REGISTERED MEMBERS: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q1: What do I get, as a registered member, in return for the payment of my maintenance fees?

A1: The members of the veterinary professions pay an annual maintenance fee. The income generated from these maintenance fees is the only income from which Council has to fund all its activities.

The SAVC is a statutory body which as its core functions has to-

- Keep a register of registered persons who qualify to render veterinary or para-veterinary services in South Africa;
- Maintain standards of training to ensure that the prescribed qualifications accepted by the SAVC for automatic registration comply with the minimum requirements for training; and to ensure that a registration examination is held for applicants without prescribed qualifications;
- Maintain standards of practice to ensure that the veterinary professions; the public and the animals are protected; and
- Advise the Minister on all matters pertaining to the veterinary professions.

The SAVC works on a committee system where recommendations on core and other functions are made to full Council. The Council and its committees are supported by an Administration.

In addition to these core functions and the funding thereof Council has to fund its administration from the annual maintenance fees only. Council also exercises and funds the remaining activities included in its objectives as described in the Act namely -

- to encourage and promote efficiency in and responsibility with regard to the practice of the veterinary and para-veterinary professions;
- to protect the interests of the professions and to deal with matters relating to those interests; and to maintain and enhance the prestige, status and dignity of persons practising the veterinary professions.

To exercise its functions Council ensures that it liaises with its stakeholders and in this regard extensive public relations from student grass roots liaison to presentations at congresses are funded by the income generated from the maintenance fees.

All committee and Council members are remunerated i.e. a meeting fee is paid and travel and accommodation expenses are funded. The funding allocated to the administration consists of the largest percentage of the budget; remuneration and travel expenses follows second and operations and the procurement of new premises are in third and fourth place. An overview of the budget will be published on the website after 25 February 2014.
Having read the above information the short answer is that the benefit of paying maintenance fees cannot be translated into a personal benefit *per se* but it can be translated into a benefit for the professions at large and for the greater good of the country, its people and animals.

**EDUCATION SECTION: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Q1:** When will the updated examination documents, including fees payable, be available on the SAVC website?

A1: Annually at the end of February.

**Q2:** When is the deadline for the examination applications?

A2: 1 April annually.

**Q3:** When is the deadline for the payment of the application and examination fees?

A3: 1 April annually.

**Q4:** Is it possible to make down payments of the examination fees?

A4: Yes, but down payments will only be accepted until 1 April when final payment must be received.

**Q5:** What format does the examination take?

A5: The examination consists of two parts: a) a Computer Based Examination (CBE) with multiple choice questions that takes place over two (2) days and b) an Oral/Practical Examination consisting of different examination panels.

**Q6:** Is it compulsory to have documents signed before a Commissioner of Oaths?

A6: Yes. Documents will not be accepted unless signed before a Commissioner of Oaths.

**Q7:** Will a copy of the original documents be acceptable?

A7: A copy of the original documents will be accepted for application purposes. Original documents must be presented at the examination before entry into the examination room will be allowed.

**Q8:** Why should the curriculum of foreign veterinary or para-veterinary qualifications/training, in certain instances, be supplied?

A8: If the applicant is applying for the first time to sit the SAVC examination (with particular reference to foreign qualifications), then the SAVC may request insight into the full details of the curriculum prior to giving permission to apply to sit the examination.
Q9: Is there a minimum number of examination applicants needed per year before the examination is offered?
A9: Yes. Twenty (20) paid up examination applicants are needed.

Q10: Will a candidate be allowed to enter the Oral/Practical Examination if he/she has not passed the Computer Based Examination (CBE)?
A10: No. Only candidates who successfully complete the Computer Based Examination (CBE) will be allowed to enter the Oral/Practical Examination.

Q11: When will the schedule for the Oral/Practical Examination be available?
A11: The schedule for the Oral/Practical Examination will only be supplied by the SAVC Administration after the CBE results are known.

Q12: Does the Council supply study material for the examination?
A12: No. Copies of study material can be obtained from the University of Pretoria, Faculty of Veterinary Science (Tel: 0027 (0) 12 529 8000)

Q13: Will protective gear for the Oral/Practical Examination be supplied?
A13: No. Each candidate is responsible to bring his/her own protective gear.

Q14: Will there be a supplementary examination?
A14: There is no supplementary examination.

Q15: When will the candidate be informed of his/her results?
A15: The results of the Computer Based Examination (CBE) will be available one (1) hour after the final day of the CBE. Only candidates who have successfully completed the CBE will be allowed to proceed to the Oral/Practical Examination one (1) week later. Results of the Oral/Practical Examination will be made available after the full Council meeting held in October annually. No results will be made available before the Council meeting.

REGISTRATION SECTION: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q1: When do I need to update my contact details with Council?
A1: You are required by law to submit your contact details to Council. Please update any information as soon as it changes, as surface and e-mail correspondence regularly return to us as being undelivered. We are also often unable to reach members on the telephone and cell phone numbers as captured on our system.
Q2: What is the difference between the Registration and the Maintenance fee?
A2: The Registration fee is a once-off payment to register you with the SAVC once you have qualified to register. The Maintenance fee is an annual fee payable to ensure that your registration with the SAVC is maintained. If you are removed from the register for non-payment of maintenance fees for any period, you will have to pay a re-registration fee.

Q3: As registered member, what do I get from Council in return for payment of my maintenance fee?
A3: The benefit of paying maintenance fees cannot be translated into a personal benefit per se, but it must rather be translated into a benefit for the veterinary professions at large, and for the greater good of the country, its people and animals.

Q4: For how long is a Letter of Good Professional Standing valid?
A4: A Letter of Good Professional Standing is valid for a period of three months from date of issue.

Q5: Must I register every year as a student?
A5: No, you register once-off as a student and thereafter maintain registration as a student by paying the annual student maintenance fee.

Q6: I am a Veterinarian registered with the RCVS. Can I register with the SAVC?
A6: You can register with Council provided that you have one of the prescribed qualifications listed:

- BVSc, Massey University, Nieu Zeeland
- BVSc, University of Bristol, England
- Vet MB, University of Cambridge, England
- BVM & S, University of Edinburgh, Scotland
- BVMS, University of Glasgow, Scotland
- BVSc, University of Liverpool, England
- Bvet Med, University of London, England
- MRCV, granted after their examination, Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, England

LEGAL SECTION: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q1: How do I go about lodging a complaint against a veterinarian?
A1: The aggrieved client (who must have first-hand [personal] knowledge of the facts and who can attest to those facts) can lodge a complaint by submitting a completed complaint form, an affidavit containing the full facts relating to the complaint as well as the substantiating documents, if any. The complaint form and pro forma affidavit is available from the SAVC website (www.savc.co.za) or they can be sent by e-mail to the prospective complainant upon request.

Alternatively any prima facie evidence will be investigated.

Q2: When does the Council investigate complaints?
A2: The Council will investigate complaints once the following conditions are satisfied:

1. The affidavit containing the facts in respect of the complaint is received.
2. The affidavit is properly commissioned, i.e. every page of the affidavit is initialled by both the deponent (person making the affidavit) and the Commissioner of Oaths.
3. The affidavit must be dated and signed in full where indicated by the deponent and the Commissioner of Oaths.
4. The facts which gave rise to the complaint (event) should not have occurred more than a year ago, unless the delay can be fully motivated.
5. The veterinarian’s account must be paid in full.
6. The records relating to the matter were received from the respondent.

Q3: May a complaint be investigated when a criminal or civil case is pending?

A3: The Council will postpone the investigation pending the outcome of a criminal or civil case.

Q4: Can a complaint of professional misconduct be investigated should the professional be acquitted in a criminal court or if no negligence or liability was found in a civil matter?

A4: Yes, even if acquitted by a criminal court or if no negligence of liability was found in a civil matter, professional misconduct can be investigated and the professional can be found guilty of misconduct by an inquiry body.

Q5: Can an Inquiry Body award damages to a complainant or order the veterinarian to repay the account to the complainant, if a finding of professional misconduct is made?

A5: No, the Council does not have the power (authority) to award damages to a complainant.

The Council may find that a veterinarian over-services a client and may make a ruling in that regard.