EDUCATION DIVISION: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

[Updated: 18 February 2021]

General: Training

Q1: Where can I find out more about the veterinary and para-veterinary professions?
A1: You can refer to the SAVC website / PROFESSIONS to read more about the various professions.

Q2: Where can I study to become a veterinarian or a veterinary nurse?
A2: The Faculty of Veterinary Science, University of Pretoria (Onderstepoort campus) is currently the only institution in South Africa offering training for veterinarians (BVSc) and veterinary nurses (BVetNurs).

Website: www.up.ac.za

Q3: Where can I study to become an animal health technician?
A3: UNISA (Florida campus) (Diploma in Animal Health), North-West University (Mahikeng campus) (Diploma in Animal Health; BSc Agric Animal Health) and Tsolo Agriculture and Rural Development Institute (TARDI) (Diploma in Animal Health) offer training for animal health technicians.

Websites: www.unisa.ac.za; www.nwu.ac.za; www.tardi.ac.za

Q4: Where can I study to become a veterinary technologist?
A4: The Tshwane University of Technology offers training for veterinary technologists (BHSc in Veterinary Technology).

Website: www.tut.ac.za

Q5: Where can I study to become a veterinary physiotherapist?
A5: The new para-veterinary profession of veterinary physiotherapist has been promulgated at the end of December 2017. Council has completed the process of bringing persons on board following the promulgation of the profession. In future, the BSc in Veterinary Physiotherapy (currently offered by Equine-Librium College) will be the qualification accepted as a prescribed qualification (i.e. no registration examination required).

Website: www.equine-librium.co.za

NOTE: All other foreign or non-prescribed qualifications need to be evaluated to determine whether the holder of that qualification will be allowed entry into a registration examination determined by Council.

Q6: Are there any other veterinary qualifications accepted for automatic registration?
A6: The following veterinary qualifications are currently accredited for automatic registration (i.e. no Council registration examination is needed) as the SAVC holds mutual recognitions agreements with the Australasian Veterinary Boards Council (AVBC) and the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS):
AUSTRALASIAN VETERINARY BOARDS COUNCIL (AVBC)

Bachelor of Veterinary Science (BVSc), University of Queensland, Australia
Bachelor of Veterinary Science (BVSc), University of Melbourne, Australia
Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM), University of Melbourne, Australia
Bachelor of Veterinary Science (BVSc), University of Sydney, Australia
Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM), University of Sydney, Australia
Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine and Surgery (BVMS), Murdoch University, Australia
Bachelor of Veterinary Bioscience (BVSc), University of Adelaide, Australia
Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM), University of Adelaide, Australia
Bachelor of Veterinary Science (BVSc), James Cook University, Australia
Bachelor of Veterinary Biology (BVBiol), Charles Sturt University, Australia
Bachelor of Veterinary Science (BVSc), Charles Sturt University, Australia
Bachelor of Veterinary Science (BVSc), Massey University, New Zealand

ROYAL COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SURGEONS (RCVS)

Bachelor of Veterinary Science (BVSc), University of Bristol, UK
Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine (VetMB), University of Cambridge, UK
Bachelor of Veterinary Science (BVSc), University of Liverpool, UK
Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine (BVetMed), Royal Veterinary College, London, UK
Bachelor of Veterinary Science (BVSc), University of Nottingham, UK
Bachelor of Veterinary Surgery (BVS), University of Nottingham, UK
Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine and Surgery (BVMS), University of Edinburgh, Scotland
Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine and Surgery (BVMS), University of Glasgow, Scotland

* Note that this list will change due to ongoing evaluation of qualifications. Contact the SAVC Registration Division at registration2@savc.org.za for the latest information.

Registration Examination

[Prospective candidates are encouraged to read ALL the questions and answers.]

Q1: What can I do if I want to practice as a veterinarian or para-veterinarian while I prepare for the SAVC registration exam?
A1: Contact the SAVC Registration Division in order to find out about authorisation to work. You will need a firm job offer, and your prospective employer will need to apply for authorisation.

Q2: When will the updated examination documents, including fees payable, be available on the SAVC website?
A2: The documents will be available annually by mid-March.

Q3: When is the deadline for the examination applications?
A3: End May annually

Q4: When is the deadline for the payment of the application and examination fees?
A4: End May annually

Q5: When will the examination fees be available?
A5: The examination fees will be made available by mid-March.

NOTE: The examination fee does not include the ovariohysterectomy required from veterinarians. Only candidates who successfully complete the Practical Examination will be required to perform an ovariohysterectomy. This fee will be payable before the procedure.
Q6: Is it possible to make down payments of the examination fees?
A6: No down payments will be accepted.

Q7: When will the examination be held in 2021?
A7: Computer Based Examination (all professions)
Day 1: Mon, 2 Aug 2021 (Faculty of Veterinary Science, UP, Computer Lab)
Day 2: Tues, 3 Aug 2021 (Faculty of Veterinary Science, UP, Computer Lab)

Practical Examination
Tues, 17 Aug 2021
para-veterinary professions: veterinary technologists – Tshwane University of Technology;
animal health technicians – Faculty of Veterinary Science, UP;
veterinary nurses – Faculty of Veterinary Science, UP, Skills Lab

Wed, 18 – Fri, 20 Aug 2021
veterinarians – Faculty of Veterinary Science, UP and Skills Lab

Practical Examination – ovariohysterectomy
Week 6 – 10 Sep 2021 (schedule TBA)
Animal Anti-Cruelty League, Johannesburg

Veterinary candidates who successfully complete the Practical Examination will be required to perform an ovariohysterectomy by ventral midline incision.

NB: The cost of the ovariohysterectomy is not included in the examination fee. Payment will have to be made before the procedure will be allowed.

Q8: Is it compulsory to have application documents signed before a Commissioner of Oaths?
A8: Yes. Application documents will not be accepted unless signed before a Commissioner of Oaths in SA or at the SA embassy abroad.

Q9: Is submission of copies of the original documents acceptable?
A9: Copies of the original documents will be accepted for application purposes. Original documents must be presented on the first day of the Computer Based Examination (CBE) before entry will be allowed into the examination room.

Q10: Which holders of veterinary qualifications are allowed entry into the registration examination without curriculum evaluation?
A10: From 2021 all curricula will be assessed unless a person holding the same qualification as the applicant has previously successfully completed the examination. Contact the SAVC Education Division (edu.coordinator@savc.org.za) for more information.

Q11: Why should the curriculum of foreign veterinary or para-veterinary qualifications be supplied when the applicant is requested to do so?
A11: In some cases, the SAVC will need to assess the foreign qualification in order to see that the curriculum content is comparable to the other qualifications that qualify for access to the SAVC registration exam.

Q12: When is the deadline for submission of veterinary or para-veterinary qualifications for evaluation?
A12: The deadline for submission of veterinary or para-veterinary qualifications for evaluation is in December of the year before the candidate plans to sit the examination in order to allow time for the evaluation of the curriculum.
Q13: What proof of proficiency in English is accepted by the SAVC?
A13: Proof of proficiency in English must be demonstrated by providing proof of the successful completion of TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) (83/120) to sit both the Computer Based Examination (CBE) and to undertake the Practical Examination.

Q14: Will the requirement of successful completion of TOEFL be waived in any instances?
A14: The requirement is waived for persons whose medium of instruction for their veterinary or para-veterinary training was in English and proof is furnished i.e. proof of English being the language of teaching at the institution of training.

Q15: What format does the examination take?
A15: The examination consists of at least two parts:
   a) a Computer-Based Examination (CBE) with multiple choice questions that takes place over two (2) days; and
   b) a Practical Examination consisting of different examination panels.

In addition, the requirement to perform an ovariohysterectomy will be required from veterinarians two weeks after successful completion of the initial Practical Examination.

Q16: Will all candidates be allowed entry into the Practical Examination?
A16: No, only candidates who passed the Computer-Based Examination with the required mark will be allowed entry into the Practical Examination.

Q17: Will the results of the CBE be made available after the completion of the CBE?
A17: Yes, candidates will be informed in writing after the CBE as only candidates who passed the Computer-Based Examination with the required mark will be allowed entry into the Practical Examination. Final detailed results will, however, only be made available, in writing, after Council has ratified all the examination results.

Q18: When will the schedule for the Practical Examination be available?
A18: The schedule for the Practical Examination will only be supplied by the SAVC Administration in the week following the completion of the CBE.

Q19: Will protective gear for the Practical Examination be supplied?
A19: No, each candidate is responsible for bringing his/her own protective gear.

Q20: Does the Council supply study material for the examination?
A20: Council is not a training institution and therefore does not supply study material. Candidates may contact the relevant local training institutions to obtain study notes for a fee.

Q21: Will an ancillary examination be offered?
A21: Ancillary examinations are offered in the Practical Examination ONLY, to candidates who achieve an overall average of 50% for the Practical Examination, but failed ONE practical panel with marks between 40% - 44.9% for this panel.

An ancillary examination is, however, not offered for the ovariohysterectomy to be conducted after successful completion of the initial Practical Examination in the examination for veterinarians.
Q22: Does a candidate have to repeat the full examination if they fail one component of the examination?
A22: Candidates who fail the practical examination, but pass the CBE, as per the stipulated rules, may re-take only the practical examination at its following offering, on condition that the prescribed examination fee is paid and other entrance requirements are met.

Q23: When will the candidate be informed of his/her final results?
A23: Final detailed results will be made available, in writing, after Council has ratified the results and approved the release thereof.

Q24: Are previous examination questions papers available?
A24: There are no previous examination papers available as the examination is computer based. Candidates may contact the local training institutions to obtain study notes.

Q25: Will the applicant get the administration fee back when there is a request for a refund of the examination fee?
A25: No, the administration fee is non-refundable.

Q26: Will the applicant get the examination fee back when there is a request for a refund of the examination fee?
A26: No, the examination fee is non-refundable, but may be transferred once and only to the subsequent examination offering. Failure of a candidate to sit the examination without proper reason will result in forfeiture of the examination fee (proper reasons include sickness via a valid medical certificate or another properly motivated reason).

Q27: Will veterinary candidates who pass the Registration Examination be expected to complete Compulsory Community Service (CCS)?
A27: In terms of regulation 2.1 of the Regulations relating to the performance of compulsory community service (CCS), Persons Who Shall Perform Compulsory Community Service, published in Government Gazette No. 39380, Notice NO. R. 1082, on 9 November 2015 compulsory community service shall be performed by every person registering for the first time as a veterinarian in terms of the Act and shall include a person who obtained his or her qualifications outside the Republic of South Africa, unless exempted in terms of these regulations.

Regulation 7 provides for the circumstances under which certain persons may be exempted from the performance of compulsory community service and reads as follows:

“The Minister may, after consultation with the Council, exempt persons who fall within the following categories from compulsory community service:
a) Persons who obtained veterinary related post graduate qualifications outside the Republic of South Africa; or
b) Persons who belong to para-veterinary professions.”