenuating circumstances **or** lodge an appeal, **but not both**.
- 

## 18. CHECKLIST FOR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

**Please ensure** when completing the Membership Application that the following documents are included. *An incomplete Membership Application will not be accepted or processed.*

- Membership Application Form (includes payment information) - available from the College website: [here](#)

- Access to Information Agreement (Membership) – available from the College website: <https://www.anzcvs.org.au/membership/>

- Curriculum Vitae

- Payment

- If sending electronically, send PDF or word documents only, **NO** jpg.  
(*Ensure all applicable areas are signed before sending.*)

(If applicable)

- All necessary supporting documentation if not eligible for registration as a Veterinarian in an Australian State or New Zealand

---