

# ECVDI® Bylaws 2024

The present document contains the Bylaws (formerly Policies and Procedures) of the ECVDI®. They were created at the start of the ECVDI® in 1993 and have been regularly updated since then.

These ECVDI® Bylaws are a set of principles, rules and guidelines used to dictate the daily functioning, and to help reach the long-term goals, of the ECVDI®. They are designed to influence and determine all major decisions and actions, and all the activities that take place within their boundaries.

The ECVDI® Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) serve as an instructional resource allowing any member participating in an ECVDI® function (Executive Committee membership, committee membership, ECVDI® representative) to act in a consistent manner especially new members. The SOPs are a separate document for ease of use as of 2015.

These Bylaws should be regularly updated, preferably on an annual basis. When updating them, it should be kept in mind that every rule or guideline has been created for a good reason. Therefore, it is essential to keep in mind the historical perspective, to understand fully why a rule or guideline has been decided (the Constitution committee or past Executive Committee members can help with this), and in order to consider if the rule or guideline is still applicable today or if it should be modified or changed.



This document should be read in conjunction with the EBVS Bylaws, in particular their documents for colleges on quality assurance and knowledge, skills and competency (appendices 1 and 2).

This document was ratified at the ECVDI® AGM by majority vote on 21 September 2024 at the ECVDI AGM in Athens and is in effect as of then.

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# 1 Purpose of the College

## 1.1 Background

### 1.1.1 Legislation

The European College of Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging® (ECVDI®) is a veterinary specialty organisation established within the EC (European Community) structure for veterinary specialisation recommended by the Advisory Committee for Veterinary Training (ACVT) of the EC, set up by the Council Decision 78/1028/EEC of 18 December 1978 and OJ No L 302 of 22 December 1978, in its report III/F/5285/3/91.

### 1.1.2 Establishment of the College

The ECVDI® was an initiative of the European Association of Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging (EAVDI) and was the result of discussion in the early 1990s in Europe in response to a growing demand for specialist veterinary diagnostic imaging services and to harmonise certification standards in this area to ensure clarity for the consumers. The ECVDI® was founded and recognized in 1994. Since 2012 the ECVDI® is registered as a non-profit Limited Company in the UK as ECVDI® Ltd.

### 1.1.3 Trademark

The titles of the college are protected by a European Community Trademark as **European College of Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging® CTM 013075601** and **ECVDI® CTM 013075304**.

## 1.2 Purpose

The objectives of the college are stated in Article 3.2 of the Constitution.

In addition, the purposes are

- To improve the quality of animal health care, by making available evidence-based, specialised knowledge and skills in veterinary diagnostic imaging.
- To improve the quality of general practice through contact between general practitioners and registered specialists.
- To improve the quality of service to the public by, amongst other things, ensuring the protection of the public from unqualified persons claiming to be specialists.
- To stimulate further development of veterinary diagnostic imaging.

## 1.3 Objectives

To this end the primary objectives of the ECVDI® are to advance veterinary diagnostic imaging in Europe and increase the competence of those who work in this field by:

- Establishing guidelines for postgraduate education and experience, prerequisite to becoming a specialist in veterinary diagnostic imaging.
- Examining and certifying veterinary surgeons as specialists in veterinary diagnostic imaging to serve the veterinary profession, the veterinary patient, its owner and the public in general.
- Encouraging research and other contributions to knowledge relating to the pathogenesis, diagnosis, therapy, prevention and control of animal diseases, and promoting the communication and dissemination of this knowledge.

## 1.4 Finances

The College is a non-profit organisation. The expenses of the College shall be met through various sources of income.



The sources of income may be:

1. Annual dues
2. Donations or sponsorship from companies and international organisations
3. Income from educational meetings organised by the College
4. Investment income
5. Examination fees
6. Other income.

The financial year for the purposes of the accounts runs annually from August 1<sup>st</sup> - July 31<sup>st</sup>. The accounts for the previous financial year and the budget proposal for the following year shall be submitted annually to the members for approval at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and circulated not later than 30 days before the AGM. The account documents (account balance of current and savings, all original receipts and invoices) must be sent to the official college accountants, located in the United Kingdom, so that they can be reviewed and registered by them.

Members or officers of the College may receive no payment from the funds of the College, except reimbursements that are necessary for the purposes of the College. Reimbursement requires that a reimbursement form be completed and that all receipts be sent to the treasurer. Items that do not require receipts are personal meals during travel to Executive Committee meetings or examinations as these are covered by the per diem. Reimbursement before an event is only allowed for pre-paid hotel and flight fees.

## **2 Membership of the College**

### **2.1 Definition of Membership of the College**

The members of the College shall be the following:

1. Diplomates (who may be defined as Founding, Certified, Non-certified or Retired)
2. Honorary members
3. Associate members

#### **2.1.1 Titles of Members**

Each individual who has successfully passed the qualification procedure of the College shall be designated Diplomat of the European College of Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging (DipECVDI), and, if practising the speciality, is entitled to be awarded by the EBVS (European Board of Veterinary Specialisation) the title of EBVS European Veterinary Specialist in Diagnostic Imaging.

Requirements for membership as a College diplomate are described in the Constitution, Article 4.

### **2.2 Membership Dues**

The membership dues of each member and the penalty fee for late payment shall be determined by the Executive Committee and approved at the AGM. The membership dues must be paid annually before July 1<sup>st</sup>. Diplomates will be deemed Non-certified if two years have elapsed without payment and may be expelled from the College if three years have elapsed without payment.

### **2.3 Requirements for Certified Diplomat Status**

To keep the status of a Certified Diplomat, an ECVDI® Diplomat must:

1. Spend more than an average of 24 hours per week in the field of veterinary diagnostic imaging (two years of less than 24 hours per week will result in non-certified status).

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Self-certification: at the time of paying annual College dues (before July 1st each year) each Diplomate shall attest their average weekly hours worked in the specialty during the previous calendar year. Diplomates may not be certified in more than one EBVS college at a time, if a Diplomate in a second college they must choose which college to be certified in; using the term EBVS European Specialist only in this college, however they may use the term Diplomate in their second college.

2. Attend the ECVDI® AGM at least once every three years. For new diplomates, the three-year period includes the year of diplomacy. A written request for dispensation of the AGM within the same calendar year may be approved by a majority vote of the Executive Committee and may be granted for only one year. The secretary must receive the written request no less than 14 days before the AGM. A doctor's letter must support requests for absence on medical grounds. Exceptions to this requirement are double-boarded Diplomates (ECVDI® and ACVR) and current members of the examination committee who must attend the AGM at least every four years. In the situation where the IVRA meeting is held outside Europe, ECVDI diplomates that are required to attend the ECVDI AGM may be granted an extra year, provided that the diplomate has written evidence of attendance of the IVRA meeting (attendance certificate or signed letter from the IVRA board). This extension is for one year only, and therefore attendance of the ECVDI AGM is mandatory for the fourth year.
3. Meet the Credentials Committee's minimum requirements as set out in the Re-evaluation form. The Re-evaluation form consists of a 100-credit point system to be submitted to the Credentials Committee every five years; For Diplomates examined in September the first five year period starts the year after becoming a Diplomate. For Diplomates examined in January/February the first five-year period starts the same year as becoming a Diplomate. The Re-evaluation form should be submitted to the Credentials committee before March 1<sup>st</sup> in the year in which it is due. Failure to submit this Re-evaluation form before December 31<sup>st</sup> of the year it was requested will automatically result in Non-certified status. In the case of failure to meet Re-evaluation requirements an extra year to make up the shortfall will be allowed during which time the Diplomate remains certified. Recertification after this will occur 4 years later. Points acquired during the interim year but not required to make up the shortfall can be added to the next five-year evaluation.
4. Pay the Annual Dues (see 2.2)
5. Diplomates/Associates will be required to submit a signed statement confirming completion of the required weekly hours and providing the details stipulated by the College.
6. Any new Diplomates elected as members, not entering by examination, must fulfil the requirements recommended in the EBVS Bylaws.
7. A Diploma awarded to a Diplomate of a non EBVS recognised college without sitting the College's examination is not valid when the conditions under which the Diploma was awarded do not exist anymore.

## **2.4 Change to Non-certified Diplomate Status**

Non-certified Diplomate: the status of Certified Diplomate ceases by default when one or more of the requirements of paragraph 2.3 are not fulfilled. The Diplomate is then designated Non-certified. Non-certified Diplomates are not allowed to use the title or trademark of EBVS European Veterinary Specialist, to vote at the AGM or to be Programme Director or Resident Supervisor. Non-certified Diplomates still have to pay their Annual Dues. Recertification is a formal procedure to assess and verify that Diplomates from an EBVS recognised college keep their level of knowledge, skills and competences in accordance with established requirements of EQF level 8. Those seeking to revert to Certified Diplomate status need to demonstrate that they again fulfil the requirements of paragraph

2.3. Restoration to Certified status will require payment of the total open balance. A restoration fee may also be enforced depending on the reason for Non-certified status.

## **2.5 Retired Member**

The College may confer a Retired status on Diplomates who have ceased to practise the specialty of veterinary diagnostic imaging at the level described in paragraph 2.4 at the request of the Diplomat in question. A retired member is permanently and irrevocably of Non-certified status, unless an exemption for restoration to certified status is granted by the Executive Committee. They do not have to pay the annual dues and in return do not have access to the College journal Veterinary Radiology and Ultrasound. They are not required to attend AGMs and, when present, is not allowed to vote. However, they remain a member of the College. A Retired Diplomat is not allowed to use the title or trademark of EBVS European Veterinary Specialist or Diplomat but may use the title DipECVDI (Retired).

## **2.6 Honorary member**

The College may confer Honorary member status to persons who have made exceptional contributions to the specialty of veterinary diagnostic imaging. Honorary membership is usually conferred on ECVDI® non-Diplomates. Non-Diplomat Honorary members shall have all the rights and privileges of Diplomates except the right to vote or hold office. Non-diplomat Honorary members are not allowed to use the title or trademark of EBVS European Veterinary Specialist nor Diplomat but may use the title DipECVDI (Honorary Member). Nomination for Honorary member status necessitates proposal by two Certified Diplomates in good standing. The proposal should be written and forwarded to the Secretary, for consideration by the Executive Committee and approval at the AGM by a two-thirds majority vote. It must contain such information relating to the activities of the nominee in diagnostic imaging as required by the Executive Committee. The Honorary member shall not be required to pay dues and in return does not have access to the College journal Veterinary Radiology and Ultrasound. No more than 5% of the membership may be Honorary members at any one time.

The status of Honorary membership can be withdrawn by the ECVDI® in the case of professional misconduct. The Executive Committee may propose withdrawal of Honorary member status if evidence of misconduct is proven. At the AGM withdrawal of Honorary membership proposal is submitted and has to be voted on and passed by a two-thirds majority of the members.

## **2.7 Associate member**

The College may confer Associate status on persons who have made significant contributions to veterinary diagnostic imaging. Associates are members of the College but shall not have the same rights, obligations and privileges of Diplomates. No more than 10% of college Diplomates may be Associate members at one time.

The status of Associate membership can be withdrawn by the ECVDI® in the case of professional misconduct. The Executive Committee may propose withdrawal of Associate member status if evidence of misconduct is proven. At the AGM withdrawal of Associate membership proposal is submitted and has to be voted on and passed by a two-thirds majority of the members.

### **2.7.1 Nomination**

Nomination for Associate status necessitates proposal by two Certified Diplomates in good standing and completion of the Associate membership application form and provision of two references. The request for application as Associate member should be written and forwarded to [adminecvdi@ecvdi.eu](mailto:adminecvdi@ecvdi.eu) for the attention of the Secretary and Credentials Chair by 1<sup>st</sup> June. Application requests will be initially considered by the Credentials Committee for consideration for approval and

then submitted to the Executive Board and then submitted for approval at the AGM by a two-thirds majority vote. Application requests will only be considered in exceptional circumstances for persons who have made a significant contribution to their field and the College recognises a specific need for that expertise.

### **2.7.2 Meeting attendance**

Members are encouraged to participate in scientific meetings and workshops organised by the College. Associate members may attend the annual general meeting as non-voting members.

### **2.7.3 Titles**

Associate members may use the title Associate Member of the European College of Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging, however they are not allowed to use the title or trademark of EBVS European Veterinary Specialist. Associate Members are not conferred any diplomas and are not entitled to use the designation of Diplomate.

### **2.7.4 Resident Training**

Associate Members are encouraged to participate in the training of residents together with Diplomates of the respective College and are entitled to act as Resident Supervisors provided that a Diplomate is responsible for the training programme.

### **2.7.5 Contributions to Committees**

Associate Members can be co-opted to College committees as advisors, however they are not allowed to hold office within the College.

### **2.7.6 Fees and Subscriptions**

Associate members shall be required to pay the annual dues. The Associate membership dues for the following year shall be determined by the AGM and must be paid annually before July 1<sup>st</sup>. The membership dues do not include a subscription to Veterinary Radiology & Ultrasound.

The status of Associate membership will be withdrawn if two years have elapsed without payment.

### **2.7.7 Maintenance of Associate Membership**

Associate members will submit an evaluation form every 5 years as directed by the Credentials Committee in order to assess their activity in the field. The status of Associate member is not permanent and can be withdrawn by the ECVDI® in case of insufficient activity in the field of Diagnostic Imaging, professional misconduct, failure to submit the re-evaluation form in the year of re-evaluation, or failure to pay the annual dues. The Executive Committee may propose withdrawal of Associate member status based on a 5-year personal progress report by the Credentials Committee. At the AGM the withdrawal of associate membership proposal is submitted and then has to be voted on and passed by a two-thirds majority of the members.

There is no retired status for Associate members and in case of retirement, the Associate membership status irrevocably ceases to exist. This also means the title of Associate Member of the European College of Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging may no longer be used.

## **2.8 Use of the term Diplomate**

A Diplomate is a veterinarian who has been awarded the diploma of an EBVS - recognised College, after passing the College's certifying examination or were appointed as a Founding Diplomate. A Diplomate who practises their speciality sufficiently (spending more than 60% of their time, for

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example: more than 24 hours per week, based on a normal working week of 40 hours or averaged over the year if only working part of the year) and passes the re-certification process of the College shall be awarded the title of Specialist by the EBVS.

Diplomates who do not practise their speciality sufficiently or for any other reason do not re-certify, can use the title “Diplomate”, but not the title of “Specialist”; they will be removed from the EBVS specialist register.

They may attend the College’s Annual General Meeting; act as a co-supervisor in Residency training programmes and must pay annual fees (as decided by the College).

However, they may not be a member of the College’s Executive Committee; represent the College on the EBVS Board; or be member of the College’s Credentials, Examination, Education or Residency Committees (Colleges, however, are allowed exemption from this rule).

## **3 Organisation, Officers and Executive Committee**

### **3.1 Duties of the Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee shall consider all the business and policies pertaining to the affairs of the College. It, or its designated Committees, shall receive all applications, conduct examinations and certify recommendations for Diplomate status in the College. It shall consider and act upon charges against Diplomates for alleged offences against the Constitution and Bylaws of the College or charges of unprofessional conduct and shall have the authority to recommend the expulsion of a member of the College for grievous offences or non-professional behaviour. The Executive Committee shall define the name, duties and composition of Committees. It shall appoint standing Committees, select the time and place of meetings and determine the fees for membership, enrolments, examinations, and other matters. It shall direct the management of funds held by the College. The Executive Committee shall meet at least once annually between consecutive AGMs, at times judged appropriate by the President.

### **3.2 Officers of the Executive Committee**

The four officers of the Executive Committee are defined in the Constitution, Article 5.2. The four officers and the immediate past president, together with the two members-at-large, and the Chairpersons of the Credentials, Examination, Education and Radiation Oncology Education Committees shall comprise the Executive Committee of the College. The four officers of the Executive Committee and the members-at-large are elected by secret ballot at the AGM. The Chairpersons of the Credentials, Examination, Education, and Radiation Oncology Education Committees are non-voting ex-officio members of the Executive Committee.

The Vice-President is elected at the AGM every two years. The presidential term starts one month after the AGM, thus allowing the transfer of duties from the immediate past president to the new President. The immediate Past President serves two years until the election of the next president.

### **3.3 Members at Large**

The members-at-large of the Executive Committee are comprised of the following individuals:

- Two members-at-large who shall normally serve a duty of two years but may be re-elected for a further two years.

Other persons may also be elected on an *ad hoc* basis to serve on the Executive Committee, according to current needs, and will normally serve a duty of two years.

### 3.4 Conflict of Interest

All Executive Board members, Committee members and employees of the European College of Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging (ECVDI) will strive to avoid any conflict of interest between the interests of ECVDI on the one hand, and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding actual conflicts of interest as well as the perception of conflicts of interest.

The purpose of this policy is to protect the integrity of ECVDI's decision-making process, to enable college members and external stakeholders to have confidence in the integrity of the ECVDI, and to protect the integrity and reputation of the college and its members and employees.

Upon appointment each Executive Board and Committee member will make a full, written disclosure of interests (see appendix 1), such as relationships, and posts held, that could potentially result in a conflict of interest. This written disclosure will be kept on file and will be updated annually or as appropriate.

## 4 The Training Programme

### 4.1 Objectives of the training programme

A European College of Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging® (ECVDI®)-approved Training Programme ('Residency Programme') is designed to:

- Provide in-depth training in veterinary diagnostic imaging and related basic and applied sciences in these areas. Allow the trainee ('resident') to develop aptitude and clinical proficiency in diagnostic imaging and to acquire and contribute to knowledge in this area.
- Meet the training requirements of the ECVDI® Credentials Committee and take the ECVDI® Certifying Examination (Diploma examination).
- Provide the resident with the opportunity to pursue career goals in teaching, research, clinical service, and/or specialty practice.
- Prepare the resident to sit the ECVDI® examination.

### 4.2 Types of programme

All training programmes must be approved by the ECVDI® Credentials Committee and are subject to current College guidelines. Two types of programme are available: standard and alternative.

#### 4.2.1 Standard Residency Programme

Standard programmes (formerly called formal programmes) are those offered by the parent institution on a routine and regular basis without modifications for particular applicants. A person undergoing this programme is called a resident. The Credentials Committee approves such programmes for a specific number of residents at any one time, mainly dependent on the caseload and number of Supervisors of the institution. Positions may be filled without further reference to the Committee provided there are no changes to the programme. Standard programmes have either a small animal or a large animal bias, hereafter referred to as small animal biased track and large animal biased track respectively. Single track (small or large) centres are allowed to run a standard ECVDI® residency programme as long as they have a formal agreement with a centre for the non-tracked species where an ECVDI® Diplomate/Associate is a programme supervisor. This needs to be accepted in advance and submitted as such with the training programme application to the credentials committee.

#### **4.2.2 Alternative Residency Programme**

Alternative programmes (formerly called individual programmes) are arranged by the trainee, supported by a Programme Director and one or more Supervisors, and approved by the Credentials Committee on a case-by-case basis. Parts of the training may be given at different institutions which offer certain facilities or caseload not provided by another, and which may not have a standard programme. The Programme Director must submit proposals for individual training programmes to the Credentials Committee. The alternative programme must be approved by the Credentials Committee before the resident embarks on it. For the purposes of this document, trainees pursuing alternative programmes will also be referred to as "residents". Alternative programmes should follow either a small animal biased or large animal biased track. This must be stated in the alternative programme application.

### **4.3 Requirements of the training programme**

#### **4.3.1 The resident**

All ECVDI residents must:

- Be graduates from a veterinary school that has been approved by the European Association of Veterinary Education Establishments (EAVEE). The Executive Committee may waive this requirement in exceptional circumstances.
- Be eligible to be registered/licensed to practise veterinary medicine and surgery in a European country. The College Executive Committee may waive this requirement in exceptional circumstances.
- Have a satisfactory moral and ethical standing in the profession and the community.
- Have completed a minimum of one year in a recognized general clinical training programme (internship) or satisfactory veterinary practice equivalent of a minimum of two years.
- Practise the specialty of diagnostic imaging for more than 60% of the time, based on a normal working week of 40 hours.

Members of the American College of Veterinary Radiology (holders of DACVR) are automatically eligible to apply to sit the examination without further periods of training provided they meet the publication and presentation requirements as defined by the ECVDI. The examination consists of two parts, a theoretical and a practical part. Candidates may not sit both parts during the same year.

##### **4.3.1.1 Resident Post-nominal**

Any individual enrolled with the European College of Veterinary Diagnostic as a resident, and who has not yet completed all sections of the examination, is permitted to use the title "ECVDI Resident in Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging" for the purposes of communication with the veterinary profession (including but not exclusively for the purposes of professional reports or for professional facing social media). The title and status of resident should not however be used for any purposes for marketing to members of the public to avoid any confusion with Diplomate status.

Misuse of the title may result in disciplinary action up to and including permanent exclusion from examinations.

#### **4.3.2 The Institution**

Training programmes are to be conducted at a veterinary school/college or other institution (including an approved private veterinary clinic). The parent institution must supply adequate resources, facilities and caseload. These must be guaranteed for the duration of the programme. Co-operation in the training with other institutions or clinics may be allowed, for example a nearby medical school. The parent institution must provide

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- All equipment required for the examination, diagnosis and management of patients throughout the duration of the programme.
- A complete medical record must be maintained for each case and these records must be retrievable.
- Extensive library facilities, providing current veterinary and medical texts, bound journals and abstracts (in printed or electronic form), must be available.
- Computing facilities must be provided.
- In an alternative programme in which the resident receives training at more than one centre, each centre must be approved by the Credentials Committee as fulfilling the requirements of that individual for that part of the training.
- The institution must provide regular academic conferences in which residents participate.
- The institution must provide an archive of imaging reports for independent study.
- Clinical imaging rounds and other specialty rounds must be held

### **4.3.3 Supervision of training**

#### **4.3.3.1 The Programme Director**

Training programmes must be normally directed by a certified Diplomate of the ECVDI (the 'Programme Director') or be a holder of an equivalent qualification (i.e. DACVR) if approved by the Credentials Committee and fulfilling the EBVS requirements. However, preference will be given to ECVDI Diplomates and training programmes must have at least one ECVDI Diplomate as either a Supervisor or the Director. The Programme Director is actively involved in the training programme to ensure adequate direction and is responsible for the administration, continuity and continuing development of the programme in general. The Programme Director is the link between the College and the residency programme. The Programme Director must assign one or more supervisors to the resident. Whenever possible the Programme Director is encouraged to attend meetings of the resident and Supervisor(s).

#### **4.3.3.2 The Supervisor(s)**

The Supervisor should normally be a certified Diplomate of the ECVDI or a holder of an equivalent qualification (i.e. DACVR) as outlined above. The Supervisor is the link between the resident and the Programme Director. The Programme Director and the supervisor may be the same individual. The Supervisor must ensure that the resident is receiving proper training and must act as a mentor. Each Supervisor may normally train up to two full-time residents or the part-time equivalent concurrently and who are following a standard residency programme. In exceptional cases three (3) residents can be allowed for a restricted time period at the discretion of the credentials committee. These figures do not include the continued supervision of candidates who have previously failed the practical examination. The resident must have a formal scheduled progress meeting with their primary Supervisor annually, preferably accompanied by the Programme Director, to evaluate the resident's performance and progress. Additional meetings throughout the year are encouraged and should be documented. The Supervisor (or a suitable alternative person) must be available at the request of the resident to perform or supervise cases. The supervisor must assist the resident to prepare for the theoretical and practical examination. For training for practical exams film readings, mock exams, and known case conferences are recommended. A supervisor shall have no more than two (2) residents following a standard residency programme; in exceptional cases three (3) residents can be allowed for a restricted time period at the discretion of the credentials committee.

A remote supervisor (supervisor who is not physically present at the main residency site) may be appointed-in certain instances (see 4.4.4.3 below) A maximum of three remote supervisors are permitted.

#### **4.3.3.3 The Advisor(s)**

The Supervisor may enlist the help of other individuals ('resident advisors') at the parent or other institutions. The qualifications of a resident advisor will vary with the subject area to be covered. A



resident advisor will ideally, but not necessarily, be a European College Diplomate Member of the EBVS.

#### 4.3.3.4 General comments

The Programme Director and the Supervisor together are responsible for the direction and evaluation of a resident and the administration of their training programme. For changes of Programme director and supervisor, see section 4.4.8.

### **4.4 Description of the training programme**

#### **4.4.1 Requirements for Entry into the Programme**

##### 4.4.1.1 Standard Programme Entry Requirements

Applicants who are entering under a standard residency shall forward their enrolment form (FORM E) to the Credentials Committee within 30 days of the start of their training.

##### 4.4.1.2 Alternative Programme Entry Requirements

Applicants who are applying to have an alternative residency approved must do so before starting the residency and must satisfy the Credentials Committee, acting on behalf of the College, that the alternative residency fulfils the College's requirements. Additionally, they shall forward their enrolment form (FORM E) to the Credentials Committee within 30 days of the start of their training. Programme should be submitted minimum 3 to 6 months before resident can start.

##### 4.4.1.3 Enrolment Fees

Payment is not submitted at the time of application. The administrative assistant receives the application and then processes it and assigns RESident status to their profile which then gives them access to the ECVDI system in order to pay their enrolment fee.

The enrolment fee charged to applicants shall be determined at the time of the AGM and will be applied immediately after the AGM.

#### **4.4.2 Objectives**

The training programme aims to provide high quality, in-depth clinical training in veterinary diagnostic imaging, leading to eligibility to sit the examination for the Diploma of the ECVDI®. The Syllabus lists full details of the requirements.

The training programme aims to produce veterinary radiologists proficient in the use of current imaging techniques for examination of a wide variety of diseases in animals, with due regard for radiation and other imaging related safety, with an understanding of developing techniques and the ability to contribute to the discipline through participation in research, congresses and publications.

The programme shall contribute to the continuing development and growth of the specialty.

#### **4.4.3 Anticipated Total Time Requirements**

##### 4.4.3.1 Total Training Time

The training programme consists of 132 weeks of education in veterinary diagnostic imaging. This time does not include annual vacation time, which will vary between institutions and needs to be added to the total length of the resident enrolment with the institution. One hundred and twenty weeks of education in veterinary diagnostic imaging must be supervised; the remaining 12 weeks may be unsupervised veterinary diagnostic imaging.(e.g. additional research time, externships for interest but not officially supervised). For each calendar year a maximum supervised time of 48 weeks will be accepted as supervised training time.

Where required, a training centre may elect to incorporate remote training. A maximum of 30% of the supervised training, and no more than 36 weeks of the whole duration of the training, may be

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supervised remotely. A remote supervisor must be appointed to supervise and certify this period of training. The remote supervisor must be a certified Diplomate of the ECVDI® or a holder of an equivalent qualification (i.e. DACVR) as outlined in section 4.3.3.1. The remote supervisor needs to be available online (with audio and video connection to the supervised resident(s) and ability to share screen and access to all the cases the resident(s) has access to) at all times during the supervised time and should be able to offer similar support to that expected of a physical supervisor. All remote supervision arrangements must be approved in advance by the Credentials Committee either as an additional centre on the programme application or as organised externships.

#### 4.4.3.2 Clinical Training, External Instruction, and Duration of Training

The standard residency programme is designed as a full-time, post-graduate education and experience in the science and practice of the subject, with 120 weeks of clinical supervised training. The training will take place at the parent institution and will be supervised by the supervisor but external instruction, approved by both the programme director and the supervisor, is allowed and encouraged. To encompass 132 weeks of education in veterinary diagnostic imaging on a full-time basis (working week of 40 hours) the total duration of the resident placement at the parent institution may be longer than three years to comply with local laws and regulations (For example where additional studying or holiday is mandated by law. It should however not exceed six years. Alternative programmes may be undertaken on a part time basis - please see 4.4.3.4 for details

#### 4.4.3.3 Concurrent Postgraduate Studies

If a further degree is undertaken at the same time as the residency programme, the overall length of the programme must be increased so that the resident can meet all of the requirements of the institution's Postgraduate Studies Committee or equivalent and still devote a total of at least 120 weeks supervised training to the residency. The postgraduate degree work must not interfere with clinical training and should be complementary to the ECVDI® training.

#### 4.4.3.4 Duration of Training for Alternative Programmes

Residents on alternative programmes may study on a part time basis (as long as they spend at least 60% of their time as residents) but must still fulfil all of the requirements of the residency programme within a period of not more than six years.

#### 4.4.3.5 Earliest Approval for Practical Examination

A resident is not permitted to sit the practical part of the College examination until four years after graduation from a veterinary school.

#### 4.4.3.6 Interruption of Training

Interruption to the resident's supervised training due to unforeseen circumstances, prolonged illness or pregnancy must be reported to the Credentials Committee immediately. In the case of pregnancy, extension of one year per pregnancy will be given if requested. Annual updating of the Portfolio will still be required.

#### 4.4.3.7 Culture and Philosophy of Training Programmes

Residency programmes should aim at training specialists who will have the qualities, professional and technical skills necessary for successful employment in professional environments, with self-confidence, self-criticism and sense of responsibility that are essential for the practice of the speciality. Moreover, residency programmes must aim at the development of a culture, which recognizes the importance of continuous professional development.

### ***4.4.4 Requirements for Personnel, Facilities and Equipment***

#### 4.4.4.1 On Site and Off Site Equipment

The Institution must provide adequate resources and ancillary equipment to ensure an effective programme. Equipment must be appropriate for large and small animal radiography and ultrasonography to ensure the residents can fulfil the training requirements. Access to nuclear medicine, computed tomography and magnetic resonance imaging through externships at other veterinary centres or at a nearby medical teaching hospital may be a substitute if these modalities are not available at the training centre.

#### 4.4.4.2 Supplementary External Training

Where a training centre lacks the equipment and/or expertise in some imaging modalities or caseload, the required training may be obtained elsewhere, as long as the overall objectives of the programme are fulfilled. A local resident advisor must be appointed to supervise and certify this period of training. The advisor must be a specialist in the field but need not necessarily be a veterinarian. The alternative arrangements must be approved in advance by the Credentials Committee.

#### 4.4.4.3 Supplementary Remote Training

Where required a training centre may elect to incorporate training on remote cases (teleradiology) within their programme in the following modalities: XR, MRI and CT. A maximum of **30%** of the total caseload requirement per modality outlined in section 4.4.5 may be remote. A remote supervisor must be appointed to supervise and certify this period of training. The remote supervisor must be a certified Diplomate of the ECVDI® or a holder of an equivalent qualification (i.e. DACVR) as outlined in section 4.3.3.1 and should be able to offer similar support to that expected of a physical supervisor.. A maximum of 3 remote supervisors are permitted. These arrangements must be approved in advance by the Credentials committee either as an additional centre on the programme application or as organised externships.

#### 4.4.4.4 Supporting Specialist Requirements

The training centre(s) for the 120-week period of supervised training must be supported by at least one Diplomate from each of the ECVDI®, ECVIM, ECVS, ECVN, ECVP or those with equivalent qualifications. A maximum of 30% of the total supervision can be remote, and the supervisor should be available online during the entirety of the supervised time. If not detailed in the training programme, an explanatory letter must be provided by the Supervisor to confirm the qualifications of each specialist and their role in the programme.

#### 4.4.4.5 Division of Small Animal and Large Animal Training

Residents enrolled under the large animal track have to spend a minimum of 24 weeks supervised training in small animal diagnostic imaging and this training should normally be performed in a fully approved ECVDI® standard small animal track residency programme ensuring a wide range of Diplomates from other disciplines are also involved in the training.

Residents enrolled under the small animal track must spend a minimum of 4 weeks and may spend up to a total of 12 weeks performing supervised training in a comparative species (such as but not exclusively limited to, large animal or livestock, equid species, exotic species, zoo species, wildlife and humans) and this training should normally be performed in a fully approved ECVDI® training centre or with a single ECVDI® Diplomate/Associate specialised in the appropriate species. Where this is not possible then section 4.4.4.2 applies and a local advisor may be appointed to supervise this training.

### **4.4.5 Requirements for Clinical Material**

#### 4.4.5.1 Species Caseload

The programme must provide a sufficient number of dogs, cats, horses, production and exotic animals to provide the resident with the opportunity to obtain familiarity with the techniques to diagnose the

diseases mentioned in the Examination Content Outlines. The resident should be given progressive responsibility for performing and interpreting all types of diagnostic imaging studies.

#### **4.4.5.2 Required Caseload - Small Animal Track**

During the whole course of the training programme, the resident should be involved in the techniques and interpretation of approximately 2500 imaging examinations. A small animal track resident should aim to be involved in the interpretation of approximately 1600 radiographic examinations of small animals (primarily dogs and cats), 500 small animal ultrasonographic examinations, 200 CT and 200 MRI studies and should be able to adequately perform all established radiographic projections and ultrasound examinations described in the canine/feline imaging literature.

#### **4.4.5.3 Required Caseload - Large Animal Track**

During the whole course of the training programme, the resident should be involved in the techniques and interpretation of approximately 2250 imaging examinations. A large animal track resident should aim to be involved in the interpretation of approximately 1000 radiographic examinations of large animals (primarily horses), 400 radiographic examinations of small animals (primarily dogs and cats), 450 large animal and 160 small animal ultrasonographic examinations, 50 large animal scintigraphic examinations, 200 CT/MRI (primarily large animals) examinations, and should be able to adequately perform all radiographic projections and standard ultrasound examinations described in the equine imaging literature. Additionally, a large animal track resident should be familiar with the conduct of lameness examinations, including peripheral nerve blocks. The large animal track resident should also be familiar with the conduct of neurological and pre-purchase examinations.

### **4.4.6 Documentation of Training**

The resident's progress through the training programme will be assessed by a Portfolio and a Confirmed Case Diary.

#### **4.4.6.1 The Portfolio**

The Portfolio consists of an Enrolment form, an annually submitted Annual Activity form and theory and practical examination application and re-application forms. All forms are available from the ECVDI® website.

#### **4.4.6.2 Enrolment Form**

The Enrolment form (FORM E) must be submitted within 30 days of the date on which the resident started their training programme ("the start date").

#### **4.4.6.3 Annual Activity Forms**

The Annual Activity forms (FORM A) must be submitted to the Credentials Committee at 12-month intervals within 30 days of the anniversary of the residency start date and after completion of 132 weeks of training. This is the responsibility of the resident and reminders will not be sent.

The Annual Activity form (FORM A) includes sections for updated personal details, an activity log and a supervisor's report.

The activity log will include, but not be limited to, details of clinical service, types and dates of external instruction, scientific meetings attended, presentations given and details of rounds attended at the training institution. The resident is responsible for making themselves aware of the content and requirements of the Annual Activity forms at the start of the programme.

Annual activity forms will be evaluated by the credentials committee following the ECVDI® Bylaws that were valid at the resident's start date, or, at the discretion of the credentials committee, the most

current bylaws. Any changes must be communicated to residents in training at least 9 months in advance of changing requirements.

#### 4.4.6.4 Annual update form

The annual update form must be submitted to the Credential Committee by March 1<sup>st</sup> of each year to maintain status as an approved programme. This is the responsibility of the Programme Director. If significant changes are reported, a full re-accreditation might be triggered at the discretion of the Credential Committee.

#### 4.4.6.5 Examination Application Forms

The Examination Application forms (FORM T (theory examination), FORM P (practical examination), FORM TR (theory resit) and FORM PR (practical resit), must be submitted between September 1st and October 1st preceding the year in which the candidate intends to sit the relevant section of the examination. **If by this time, the candidate has not achieved the requirement for acceptance of two publications (see Bylaw 4.4.7.3), an extension will be granted until December 1<sup>st</sup>, after which time no further extensions will be granted.** This is the responsibility of the resident and reminders will not be sent.

#### 4.4.6.6 Confirmed Case Diary

The Confirmed Case Diary must be maintained by the resident throughout the training programme and submitted to the Credentials Committee at the time of their first application for entrance into the practical examination. It does not need to be re-submitted if a resident applies to re-sit a previously failed examination.

The Confirmed Case Diary must contain 150 interesting cases. "Interesting" is defined as a case that the resident considered to be challenging, unusual or worthy of record for some other reason. Each case must have a known outcome where diagnosis is confirmed either by surgical findings, cytology, histopathology, post-mortem or clinical outcome. A range of species and modalities should be included, and the proportion of each species and modality is at the discretion of the resident.

A sample Confirmed Case Diary is available on the ECVDI® website and the resident is expected to follow this format but may use a software programme of their choice to record the information. The Confirmed Case Diary must, however, be eventually submitted to the Credentials Committee in either PDF, Word or Excel format.

### **4.4.7 Study and Education**

#### 4.4.7.1 Coursework

The resident must receive tuition in radiobiology, radiation safety and physics of diagnostic imaging, the latter must include radiography, ultrasonography, nuclear medicine, computed tomography and magnetic resonance imaging. The required knowledge is presented in the Syllabus. The programme must provide an opportunity for investigative work by the resident under appropriate supervision. This may take the form of basic research in a laboratory or analysis of clinical material.

#### 4.4.7.2 Performing a Presentation

During the period of training, and before application for the practical examination, the resident must make a presentation at an academic meeting of their own institution and an oral abstract presentation at a national (English language not required) or international veterinary conference on the subject of diagnostic imaging. Oral abstract presentations given during a period of two years prior to the start date of the residency programme are acceptable.

#### 4.4.7.3 Scientific Paper Requirements

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At the time of application for the practical examination, residents must have two scientific papers accepted for publication in a branch of diagnostic imaging in a peer-reviewed journal (English language not required): one study as first author (which is not a single case report) and a second paper as first or co-author. Papers with **an acceptance** date within two years prior to the start date of the residency are acceptable. Acceptance is based on the issuance of the copyright form and also based on the words 'accepted' or 'accepted subject to minor editorial review', but not 'accepted subject to major or minor revisions'. In certain extraordinary events and exceptions (e.g. ill health, bereavements), the Credentials Committee reserves the right to examine the case individually in order to decide if the applicant meets the criteria of acceptance or not. Case reports by a resident (as a first author or co-author) may be in any language but must be published in a peer reviewed journals and can be accepted only as the second paper. The case report must have a veterinary diagnostic imaging topic, a scientific abstract, the word count in the main text of the paper must be at least 1500 words and it contains five or more references.

#### 4.4.7.4 Independent Study

A searchable, computer-based or organised written teaching database of known case studies should be available at the institution (and maintained up to date) for reviewing additional cases or cases less frequently encountered in the clinic.

Textbooks and relevant literature should be used to deepen understanding of imaging characteristics and pathophysiology of cases seen in the clinic.

#### 4.4.7.5 Clinical Training

##### 4.4.7.5.1 Supervised Training

Clinical training must be a directed educational process. Unsupervised clinical duty alone is not suitable.

##### 4.4.7.6 Creation and Archiving of Reports

During the supervised training period the resident shall routinely write reports (on a daily basis) on each case examined. The reports shall include a description of the pertinent findings, an interpretation of them and a conclusion or diagnosis. The reports must be archived by the institution.

##### 4.4.7.7 Rounds

Rounds between the resident and the supervisor to review and discuss interpretation of diagnostic studies, the accuracy of the written reports and case management should be held, preferably every day, or at a minimum twice a week.

Other diagnostic imaging rounds are encouraged as part of the supervised training period. Types of rounds to consider include: daily case reporting and discussion, known case conferences, mock theory and practical examinations, journal clubs, book review sessions and other discussion groups, at a recommended frequency of at least once a month.

The resident must be given opportunities to regularly attend rounds given by other specialties such as medical, surgical, neurological and pathology rounds.

##### 4.4.7.8 Clinical Teaching Opportunities

The resident should participate in clinical teaching of other graduate veterinarians (+/-students).

#### **4.4.8 Quality Assurance of Training Programmes**

The Credentials Committee, acting for the College, shall review the supervisor's reports of the resident's performance and the Examination Committee's reports on each candidate and shall monitor:

- The performance of each candidate in the examination

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- The adequacy of each residency programme. Annual review of the programme, involving the resident's opinion, should be carried out by institutions running approved residency programmes.

#### 4.4.8.1 Reaccreditation of Standard Programmes Every 5 Years with annual updates

Programme re-accreditation of each standard residency training programme must be submitted to the Credentials Committee for review every five years and a short update form must be submitted annually; to be received before March 31st of the year that it is due. If a standard programme appears to be performing poorly, dialogue between the Credentials Committee and the Programme Director must take place in an attempt to identify and rectify areas of weakness.

#### 4.4.8.2 Programme Interruption for more than 2 years

Standard residencies should be filled on a regular basis. If a residency remains unfilled (no resident in the programme), for whatever reason, for more than two years, the Credentials Committee must be notified and the programme re-accredited before it is offered again.

#### 4.4.8.3 Programme Modification

Changes in either a standard or an alternative programme that may have an impact on the programme must be reported to the Credentials Committee by the Programme Director either in the annual update form or immediately (such as reduction or cessation of areas of training due to loss of association with a co-operating department or institution, a permanent reduction in the clinical caseload, change of director or loss of supervisors) and reaccreditation of the programme may be required at the discretion of the Credentials Committee.

#### 4.4.8.4 Reporting of Changes of Programme Director or Supervisor

Proposed changes of Programme Director or Supervisor, including a change from practicing status, must be promptly reported to, and approved by, the Credentials Committee. New residents may not enter the programme until the reaccreditation is approved by the Credentials Committee. The following procedure should be followed:

1. The vacating Programme Director and/or supervisor send(s) a signed letter to the Credentials Committee explaining the circumstances or causes for the change.
2. The new Programme Director and/or supervisor send(s) to the Credentials Committee:
  - a. A signed letter of acceptance to the Credentials Committee, including a statement that they are aware of the current Bylaws and of their obligations,
  - b. An updated comprehensive programme (including their curriculum vitae) for reaccreditation, which will be evaluated by the credentials committee and,
  - c. Once the re-accreditation is approved by the Credentials Committee, an updated short version of the new programme for the ECVDI® webpage.

#### 4.4.8.5 Increasing the Number of Residents

Each residency programme will have been approved for a specific number of residents mainly based on the clinical caseload. Any proposal to increase that number of residents must be notified to the Credentials Committee before any action is taken. If the increase is temporary, the Programme Director must document how this may affect the training of the other resident(s). If the increase is permanent, the entire programme description must be revised, evaluated and approved by the Credentials Committee for reaccreditation of the programme.

### **4.4.9 Procedures for evaluation of residents**

#### 4.4.9.1 Supervisor and Programme Director Review of Portfolio

The resident's progress is reviewed annually by the Credentials Committee by means of their portfolio. It is the resident's responsibility to provide the portfolio to the supervisor and Programme Director, and after updating and signing the resident submits it to the Credentials Committee. If the Portfolio is not received within 30 days of each submission deadline, any supervised clinical training time between 30 days after the submission deadline and the actual date of submission will not be counted as supervised clinical time in the resident's programme and the Credentials Committee may recommend to the ECVDI® Executive Committee that the resident's programme be suspended.

#### 4.4.9.2 Unsatisfactory Progress of the Resident

If weaknesses are identified by the Credentials Committee, the supervisor will be notified of the steps required to correct them. If severe deficiencies are noted, the resident's progress may be suspended. The resident and supervisor must act on the Credentials Committee's directions and submit reports as directed by its members. If the deficiencies cannot be corrected, the Credentials Committee may permanently withdraw approval of the programme. If the resident has policy-based concerns, contact the Credential chair of the ECVDI. All interpersonal conflicts need to be moderated by the place of employment.

#### 4.4.9.3 Unsatisfactory Training Programme

If a training programme is not proceeding satisfactorily deficiencies must be addressed rapidly, to ensure that the resident does not waste valuable training time in activities not leading to their effective education. The reviews outlined above may not be timely enough to ensure this. Therefore, at any time the Programme Director, supervisor or resident may initiate a College review of any change that may affect the effectiveness of the programme. The Credentials Committee will inform the Programme Director in writing of any deficiencies. Deficiencies may result in a programme being put on probation. Programmes on probation are not allowed to enrol new ECVDI®-recognised residents until the deficiencies have been corrected to the satisfaction of the Credentials Committee. Should the latter not occur, for whatever reason, the programme's approval by the ECVDI® may be withdrawn. From the date of withdrawal of approval, any further resident training will not be recognised as ECVDI®-approved.

#### 4.4.9.4 Resident Transfer Procedure

Programmes should be flexible and be open to changes that facilitate resident's future careers. Residents are expected to remain in the same programme for the entire time, however they may need to transfer to another approved residency programme for the following reasons:

1. The original programme was placed on probation or suspension
2. Personnel disputes
3. Personal issues, location, etc.
4. The resident is terminated from a programme

If a resident wishes to transfer for any reason, that transfer must be approved by the initial programme director as well as by the new programme director PRIOR to transfer.

1. Letter from original (transferring) institution must be submitted to the Credentials Committee PRIOR (at least 6 weeks) to scheduled transfer. This letter should contain: Name of institution with up to date contact details for programme Director, Name of transferring resident, year of training, number of clinical and non-supervised training in months or weeks satisfactorily completed prior to transfer at original institution, signature of resident and programme Director.
2. Documentation of a resident in good standing (see 4.3.2): Submission of latest annual activity form, including a list of satisfactorily completed rotations and confirmed case diary (should



document interesting cases added up to date of transfer), by the resident to the Credentials Committee and new Programme Director.

3. Letter from receiving institution and Programme Director PRIOR to scheduled start date. This letter should contain: Name of institution with up to date contact details for programme Director, Number of Residents already present at this location, Name of transferring resident, anticipated start date, estimated date of completion of programme, signature of new programme Director.
4. Residents must be acceptable to the programme to which they seek transfer.
5. Resident needs to re-enrol with ECVDI.
6. A grace period of 2 years from termination of programme is given. After the 2 years, no previous credentials (supervised time, documented cases, publications etc) will be accepted.

Both the training centre(s) and resident involved in a resident transfer are expected to behave in a mature, professional and confidential manner. Residents involved in the transfer should be treated with respect and dignity. All forms are available on the ECVDI website.

The Credentials Committee will review all transfer requests in a timely manner after all documentation is received. A recommendation of approval or rejection will be made and the original and receiving Programme Directors as well as the transferring resident will be notified of the decision.

#### 4.4.9.5 Conflict Resolution

If the resident has policy-based concerns, they should contact the Credentials chair of the ECVDI. All interpersonal conflicts need to be moderated by the University or place of employment and Human Resources Department.

Even if a program is satisfactory to the Credentials Committee, ECVDI does not accredit, certify, promise, or guarantee the results or satisfaction with any residency program. Additionally, ECVDI has no liability for the conduct or actions of the faculty/diplomates or residents within a program.

#### 4.4.9.6 Termination of residency

The Programme Director must send a letter to the Credentials committee including: Name of resident, date of termination, number of weeks or months of clinical supervised and non-supervised time completed at the institution, reason for termination, signature of programme director

## **5 The Examination**

### **5.1 General Format, Time Frame and Examiners**

#### **5.1.1 Syllabus Updates**

The Syllabus will be updated on the ECVDI® website at the latest nine months prior to the Theoretical Examination.

#### **5.1.2 Parts of the Examination**

The examination consists of two parts, a theoretical and a practical part. Both parts of the examination are held annually in February/March. Candidates may not sit both parts during the same year. A resit of the theoretical examination may be held 4-8 months after the initial examination for failing candidates. The resit examination will have the same structure as the original examination and up to 1/3 of the questions will be changed from the original examination. Candidates who pass the resit examination would be eligible to sit the practical examination in the following year examination cycle. Eligible candidates would not normally be allowed to defer their initial theoretical exam to the resit date barring extenuating circumstances (eg. illness) and would only be permitted to do so subject to permission from the credentials committee. Failing candidates of the theoretical exam would not be required to take the resit examination, and may choose to retake the theoretical examination in the following year.

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### **5.1.3 Examination Language and Reference Material**

The language of the examination is English. Hard copy, non-medical dictionaries and a basic calculator are permitted in all parts of the examination.

### **5.1.4 Time Permitted to Pass the Examination**

Candidates must pass all parts of the examination within eight years of completion of their residency programme, or within eight cycles of the examination if it is not held every year. The Credentials Committee can grant extension of this period in special circumstances (see paragraph 4.4.3.6).

### **5.1.5 Number of Examination Attempts**

The candidate may only make four attempts at the theory examination and four attempts at the practical examination. Candidates that have failed the examination (theoretical and/or practical) four times or have not obtained the ECVDI diploma within eight years after the end of their residency will be refused further training and examination, unless exception circumstances have been approved by the College.

### **5.1.6 Withdrawal from the Examination**

Withdrawing from the theoretical or practical exam may be allowed if the candidate provides a justifiable reason, supported by the supervisor or program director. If the credentials committee accepts the withdrawal, the candidate will lose the exam fee, but the number of remaining attempts will be unaffected.

### **5.1.7 Eligibility for the Theoretical Examination**

Eligibility for the theoretical part requires:

- Completion of at least 60 weeks of supervised training by the application deadline to sit the examination.
- All relevant sections of the Portfolio must be up to date at the time of application.
- An application to sit the theoretical part of the examination (FORM T) must be sent to the Credentials Committee between September 1<sup>st</sup> and October 1<sup>st</sup> of the preceding year.
- The theoretical examination fee must also be paid in full by the same date. The examination fee is usually non-refundable once the Credentials Committee has accepted the application.

### **5.1.8 Eligibility for the Practical Examination**

Eligibility for the practical part requires:

- Completion of at least 108 weeks of supervised training by the application deadline to sit the examination.
- A PASS result in the theoretical part of the examination.
- Meeting the publication and presentation requirements mentioned under chapter 4.4.7 by the application deadline to sit the examination.
- All relevant sections of the Portfolio must be up to date at the time of application. The final part of the portfolio (final annual activity form) confirming all residency requirements are completed must be submitted to the credentials committee AT LEAST one week prior to the practical examination. Candidates will be reminded of this at the time of acceptance of credentials.
- Submission of a completed Confirmed Case Diary to the Credentials Committee by the application deadline to sit the examination.

- An application to sit the practical part of the examination (FORM P) must be sent to the Credentials Committee between September 1<sup>st</sup> and October 1<sup>st</sup> of the year preceding the practical part of the examination.
- Payment of the examination fee by the same date. The examination fee is usually non-refundable once the Credentials Committee has accepted the application.

### **5.1.9 Notification of Credential Status**

The acceptance or denial of credentials will be notified to candidates by 1<sup>st</sup> November of the year preceding the examination. This allows sufficient time for appeal against this decision before the examination. Any appeal against the denial of credentials must be made a minimum of one and maximum of three weeks following the official announcement of this decision.

### **5.1.10 Examination Committee**

The Examination Committee Chair in conjunction with the members of the Examination Committee will be responsible for the formulation and administration of the examination and subsequent examination reports. The Examination Committee may recommend to the Executive Committee the appointment as examiner anyone it considers competent to administer the relevant part.

### **5.1.11 Honour Code**

Examinees are required to sign the Honour code prior to sitting the theoretical and practical examinations (see Appendix 1).

## **5.2 Theoretical part of the examination (from the 2021 Examination onwards)**

The theoretical part of the examination consists of a single multiple-choice examination with 175 questions. 150 questions are allocated to the examination and 25 questions are 'test' questions which will be assessed statistically and can be used in subsequent examinations. Candidates will not be aware which are the 'test' questions, these 'test' questions will not count toward the examination results and cannot be used in any appeal process. Questions are not divided into separate sections but will cover anatomy, pathophysiology and specifics of imaging. Approximately 1/3 of questions relating to each imaging modality will pertain to the physics of imaging and instrumentation.

### **5.2.1 Small Animal Track Theoretical Examination**

The majority of species-specific questions will refer to canine and feline species. No more than 5% of questions in the small animal track will refer specifically to other species. Questions relating to other species will be at a textbook level. The distribution of examination questions is approximately as follows:

1. Anatomy: 13%
2. Pathophysiology: 13%
3. Radiology / Fluoroscopy: 22%
4. Ultrasound: 21%
5. Computed tomography: 19%
6. MRI: 10%
7. Nuclear scintigraphy: 1%
8. Image management systems: 1%

### **5.2.2 Large Animal Track Theoretical Examination**

Approximately 80% of species-specific questions will refer to large animal species. Up to 20% of species-specific questions may refer to canine and feline knowledge. Canine and feline questions will be at a textbook level. The distribution of examination questions is approximately as follows:

1. Anatomy: 13%
2. Pathophysiology: 13%
3. Radiology / Fluoroscopy: 26%
4. Ultrasound: 12%
5. Computed tomography: 13%
6. MRI: 18%
7. Nuclear scintigraphy: 4%
8. Image management systems: 1%

### **5.2.3 Content of the Theoretical Examination (All Theoretical Examinations)**

Each section will consist of questions covering as much as possible of the content of the exam content outline. Questions are single, best-answer, context-rich, multiple-choice questions (MCQ). Each question will be phrased clearly and will not contain any ambiguity. Essay (short or long) questions will not be included. Each question will be based on published documentation available in the English language excluding references published during the last 6 months preceding the examination. The reference and correct answers will be recorded before the examination is held and will be made available to each Examination Committee member. Any question with an unanticipated low correct answer rate will be re-evaluated by the Examination Committee after the examination is held to ensure that it was unambiguous and reasonable. The Examination Committee may decide to remove questions retrospectively.

### **5.2.4 Creation of the Theoretical Examination (All Theoretical Examinations)**

The chairs of the large and small animal examination committees determine who on the committee is responsible for producing which part of the examination. Examination committee members will select questions from the question bank from previous years, may ask individual diplomates to produce questions in specific fields and may themselves produce questions as needed to cover the syllabus. Questions from the previous year's examination may be re-used, but at least 1/3 of the total questions should be replaced each year. The entire examination is reviewed by the examination committee chairs and by members of the quality assurance committee. The completed examination is reviewed by selected diplomates during criterion referenced standard setting to determine the cut off score for the examination.

### **5.2.5 Format of the Theoretical Examination (All Theoretical Examinations)**

The examination is held on one day, with all sections examined in one paper. There will be 175 questions in the main theoretical examination. 150 will form the examination and an additional 25 questions will be evaluated statistically for future use. Candidates will not be aware which are the 25 'test' questions but the results on these questions will not influence the exam result. These 25 test questions will not be included in the theoretical resit examination, leaving a total of 150 questions which will form the resit examination. A maximum of 5.5 hours will be allowed to sit the examination. No documentation, other than a hard copy non-medical dictionary. The use of "smart" digital devices that could allow access to information that could benefit the candidate (including watches of any type, mobile/cell and smartphones and ear buds) are not permitted to be taken into the examination room; only a basic calculator is allowed.

### **5.2.6 Marking the Theoretical Examination (All Theoretical Examinations)**

The exam will be computer based allowing for automatic marking. The examination committee will aim to create an exam with estimated overall difficulty of 75%. The pass mark for the theoretical examination will be determined by criterion referenced standard setting. Candidates achieving this standard will be eligible to sit the practical examination. Any question with an unanticipated low correct answer rate will be re-evaluated by the Examination Committee after the examination is held to ensure that it was unambiguous and reasonable. Questions may be removed retrospectively.

### **5.2.7 Notification of Theoretical Examination Results (All Theoretical Examinations)**

Results of the examination will be forwarded to an Officer of the College (President, Vice-President, Treasurer or Secretary). The Officer of the College may approve the results of the theoretical part of the examination based on recommendations from the Examination Committee. The Exam Director or Examination Committee Chairs will inform candidates individually within 30 days of the end of the exam, and all candidates will be informed of their result on the same day. The Examination Committee Chair will send a written report to failing candidates detailing marks in individual sections and specific weaknesses identified during the examination. This report will also be made available to the programme director of the failing candidate. The Executive Committee will consider requests by candidates who wish to keep results private. Such a request should be made within 3 days of receiving the written/ email confirmation. Failing candidates can appeal the decision of the Executive Committee within 90 days of receiving their written/ email notification.

## **5.3 Practical part of the examination**

The practical part of the examination will be held during two consecutive days and includes four written sections. The examination is based on diagnostic images of real clinical cases and consists of written reports with 9-11 cases examined per section.

They are divided into four sections as follows:

### **5.3.1 Small Animal Track Practical Examination**

#### **5.3.1.1 Section 1**

Thoracic imaging (written)

#### **5.3.1.2 Section 2**

Abdominal imaging (written)

#### **5.3.1.3 Section 3**

Musculoskeletal imaging (written)

#### **5.3.1.4 Section 4**

Head and neuroimaging (written)

### **5.3.2 Large Animal Track Practical Examination**

#### **5.3.2.1 Section 1**

Thoracic and abdominal imaging (written)

#### **5.3.2.2 Section 2**

Musculoskeletal imaging 1 (written)

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#### 5.3.2.3 Section 3

Musculoskeletal imaging 2 (written)

#### 5.3.2.4 Section 4

Head, spine and neuroimaging (written)

### **5.3.3 Composition of the Practical Examination - Small Animal Track (from the 2021 Examination onwards)**

Approximately 95% of case material will pertain to canine and feline. For the Small Animal Track, no more than 5% of cases may pertain to other species. The proportion of advanced imaging cases across the examination will be up to 30% CT and up to 15% MRI. A greater number of advanced imaging cases will be used in sections 3 and 4 as compared to sections 1 and 2. Up to 30% of ultrasound cases will be used across the examination.

### **5.3.4 Composition of the Practical Examination - Large Animal Track (from the 2021 Examination onwards)**

For Large Animal Track up to 20% of material may pertain to canine and feline imaging. The proportion of advanced imaging cases across the examination may be up to 20% CT and 25% MRI with most advanced imaging cases in sections 2, 3 and 4. Up to 20% of ultrasound cases and 5% of nuclear medicine cases may be used across the examination.

### **5.3.5 Case Material and Presentation for the Practical Examination**

The Examination Committee Assistant Chairs (one for Small animal cases and one for Large animal cases) are responsible for collecting cases and assessing the degree of difficulty and homogeneity of the examination set, with the examination committee members.

Examination material must be of sufficient diagnostic quality to allow the candidate to reach the expected conclusions. Normal studies may be included in the examination if they are considered pertinent by the Examination Committee. For each case a pertinent clinical history may be provided at the discretion of the Examination Committee. Candidates are not expected to interpret results of ancillary (non-imaging) diagnostic tests. In some cases, no clinical history may be provided to allow candidates to be tested on their lesion detection skills and ability to generate a list of differential diagnoses. All images will be labelled appropriately and, if not shown on the images, relevant information on date, time, side, and beam angle should be provided by the examiners. Cases using digital images displayed on computer stations will be used. If specific software package will be used this will be stated at least 6 months in advance and if the candidate is unfamiliar with its use an examiner may be asked to manipulate the images.

### **5.3.6 Practical Examination Questions Answer Format**

Sections 1 – 4 consist of written reports based on clinical cases allowing approximately 20 minutes per case. Written reports must be organized into separate paragraphs including:

1. Description of findings.
2. Summary of main findings.
3. Interpretation of findings/diagnosis/differential diagnosis/conclusion.

### **5.3.7 Marking of the Practical Examination**

Different members of the Examination Committee mark the questions. One examiner marks the answers for all candidates for a specific question. Consequently each candidate's answers in one

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section of questions will be marked by different examiners. A random selection of answers is marked by two different examiners (double marked) to check for consistency. In case of persistent disagreement between the two examiners, the Chair will make a final assessment. Candidates must achieve  $\geq 70\%$  of the total available marks to pass the exam with  $\geq 70\%$  in at least two out of four sections and  $\geq 50\%$  in all sections in order to pass the exam overall. Any case with an unanticipated low correct answer rate will be re-evaluated by the Examination Committee after the examination is held to ensure that it was unambiguous and reasonable. The Examination Committee may decide to remove cases retrospectively. The examination committee may adjust the overall pass mark by up to (+ or -) 2% on review of overall examination difficulty and distribution of the final marks before the identity of the candidates is known. The identities of the candidates will remain unknown to all the examiners until after marking is completed and the post-exam moderation is performed.

#### **5.3.8 Communication of Results of the Practical Examination**

Results of the examination will be forwarded to the Executive Committee within one week after the exam and the Executive Committee will take the final decision on pass or fail based on recommendation from the Examination Committee. The Examination Committee Chair will notify results of the practical part of the examination individually to the candidates within 30 days after the exam, and all candidates will be informed of their result on the same day.

### **5.4 Examination Report**

The Chair of the Examination Committee will be responsible for writing a full report of the examination to the Executive Committee. This report will include statistics regarding number of candidates, pass rate for first time candidates, pass rate for repeat examinees, pass rate for the entire examination and pass rate for each theoretical and practical section. In addition, specific comments from the examiners regarding areas of weakness will be included. Any particular event during the examination and the marking, such as question removal, must be documented clearly. The examination report will be made available to all ECVDI® Diplomates after it has been approved by the Executive Committee.

#### **5.4.1 Examination Feedback for Failing Candidates**

Candidates who fail the Practical part of the examination will be furnished with a letter detailing their strengths and weaknesses on the examination to aid with future preparations for the examination. The Chair of the Examination Committee will collect comments from all examiners and review the candidate's results to give a comprehensive analysis of their performance. This report will also be made available to the programme director of the failing candidate. Failing candidates can appeal the decision of the Executive Committee within 90 days of receiving their written/ email notification.

### **5.5 Re-examination**

A candidate who fails the theoretical or practical parts of the examination must re-apply if they wish to re-sit this part of the examination in a subsequent year. The candidate is advised to discuss this decision with their supervisor prior to making an application to re-sit an examination. If a candidate fails one or more parts of the examination, the Examination Committee should contact each unsuccessful candidate and provide specific feedback in a format deemed appropriate by the College. If a candidate fails one or more parts of the examination twice, a mentorship and educational plan should be discussed with each unsuccessful candidate.

#### **5.5.1 Application Deadlines for Re-Examination Forms**

The appropriate application form (FORM TR or PR) must be submitted to the Credentials Committee between 1<sup>st</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> October of the year prior to the year in which the candidate intends to re-sit the examination.

### **5.5.2 Application Fee for Re-Examination**

The full re-sit examination fee must be paid at the time of application.

## **5.6 Guidelines for Members of the Examination and Quality Assurance (QA) Committee giving Mock Examinations**

### **5.6.1 Acceptable Trainers for Mock Examinations**

Current members of the examination committee can only give mock exams to their own residents, i.e. residents they directly supervised (either as programme director, main supervisor or associated supervisor) and/or following the residency program in their own institution.

Current members of the examination committee are not authorised at any time to organise or participate in mock exams for residents who are not their own residents (i.e. residents who are not part of their own institution/residency programme or residents they do not supervise).

### **5.6.2 Timeline for Mock Theoretical Examinations**

Current members of the examination committee are only authorised to give theoretical mock exams to their own residents before October 1<sup>st</sup> of the year prior to the year of the examination. No theoretical mock exam should be given after this date, which is the date when questions of the theoretical examination are usually sent to all the members of the examination committee.

5.6.2.1 Current members of the QA committee should not deliver mock theoretical exams in the last 8 weeks before the theoretical examination.

### **5.6.3 Timeline for Mock Practical Examinations**

Current members of the examination committee are only authorised to give practical mock exams to their own residents before January 15<sup>th</sup> of the year of the examination. No mock exam should be given after this date, which is the date when cases of the practical examination are usually sent to all the members of the examination committee.

### **5.6.4 Mock Examination Material**

Previous and current members of the examination committee or the QA committee are not allowed at any time to use examination material (theoretical multiple-choice questions or practical cases) for training or mock exams for any residents.

## **5.7 Suspected malpractice by examination candidates**

### **5.7.1 Definitions**

Malpractice is deemed to be those actions and practices, which threaten the integrity of the examination, and/or damage the authority of those responsible for conducting them. The following are examples of malpractice by candidates. The list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by the ECVDI® at their discretion:

- Introduction of unauthorised material into the examination room (including but not limited to: notes, textbooks or study guides; personal organisers; mobile phones; smart watches or other similar electronic devices);
- Obtaining, receiving, exchanging or passing on information which could be examination related (or the attempt to) by means of talking, written papers/notes, mobile phone or other electronic devices;



- Attempting to solicit information about the examination from candidates from an earlier time slot;
- Copying from another candidate;
- Collusion;
- Disruptive behaviour in the examination room (including the use of offensive language);
- Failing to abide by the conditions of supervision designed to maintain the security of the examinations;
- Failing to abide by the instructions of an invigilator, examiners, or the ECVDI® in relation to the examination rules and regulations;
- Impersonation: pretending to be someone else, arranging for a third party to take the candidate's place in an examination;
- The inclusion of inappropriate, offensive or obscene material in answers;
- Misuse of examination material, e.g. by passing or attempting to pass such material to a third party after the examination;
- Physical or verbal abuse or intimidation of examination candidates or examiners;
- Bribing or attempting to bribe an examiner;
- Behaving in such a way as to undermine the integrity of the examination;
- Contravention of the instructions on the conduct of the examination and the candidate's responsibilities, contained in documents that have been sent to the candidates; or that are published on the ECVDI® website; or that have been conveyed to them by examination staff or invigilators.

### **5.7.2 Allegations of Malpractice**

#### **5.7.2.1 Reporting Allegations of Malpractice**

Allegations of malpractice may be reported to the Executive Committee of the ECVDI® by (supervising) examiners, invigilators or candidates. When dealing with alleged malpractice, the ECVDI® Executive Committee will deal both with the invigilator or examiner and the candidate or the candidate's representative.

#### **5.7.2.2 Investigation of Malpractice**

The ECVDI® Executive Committee will seek to establish the full facts and circumstances of any alleged malpractice by any candidate by seeking full accounts from and, where appropriate, interviewing, all parties involved. The ECVDI® Executive Committee will seek to investigate all allegations of malpractice, but reserve the right to reject allegations, which lack substance or appear, following careful scrutiny, not to be malicious. Only in the case of a burden of evidence will the College take official steps regarding violations of its Bylaws.

#### **5.7.2.3 Reporting Malpractice at the Examination**

If malpractice is discovered during or immediately after the examination by someone at the centre, a full report must be submitted immediately after the event to the ECVDI® Executive Committee by the invigilator or supervising examiner. In most circumstances, the candidate will be permitted to complete the examination provided that their behaviour causes no disturbance to other candidates or jeopardises the security or conduct of the examination, in which case they should be removed and their examination terminated. However, the candidate will be informed of the nature of the alleged malpractice in front of an independent witness. A full report should be submitted to the ECVDI® Executive Committee, including an account of the candidate's response. The candidate should be advised that the matter will be subject to an investigation. Any material illegally introduced into the examination room should be temporarily confiscated (including electronic equipment) and a receipt given. If the candidate refuses to permit the material or equipment to be confiscated, this fact will be recorded.

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#### 5.7.2.4 Reporting Malpractice after the Examination

If malpractice is alleged after the examination or is discovered by the ECVDI® Executive Committee, full details of the alleged malpractice will be reported to the invigilator or supervising examiner at the examination centre and they will be asked to comment in writing on the report.

#### 5.7.2.5 Communications to Candidate and Candidate Response

In all cases a candidate accused of malpractice must be sent full details of the allegations and evidence against them and be given the opportunity to respond in writing to allegations made. The candidate will be given a period of up to 30 days, following written receipt of the allegations and supporting evidence etc., to reply to the allegations.

#### 5.7.2.6 Candidate Access to Evidence of Malpractice

The ECVDI® Executive Committee will ensure that individuals subject to an irregularity investigation have access to all evidence against them and are provided with all necessary facilities including advice, sufficient time etc. in order to allow full responses to be prepared.

#### 5.7.2.87 Investigation and Report of Malpractice to Executive Committee

It is the responsibility of the invigilator or supervising examiner, acting on behalf of the ECVDI, to carry out an investigation, to submit a full written report of the case and to provide supporting evidence, including the actual material or equipment confiscated where appropriate to the ECVDI® Executive Committee.

Reports should include:

1. a statement of the facts (detailed account of the circumstances and details of any investigation carried out by the centre);
2. a written statement(s) from the invigilators or other staff concerned;
3. any mitigating factors;
4. seating plans;
5. unauthorised material found in the examination room;
6. any work of the candidate and any associated material or equipment which is relevant to the investigation.

### **5.7.3 Consideration of the Malpractice Allegation**

#### 5.7.3.1 Informing the Candidate of Possible Consequences of Misconduct

In following up the receipt of a formal report of allegation of misconduct the Chair of the Examination committee should write to the candidate to inform them of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven and of the avenues for appealing should a judgement be made against them.

#### 5.7.3.2 Informing the Candidate of Course of Action

Once the candidate's response to the allegation contained in the report has been received, the Chair of the Examination committee, or equivalent, will consider the case and decide upon a course of action. This course of action will be communicated to the candidate within 30 days of receipt of their response. If the potential sanction falls outside the authority of the Chair of Examination, the allegation may be referred to the ECVDI® President. The ECVDI® President may consider the allegation and take appropriate actions, or may ask the Executive Committee to consider the allegation.

Full details of the procedure should be sent to candidates whose case is put before the ECVDI® Executive Committee.

#### 5.7.3.3. Candidate's Options for Response

In most cases the events will be considered on the basis of documentary evidence alone and candidates will respond to allegations in writing. However, candidates will have the right to appear in front of the Executive Committee to present their case and in such cases, they will be offered the opportunity to be accompanied or represented by a legal adviser or other representative or supporter.

#### **5.7.4 Sanctions and penalties applied against candidates**

The ECVDI® Executive Committee may, at their discretion, impose the following sanctions and penalties against candidates found guilty of malpractice:

1. formal warning
2. result of a part of the exam annulled or withheld
3. all results for exams to date annulled/withheld
4. barred from entry for set period
5. barred from entry ever again.

Penalties (4) and (5) imply also penalty (3).

#### **5.7.5 Principles for applying sanctions and penalties**

##### **5.7.5.1 Application of Penalties**

The ECVDI® reserves the right to apply penalties flexibly or outside of the defined options 1-5 if particular mitigating or aggravating circumstances are found to exist.

As no assumptions can be made on intended actions, penalties will be based only on the evidence presented. All penalties must be justifiable and reasonable in their scale and consistent in their application. Penalties may apply either to all parts or components of the examination in which the offence has been committed or may apply additionally to possible future examinations, depending upon the severity of the offence. If evidence comes to light some considerable time after the offence, a penalty may still be applied to the examination in which the offence was committed and to later examinations.

For reasons of consistency of approach in the application of penalties, the ECVDI® will not (subject to any mitigating factors or extenuating circumstances) take into account the consequential effects of any particular penalty that might arise from the circumstances of the individual.

##### **5.7.5.2 Duration of Penalties Applied**

Penalties applied will remain on record until the candidate is either time-expired from the ECVDI® examination or passes the ECVDI® examination.

#### **5.7.6 Communication of the decision**

The candidate will be informed of any decision in writing as soon as possible after decisions are made and in all cases within 14 days. It is the responsibility of the ECVDI® Secretary to communicate the decision to the individuals concerned, and to give warnings in cases where this is indicated.

## **6 Appeal Procedures**

### **6.1 Definitions and Grounds of Appeal**

In the event of an adverse decision by the College the affected party has the right to appeal against this decision. Adverse decisions by the College include, but are not limited to:

- A. Denial of certification of credentials.
- B. Temporary or permanent suspension of a member of the college.

- C. Failure of an examination or a part of an examination.
- D. Denial of adequacy of credentials.
- E. Denial or withdrawal of approval of a residency programme.
- F. Sanctions or penalties for malpractice.

*Affected parties* can be persons seeking enrolment as ECVDI® residents, enrolled ECVDI® residents, examinees or members of the college. For adverse decisions regarding training (residency) programme denial or approval, the Programme Director shall act as the affected person.

A *Notice of Appeal* is the submitted document by the affected party prior to it being considered as an Appeal by the Executive Committee of the College.

An *Appellant* is an affected party who has submitted a Notice of Appeal.

Appeals must be made on one of the following grounds to be considered:

- A. That the College failed to correctly apply its own published rules, procedures or criteria relevant to the decision in question.
- B. That the College imposed a sanction that was disproportionate to the gravity of the adverse decision against the Appellant.

## **6.2 Communication of the Right of Appeal**

In the event of an adverse decision, the College shall notify the affected party (or parties) of the procedure for appealing against the adverse decision. This notification must be included with the communication that gives notice of the adverse decision itself. The Appeal Procedure must specify a postal or email address and Officer of the College to which an Appeal should be sent in the first place, this is currently the Secretary.

## **6.3 Commencing the Appeal Process**

### **6.3.1 Timeline for Launching a Notice of Appeal**

Any affected party who wishes to launch a Notice of Appeal must do so within 90 days of the written/email receipt of the adverse decision. The Notice of Appeal must be made in writing to the Secretary and shall include a statement of the grounds for reconsideration and any relevant documentation in support of the Appeal. Note, an exception to this timescale exists for appeal against denying acceptance of credentials. This must be made a minimum of one and a maximum of three weeks following the official announcement of the decision (see also 5.1.8)

### **6.3.2 Acknowledgement of Receipt of Appeal**

The College must acknowledge the receipt of the Notice of Appeal within five working days. The Secretary shall advise the Appellant of the procedure for appealing against the adverse decision including payment of the appeal deposit.

### **6.3.3 Appeal Deposit**

An Appeal Deposit of £500 will be payable by the Appellant. The Appeal Procedure will only be opened once the College has received the Appeal Deposit. If the Appellant does not pay their deposit within four weeks of receiving an invoice, this will be deemed an admission of liability. All administrative costs incurred by the ECVDI® in handling of the Notice of Appeal and subsequent Appeal, including any travel and subsistence costs of the Appeal Committee members and the Executive Committee attending an Oral Hearing, shall be met by the losing party (Appellant or

ECVDI®). If the Appeal is accepted/upheld the deposit is repaid in full. In the event of an unsuccessful/rejected Appeal any remaining deposit, following deduction of the costs itemised above, will be repaid to the Appellant together with an itemisation of the costs retained.

#### **6.3.4 Consideration of Notice of Appeal**

The Secretary shall notify the President of the College immediately on receipt of the Notice of Appeal. Within 10 working days of its receipt by the College the Notice of Appeal must be considered by the Secretary. The Secretary shall have had no prior involvement with the case, and no potential conflict of interest with the Appellant or the Committee whose decision is being questioned. The Secretary will launch the appeal process. If the outlined conditions cannot be met by the Secretary, another officer of the Executive Committee for whom these conditions do apply, will be nominated by the Executive Committee to consider the Notice of Appeal.

Within 25 working days of receipt of the Notice of Appeal and the deposit the College must inform the Appellant of the proposed membership of the Appeal Committee that will consider the Appeal.

#### **6.3.5 Decision on Notice of Appeal**

The College will convene an Appeal Committee to consider the Appeal and will be responsible for assessing the validity of the appeal.

If no proper Ground of Appeal in the Notice of Appeal document has been identified by the Appeal Committee, the Secretary may inform the Appellant that either:

1. It will take no further action (and explain the justification for this),

OR

2. It will consider the Notice instead as a request for an informal review of an adverse decision by the Executive Committee on non-appealable grounds (e.g. extenuating circumstances of personal difficulty etc.).

#### **6.3.6 Timeline for Distribution of Appeal Documents**

The procedure for convening an Appeal Committee to consider the Appeal must be completed no later than 30 days after the date the College has informed the Appellant of the proposed membership of the Appeal Committee according to paragraph 6.4.

Within 5 working days of the appointment of the Appeal Committee, all the documents relating to the dispute shall be forwarded by the Secretary to the members of the Appeal Committee.

### **6.4 Creation of the Appeal Committee**

The Appeal Committee shall be made up of a minimum of three Diplomates of the College who shall not be serving as members of the Executive Committee of the College or members of the relevant committee whose decision is being questioned, who shall have had no prior involvement with the case, and who have no potential conflict of interest with the Appellant or the Committee whose decision is being questioned.

The ECVDI® has a standing Appeal Committee Chair who is not a member of the Executive Committee. The Appeal Committee Chair shall, with the advice of the selection committee, seek two other Diplomates, who are not involved with any function in the ECVDI® that would compromise their judgement and are not closely associated with the affected person personally or professionally, to serve in the Appeal Committee with the Chair. This committee normally includes the Appeal Committee Chair (unless there is a conflict of interest). The names of the Appeal Committee members shall be put forward for approval to the Appellant and the President of the College. If either party disagrees with the selection of an Appeal Committee member, a reason must be given. The Appeal Committee Chair will then consider the arguments made and may select another suitable Diplomat for the Appeal Committee.

The Appeal Committee Chair is in charge of organising the work of the Appeal Committee and communicating with the Secretary. The Secretary of the College acts as a conduit for communication between the Appeal Committee, the Appellant and the Executive Committee.

## **6.5 Conduct of the Appeal Process**

### **6.5.1 Confidentiality**

All Appeals are to be conducted in due confidence.

### **6.5.2 Requests for Material**

The Appeal Committee should request information relevant to its consideration of the Appeal from any relevant party. This includes material from the Credentials Committee, Examination Committee or other relevant ECVDI® functions, as well as a complete dossier of relevant information from the Appellant via the secretary of ECVDI® and NOT directly to the Appeal committee.

### **6.5.3 Oral Hearings**

The Appeal Committee must consider carefully the need or not for an Oral Hearing. Where an Appeal Committee decides not to hold an Oral Hearing in an Appeal against an adverse decision that arises from an allegation of impropriety against the Appellant (or in other matters of similar gravity), reasons for that decision must be given. Where an Oral Hearing is held, a timetable must be devised which allows the Appellant reasonable opportunity to appear.

\*An Oral Hearing must be attended by at least three members of the Appeal Committee but neither party will be represented by legal counsel. Oral hearings will be conducted in English. The Appellant may be accompanied by an individual ("representative"), who may assist them to present the appeal. The "representative" will not be allowed to participate in answering specific questions but, at the discretion of the Chairperson, may be allowed to provide necessary language translations and may, at the end, be allowed to make a statement on behalf of the Appellant. In the event of rejection of the appeal, the College will not meet any costs incurred by the Appellant or their "representative" in attending the Oral Hearing.

### **6.5.4 Documentation of the Appeal Meeting**

A transcript or detailed minutes of the meeting will be kept. An electronic recording may be made with the prior consent of all parties. The minutes and, if it is made, the electronic recording, shall be made available to the meeting's participants on request.

### **6.5.5 Consideration of the Appeal**

The Appeal Committee shall consider the merits of the Appeal based on the Constitution and the Bylaws of the College, in particular whether the College failed to correctly apply its own published rules, procedures or criteria relevant to the appealed decision in question or whether the College imposed a sanction against the appellant that was disproportionate to the gravity of the adverse decision against the Appellant. For the purposes of an Appeal, the Constitution and Bylaws to be used will be those which were published on the ECVDI® website at the time of the incident leading to the adverse decision of the College.

### **6.5.6 Decision on the Appeal**

The Appeal Committee must either uphold, partially uphold or reject an Appeal. The Appeal Committee should also make recommendations to the Executive Committee where it sees problems or insufficiencies in the work of the College, even if these do not merit the upholding of an Appeal.

### **6.5.7 Timeline for Communication of Decision on Appeal**

The Appeal Committee must deliver its decision on the Appeal to the Secretary of the College within 90 days of the date of receiving all documents relating to the dispute, although with an adverse decision on credentials the procedure will be expedited so that the candidate is able to sit the examination if the appeal is successful. Within 15 working days of receipt of the Appeal decision the Secretary will deliver it in writing, via electronic means and in addition, if there is no satisfactory confirmation of receipt, via registered post, to the Appellant.

## **6.6 Complaints Procedure**

### **6.6.1 Definition and grounds of complaint**

A complaint may be raised against a diplomate of the college (complainee) by a member of the public, a resident or diplomate of the ECVDI, and/or another veterinary surgeon (the complainant).

Complaints may include, but are not limited to, non-professional or unethical conduct, actions that fall against the interests of the college. Professional misconduct or negligence are not handled by the college and any party raising such complaints would be directed to address their concerns to the appropriate veterinary regulator in the country where the member is employed.

### **6.6.2 Complaints procedure**

Complaints should be placed in writing and sent to the college administrator at [adminecvdi@ecvdi.eu](mailto:adminecvdi@ecvdi.eu)

### **6.6.3 Acknowledgement of Complaint**

All complaints will be treated in confidence and will be acknowledged within 7 days.

### **6.6.4 Consideration of Complaint**

When a complaint is received the college administrator will inform the College President and Secretary of the complaint. In the event that the complaint concerns either the College President or Secretary then it will be passed to the Vice-President and an uninvolved officer.

### **6.6.5 Creation of the complaint committee**

A complaint committee will be formed on an ad hoc basis. This will consist of three members of the College. The committee will be chaired by the Past President (in the event of a conflict of interest this will default to the Vice-President). The Past President will then appoint two other diplomates. The diplomates chosen may already be members of an ECVDI committee but cannot be members of the executive committee. The chosen diplomates' names shall be put forward to the President of the college for approval.

The Complaint Committee must then investigate the issue raised and should request any information relevant to its consideration of the complaint from either the complainant or complainee. Material should be requested via the College Secretary.

## **6.6.6 Conduct of the Complaints Process**

### **6.6.6.1 Confidentiality**

All Complaints are to be conducted in due confidence.

### **6.6.6.2 Requests for Material**

The Complaints Committee should request information relevant to its consideration of the complaint from any relevant party. This includes any relevant material from any ECVDI® committee, as well as a complete dossier of relevant information from the complainant via the secretary of ECVDI® and NOT directly to the Complaints committee.

### **6.6.6.3 Oral discussions Hearings**

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In the event of any oral hearing with either the complainant or complainee, a transcript or detailed minutes of any meeting will be kept. Oral hearings must be held with all members of the committee present. One additional representative from both parties will be allowed to accompany them to assist in their presentation.. An electronic recording may be made with the prior consent of all parties. The minutes and, if it is made, the electronic recording, shall be made available to the meeting's participants on request. The college will not be responsible for any costs incurred by either party in attending these meetings.

#### **6.6.6.4 Consideration of the Complaint**

The Complaints Committee shall consider the merits of the complaint based on the Constitution and the Bylaws of the College, in particular whether any of those rules or procedures have been broken by the complainee.

For the purposes of a complaint, the Constitution and Bylaws to be used will be those which were published on the ECVDI® website at the time of the incident.

#### **6.6.6.5 Decision on the Complaint**

The Complaint Committee must either uphold, partially uphold or reject a complaint.

#### **6.6.6.6 Timeline for Communication of Decision on Complaint**

The Complaints Committee must deliver its decision on the Complaint to the Secretary of the College and President of the College within 90 days of the date of receiving all documents relating to the dispute. Within 15 working days of receipt of the complaint decision the Secretary will deliver it in writing, via electronic means and in addition, if there is no satisfactory confirmation of receipt, via registered post, to the complainant. Any action recommended by the complaint committee will be considered by the ECVDI executive committee in line with the bylaws and constitution.

#### **6.3 EBVS Appeal**

After completion of the Appeal Procedure the Appellant, if not satisfied with the final decision rendered by the ECVDI® Appeal Committee, may appeal to the European Executive Committee of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS) against an adverse decision by the ECVDI®. Appeals to the EBVS must be made in writing to the EBVS Secretariat. The decision of the EBVS is final.

Similarly, after completion of a Complaint Procedure, if the complainant is not satisfied with the decision rendered by the ECVDI complaints committee, they may appeal to the European Executive Committee of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS) against the decision by the ECVDI®. Appeals to the EBVS must be made in writing to the EBVS Secretariat. The decision of the EBVS is final.

### **6.7 EBVS Appeal**

After completion of the Appeal Procedure the Appellant, if not satisfied with the final decision rendered by the ECVDI® Appeal Committee, may appeal to the European Executive Committee of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS) against an adverse decision by the ECVDI®. Appeals to the EBVS must be made in writing to the EBVS Secretariat. The decision of the EBVS is final.



## **7 Appendices**

### **7.1 Appendix 1: EBVS document for colleges: Quality assurance (separate document)**

### **7.2 Appendix 2: EBVS document for colleges: Knowledge skills and competency (separate document)**

### **7.3 Appendix 3: Model reference letter (separate document)**

### **7.4 Appendix 4: Examination Honour Code**

The contents of the ECVDI® Theoretical and Practical examinations are confidential. You are prohibited from divulging any information about the questions, images, or case material included in the ECVDI® Theoretical and Practical Examination to anyone during or after the examination. For the Practical examination this includes discussion of format of cases, such as number of images, types of images, “hidden” views or supplemental studies presented to you. Your description of the case, medical management, or final diagnosis may not be discussed with anyone. For the Theoretical examination, use of any electronic devices during the examination other than those provided to you by ECVDI® is strictly prohibited and will be considered a violation of the honour code. Your confidentiality is required in order to ensure each candidate an equal opportunity to pass the examination. If any candidate is thought to be in violation of the Honour Code, a detailed report with charges of the violation will be sent to the ECVDI® Executive Committee for action. A candidate found to be in violation of the Honour Code by Executive Committee will have their examination results nullified. All candidates must read and sign the following statement prior to participating in the examination: I have read and understand the ECVDI® Honour Code. I agree to keep the contents of the ECVDI® Examination confidential. I agree to report any inappropriate discussions or actions I observe to the Examination Committee. I will not provide assistance to, nor accept assistance from anyone during the examination.