



## AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SCIENTISTS

### MEMBERSHIP GUIDELINES

#### *Small Animal Medicine*

#### INTRODUCTION

These Membership Guidelines should be read in conjunction with the *Membership Candidate Handbook*.

#### ELIGIBILITY

Refer to the *Membership Candidate Handbook*.

#### OBJECTIVES

To demonstrate that the candidate has sufficient knowledge of and experience in Small Animal Medicine to be considered by colleagues and the general public as an advanced practitioner, representing a middle-tier of knowledge, competence and experience in this subject.

#### LEARNING OUTCOMES

For the purposes of this and further discussion, the term small animals will be taken as meaning cats and dogs.

1. The candidate will have a **sound**<sup>1</sup> knowledge of:
  - 1.1 the aetiology, pathogenesis and pathophysiology of organ dysfunction in the cat and the dog
  - 1.2 the diagnosis, differential diagnosis, treatment and management of canine and feline diseases
  - 1.3 diagnostic tests and procedures as these apply to the diagnosis of disease conditions in the cat and the dog; including the interpretation, limitations and practical application of test results
  - 1.4 preventative medicine as it applies to the cat and the dog.
- 2 The candidate will have a **sound**<sup>1</sup> knowledge of:
  - 2.1 canine and feline anatomy and physiology;

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<sup>1</sup> **Knowledge Levels:**

**Sound knowledge** – candidate must know all of the principles of the topic including some of the finer detail and be able to identify areas where opinions may diverge. A middle level of knowledge.

**Basic knowledge** – candidate must know the main points of the topic and the core literature.

- 2.2 pharmacology of drugs and vaccines used for the treatment, prevention and management of canine and feline diseases (including potential side effects, limitations, applications)
  - 2.3 common chemotherapeutics and biologics used for the treatment of canine and feline diseases, including their potential adverse effects, applications and public health and safety considerations
  - 2.4 canine and feline nutrition and husbandry, especially as it applies to the management of disease conditions
  - 2.5 potential zoonotic diseases of the dog and cat, along with measures to reduce the public health significance of those diseases.
- 3 The candidate will have a **basic**<sup>1</sup> knowledge of:
- 3.1 clinical features, diagnosis and treatment of common oncological conditions of the dog and cat
  - 3.2 reproduction and reproductive diseases
  - 3.3 exotic diseases that could be of potential significance to canine or feline health in Australia and New Zealand.
- 4 The candidate will demonstrate **sound** clinical judgement through a logical and justified approach to clinical investigations. This may include the ability to:
- 4.1 collect a thorough history, focusing on important clinical signs
  - 4.2 perform a thorough and systematic physical examination of all body systems
  - 4.3 formulate organised, logical and prioritised problem lists and ranked differential diagnoses lists
  - 4.4 prioritise diagnostic tests based on an organised differential diagnosis list
  - 4.5 follow accepted diagnostic pathways
  - 4.6 interpret clinical pathology, cytological, and diagnostic imaging results
  - 4.7 provide prognostic information
  - 4.8 outline methods of monitoring the efficacy of treatment
  - 4.9 formulate contingency plans should the treatment prescribed prove ineffective or problematic
- 5 The candidate will have a **sound** understanding of the indications, approach, and potential complications, for the following technical procedures:
- 5.1 biopsy techniques (fine needle aspiration and cutting needle core samples, with and without imaging guidance)
  - 5.2 blood pressure measurement
  - 5.3 body cavity centesis: thoracic, abdominal, pericardial
  - 5.4 bone marrow biopsy & aspiration
  - 5.5 arterial blood sample collection
  - 5.6 cerebrospinal fluid collection
  - 5.7 electrocardiography (ECG)
  - 5.8 enteral nutrition tube placement
  - 5.9 joint fluid aspiration
  - 5.10 prostatic massage/ejaculate collection
  - 5.11 thoracostomy tube placement
  - 5.12 transtracheal aspiration & bronchoalveolar lavage
  - 5.13 blood transfusion medicine
  - 5.14 fluid therapy
  - 5.15 Diagnostic imaging

- 5.15.1 radiography, including plain and contrast studies
    - 5.15.2 ultrasonography (basic concepts)
    - 5.15.3 computed tomography (basic concepts)
  - 5.16 endoscopy and biopsy
- 6 The candidate will demonstrate effective communication skills, in both written and oral form, using professional terminology and a logical approach.

## EXAMINATIONS

For information on both the standard and the format of the Written and Oral examinations, candidates are referred to the *Membership Candidates Handbook*. The Membership examination has **two separate components**:

1. **Written Examination** (*Component 1*)  
**Written Paper 1** (two hours): Principles of the Subject  
**Written Paper 2** (two hours): Applied Aspects of the Subject
2. **Oral Examination** (*Component 2*)  
**Oral** (one hour)

The written examination will comprise two separate two-hour written papers taken on the same day. There will be an additional 15-minute perusal time for each paper, during which no typing is permitted. The exam may include a series of short answer questions, multiple-choice questions or may require an essay-type response. The exam is worth a total of 120 marks and all questions must be answered. Allocated marks to each question/sub question will be clearly indicated.

### Written Paper 1:

This paper is designed to test the Candidate's knowledge of the principles of Small Animal Medicine as described in the Learning Outcomes using essay-style, short answer, note-point or multiple-choice formats. Answers may cite specific examples where general principles apply but should primarily address the theoretical basis underlying each example. This paper will focus on the pathophysiological basis of diseases in the cat and dog. Candidates will need to be able to discuss the aetiology, pathogenesis and pathophysiology of various disease processes. Candidates may also be required to discuss the application and limitations of available diagnostic tests in relation to their understanding of pathophysiology. Knowledge of pharmacology (e.g. indications, mechanisms of action and potential adverse effects) may be required.

### Written Paper 2:

This paper is designed to (a) test the Candidate's ability to apply the principles of Small Animal Medicine to particular cases/problems or tasks and (b) test the Candidate's familiarity with the current practices and current issues that arise from activities within the discipline of Small Animal Medicine in Australia and New Zealand using essay-style, short answer, note-point or multiple choice formats. The Candidate may be required to justify their clinical approach and treatment options using their knowledge of pathophysiology and pharmacology.

### Oral Examination:

This examination requires the candidate to demonstrate achievement of the above-mentioned Learning Outcomes. Discussion will be predominantly based on case material. The duration of this examination is approximately one (1) hour.

Images and laboratory results are likely to be used during this examination. A series of cases will be presented using PowerPoint slides, with supporting questions asked verbally in a face-to-face setting online. The oral examination has a total of 60 marks.

## RECOMMENDED READING MATERIAL

The candidate is expected to read widely within the discipline, paying particular attention to areas not part of their normal work experiences. This list of books and journals is intended to guide the candidate to some core references and other source material. Candidates also should be guided by their mentors. *The list is not comprehensive and is not intended as an indicator of the content of the examination.*

### Recommended Textbooks<sup>2</sup>:

*Small Animal Internal Medicine*. Nelson RW & Couto CG (Editors), 6<sup>th</sup> Edition. Elsevier, 2019. *Note: this text does not contain adequate detail regarding pathophysiology.*

*Cunningham's Textbook of Veterinary Physiology*. Klein BG (Editor), 56<sup>th</sup> Edition, Elsevier, 2019 (or equivalent physiology textbook, such as Guyton or Sherwood).

*Ettinger's Textbook of Veterinary Internal Medicine Vols I & II*. Côté E, Ettinger SJ & Feldman EC (Editors), 9<sup>th</sup> Edition. Elsevier, Philadelphia, 2024.

### Additional references:

Consensus Statements of the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine <https://www.acvim.org/research/consensus-statements> (pertaining to relevant common small animal medicine topics)

### Additional Reading Materials:

*BSAVA Manuals* (in topics relevant to small animal medicine)

*Withrow and MacEwen's Small Animal Clinical Oncology*  
Editors: David M. Vail, Douglas H. Thamm, Julias Liptak  
6<sup>th</sup> Edition - July 23, 2019

*Plumb's Veterinary Drug Handbook*. Budde, JA and McCluskey, DM, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition. Wiley Blackwell, 2023

### Past examination questions:

Please refer to the *ANZCVS website* (<https://www.anzcv.org.au/membership/sample-exam-papers/>) for examples of past examination questions. All candidates are encouraged to access these resources and to practice their examination technique.

## ENGAGING A MENTOR

The Small Animal Medicine Chapter STRONGLY recommends that all membership candidates engage a mentor during their preparation for examinations. The value of a mentor should not be underestimated. Mentors can guide you further regarding study

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<sup>2</sup> Textbook Definitions:

**Recommended textbook** – candidates should own or have ready access to a copy of the book and have a sound knowledge of the contents.

**Additional references** – candidates should have access to the book and have a basic knowledge of the contents

**Additional Reading Materials** - These are conference proceedings, other non-refereed publications and other journals that would offer some information in the subject area including differing points of view but are not required reading.

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plans/techniques, depth of knowledge required, examination technique and they may facilitate practice exam questions or mock oral examinations. Some mentors also run study groups, which enable you to work with other candidates during your preparation. Even if you are in a remote region, participation may still be available via email, phone, or video conferencing. Please consult the College website for a list of available mentors.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

For further information contact the College Office

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