



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

***EXAMINER  
HANDBOOK***

**2018/2019 Edition**

*The ANZCVS recommends that Examiners access the most up to date copy of this handbook from the College website <http://www.anzcv.org.au/examiners/>*

Congratulations on your selection to examine candidates for membership or fellowship of the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists.

The *Examiner Handbook* is intended to guide you on the principles of College assessment, the roles and responsibilities of examiners and the procedures which form the framework within which College assessment activities are managed. This booklet should be used in conjunction with the relevant Subject Guidelines and the *Fellowship Candidate Handbook* or *Membership Candidate Handbook*.

The College Board of Examiners and College Office Staff are at your service to assist you in your important role as examiner. Please contact us if the *Examiner Handbook* leaves any of your questions unanswered.

On behalf of the Board of Examiners, I take this opportunity to extend our thanks to you for acting as an examiner this year. You were selected because of your recognised expertise in your subject in addition to your proficiency in communication and your general professionalism and we look forward to working with you to deliver a very high standard of examination. Resources are available to examiners on the College website at <http://www.anzcv.org.au/examiners/>

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[Policies and Procedures available on College website](#)

[Templates available on College website](#)

## College acronyms

ANZCVS	Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists
BoE	Board of Examiners
CE	Chief Examiner
ACE - T	Assistant Chief Examiner (Training and Credentials)
ACE - Ex	Assistant Chief Examiner (Examinations)
TCC	Training and Credentials Committee
EC	Examinations Committee
SSC	Subject Standards Committee <sup>1</sup>
SEC	Subject Examinations Committee <sup>1</sup>
EO	Executive Officer
CM	College Manager
ExO	Examinations Officer
HSE	Head Subject Examiner
SE	Senior Examiner <sup>2</sup> (leads an examination team if more than two or three examiners needed)
CSW	College Science Week
FCH	Fellowship Candidate Handbook
MCH	Membership Candidate Handbook
ERRS	Examinations Results Recording System

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<sup>1</sup> Previous CEC responsibilities now sit with SEC and SSC

<sup>2</sup> Leads an examination team if more than two or three examiners needed.

## Timeline for Examinations

If you are able to submit the examination earlier than 1 March; this would be advantageous to the examination review process.

### Before examination submission to the College office

Action	Responsibility	Due Date
Appoint examiners	Subject Examinations Committee (SEC), Chief Examiner (CE), Assistant Chief Examiner – Examinations ACE(Ex) Examinations Officer (ExO)	Before 30th November
Examiner Workshop	Chief Examiner, Assistant Chief Examiner- Examinations, College Manager, Examinations Officer	February
Set written, practical and oral questions and marking guides and forward to Head Subject Examiner (HSE)	Each examiner	December – mid-February
Compile the written, practical and oral questions and marking guides	Head Subject Examiner	
Liaise with the Chair of SEC about written, practical and oral questions and answer keys to ensure conformity with Subject Guidelines and the Examiners Handbook. The SEC Chair will review practical and oral questions, particularly quality of images, clarity of questions.	Head Subject Examiner SEC Chair	mid- February
SEC-Chair-reviewed written, oral and practical components with marking guides due, along with SEC Chair checklist	Head Subject Examiner <i>(it is the responsibility of the Head Subject Examiner to ensure the review of the examination takes place by the SEC Chair in a timely manner before the paper is submitted to the College office for review)</i>	Before 1st March  <b>*(It is imperative that this requested deadline is met as adequate time for editing and preparation of the examination is important to maintain high standard, defensible examinations)</b>

### After Examination submission to College office

Action	Responsibility	Due Date
Examination components College formatted	Examinations and Assistant Examinations officer	On submission of the examination component.
College review of examination components and marking guides	Chief Examiner, Assistant Chief Examiner – Examinations, Board of Examiners Examinations Committee	March
College reviewed examination components returned to HSEs for final check and return to College office  HSE sends out marking guide for examining team to use when marking candidate's papers.	Head Subject Examiner	April  May
Finalised version of written papers printed and posted to venues	Chief Examiner ACE-Examinations College office	First week of May
Candidates written examinations emailed for marking	All examination teams	Second and third week of June
Mark candidates written papers	All examiners	Second and third week of June
Check for discrepancies in marks of candidates using the Examinations Results Recording System (ERRS)	Examiner pairs and Head Subject Examiner overall team of examiners	Prior to attending oral/practical exams.

### During and after Examination Week

Action	Responsibility	Due Date
Set up of practical examination	All examiners	Day prior to the examination, end of June to beginning of July
Feedback comments for failed candidates	Head Subject Examiner or Senior Examiner ensure helpful comments included in ERRS for failed candidates	On completion of written and oral examinations; before submission of candidates final result/s.
Examiner exit interview	All examiners	At end of examination period
Review of examination	All examiners plus SEC and SSC Chair's	At end of examination period and on receipt of feedback from College Office

# 1. PRINCIPLES OF COLLEGE ASSESSMENT

College assessment practices have been distilled into an Assessment Policy, which provides an overview of all requirements, with links to more detailed information. Further resources are available to examiners on the College website at <https://www.anzcvcs.org.au/examiners/> These include presentations by Drs Liz Norman and Sharanne Raidal at past Examiners Workshops and oral examination information to assist examiners. .

## 1.1. Subject Guidelines should contain Clear Learning Outcomes

*“What does a candidate need to be able to **do** to become a member or fellow of your College Chapter?”*

Learning outcomes are unambiguous statements of behaviours a successful candidate needs to display in order to be admitted as a member or fellow of the College.

They are based upon behavioural verbs, and need to be specific.

Avoid non-specific verbs such as “know” and “understand” – perceptions of “knowing” or “understanding” may vary between candidates and examiners, or between assessors.

In general, all learning outcomes should be measured. Learning outcomes canvass subject content such as:

- demonstration of mastery of specific discipline knowledge
- personal skills (such as initiative, communication skills, and attitudes)
- academic factors (such as ability to make use of information, think critically, analyse and synthesise ideas and information).

## 1.2. Blueprinting for College Examinations (<http://www.anzcvcs.org.au/examiners/>)

In developing assessment tasks, examiners need to be guided principally by the relevant subject learning outcomes.

In addition, examiners need to be cognisant of the College’s requirements for admission of all Members and Fellows, i.e.

The awarding of Membership of the College signifies that; "The candidate is able to demonstrate a high level of interest and competence in a given area of veterinary activity. 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 veterinary endeavour."

The awarding of Fellowship of the College signifies that; "The candidate has sufficient knowledge and experience in a particular area of veterinary science to entitle him/her to be acknowledged as a specialist or consultant in that area." In addition, answers from candidates should be supported by either universal scientific acceptance or by published scientific information. Candidates for Fellowship must demonstrate through their answers that they have formed their own opinion on issues related to their subject area, and that they can defend that opinion using their experience and knowledge of the subject area, supported by published scientific information.



## **Developing an assessment blueprint**

In developing a blueprint, the examiners decide how the subject learning outcomes are best mapped against the assessment strategies available to College examiners. i.e.

- Basic concepts & principles written exam
- Applied & clinical applications written exam
- Oral/practical exam/s
- Training program

At this stage, examiners may determine the types of questions within each examination that are best suited to different learning outcomes.

Learning outcomes are rarely equivalent in importance, or encompass similar volumes of content, and some will be evaluated in all assessment activities, while others can only be evaluated in a particular form of assessment.

In general, all learning outcomes should be measured. However, this is not always possible. In addition, some learning outcomes will be assessed outside of the formal examination processes. For example, at Fellowship level, some learning outcomes are assessed during assessment of the Training Program Document by the Training and Credentials Committee. At Membership level, some outcomes may be assumed to have been met by the criteria for eligibility to sit the examination (e.g. by being a veterinary graduate of some years, it may be assumed the candidate demonstrates certain professional behaviours which the chapter feels are integral to membership in their field but which cannot be easily evaluated with the available College assessment strategies).

## **Body of knowledge**

Normally the subject learning outcomes will reflect the body of knowledge in the discipline, but this can depend upon the way the learning outcomes are written. Regardless, examiners should design the assessment tasks so that they sample broadly across the discipline's body of knowledge, while giving most weighting to the most important areas.

## **Past examination papers**

Candidates will have access to previous examination papers, or representative questions, and will be guided by these in relation to areas of knowledge that the Chapter typically considers important.

Many candidates' approaches to examination preparation will be strongly influenced by their experience as undergraduate students, where past examination papers would have consistently been a more accurate way to understand what examiners were likely to ask than subject learning outcome statements.

## **Summary of tasks:**

- Determine which learning outcomes will be assessed in the various examinations (and which are assessed as part of credentialing etc)
- Determine the relevant weighting of topics across the examinations (i.e. the most important topics are given the most weighting)
- Determine the most relevant format of the examinations, using the outline contained in the subject guidelines.

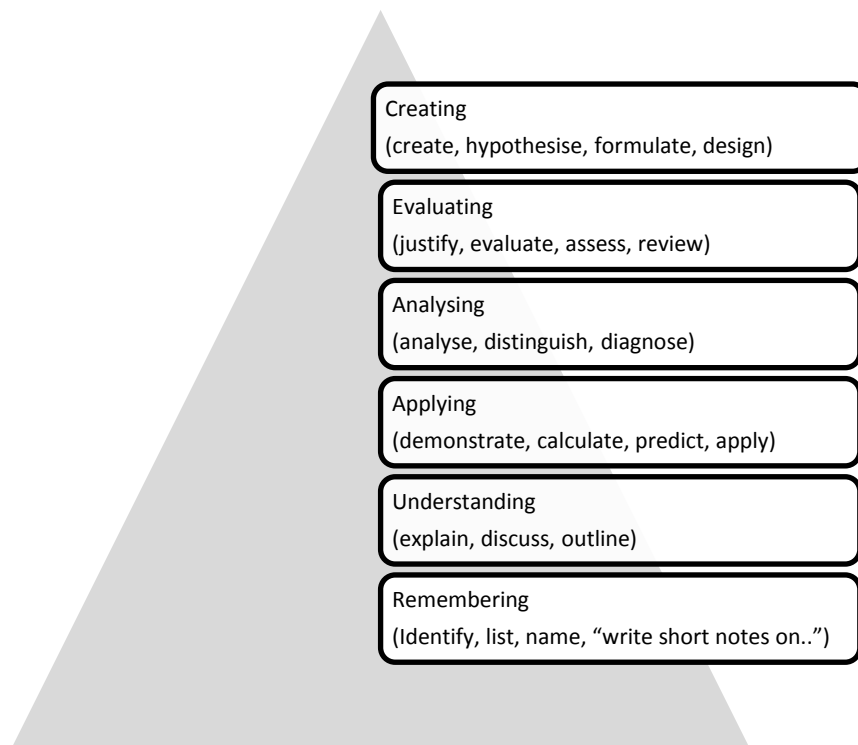
In making these decisions, examiners are guided by:

- subject learning outcomes
- College's expectations of successful candidates for Membership and Fellowship
- past exam papers in that subject

### 1.3. Develop Individual Assessment Tasks – Written Examinations

If the learning outcomes are clearly written, with precise behavioural verbs, then setting the exam questions becomes relatively straightforward.

Writing exam questions is not about being nice, tricky, mean etc – it is *only* about measuring candidate's performance against the subject learning outcomes. Consideration of taxonomies of learning, and behaviours associated with different levels, can be useful in developing questions for written examinations (see Fig 1).



**Fig 1.** An example of a taxonomy of learning outcomes, and behavioural verbs that reflect them. College examinations would be expected to focus on middle- to higher-levels<sup>3</sup>.

Some considerations in setting written examinations:

#### Multiple Choice Questions

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) often appear attractive to examiners in that they appear objective, and are reliable and easy to mark. However, it is time consuming and difficult to write good questions, particularly when higher order outcomes are being assessed, as they ought to be in College examinations.

<sup>3</sup> Anderson L and Krathwohl D (2001) A taxonomy of learning, teaching and assessing: a revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives. New York. Longman.

A common criticism of MCQs is that they trivialize learning through an emphasis on lower level learning behaviours (such as recall, identification, and understanding) which are not the true intent of the learning outcomes. MCQs *can* be designed to assess higher order learning outcomes, e.g. making a diagnosis after working through clinical records and laboratory results, but this requires a high level of assessment expertise in the examiner.

Some other concerns that need to be taken into account when using MCQs in written examinations include:

- They may measure English proficiency rather than Subject learning outcomes (especially when items are built around long, convoluted sentences)
- Location and sequencing of MCQ items may influence the candidate in unexpected ways
- MCQs that are easy to write tend to assess lower learning outcomes
- MCQs should not be used if the correct answer is open to debate (e.g. an expensive surgical procedure may not be nominated by some candidates as the best treatment option due to cost or some ethical viewpoint)
- There are a variety of marking guides for MCQs – whichever one is adopted should be clear to the candidate before they sit the examination

The College does not promote the use of MCQs. If MCQs are used in College examinations, they should comprise only a minor component of the overall examination. The examiners should be clear about which learning outcomes can be effectively evaluated by these types of questions, and there needs to be careful review of the questions to eliminate unintended ambiguity. The College policy on MCQs can be found in Policy and Procedures published on the [College website](#).

### **Choice**

Choice can be detrimental to a candidate because they may not choose in the most advantageous manner. Extra time needs to be provided to select the questions to answer, as the examination paper can become confusing, and it can be difficult to ensure all learning outcomes are assessed.

The College concedes that choice may be needed in some circumstances (e.g. where a Chapter acknowledges “streaming” of candidates’ interests even at membership level).

### **Time to Answer Questions**

Probably the most common error made by new examiners is asking for too much information for the period of time allocated for the question/examination. Remember the candidate needs time to think, structure in their mind a response, and write the response. It can be useful to ask another examiner to answer the question so as to test the time it takes to respond – candidates will need significantly more time. This is also one of the key functions of the model answers that are submitted with the paper (i.e. they provide some indication of whether the time allocated is likely to be sufficient).

As a guide, it should be anticipated that candidates can write no more than 16-20 words per minute during an examination, and questions should be designed to be answered completely within this number of words.

### **Timelines for Proofing and Preparation of Papers.**

Submission deadlines (see page 5 or College website) are important as they allow adequate review, proof-reading and, where necessary, re-formatting of papers. These steps are critical to maintain the integrity of the College’s assessment processes, and to avoid confusion during the actual sitting of the paper.

## 1.4. Develop Individual Assessment Items – Oral and Practical Examinations

Oral and practical examinations can provide rapid insight into a candidate's depth of knowledge and understanding. Some learning outcomes will only be able to be assessed by this type of examination, and care should be taken to ensure these are considered when mapping the overall assessment strategy against the subject learning outcomes.

Good preparation and standardisation of the examination procedures is critical to ensuring the reliability and validity of these tasks.

### Conduct of Practical Examinations

Remember the candidates will be tired and stressed. The instructions should be very clear.

Practical examination checklist

Ensure you:

- Check the quality of the examination material. Ensure that materials are clear, legible and of appropriate (good to excellent) quality. Ensure any labels or tags are correctly written and positioned. It is useful to ask another member of the examination team to assess your questions and materials for legibility and quality.
- Check the equipment. Ensure all equipment (e.g. microscopes, data projectors, radiographic viewing boxes, etc) is fully functional.
- Begin and end the examination on time. Any delays to or discrepancies in the scheduled Practical examination timetable can be very disruptive to candidates.
- Check that candidates understand the Examination format. Ensure that all candidates understand exactly how many questions are to be answered, and the time allowed for the examination.

Most significant problems occur when practical exams are set up in a mad hurry on the morning of the exam leading to issues such as:

- Rotating stations (tables) where the question at some stations did not apply to the image that was shown at that station.
- Numbering systems that did not match the numbers on the candidate's answer sheets.
- No logical sequence to moving to the next station, it is not acceptable to have candidates moving all over the place to find the next question

The simple solution is preparation:

- You need to set up the stations (i.e. tables) the night before. The tables need to be very clearly labeled with the question numbers.
- Check and then double check the stations, questions, and numbers on the candidates answer sheets, ask the Observer to review this as well.

## **Conduct of Oral Examinations**

Remember the 6 P's – Prior Preparation and Planning Prevents a Poor Performance.

It is important that, before the first exam of the day:

- the examiners have set up the exam room the way that they want it,
- they have checked the AV equipment is working,
- they have conducted a 'dry run' of the exam to ensure that the questions and images appear correctly, legibly and in the right order,
- both examiners are comfortable with the exam questions and the exam format (e.g. which examiner asks which question),
- the examiners have predetermined how to mark the oral questions according to a marking guide and will both mark each question out of the same number of ten against the same criteria.

Remember that you have a briefing with the Board of Examiners (BoE) Observer before exams begin; this could impact on the time available to set your room up. Allow plenty of time to do both. If appropriate/necessary, you may be able to set up the night before. Check with the College Office if this is possible.

### **Introduction:**

The BoE Observer will bring in the candidate and introduce them to the examiners. The Observer will then tell the candidate that he or she is just observing and taking no active part in the exam process.

It is then important that one of the examiners then makes the candidate feel at ease. This works best when the examiner had taken the time to find out about the candidate before the oral exam. One examiner told the candidate that he really enjoyed a scientific paper she had just had published, this was a big boost to the candidate.

If the candidate is known to one of the examiners then this initial conversation could even be more targeted i.e. "I understand you recently did ..., or are planning to go... etc"

If the candidate is not known to the examiners then asking where the candidate works, what special interests they have, can help put the candidate at ease.

### **Explain the format of the exam:**

The examiners should outline how the oral is to be conducted.

"The examination will take about 45 minutes to an hour. I will start with some questions, then we will move from examiner to examiner. Take your time, ask for clarification if you need to. We will periodically be giving you images or lab reports – the viewer is behind you. Please let us know if any of the images or questions are not clear. You may make notes and periodically we will also be making notes."

### **Going over written material:**

It is current policy that the written and oral exams are completely independent examinations. This means that a candidate's performance in the written papers cannot be used to determine what questions might be asked in the oral.

### **A good oral exam has:**

- Relatively little talking from the examiners. Remember it is the candidate's exam, they should be doing the talking. This means that long introductions including clinical history, signalment etc are suboptimal.
- Questions that are clear and indicate to the candidate what the examiners want. An open-ended question is designed to encourage a full, meaningful answer using the subject's own knowledge and/or feelings. It is the opposite of a closed-ended question, which encourages a short or single-word answer.
- Use of audio-visual aids only when they clearly add to the question. This is really extending the above principle. Don't show pictures unless they are clearly important to the question being asked.
- Have concise lab results. If using lab results, do not pass over an entire haematology and biochem printout if the question is focused on liver disease for example. Candidates will often use a lot of time to look at every value and trying to look for traps etc. The BoE would rather examiners use a separate print out that might only have two values on it for the two parameters of interest and then a line saying that all haematology & other biochem was basically normal.
- Clear Powerpoint displays. If using Powerpoint, do not use any presentation tips & tricks – no fancy colours or rotating bits or movement. Just use a simple background and monocolour text. This is not a presentation where examiners need to impress someone with their Powerpoint skills. It is simply a medium to support a question being posed to a candidate.
- An oral examination template is available from the College office. If you have not received this please request the template to be sent to you.
- Audiovisuals that are fit for purpose. Fitness for purpose means that selected material needs to meet the examiners' purpose for the question(s) but does not necessarily need to be perfect or complete (in terms of a series of images). Assessment of fitness for purpose should be made under conditions as similar as possible to those that will be present during the examination. This particularly applies to situations where an original image might be selected for use in an examination and then reproduced, scanned or processed in some way prior to the examination.
- Is prepared well in advance, with no delays. In membership orals there is so little time, it is very important to have carefully designed questions that lead the candidate to where it is that you want them to go. With a complex case you may end up waiting for the candidate to indicate what they would do next. If the candidate says x-ray, you hand him/her a radiograph and so on. This can be done at membership but it must be prepared carefully and experience shows that this approach is more likely to chew up time and reduce the number of questions. In fellowship this approach can be utilised a little more effectively but still with care to ensure it does not use too much time.

How does a good examiner handle the candidate when the candidate starts to go down the wrong path?

Oral exams have to take into account the individual – some are introverted some extroverted – some confident some not. The shy non-confident candidates require more time and need encouragement and gentle handling. Examiners may find that they have to change their handling of a particular candidate during the exam process:

- Try not to be either negative or positive e.g. be careful about saying “that is good” when you may not necessarily agree with what the candidate is saying or their direction
- Give the candidate time. Be prepared to allow a bit of silence – don't think you have to jump in and say something or provide direction.
- Indicate that the direction the candidate is heading may be one approach. Ask if there are any other approaches the candidate might like to think about.
- Ask the candidate to refer to the literature for support or lack of support for their position (i.e. to argue their case using published literature).

- Don't labour a point. If the examiner has pursued the above sorts of feedback and feel confident that the candidate has demonstrated the extent of their knowledge in a particular area then it is time to move on. Once you have enough information to indicate that the candidate is right or wrong or has reached the end of their knowledge then move on to another topic.

### **Ending the exam:**

Give a little bit of thought to how you will end the examination and in particular to choice of words.

Examiners may say for example: "Well that is great, we are finished and you are now free to go." What they mean is isn't it great that the exam is over?! What the candidate sometimes hears is "you did great". It is really important not to use words that can be misinterpreted by the candidate as being indicative of how they have performed.

### **A simple alternative is:**

"I think we have come to the end of our time period. Thank you for your interest in the subject. The Observer will take you back out and ask you to fill in some paperwork. Enjoy the rest of your day."

Should the examiners ask for feedback from the candidate about the exam process or the written papers? The College recommends that this sort of questioning be avoided. All candidates do get asked to provide written feedback on the exam process in a confidential process and this information is passed back to the SECs.

### **Working out the pass marks for candidates:**

Time will be required between candidates to add examination results to see if a candidate has achieved, failed or in membership received a supplementary examination for the following year. The Senior Examiner will add up the marks after the candidate has left the room.

### **Filling out the Candidate information to candidates that didn't pass: (see 3.2.6, 3.12 & 3.13)**

Constructive feedback from examiners to candidates on the HSE report on candidates who did not pass the examination form is required. This specific information is relayed to candidates if they request feedback (the majority of failed candidates do request feedback from their examiners).

## **1.5. Assessment Criteria for Marking Questions**

Marks are awarded on the basis of standards of performance against different criteria which have been developed by Chapters and published in the subject guidelines for each subject.

### **Marking Guides and Model Answers**

A marking guide describes the criteria against which a candidate's answer will be assessed (e.g.: knowledge of content, problem solving, communication) as well as the levels that indicate a pass, fail, and sometimes other standards (e.g.: clear pass, marginal pass, marginal fail, clear fail). It may include specific content (e.g.: a passing answer must include mention of fact a, b and c) or may be very general (e.g.: the passing candidate justifies their conclusions).

Development of marking guides is a critical part of the examination-setting process as they:

- Ensure an examiner applies the same criteria to each candidate and that all examiners are applying the same criteria.
- Are essential for moderation purposes; i.e. does each examiner understand the standard by which the candidate's response will be assessed?

Examiners must discuss marking guides and agree to them before marking can begin. This is true of both written, oral and practical components of the examination.

Model answers are usually written as an example of the ideal answer. They are useful for:

- checking the question can be answered in the available time,
- checking the expected answer corresponds to what is being asked in the question.

By itself, a single model answer is not a marking guide, as it does not indicate how a less than ideal answer should be graded, and does not provision for multiple ways in which a satisfactory answer might be presented.

Examiners are required to develop their own marking guides, and different guides are likely to be needed for each question in the examinations. Marking guides may be analytic or holistic. Examples of criteria and standards that might be appropriate for written exam questions are provided in the template below (examiners should modify the examples provided to suit their own context).

Examiners may elect to modify criteria to suit their discipline, or a particular question. More, or fewer criteria, or different standards may be appropriate - the design principle is important.

The following are examples as a guide:

1. Examiners should identify the criteria they wish to assess in the question, and
2. Examiners should define appropriate performance standards relative to each criterion,
3. Within the marks allocated for the question, examiners should determine the relative weighting (marks) for each criterion.

### Example of an analytical marking guide with two criteria and four standards often used for written examination questions

A particular question may have more or fewer criteria and standards.

		Standards				total mark
		Fail	Marginal	Pass	Excellent	
Criteria	Knowledge of subject	Fails to understand or address the topic. Conclusions illogical or not supported.	Shows limited understanding of topic and context. Reasonable grasp of principles.	Thorough understanding of topic and context. Shows evidence of critical thought.	Outstanding knowledge of topic, including comparative work from other species. Critical thought & analysis of literature is demonstrated .	
		<b>Mark: &lt;4</b>	<b>Mark: 4.5-5.5</b>	<b>Mark: 6-6.5</b>	<b>Mark &gt;7</b>	
	Logical presentation	Answer is disorganised and includes a large amount of irrelevant material	Answer is somewhat disorganized and includes some irrelevant material	The answer is relatively well organized and contains little irrelevant material.	The answer shows a high degree of logical thought and well constructed argument.	
		<b>Mark: &lt;0.5</b>	<b>Mark: 0.5-1</b>	<b>Mark: 1-1.5</b>	<b>Mark: 2</b>	
					<b>Total for question:</b>	



Alternative or additional criteria are shown on the following pages. Other examples are provided as Excel files on the College website – you might like to contribute further examples.

		Standards				Total marks	
		Fail	Marginal	Pass	Excellent		
<b>Criteria</b>	Content knowledge	Response includes <50% of relevant content and/or excessive irrelevant information	Response includes 50-70% of relevant content but also includes irrelevant information	Response includes 70-90% of relevant content and is largely free of extraneous detail	Response includes >90% of relevant content and is free of irrelevant detail	/15	
	Marks allocated	<7	7 - 8	9 - 12	>12		
	Clinical reasoning	Response does not reflect current evidence or underlying theory, incorrectly identifies or interprets information and provides inappropriate diagnosis and/or treatment	Response is partly consistent with current evidence and/or underlying theory, interpretation is incomplete or simplistic, diagnosis and/or treatment are acceptable but not optimal	Response reflects current best evidence and/or underlying theory, discriminates and correctly interprets relevant information and provides most appropriate diagnosis and/or treatment options		/5	
	Marks allocated	≤3	3	>3			
	Logical structure, sequencing and organisation	Poor structure and presentation of material. Difficult to read or illogically presented; inappropriate or incorrect terminology. Incomplete or excessively long.	Structure and presentation of material is acceptable with logical presentation – may be minor lapses in terminology, structure, length or selection of appropriate information for inclusion.	Structure and presentation of material is advanced with logical presentation; evidence of sound discrimination between essential and irrelevant information.	Structure and presentation of material exemplary; succinct with articulate use of appropriate terminology; demonstrates sophisticated understanding of condition and advanced written communication skill.	/10	
	Marks allocated	<6	6 - 7	7 - 8	>8		
	Breadth and detail of response: Scope, understanding, contextualization	Factually poor, superficial knowledge only; key information omitted or inclusion of extraneous detail	Factually correct, yet limited argument, contextually poor; most key info included, but opportunity to further discern essential and peripheral information.	Factually and contextually correct, yet limited extension; sensible inclusion of key information, minimal extraneous information.	Factually and contextually correct and appropriate with expansive supporting knowledge; mature and insightful awareness of condition; astute inclusion of all relevant information, no extraneous detail.	/5	
	Marks allocated	≤3	3	3 - 4	> 4		
	<b>OVERALL TOTAL:</b>						<b>/30</b>

		Standards				Total marks
		Fail	Marginal	Pass	Excellent	
Criteria	Communication and terminology	Does not use required terminology; fails to communicate at appropriate professional standard	Hesitant use of acceptable terminology, inconsistently demonstrates appropriate communication	Adequate use of appropriate terminology, communication is mostly of expected standard	Succinct and appropriate use of correct terminology; communication is of expected professional standard	
	Marks allocated	<60% x n	60-70% x n	70-80% x n	>80% x n	/n
	Application of knowledge	Information provided in the response is not relevant to the question or applied in a way that demonstrates no understanding of concepts	Information provided in the response is mostly relevant to the question and response suggests of understanding of concepts is probably acceptable	Information provided in the response is relevant to the question and response demonstrates expected level of understanding of concepts	Information provided in the response is relevant to the question and response demonstrates advanced understanding of concepts	
	Analysis and interpretation of results	Interpretation not provided or incorrect; lacks one or more key elements	Adequate interpretation that addresses key elements but there are substantive omissions, misconceptions or questionable conclusions	Adequate interpretation that addresses key elements with minor omission(s), missed nuances or interpretation of uncommon ddx	Thorough, accurate interpretation of results, well justified and appropriately prioritised list of ddx	
	Understanding and grasp of concepts <small>(from SOLO taxonomy)</small>	Question may be rephrased as the answer, almost completely misses the point of the question; able to identify, list, name or enumerate, but does not describe, explain or relate multiple aspects of a response	Able to list and describe distinct aspects of a response but unable to explicitly explain causes for observations, unable to present or recognise cause-effect relationships	Able to describe multiple aspects of a process and to explain mechanisms or elaborate observations into cause-effect relationships, able to compare similarities and differences	Highly developed, able to explain mechanisms and apply this information into a novel context, develop novel hypotheses, theories and deduce principles	
	Quality of planning	No plans provided, or plans not appropriate or dangerous	Plans miss some key aspects or are not specific to the problem presented	Adequate plans that address all key ddx, some poorly prioritised or not pragmatic	Thorough, detailed and well-prioritised and pragmatic plan that addresses all defined ddx in the most appropriate manner	
	Knowledge of current literature	Little or no literature referred to, or incorrectly referred to		Answer refers to some of the key literature	Answer refers to current literature including controversies and comparative work from other species	
	Risk, safety or fatal errors	Fails to implement appropriate WPS or biosecurity measures; treatment includes one or more errors likely to endanger patient survival	Minor lapses in WPS or biosecurity measures; treatment includes one or more errors that might compromise patient outcomes or unnecessarily increase cost of Dx or Tx	Appropriate WPS and/or biosecurity measures; treatment is appropriate to context with no detrimental effects on patient outcomes		
	Breadth and detail of response: scope, understanding, contextualization	Factually poor, superficial knowledge only; key information omitted or inclusion of extraneous detail	Factually correct, yet limited argument, contextually poor; most key info included, but opportunity to further discern essential and peripheral information.	Factually and contextually correct, yet limited extension; sensible inclusion of key information, minimal extraneous information.	Factually and contextually correct with expansive supporting knowledge; advanced insight into condition; astute inclusion of all relevant information, no extraneous detail.	

### An example of a holistic marking guide often used for oral examination questions

Grade	Mark range	Performance indicators
<b>Fail</b>	<5.5/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate knowledge</li> <li>• Inadequate application: decisions not rational and little justification.</li> <li>• Inadequate communication skills.</li> </ul>
<b>Marginal</b>	5.5-6.5/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barely adequate knowledge,</li> <li>• Barely adequate application: major decisions rational, able to justify some opinions.</li> <li>• Barely adequate communication skills.</li> </ul>
<b>Pass</b>	7.0-8.0/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate knowledge,</li> <li>• Adequate application: good decision-making skills, able to justify most opinions</li> <li>• Adequate communication skills: coherent.</li> </ul>
<b>Excellent pass</b>	>8.0/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed knowledge,</li> <li>• Excellent application: rational, critical, able to justify opinions, refers to literature as well as own personal experience.</li> <li>• Excellent communication skills: coherent.</li> </ul>

### Alternative oral assessment rubric:

Question / topic:							
Criterion	Unsatisfactory		Marginal		Proficient	Weighting	
	0	1	2	3			4
<b>Domain knowledge</b>	Little or no awareness of relevant information; frequent factual errors or omission of key information		Able to recall sufficient factual information relevant to topic; some errors or key information omitted		Well informed, excellent recall of relevant information; few or no errors, all/most key info covered		X2
<b>Application of info</b>	Little or no understanding of topic; information presented randomly and with limited application to case scenario		Satisfactory understanding of topic, limited or simplistic application to case scenario		Good to excellent understanding of topic; information intelligently applied to case scenario		X2
<b>Use of veterinary terminology</b>	Unable to use, or limited use of, correct terminology		Able to use correct terminology, some errors in pronunciation		Fluent use of appropriate terminology		X1
<b>Holistic impression</b>	Examiner is uncomfortable with candidate's response; major deficiencies identified on > 1 occasion		Candidate's performance was close to the required standard, with occasional minor deficiencies or omissions, or occasional minor inaccuracy		Examiner is impressed with candidate's abilities; demonstrated knowledge, critical thinking and communication ability consistent with performance at or above the expected standard		
<b>Comments</b>							

## Assessment Criteria for Short Answer and Multiple Choice Responses

Generally allocation of marks to these types of answers is straightforward, but weighting of marks (e.g. for different subsections of a question) needs to be clearly described in the examination paper *and in the marking guide*, and adhered to by examiners during the marking process.

### 1.6. Make Judgments about Candidate's Overall Performance

Procedures for doing this are outlined in the Assessment Policy, and described in greater detail at membership and fellowship levels in sections 4 (*Procedures for Membership Examinations*) and 5 (*Procedures for Fellowship Examinations*) of this book.

### 1.7. Moderation

The HSE collaborates with the examiners to ensure moderation of marking within a particular cohort of candidates (i.e. where multiple examiners are used) and also between cohorts (i.e. that the level required is similar across different years in which the examinations is offered).

The *marking guide* and model answers are a crucial documentation for ensuring reliable moderation of marking within a cohort of candidates, as it allows different examiners to be guided by the same criteria in allocating marks to candidate responses.

### 1.8. Management of Large Examining Teams

In subjects where examining teams of three or more are required (2 examiners per team), the HSE should function to coordinate and lead the team in order to ensure the quality and timely production of the examinations, and the delivery of valid and fair examinations for all candidates in that subject. In this situation, there is a greater need for moderation of marks awarded for written and oral examination components by different examiners to ensure consistency and equivalence for all candidates, and there is a need to ensure that all examiners are contributing the development of the exam. This would generally mean that the HSE is focused on supporting the other examiners to develop, deliver and mark the exam, but does him/herself not mark papers deliver oral examinations. The HSE should review marking to ensure consistency between examiners, and agreement between qualitative assessments and marks. Leadership of the examining team should include coaching examiners, identifying and addressing issues that may arise; in short, the HSE's people management skills are as important as his/her discipline knowledge and expertise.

To promote consistency in marking across examiners, the following methods should be employed:

- The creation of sound and detailed marking guides.
- All examiners should discuss the marking guide as a team and come to a common understanding of how to apply it.
- When assigning examining pairs, priority should be given to assigning less experienced with more experienced examiners.
- The HSE should perform some early cross-marking to flag any discrepancies in marking approaches between pairs of examiners (for example the HSE may cross-mark the first three candidates for all examiners).

## **1.9. Reflect, and Consider Changes for Next Iteration/Examination Period**

By setting aside a dedicated period for reflecting on the examination process, the examiners may identify areas for improvement in the assessment process, e.g.

- Revise Subject learning outcomes
- Revise format or scope of one or more of the examinations
- Revise resources for oral/practical examinations
- Provide feedback to mentors

The difficulty and structure of the examinations are determined by the Chapter through their SSC members and consistent with common standards upheld by the College for Membership and Fellowship exams. The SSC Chair should ask for feedback from the SEC Chair and examiners on completion of a subject's exam. If the SSC members agree that changes to the examination structure of a component is necessary then they should forward these changes to the College office before September 30 to allow for BoE review and finalising by October 31 of the year preceding the subject's next examination.

## 2. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPANTS IN COLLEGE EXAMINATIONS

All participants are expected to treat College Office Staff and Officers, other examiners, Mentors, Observers and/or candidates with respect, and are expected to avoid confrontations with these people in the process of examinations.

Please note that while examiners, as subject experts, are responsible for determining subject content of examinations, the Board through the Chief Examiner and the Assistant Chief Examiner are the final authority with regard to examination design and examination delivery.

*Candidates are expected to:*

- be familiar with the policies and procedures associated with College examination and grading
- display behaviour consistent with the College's mission and objectives
- have no role in selection of examiners
- not communicate with examiners or observers on any matters relating to the examination, or their marks

*Examiners are expected to:*

- assist the Head Subject Examiner (HSE) prepare examination papers *and marking guides* in a timely fashion
- assist in marking candidates' exam components and submit candidates' marks to the HSE for his/her review
- declare potential conflicts of interest to the Chief Examiner at the earliest opportunity
- follow the College's procedures in the conduct of examinations and assessment of candidates

*Observers are expected to:*

- to be present for and to proctor the oral and practical examinations
- usher candidates into examination room, and introduce candidates to the examiners
- report on the conduct of the examination to the Chief Examiner
- monitor the examination process and technique

*The Head Subject Examiner(HSE) is expected to:*

- liaise with the SEC Chair during the planning and preparation of the examination paper
- blue print the examination and negotiate or assign examiners' workload, including questions to be contributed by the HSE
- mentor and coordinate the examination team
- ensure that all examiners are aware of, and able to comply with, exam submission deadlines (timeline)
- coordinate the preparation of examination questions by examiners
- in consultation with the examination team, select and collate questions
- compile the examination paper
- ensure examination components are reviewed by the examination team
- version control and circulation of revisions so that team members receive the most recent documents in a timely manner
- submit the examination paper, along with marking guides, to the relevant SEC Chair member or review prior to submission to the College Office
- address requests for amendments from the College Office in a timely manner
- ensure each examiner has the correct marking guide for each exam component, is aware of how to use the marking guides and forwards completed marking sheets
- collate written and practical marks awarded by examiners for each question (including sub parts) and examiners comments on performance
- review the written and practical marks for each candidate for accuracy, completeness and discrepancies
- identify any discrepancies between examiners and, if necessary, remark according to College policy

- review candidates marks submitted by examining teams through ERRS, to assist in ascertaining if there are any issues regarding examination questions or disparities between examining teams
- be available to talk to other examiners about issues that may arise at the oral examinations
- be available to talk with the Chief Examiner / Examination Committee members about issues that may arise during College examinations

*The Senior Examiner is appointed by the HSE and is expected to:*

- be responsible for ensuring sufficient helpful comments for failed candidates in the ERRS;
- identify any discrepancies in candidates marks before finalising candidates results through ERRS.

*SEC Chair is expected to:*

- be responsible for reviewing and editing draft examination papers, and marking guides, prior to their submission to College Office, and for completion of the SEC Chair checklist
- liaise with the HSE to ensure submission of papers in a timely fashion

*In addition to roles and responsibilities identified above SEC members are expected to:*

- nominate potential examiners to the Chief examiner;
- to nominate a Chair who will liaise with the HSE during examination planning to ensure their consistency with the Subject Guidelines and the Examiner Handbook. The Chair must not be an examiner or have any potential conflicts of interest with any candidates;
- aim to formulate facilitate development of a question bank for each Section of the examination;
- review and take appropriate action (e.g. modify Subject Guidelines; modify examination format) following Chapter review of the cCandidate feedback (comments and suggestions) collated by the Board of Examiners after the annual examinations at Science Week.
- .

*College Office Staff are expected to:*

- assist examiners, particularly HSE, during preparation and conduct of examinations. This includes providing exam templates for examiners to use and formatting examinations to the College style guidelines
- advise candidates on administrative matters associated with examinations
- liaise with the Chief Examiner and EC committee on all matters associated with examinations
- provide a link between the BoE and the Council, Chapters and members

*The Chief Examiner is expected to:*

- oversee the entire examination and assessment processes of the College
- appoint examiners, on advice from SECs, ACE(Ex) and Management Staff
- assist examiners, as required, at all stages of the examinations process
- chair Board of Examiners
- consider, and be the decision maker, in instances of disparity in marks between examiners

*The Assistant Chief Examiner (Examinations) is expected to:*

- assist the entire examination and assessment processes of the College
- assist examiners, as required, at all stages of the examinations process
- chair Board of Examiners Examination Committee

*The Examination Committee is expected to:*

- review all examinations components and provide advice to examiners with written feedback
- assist examiners, as required, at all stages of the examinations process
- assist the entire examination and assessment processes of the College

*The Board of Examiners is expected to:*

- contribute constructively to the examination process by peer review of submitted material;
- ratify results of examinations
- implement the College's training and examination system, including conduct of examinations, review and development of policy and procedures relating to credentialing and examination of candidates.



### 3. PROCEDURES FOR EXAMINERS (GENERAL)

#### 3.1. Subject Examination Committee (SEC) (*see College website for more information*)

The size and composition of each SEC will vary according to the number of candidates presenting for examination. The SEC is the group of discipline experts responsible for design, delivery and assessment of examination components at Membership and Fellowship levels, and replaces the Chapter Examination Committee (CEC) as a mechanism to better share the workload inherent in subject examination and to facilitate the recruitment and development of new Examiners.

Please refer to the Subject Standards Committee and Subject Examinations Committee Handbook available on the College website: <https://www.anzcv.org.au/examiners/>

#### 3.2. Appointment of Examiners

3.2.1 All examiners are appointed by the Chief Examiner. The SEC Chair provides a list of examiners in each subject to the College before November 30. Subject examiners will typically be selected from the SEC. The composition of the SEC is described in the SEC Terms of Reference, in the Subject Committees Handbook <https://www.anzcv.org.au/examiners/>

In the absence of a SEC recommendation(s), examiners will be chosen by the Chief Examiner.

3.2.2 The size of the Subject Examinations Committee (SEC) should be determined by the Chapter, in consultation with the College, based on the typical number of Membership and Fellowship candidates. The Subject Examinations Committee (SEC) includes two examination teams, one for Membership and one for Fellowship, as required.

3.2.3 An attempt should be made to ensure that at least one examiner in each subject has had previous experience at examining for the College.

3.2.4 Chapters are encouraged to rotate examiners.

3.2.5 Examiners operate in teams of two at membership level, and two to three at fellowship level. Each team will not normally be asked to examine more than twelve membership or if the examination has a practical component ten, for fellowship three candidates. When the threshold is exceeded another team of examiners will be appointed.

3.2.6 In subjects with a large number of candidates there will be teams of two to three Examiners. In this case, each team will be led by a **Senior Examiner** who is responsible for finalising allocated candidates marks and ensuring sufficient comments available for failed candidates in the ERRS. The Senior Examiner is appointed by the HSE and is the most experienced examiner in the team. The Senior Examiner refers to the Head Subject Examiner.

3.2.7 Non-College examiners may be used if appropriate examiners are not available within the College, and the nominee is approved by the Chief Examiner. Non-veterinarians may be used but their appointment must first be ratified by Council.

- 3.2.8 Overseas examiners (from countries other than Australia or New Zealand) may be used at the discretion of the Chief Examiner if the appropriate expertise is not available within Australia or New Zealand and/or the use of a high profile overseas examiner may assist the quest for international recognition of College qualifications. Chapters wishing to use overseas examiners should write to the Chief Examiner before 30 November in the year preceding the examination. Overseas examiners will be requested to meet with College executives during Science Week and report back to overseas colleges and the ANZ College on the examination process.
- 3.2.9 Candidates have no role in the choice of examiners.

### 3.3. Conduct of Examiners

The conduct of examiners is critical to the College's ability to fulfill its mission, and to the assessment processes that underpin the integrity and reputation of the membership and fellowship qualifications. For these reasons;

- 3.3.1 Examiners are expected to be punctual and meet deadlines for submission of examinations.
- 3.3.2 Examiners with a conflict of interest are expected to reveal such a conflict to the Chief examiner at the earliest opportunity. Conflicts of interest may occur when an examiner has had, or has, a relationship with one or more candidates such as;
- Being close relatives (e.g. sibling, spouse, cousin)
  - Close personal relationships
  - Research collaborations
  - Supervisory or other close working relationships
- Conflicts of interest might also occur when a candidate and examiner are in a position of potential business competition. The veterinary profession is a small community, so if there is any doubt about a potential conflict of interest, the Chief Examiner should be consulted.
- 3.3.3 Examiners must maintain the confidentiality of each candidate's examination responses and marks, including the written papers and records of practical and oral examinations.

Examiners must **not** discuss the examination with anyone, except the following people, where necessary:

- Subject examiners,
- Observer of the oral and practical,
- Members of the Board of Examiners,
- Members of College Council,
- College Office Staff and
- Persons nominated by Council in the event of an appeal.

Examiners must not discuss examinations, or examination results, in any public areas during the College Exam and Science week.

- 3.3.4 Examiners do **not** communicate with candidates about the examination, unless it is with the written permission of the Chief examiner and through the College office.

Examiners must not discuss results with candidates under any circumstances.

Any attempts by a candidate to contact an examiner about an examination or examination results, should be reported to the Chief Examiner.

- 3.3.5 Any email correspondence relating to examinations should be written in the expectation that such correspondence could become public at some later stage.

### 3.4. The Examination Process - General

From 2017 each examiner will submit marks using the electronic Examinations Results Recording System (ERRS).. **Further information regarding utilising the ERRS will be provided to examiners before marking of candidates written papers in 2018.**

#### 3.4.1 Examination Location

Written examinations may be offered in selected major centres, but Oral and Practical examinations are only offered at the College Science Week venue.

#### 3.4.2 Anonymity of candidates

Candidates are identified by a number for the written examinations to maintain their anonymity until the grading of written papers is complete, and by number and name for the oral and practical examinations.

#### 3.4.3 Marking of written papers and oral/practical examinations

3.4.3.1 The marking of the written papers and oral/practical examinations is conducted independently of each other.

3.4.3.2 The Head Subject Examiner reviews marks awarded by examiners for each question. Where marks awarded by different examiners for the same question or for a sub-question differ by more than 10% of the marks available, the Head Subject Examiner (or Senior Examiner) must request that the examiners each re-grade that question. As an indication, this means that examiners may discuss discrepancies when there are differences in questions or sub-questions that are worth between: 1-5 marks, when the marks differ by more than half a mark; 6-10 marks, by more than one mark; and 11-20 marks, when markers differ by more than two marks.

If, after a process of discussion and review of the answer given and the marking guide, the marks awarded by different examiners for the question or sub-question still differ by more than 20%, or the overall result for the paper differs by more than 10%, then the Chief Examiner of the College will be notified and that question, answer key and the candidate's answer for that question may be sent to another examiner for consideration at the discretion of the Chief Examiner. Persons will be regarded as suitable to act as another examiner if they meet the following criteria:

- Not involved in training or mentoring of the candidate, and
- Preferably have previously examined at the same examination level in the same discipline

In this instance the Chief Examiner, in consultation with two members of the Board, will make a decision on the marks to be awarded, taking into account the marks from all the examiners.

### 3.5. Examination Structure

**Examiners and candidates can find the** structure of each component in the subject guidelines. Examiners must adhere to these outlined examination structures when designing each exam components.

Revisions to examination structure can be planned as part of subject guidelines review and must be submitted to the College Office by 30 September in the year preceding examinations. Changes to examination structure are not permitted after 31 October the year preceding examinations.

Examination structure is subject to the following limitations:

- The maximum duration for each written examination paper is two hours for membership examinations and four hours for fellowship 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 and 20 minutes for fellowship
- 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
- If there are multiple choice questions these must be together in one section
- 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.
- 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).

### 3.6. Reuse of Question in Subsequent Examinations

- No more than 20% of the questions in any written or practical examination can be substantially similar to questions offered in the previous three examinations offered in the same subject.
- Any exam question that is reused must be identified as such by the Head Subject Examiner at the time of submission of the draft examination to the Board of Examiners.

### 3.7. Use of Acronyms and Copyright Policy

#### 1. Use of Acronyms

Where you use an acronym in any examination question, the term it relates to must be written out in full wherever the term first appears in the question. NB: this requirement applies even where you consider the acronym to be common knowledge.

#### 2. Copyright policy

While the College has a right to use copyright material belonging to others in its examinations without seeking prior permission, the same does not apply to other uses, such as later hosting written examinations on its website for the benefit of future Candidates.

Therefore in order for the College to be able to manage how it deals with examination materials, **and to ensure that there is no breach of copyright, the College requires you to identify any material used that might belong to another person.**

For example:

- A photograph or drawing taken from a text book, journal, article etc
- An x-ray, radiograph, scan, photograph or other image **not** made by you/your employee in **your business**
- An x-ray, radiograph, scan, photograph or other image **made by you** as an **employee of another person's business** (including veterinary practices and universities)
- An x-ray, radiograph, scan, photograph or other image supplied by a client (ie. made by someone else)
- Written questions copied from another source

**You should footnote the source of this information within the examination itself (eg in the 'notes' section in Powerpoint or as a footnote in a Word document)**

If you have any doubts, you may contact the College on 07-3423 2016.

The College's *Copyright Policy* can be read in full in the *Policies and Procedures Handbook*, which is available on the College website.

## Copyright indemnity for examiners

While the *Copyright Act* protects the use of third-party copyright material for use in setting examinations, the College also decided to **offer an indemnity to examiners to protect them from any legal action based on a breach of copyright** for examinations prepared by the examiner, provided they examiner complies with the *Copyright Policy* requirements (ie. *identifying copyright material belonging to others as described above*). The College believes that as a matter of good governance, examiners should not be exposed to the financial and emotional costs of defending themselves against claims arising from the examiners' voluntary work for the College.

## License over examinations

By agreeing to prepare an examination for the College, you agree to give the College a license to republish the examination.

This means the **ownership** of copyright in new material created in the examination **remains with the author(s)** (ie. you as examiner and any other examiners who have contributed).

## 3.8. Securing Examinations and Question Banking

### 1. Securing Examinations

All components of all exams will be initially secured at every examination venue.

Examinations not initially secured because of a breach of procedures, will not be considered permanently secured.

Chapters may choose to hold membership and/or fellowship examinations permanently secured for question banking if they wish.

Chapters may choose to permanently secure particular components of the examination or all components of the examination.

Chapters wishing to hold examination components permanently secured must submit sample questions to the College Office by October 31st the year before the examination.

The sample questions must be representative of and sufficient in number to give candidates a good idea of the range of structure, style and type of questions to be used in the permanently secured component across the breadth of learning outcomes. For MCQs the number of questions required is equivalent to 20% of the number of questions intended to be used in any one examination. For other question types, at least 5 sample questions are required. Sample questions may be derived from past papers.

Marking guides for sample questions shall not be provided.

New sample questions are required when there are planned changes to the format of the questions used for examinations or if changes in current knowledge and practice dictate that the questions need revision.

Sample questions need to be reviewed by the chapter when the subject guidelines are reviewed.

For subjects or examination components that chapters do not wish to hold permanently secured, examination papers (but not marking guides) will be released publically for candidate use. Only such released papers are available for candidate scrutiny during review of their examination performance under the policy on candidate access to information.

## 2. Question banking policy

### Security

- Question banks are able to be used by Chapters who wish to initiate one where there is support from the Chapter membership.
- A separate bank will be kept for each subject or related subject area that wishes to bank questions. For subjects banking both membership and fellowship questions, a separate bank will be kept for each level.
- Access to the membership subject bank is limited to current membership and fellowship examiners for that subject or subject area. Access to the fellowship subject bank will be limited to Fellows who are current fellowship examiners. Access to the fellowship bank by non-Fellows who may be examining will be at the discretion of the Chief Examiner on request by the Chapter Executive.
- The College Office will maintain the infrastructure supporting question banks (including management of back-ups) on behalf of Chapters and control access according to Chapter instructions within the limits set out in this policy. Chapters will be responsible for entering and maintaining content.

### Types and sources of questions banked

- Questions may be written specifically for the bank. Chapters may solicit questions from Chapter members, potential candidates or other sources. The Chapter Executive must take measures to ensure that questions provided are original questions, not held under copyright by another party.
- Questions may also be banked from past examinations, whether or not the examinations have been permanently secured.

### Reuse of questions

- The reuse of questions policy will apply, limiting the proportion of questions that can be repeated from previous examinations, even if examinations have been permanently secured.

### Collation of ancillary information

- Questions to be banked must have ancillary information collated contemporaneously with questions being used and/or added to the bank. The responsibility for collating this information rests with the Examiners for that examination period and must be uploaded to the database when questions are uploaded.
- Question author(s)
- Names of all those who have viewed the question (including candidates, examiners, BoE members and College staff)
- Date of question creation
- Time allowance for the question (for candidates to answer it)
- Question type (eg: MCQ, long answer)
- Whether the question is of “fact-recall” or “higher-order” type
- Topic of the question
- Learning outcomes assessed in the question
- Estimated degree of difficulty
- Date(s) of question use
- Date(s) of question revision and revisions made

Question performance information such as:

How candidates responded when question was used  
How well question functioned to elicit expected answers  
Suggested areas for improvement if subsequently used  
Exemplars of answers of various standards and marks awarded

### **Revision of questions**

- All questions and marking guides pulled from the bank need reassessment by the current examiners and may need revision.

### **3.9. Securing Multiple Choice Questions**

Examiners may choose to secure multiple choice components of examinations for future reuse (as allowed under the reuse of questions policy) by retaining written examination papers and preventing them being available for review by candidates, under the following conditions.

- 3.9.1. Examiners must specify that the multiple choice component of the examination should be secured when they submit the examination to the College Office in line with the specified deadlines.
- 3.9.2. The multiple choice section of the examination will be designed to be presented to the candidate as a separate section of the examination, and stapled as an individual document. Candidates will indicate their answer on the examination paper itself (for example by circling the answer of their choice) and submit the entire multiple choice section for marking. The remaining sections of the examination will be answered in the answer booklet in the routine manner and candidates will be allowed to retain the section of the examination paper containing the remaining questions.
- 3.9.3. The College acknowledges that circumstances where candidates are able to recall the questions and circulate these amongst potential future candidates cannot be prevented. It is therefore of critical importance that examiners select multiple choice questions from a large bank of potential questions and that examiners are aware that the Board of Examiners has already imposed a limitation on the number of questions that can be repeated from year to year. The Board of Examiners may further restrict or control the reuse of questions in future if indicated.
- 3.9.4. Candidates wishing to review their examination paper after the examination will not be permitted access to the multiple choice component of the examination, and will be given a summary of total marks obtained in this section only.
- 3.9.5. Examiners wishing to secure examinations must also prepare, in advance, a set of sample questions of the same type, format and covering a representative range of learning outcomes that will be publicly released to candidates to aid their study. The number of questions required is equivalent to 20% of the number of questions intended to be used in the examination. Questions must be submitted to the College Office by December 1<sup>st</sup> in the year before the examination. Such questions do not need to change from year to year unless changes in format of the questions used for examinations dictates they should be updated.
- 3.9.6. The College will maintain a secure electronic storage area for the questions to which access will be strictly controlled and limited as determined by the Chapter (see point 7).



- 3.9.7. The Chapter must develop a plan for controlling access to the questions so that potential future candidates (who may be serving on the SEC) are not given access to questions which are used in their exam even if their potential candidacy is some years away. This plan must include methods of adequate peer review of questions. The plan must be submitted to the College office along with the request for examinations to be secured.

### **3.10. The Examination Process – Written Papers**

- 3.10.1 During the written examination process, the HSE is responsible for preparation of examination papers and marking guides, marking, and reporting of results to the Chief Examiner. (See also *Section 2 – Roles & Responsibilities*).
- 3.10.2 Written examination papers, having been reviewed by the SEC Chair, are to be submitted to the College Office for review before March 1<sup>st</sup>. After submission to the College Office, the written paper questions and marking guides are reviewed by members of the Board of Examiners. **It is imperative that requested deadlines are met, as adequate time for review and preparation of the examination is important to maintain high standard, defensible examinations.**
- 3.10.3 Examiners must record actual marks given for each answer, or parts thereof, on the electronic grading sheet provided by the College. All examiners use the same grading or marking criteria for each question.
- 3.10.4 Each answer is assessed independently by each examiner.
- 3.10.5 If a candidate attempts more than the required number of questions, all questions should be marked and the best marks used.
- 3.10.7 Feedback is an important aspect of the learning candidates gain from examinations. Particularly when low marks are given, it is essential that the examiner record the reason(s) for this in the ERRS. Such comments are invariably important when examination results are disputed.
- 3.10.9 Once marking of papers is completed, and prior to the practical/oral examination, examiners submit written paper results in the ERRS for the Head Subject Examiner to review. Any discrepancies that have not been resolved by examining teams must be deferred to the Head Subject Examiner, if necessary the HSE may need to discuss with the Chief Examiner reasons for disparities.
- 3.10.10 Marked answer papers are retained by examiners until completion of the oral examination and candidate results finalised. The originals are held by the College office for a period of six months and then destroyed.

### **3.11. The Examination Process - Practical and Oral Examinations**

- 3.11.1 The structure and content of the practical and oral examinations is an important early priority during the examination planning process.
- 3.11.2 The appropriate Practical Examination Template is required to be completed and submitted to the College Office with the examination by March 1<sup>st</sup> ([see College website for templates](#)).
- 3.11.3 Practical examination and oral examination questions, formats and marking guides must be submitted by the HSE to the SEC Chair in a timely fashion to allow feedback from the SEC Chair to be taken into consideration prior to submission of the paper to the College office.

The practical examination is to be submitted to the College office with the signed SEC Chair checklist by March 1<sup>st</sup>. The oral examination is to be submitted to the College office with the signed SEC Chair checklist by March 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### 3.11.4 Use of animals

The Board of Examiners does not encourage the use of animals during the examination process. However, if it is felt necessary by the examiners, a submission must be made in writing to the Chief Examiner, by March 1<sup>st</sup> in the year of the examination. The Chief Examiner will consider each submission and is the final arbiter for all requests for animal use during the examination process. Once approval is granted by the Chief Examiner, the existing College policy on the use of animals applies.

#### 3.11.5 Observers

- 3.11.5.1 The Chief Examiner appoints an observer for each oral and practical examination. The observer may be the Chief Examiner, a member of the Board of Examiners or any appointee of the Chief Examiner.

The role of the observer is;

- to be present for and to proctor the oral and practical examinations,
- to monitor the examination process and technique, and
- to report on the conduct of the examination to the Chief Examiner, including when the observer has concerns re conduct

The observer should be present for all examiner discussions on the oral examinations.

- 3.11.5.2 Only appointed examiners and the observer are present with the candidate during oral and practical examinations.

- 3.11.5.3 If 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 at least two weeks prior to the examination.

This approach must explain the reasons for inviting the additional person. If approval is granted, the College office informs 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 invited person will not take part in any aspect of the examination

Candidates are asked to contact the College office immediately if they have any objection to the additional person's presence. The invited person must be placed in the room in such a position that he/she is clearly not actively involved in the examination process, nor likely to distract the candidate. The invited person must not speak to anyone in the room during the examination and must not be involved in asking questions of the candidate.

- 3.11.6 At the oral examination, the candidate, two or more examiners, and an observer, will sit in a room together.

- 3.11.7 Questions are shared between the examiners.

- 3.11.8 During the oral, **no** records concerning the written papers or practical, or written notes about the oral examination should be visible to the candidate.

- 3.11.9 A candidate's performance in a written paper must not influence the choice of questions or question content in the oral examination.

3.11.10 Copies of all supportive materials for practical and oral examinations such as slides and images must be provided to the College office for safe storage.

### **3.12. Oral Examination Policy**

1. Examiners must contribute to the construction of the oral examination by providing questions and marking guides to the Head Subject Examiner. All questions and marking guides must be reviewed and agreed upon by all the examiners delivering the oral examination including all materials to be used, for example images, radiographs, ECG's and histopathological slides. They must also be reviewed by the SEC Chair and the BoE as is the normal procedure for all other examination components.
2. Oral examinations are to be submitted on Word and Powerpoint templates provided by the College. A separate examination must be provided for each day of examination.
3. The oral examination for each candidate within a subject will be standardised so that 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.
4. The degree of sameness of the examinations within a day will be such that the same content, materials (scenarios, images, radiographs, etc), cues 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, below.
5. The amount and type of cueing may be (inversely) proportional to candidate knowledge and reasoning. A strong candidate may pre-empt subsequent material. Examiners should identify in advance where and how they may need to cue candidates during the oral examination so that all candidates receive similar cues, as required. Examiners should also consider how the need for cues is reflected in their marking guide. Any additional cueing required during the examination should be recorded in examiners' notes, and will likely influence marks awarded.
6. Membership oral examinations will be designed to last approximately 45 minutes and Fellowship oral examinations to last 60-120 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.
  - a) 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.
  - b) Candidates are expected to present themselves for examination composed and ready to begin. Delays at the start or during an examination of more than five minutes will not be allowed.

## Guidance notes for examiners

### How much "the same" do oral exams held on the same day need to be?

Many things need to be the same:

#### 1. Scenario details and ancillary data

All details of the scenario presented should be the same, including the facts given to candidates and the data presented (eg tables, lab data, images, radiographs).

#### 2. The general plan of "main" questions

The general or main questions must be the same. So, for example, if a candidate is to be given a scenario and then asked about their management plan, management must be covered with all candidates. Similarly if the candidates are to be asked to explain or justify their answer, then all candidates must be asked this.

#### 3. Qualifiers and cues

Qualifiers express limits or provide additional detail about the type of answer candidates should give, and help the candidate to understand the focus of the question. Cues are used to prompt the candidate to expand or extend their answer. Cues should not lead the candidate. Examiners should be aware that candidates may variably look for additional cues, and should be vigilant in directing the candidate back to the question to avoid excessively directing candidate responses.

Examples of qualifiers to a question about management might include:

- *over the first 3 days*
- *imagine you are explaining your plan to a colleague (or alternatively to an owner, which substantially changes the type of language a candidate might be expected to use).*
- *assume you have an unlimited budget and all the equipment you would like.*

Examples of planned cues might include: remind the candidate to consider sub-parts of question (if forgotten):

- *ask candidate to summarise or focus their thoughts*
- *before progressing to the next disclosure, ask candidate if there is anything further they would consider*

In constructing the examination, examiners need to think carefully and plan for the qualifiers and cues that might be needed for an adequately prepared candidate, and ensure that equivalent delivery is provided to all. This will require detailed thought and planning.

#### 4. The order of each scenario

Each scenario planned should be presented to candidates in the same order.

### Things that would usually be the same but may need to differ:

#### 1. Exact wording

We have no wish for examiners to have to read exact wording from a script, although they may need to look at detailed notes to ensure that all scenario details, ancillary data and the same qualifiers are provided to each candidate at the appropriate stage.

For example one examiner might ask a candidate

*"Okay let's move on now and I would like you to tell us about the management plan you would consider ideal if there were no limitations on equipment or money you could spend. Let's just talk about the next 3 days for now. Tell me as if you were speaking to a colleague."*

Another may say:

*Examiner: How would you manage this case if you could spend any money and access any equipment? Imagine you are explaining your plan to a colleague. Let's just concentrate on the next 3 days.*

*Candidate: ok so you just want the first 3 days?*

*Examiner: yes that's right*

Note that all candidates should be given the qualifiers without them having to ask, however candidates may ask for qualifiers to be repeated or clarified and examiners should answer.

## **2. Number of qualifiers provided**

With careful planning all necessary qualifiers should be identified in advance. However if it is discovered during an examination that further qualifiers than were planned are needed, examiners should insert the new qualifiers into the questions for subsequent candidates and also communicate with examiners examining at the same time so that they also insert the new qualifiers.

## **3. Additional questions to explore the depth of knowledge of a candidate**

Examiners may need to add additional clarification questions above those planned in order to check the depth of understanding of a candidate about particular points they have made. However, in most instances it is appropriate to ask all candidates to justify their interpretations, plans or other statements. Asking for justifications should not be reserved for candidates who give an incorrect or unusual answer.

Examiners must not give hints or advice or clues to the correct or best answer to any candidate.

## **4. The order of questions**

Generally the order that questions are asked within each scenario presented should be the same from candidate to candidate. However examiners may find that some candidates preempt questions and may jump ahead before they have been asked. Examiners do not have to interrupt the flow of this, but should ensure that candidates have all necessary information (including qualifiers) to answer at that point. Examiners should also be sure to come back to cover all parts of the question that were planned.

### **How similar must exams on subsequent days be?**

If a subject is examined over more than one day, different questions should be used for each day of examining. While the questions need to be different, the following aspects need to be kept as much the same as possible:

- There should be the same number of "main" questions or scenarios
- The learning outcomes covered by the questions should be the same. This may be at a broad level. For example if the learning outcome concerns animal nutrition, then animal nutrition should also form the basis for the second day's question. The day one may address a deficiency of one element and day two may address over-supplementation with another element.
- As far as possible the level of difficulty should be kept the same.

This type of similarity can often be achieved by substituting a different scenario but retaining the same questions.

### 3.13. Examiner Report and Finalisation of Results

- 3.13.1 The Head Subject Examiner is responsible for checking for examination result disparities, and consulting with examiners the reasons for these disparities. If necessary the HSE may need to discuss with the Chief Examiner reasons for disparities and/or confirms the finalised results of all sections of the examinations to the Chief Examiner.
- 3.13.2 Examiner comments and the marks awarded need to be consistent. A lack of consistency between examiner comments and marks awarded sends an inconsistent message to the candidate, Board of Examiners and an Appeal Committee. *An example of this might be where the Examiner Report strongly supports a FAIL grade, although the candidate mark of 54% for one section falls only 1% short of the 55% that is a SUPPLEMENTARY grade.*
- 3.13.3 When a candidate fails, it is the responsibility of the Head Subject/Senior Examiner to ensure sufficient, helpful feedback is provided in the ERRS for the candidate.
- 3.13.4 The Chief Examiner reports any marking disparities and his/her actions to the Board of Examiners; however, the final decision regarding the outcome of these examinations is made by the Chief Examiner.
- 3.13.5 Once the Chief Examiner is satisfied with the submitted results for a subject, the finalised examination results are submitted to the Board of Examiners for final ratification.

### 3.14. Candidate Notification of Grade (PASS, FAIL SUPPLEMENTARY)

- 3.14.1 Candidates are able to access their overall result the Friday of Science Week and are further notified of in writing. If a delay in notification of the Candidate is anticipated, the candidate will be informed by email of the reasons for the delay.
- 3.14.2 Candidates should direct all enquiries re notification of results to the College Office.
- 3.14.3 Unsuccessful candidates may request further feedback on their performance and access to their examination papers. The process of requesting marks is separate to the appeal process and aims to assist unsuccessful candidates identify areas of weakness or poor performance.
- 3.14.5 **Appeals** are conducted according to the Appeal Procedures detailed in the *Policy and Procedure book available on the College website.*

### 3.15. Examiner Payment and Reimbursement of Expenses

All information regarding examiner payments and reimbursement of expenses can be found on the College website in the [Membership Info /Examiners section](#)

The College policy on reimbursement of expenses can be found at:  
<https://ripehosting.blob.core.windows.net/anzcvs-prod-media/23331/reimbursement-of-expenses-nov-2018-v1.pdf>

## 4. PROCEDURES FOR EXAMINERS (MEMBERSHIP)

### 4.1. Membership Definition

4.1.1 Membership of the College signifies the following:

"The candidate is expected to demonstrate a high level of interest and competence in a given area of veterinary activity. 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 veterinary endeavour."

### 4.2. Examination Format (Membership)

The following general format will be followed for all membership examinations and will be constructed to conform to the *Membership Candidate Handbook* and the specific description in the Subject Guidelines.

The membership examination has **two separate components**:

**1. Written Papers (Component 1)**

**Written Paper 1** (minimum two hours): Principles of the Subject

**Written Paper 2** (minimum two hours): Applied Aspects of the Subject

**2. Practical/oral (Component 2)**

For most disciplines, the **practical/oral** section is a single, combined oral examination. *Some disciplines (e.g. Radiology, Pathology) have separate oral and practical examinations.*

### 4.3. Written Papers (Membership) (Component 1)

4.3.1 The written examination will comprise two separate 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.

4.3.2 The structure of each paper is based on the Subject Guidelines for that particular subject. **Written paper 1** tests basic concepts and principles relevant to the subject. **Written paper 2** addresses the practice and applications of the subject.

4.3.3 Examinations will not be biased towards any candidate's special interest.

4.3.4 Questions may be essay type, a series of small parts or multiple choice. **Marks allocated to each question and to each subsection of questions will be clearly indicated on the written paper.**

#### 4.4. Practical/Oral (Membership) (Component 2)

4.4.1 For most disciplines, the practical/oral Section is a single, combined oral examination, aided by case presentations, and multimedia (e.g. colour images, video etc). This component will be of at least 45 minutes in duration.

Some disciplines (e.g. Radiology, Pathology) have separate oral and practical examinations. In these disciplines, the structure and content of the practical examination and its answer key, should also be reviewed by the Chapter Examination Committee prior to submission to the College Office by 1<sup>st</sup> March.

4.4.2 The oral examination begins with straightforward questions then progresses to the more difficult.

4.4.2 For subjects with a separate practical examination; copies of all supportive materials such as slides and images must be provided to the College Office for safe storage.

#### 4.5. Grading (Membership)

4.5.1 **Written Papers 1 and 2 (Component 1)** will be marked independently by each examiner, who will return the breakdown of marks (both before and after the examiners have conferred) and a mean mark (as a percentage) for each paper. The mean of the examiner marks for each written paper is the overall mark for that paper. The mean of the overall marks for written papers 1 and 2 is the overall mark for the written component.

4.5.2 It is essential that marking of the written papers is completed, that grades are collated and that examiners have conferred about each candidate **before the oral examination take place**

4.5.3 The **oral (Component 2)** will be marked independently by each examiner, who will return a mean mark (as a percentage) for the oral. The mean of the examiners' marks will be the overall mark for the oral component.

4.5.4 Marking guides are required for all questions.

4.5.5 **Examination Grade (PASS, FAIL or SUPPLEMENTARY) (Membership)**

MEMBERSHIP EXAMINATION			
SECTION MARK			EXAM GRADE
One Component only	Other Component	Average of both Components	
≥55	≥70	≥70	PASS
≥55	≥70	<70	SUPPLEMENTARY (need ≥70 to pass Supp)
candidate fails to fulfill the above conditions of PASS or SUPPLEMENTARY			FAIL

4.5.6 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%



- 4.5.7 A **SUPPLEMENTARY** examination may be offered in a maximum of 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.

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.

- 4.5.8 The candidate will **FAIL** if he/she does not fulfill the conditions of a PASS or SUPPLEMENTARY examination grade.

#### **4.6. Examiner Reporting (Membership)**

- 4.6.1 Details of whether the candidate has passed, failed, or is to be offered a supplementary examination are calculated through the ERRS.
- 4.6.2 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. .
- 4.6.3 The Head Subject Examiner/Senior Examiner ensures sufficient comments are available giving the candidate reasons for their failure and suggestions for preparing to re-sit the examination.

## 5. PROCEDURES FOR EXAMINERS (FELLOWSHIP)

### 5.1. Fellowship Definition

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

5.2.2 The award of fellowship of the College implies that the awardee:

"has sufficient knowledge and experience in a particular area of veterinary science to entitle him/her to be acknowledged as a specialist or consultant in that area"

### 5.2. Examination Format (Fellowship)

Specific format parameters can be found in the subject guidelines. The following general format will be followed for all fellowship examinations and will be considered the minimum requirements for all fellowship subjects:

The fellowship examination has **four separate, autonomous components**:

1. **Written Paper 1** (minimum three hours): This written paper or papers will focus on the basic science and principles of the subject.
2. **Written Paper 2** (minimum three hours): This written paper or papers will focus on the practice and clinical applications of the subject.
3. **Practical** (minimum one hour): This component will consist of a mixture of case presentations, multimedia (e.g. colour images, videos, and histology slides), problem solving and theory, for which written or oral answers will be required.
4. **Oral** (minimum one hour): The candidate will be expected to be able to discuss any aspect of the subject, communicating in a scientific and professional manner.

The practical and oral components must total at least three hours when combined. The time thresholds are minimum thresholds. Individual chapters may exceed the thresholds (refer to Subject Guidelines).

### 5.3. General Expectations at Fellowship level

5.3.1 Answers expected of candidates should be supported by either universal scientific acceptance or by published scientific information.

5.3.2 Candidates for fellowship must demonstrate through their answers that they have formed their own opinion on issues related to their subject area, and that they can defend that opinion using their experience and knowledge of the subject area, supported by published scientific information.

### 5.4. Written Papers 1 and 2 (Fellowship)

5.4.1 **Written Papers 1 and 2** each comprise a separate component of the fellowship examination. Twenty minutes perusal time will be allowed before the beginning of each paper. Each paper will require candidates to answer a series of questions.

5.4.2 Questions may be essay type, a series of small parts or multiple choice. **Marks allocated to each question and to each subsection of questions will be clearly indicated on the written paper.**

5.4.3 Marking guides are required for each question.

## 5.5. Practical (Fellowship)

- 5.5.1 The structure and content of the practical examination and its answer key must be determined by the examiners and reviewed by the Chapter Examination Committee prior to submission to the College Office. Copies of all supportive materials such as slides and images must be provided to the College office for safe storage.
- 5.5.2 It is essential that marking of the written papers is completed, that grades are collated, and that examiners have conferred about each candidate **before the oral and practical examinations take place**
- 5.5.3 The practical examination should be of sufficient duration to adequately assess the candidate's practical application of his/her knowledge. If more than three hours is required, a break is mandatory.
- 5.5.4 Every attempt should be made to in fact assess practical skills.
- 5.5.5 An accurate and detailed record must be made of the candidate's performance in the practical examination on the grading sheet. This is best achieved by requesting the candidate to provide brief written responses to questions asked on a proforma provided for this purpose.
- 5.5.6 If such written responses are not requested, the College observer will keep a record of the number and nature of questions asked and answers given.

## 5.6. Oral (Fellowship)

- 5.6.1 The oral examination must be conducted separately from the practical. The structure and content of the oral examination and its answer key must be determined by the examiners and reviewed by the Chapter Examination Committee prior to submission to the College Office.
- 5.6.2 All fellowship oral examinations will be sound-recorded using digital recorders
- 5.6.3 The oral examination provides a forum for the candidate to justify with the examiners his/her views on important, novel or controversial techniques or issues relative to the particular discipline. The ability of a specialist to form an opinion, effectively refuting or upholding emerging or established views in his/her discipline, is important and examiners should identify and pursue at least one such topic with the candidate.
- 5.6.4 Marking guides are required for all questions.

## 5.7. Grading (Fellowship)

- 5.7.1 All four components of the examination (two written papers, the oral and the practical exams) are regarded as separate components for the purposes of assessment.
- 5.7.2 **Written Papers 1 and 2:** will be marked independently by each examiner who will return the breakdown of marks (both before and after the examiners have conferred) and a mean mark (as a percentage) for each paper. The mean of the examiner marks for each written paper will be the overall mark for that paper. ***Each written paper is a separate component of the examination.***

- 5.7.3 The **practical** examination will be marked independently by each examiner who will return a mean mark (as a percentage) for the practical. The mean of the examiner marks will be the overall mark for the practical component.
- 5.7.4 The **oral** examination will be marked independently by each examiner who will return a mean mark (as a percentage) for the oral. The mean of the examiner marks will be the overall mark for the oral component.
- 5.7.5 The pass mark for each section is 70%.
- 5.7.6 Candidates will pass the fellowship examination once they have achieved a pass mark in all four sections.
- 5.7.7 The 70% pass mark for each section is absolute; there is no opportunity to compensate in other sections for one failed section.
- 5.7.8 Candidates are not required to re-sit components in which they have already achieved a pass. When re-sitting, candidates must re-sit all failed components in the same examination year.
- 5.7.9 Candidates are only allowed to attempt the examination three times. These three attempts must be within a four year period. Candidates may apply for deferral of one exam period during this time. If all four components are not passed within this time period, the candidate is required to refresh credentials and sit all four components again.
- 5.7.10 Candidates reattempting sections of the examination will pay a fee equivalent to 25% of the currently applicable total fellowship fee (Part 1 plus Part 2) for each section to be reattempted.

## **5.8. Examiner Reporting (Fellowship)**

- 5.8.1 Details of whether the candidate has passed or failed a component are calculated through the ERRS.
- 5.8.2 In the event of a FAIL grade, the Head Subject Examiner/Senior Examiner ensures sufficient comments are available giving the candidate reasons for their failure and suggestions for preparing to re-sit the examination.

## 6. Subject Examinations Committee Chair

It is the responsibility of the HSE to ensure that review of the examination takes place by the SEC Chair in a timely manner before the paper is submitted to the College Office for review. The written examination papers are to be submitted to the College Office with the signed SEC Chair checklist.

The SEC Chair Checklist is available in the Subject Committees Handbook, the College website and electronically from the College office.

### 6.1 Examination checklist Guidance notes

What the SEC Chair will be looking for as a compliant examination

#### **Breadth and level of the examination as a whole (all components including written practical and oral)**

**Are the questions focused on middle to higher level tasks** such as creation, evaluation, analysis and application?

Questions should assess higher level learning outcomes such as the ability to create, evaluate, analyse and apply knowledge and skills. Refer Examiner Handbook, Principles of College Assessment, Fig 1

**Are the questions at the right level of difficulty?**

There is a match between the depth of knowledge and degree of skill (both practical and cognitive) required to answer the question, and those specified for the topic in the learning outcomes.

Demanding tasks are provided for topics in which a high degree of skill or knowledge is required; less demanding tasks are provided for topics in which a lower degree of skill or knowledge is required.

Whether the exam is a fellowship or membership exam must be considered.

**Do the questions provide the right breadth of coverage and relative weighting of the subject guidelines?**

As a whole, all 3-4 components of the examination (writtens, practicals and orals) should sample from all the learning outcomes specified in the subject guidelines and with the most important topics and skills given the most weighting in the examination. There should be nothing in the examination that does not fall within the learning outcomes as specified in the subject guidelines.

#### **Examination structure**

**Do the examination materials follow the exam structure format as described in the current guidelines?**

The Chapter Examination Committee representative is responsible for reviewing and editing the submitted examination paper and marking guide prior to its submission to the College Office by the Head Subject Examiner. This will usually involve liaising with examiners to ensure examination papers and marking guides conform to Subject Guidelines and College requirements.

**Are marks allocated to each question and separate subpart?**

All questions must have a mark allocation indicated. Subparts of questions should have marks indicated if they would be answered and marked separately. If subparts would form part of an integrated answer and marked holistically marks for subparts do not need to be indicated.

**Are the marks allocated to each question and each sub-part appropriate?**

Do the marks allocated reflect the relative difficulty, importance and time required for each question and subpart?

**Do the marks add up to the expected total?**

The total marks for the paper should be easy for candidates and examiners to follow so that it is easy to plan the time allocation for each answer. In general, 1 mark per minute of exam time is allocated ie a 20 mark question will take 20 minutes to answer.

**Is there sufficient time to answer all the questions?**

Candidates should only need to write 20 words per minute or less to give a complete and correct answer.

**20% of the questions in this written or practical examination are not substantially similar to questions offered in the previous three examinations for this subject.**

No more than 20% of the questions in any written or practical examination can be substantially similar to questions offered in the previous three examinations offered in the same subject.

**Question structure****Is it clear for each question what is required in terms of scope?**

The scope needs to be well defined so it is clear to candidates what an answer should include and what it does not need to include.

**Does each question contain an instructional verb that explains the task required to the candidate?**

Instructional verbs (eg: discuss, explain, critique) must be provided to indicate to candidates what they need to do to demonstrate their knowledge.

**Is each question worded so that it can be answered by candidates living either in Australia or NZ?**

Unless specified otherwise in the learning outcomes, questions should be framed so that they can be answered using a knowledge of either Australian or NZ legislation, climate, geographical features etc

**Are any ancillary materials used (images, radiographs, histopathology slides etc) fit for purpose, clear, legible and of good quality?**

All materials used in written, practical and oral examinations should be checked by examiners and the SEC Chair. It is especially important to check that all agree on the interpretation and that the quality is sufficient that what is supposed to be seen can be seen. The level of difficulty in making the interpretation should also be appropriately aligned with the specified learning outcomes for the subject.

**If there are multiple choice questions:**

- do they comprise only a minor component? As per the Fellowship Candidate handbook, no more than 20% of an examination component shall be multiple choice question type.
- do they assess higher learning outcomes?
- are they clear and unambiguous?
- is there only one correct answer?
- do you agree about which answer is correct?

**Is a marking guide provided which indicates the agreed standard by which candidates' answers will be judged and marks awarded?**

How marks will be awarded and what constitutes a clear pass, borderline answer and fail should be discussed and agreed upon by examiners and recorded in a marking guide for review by the SEC Chair and BoE. The marking guide must be used by all examiners during marking.

**Does the answer provided in the marking guide answer the question that is being asked?**

Check the question is clearly worded so it asks the question the examiner wants answered, including all parts the marking guide awards marks for.

**Do you agree with the marking guide?**

Does the marking guide reward answers you consider are correct?

## **Grammar and spelling**

**Is the language used in each question is clear and grammatically correct?**

The meaning of the question is clear so there is no confusion about the task or scope. Abbreviations should be spelled out unless testing the knowledge of the abbreviation is a key part of the question (which would rarely be the case). Be aware that terminology may vary in different areas of the world.

**Are there any spelling mistakes (particularly discipline specific words)?**

The Macquarie Dictionary provides standard spellings to be used.

**Are units given as SI units?**

All imperial units should be converted to SI units or those in standard use in Australia and NZ.

**Are any numerical values used realistic and correct?**

For example are there any errors in scale such as the value is in the hundreds when it should be in the thousands?

## 7. APPENDIX – FORMS AND TEMPLATES

### i. College Examination Blueprinting *(Example from Equine Medicine 2010\_12)* *(Template on College website)*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Learning outcome</b></p> <p>The candidate will expect to have:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Draft questions or tasks/topics/concepts</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Notes</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessed in: P1, P2, Prac, Oral, Credentials</b></p>
<p>1. A detailed and broad knowledge of diseases of horses based on the experience of a significant case load which should be documented</p>			
<p>2. A thorough knowledge of the structure, function and dysfunction of all equine organ systems in health and disease This shall include the eye, the skin and reproductive organs despite the other specialties in these areas.</p>			
<p>3. A thorough knowledge of all relevant methods of diagnosis, treatment, management and prevention of equine diseases and the ability to apply this with complete competence</p>			
<p>4. A thorough knowledge of applied clinical pharmacology and therapeutics in the treatment of equine diseases and performance disorders</p>			
<p>5. A thorough knowledge of equine husbandry in Australia/New Zealand including</p>			



<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Learning outcome</b></p> <p>The candidate will expect to have:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Draft questions or tasks/topics/concepts</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Notes</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessed in: P1, P2, Prac, Oral, Credentials</b></p>
<p>stud, racing, competition and pleasure horse practices as they affect horse health, welfare and performance</p>			
<p>6. A good knowledge of poisonous plants, toxins and envenomations encountered in Australia/New Zealand and the syndromes they cause in horses</p>			
<p>7. A broad knowledge of epidemiological principles and their application to disease control programs and preventive medicine programs</p>			
<p>8. A knowledge of exotic equine diseases and their potential importance to Australia and New Zealand</p>			
<p>9. Evidence of significant contributions to knowledge in the theory or practice of equine medicine.</p>			