



European College of Veterinary Surgeons

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Information concerning the Examination Procedure

The official language of the examination of the ECVS is **English**. The examination consists of Part I, II and III. The following explains the structure of each individual part and also the procedure of evaluation.

General comments

You will receive a personal identification number before the examination by mail. This number is known only to you and the ECVS Office. The Examination Committee members do not have access to the identity of these numbers until the entire examination has been marked and the results collated. Please bring this number with you to the examination. It will be used to anonymously identify your answer sheets and to find your examination seat. Seating positions will have been randomly allocated prior to the examination using these numbers. You must inform the ECVS Office in writing, before the registration deadline, if you have any medical reasons why a special seat is required. In such cases, supporting medical documentation will need to be provided.

All examination papers will be collected after each session. **NO PAPER MAY BE TAKEN INTO OR OUT OF THE EXAMINATION ROOM BY CANDIDATES.** The answer booklets/sheets are identified only with the candidates' personal identification number.

Candidates will be provided with pencils, erasers and sharpeners for the examinations. Under no circumstance may mobile phones be brought into the examination hall, and all personal items must be kept in a bag that is left at the door. The only personal item that can be brought to the examination table is a language dictionary. The use of a language dictionary is permitted in all three parts of the examination. Dictionaries should be labelled with the candidate's examination number. The Examiners may ask to check your dictionary before, during or after the examination.

Each of the three parts of the examination is prepared specifically for either large animal or small animal candidates. The timetables and venues for the two groups may differ. Part III of the examination however, may be delivered to both large and small animal candidates in the same room, at the same time.

The Examination Committee will meet with all candidates for a general briefing in the evening before the first examination day.

1. Part I (written case based examination)

- 1.1. This part of the examination will assess a candidate's ability to manage a case. The candidate will be required to interpret results and make decisions based on the information available to them. The candidate will be expected to answer questions covering all areas of surgical practice.
- 1.2. Candidates can expect to be presented with a number of different cases which will test their soft tissue, orthopaedic, neurological and general surgical knowledge.
- 1.3. Slides of images (including short video clips) and test results will be projected and the candidate will be expected to answer specific questions on these in the question/answer book provided.
- 1.4. It is expected that candidates give short written answers in English. Long written descriptions are not expected.
- 1.5. This part of the examination is progressive and answers to earlier questions may become more obvious as the case unfolds. In some instances, the answer to an earlier question may be given on the following page. **It is therefore imperative that candidates do not turn the pages forward until instructed to do so.** Candidates may not alter their answers after that page has been turned – i.e. **at no time is the candidate allowed to turn pages backwards.** If a candidate is seen to persistently turn the pages either forward or backwards, despite being warned, the Examiners **will disqualify** the candidate from the examination. In order not to disrupt the other candidates, the offending candidate will not be informed that they have been disqualified until after the examination is complete. There will be no appeal.

- 1.6. At the beginning of Part 1 of the examination the candidates will be given the opportunity to practise the procedure for page turning to ensure that they clearly understand the examination format.

2. Part II (practical part)

- 2.1. This part of the examination consists of two sessions, separated by a refreshment break.
- 2.2. The practical examination contains a total of 25 questions each with a number of subsections. The candidate will have 6 minutes to answer each of the 25 questions. At the end of each session, there will be an additional period of time when each slide will be shown again for one minute. During this time, the candidate may review and if necessary amend their answers.
- 2.3. Each question will relate to projected images which would typically be of diagnostic images/investigations, surgical procedures/equipment/implants, anatomic specimens, laboratory test results, cytology/histopathology slides etc. Video clips may be used.
- 2.4. Each candidate will have their own examination question/answer booklet which will be handed out in the examination room. Answers should be given in the spaces provided. At the end of the examination, the booklets will be collected for marking.
- 2.5. Short written answers in English are expected. Long written descriptions are not required.
- 2.6. Complete answers in a language other than English will **not be** marked. However some words may occasionally be written in one of the main European languages if a candidate cannot remember how to translate a specific technical term.
- 2.7. When a question requires the candidate to provide a list, the Examiners will only mark the number of responses requested. The responses will be marked in the order that they were written down by the candidate. Additional answers will not be marked. For example; Question: "List two main causes of this condition" Answer: "Diabetes, Cushing's syndrome, Hypothyroidism", only the first two answers will be marked, **even if the third was correct**.

3. Part III – (multiple choice questions)

- 3.1. This part will consist of 170 multiple choice questions divided into two papers of 85 questions each and delivered over two half days. Approximately 2.8 minutes will be allowed per multiple choice question. There will be 4 possible answers for each of the questions and the candidate will be expected choose **one**. The examination may be delivered in either a written or computerised format.
- 3.2. Questions will be asked on all areas of surgical interest (e.g. surgical principles, anatomy, physiology, basic sciences, pathophysiology, anaesthesia, pharmacology, blood gases, diagnostic techniques, asepsis/antibiotics, suture materials, surgical techniques, equipment/implants, post-operative care etc).

Examiners will be in the room to clarify the wording of any questions. Refreshments will be available in the examination room and the candidates may help themselves throughout the examination. Candidates will not be permitted to leave the room before completing their examination other than to visit the lavatory. Once all questions have been answered, the candidate may leave at his/her earliest convenience but will need to sign out. Any dictionaries brought in to the examination room must be left with the invigilators but will be available again for the next session.

4. Evaluation of the examination

- 4.1. The Examination Committee will evaluate the results of the examination.
- 4.2. The Examination Committee sets the pass mark, using an accepted validity scoring system. This system will even out unfair or obscure questions.
- 4.3. Each candidate will be informed of their results, by letter, within 8 weeks of the examination. Unsuccessful candidates will be notified of their performance shortly thereafter. Their exact scores and the pass marks will not be revealed to candidates.

The manuscripts of unsuccessful candidates will be stored at the ECVS Office for 6 years after the candidate's first examination attempt. No copies of either question or answers will be sent to the candidate.