

EXAMINATION PROCEDURE: WHAT TO EXPECT

Updated October 2020 by Jennifer Kinns. This information is correct for the 2021 examination.

The goal of the examination is to verify that candidates that have received the appropriate amount of training have reached an acceptable level of theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of veterinary diagnostic imaging to be granted the status of Diplomate in the European College.

The expected level of knowledge is set forth in the College [Exam content outline 2019](#), which is used by the [examination committee](#) to select and write questions for the theoretical examination.

THEORETICAL PART OF THE EXAMINATION

The examination consists of 150 multiple choice questions which are organised by category according to the exam content outline. Please refer to the exam content outline for the distribution of questions per category.

25 additional questions are included in the examination (175 questions total) and will be analysed statistically for future use, but will not count toward the exam total. Candidates will not be aware which are the additional questions. The entire exam (including the additional questions) is produced by the Examination Committee and reviewed by the Quality Assurance Committee. It is then assessed by a panel of diplomats who score each question for difficulty. The pass mark for each section of the examination is determined by this standard setting process. After the candidates have sat the examination the results will be reviewed statistically, and any questions which have a poor pass rate will be reviewed again and may be retrospectively removed if they are considered inadequate.

PRACTICAL PART OF THE EXAMINATION

There are 4 written sections in both the Small Animal and Large Animal Practical exam:

Small Animal Track;

- Section 1: Thoracic imaging (written)
- Section 2: Abdominal imaging (written)
- Section 3: Musculoskeletal imaging (written)
- Section 4: Head and neuroimaging (written)

Large Animal Track;

- Section 1: Thoracic and abdominal imaging (written)
- Section 2: Musculoskeletal imaging, radiography and ultrasonography(written)
- Section 3: Musculoskeletal imaging, alternate imaging techniques (written)
- Section 4: Head, spine and neuroimaging (written)

Each written section is composed of 10 cases. The total examination time will be 20 minutes per case with a 10 minute break, but candidates can do the cases in any order they wish.

Cases are selected by individual examiners and then reviewed by the entire exam committee to assess suitability and to define a grading scheme. The grading scheme is set to emphasise clinically important findings and conclusions. Each case is equally weighted to produce the average mark for the section.

Your report should consist of:

1. A description of the findings
2. A summary of the main findings
3. A conclusion / differential diagnosis

You should focus on making an **organized description** of your findings. Note that not ALL findings will be attributed points. Some insignificant findings may be attributed no points because it would not be fair to penalize for not mentioning an insignificant finding. You are NOT required to provide a technical evaluation of the study.

A summary of the findings is not essential to achieve all the points for a case but can help you to organise your thoughts and can help the examiners to understand what you were thinking.

Conclude your report with an **ORGANIZED** and **PRIORITIZED** differential diagnosis. It is very important that you clearly state which is the most likely differential. If the correct answer is one of an unprioritized list you may not receive the full points for that conclusion. Recommendations are not expected or assessed.

Candidates must achieve 70% overall to pass the exam, with at least 70% in two out of four sections and at least 50% in all sections to pass the exam.