

Summary of 2024-2025 ACVP Phase I and Phase II Certifying Examinations Job Task Analysis Report

Purpose and Scope

The American College of Veterinary Pathologists (ACVP), in collaboration with the ACVP Certifying Examination administrative partner, Meazure Learning, conducted a comprehensive Job Task Analysis (JTA). The JTA was performed between 2024 and 2025 to update and validate the certifying examinations for Veterinary Anatomic Pathology and Clinical Pathology. A JTA must be completed by all American Board of Veterinary Specialties veterinary specialty organizations at least once every 10 years. The JTA ensures that examinations remain content valid, legally defensible, and reflective of the current practice of veterinary pathology.

The 2024-2025 ACVP JTA process focused on three key steps:

1. **Step I** – Development and validation of initial content outlines
2. **Step II** – Validation study via a survey of ACVP Diplomates
3. **Step III** – Generating updated test specifications (examination blueprints) based on survey data

Step I: Content Outline Development

A Meazure Learning psychometrician and a panel of 20 subject matter experts representing demographic diversity of ACVP anatomic and clinical pathologists were convened across six virtual meetings. The goal was to refine and restructure the existing 2016 examination content outlines (“Blueprints”) for the Phase I examination (shared foundational knowledge) and the Phase II examinations (specialty specific knowledge for anatomic and clinical pathology).

Step II: Validation Survey

Following the development of the preliminary content blueprints, a five-part online survey was distributed to 2,641 ACVP Diplomates. The final valid response number was 827 (33.7% response rate). The survey assessed:

- Importance and frequency of each task, knowledge, and skill
- Suggested examination weighting for each task
- Demographic data to ensure representativeness

Survey takers were binned into either anatomic pathology, clinical pathology, or both, depending on their answers pertaining to their specialty. This determined if they were assigned to surveys assessing the Phase II Anatomic Pathology survey, Phase II Clinical Pathology survey, or both. All survey takers were presented with the Phase I survey.

Step III: Test Specifications

Data from the survey was collated by the Measure Learning psychometrician and free text feedback was evaluated and collated by JTA and Certification and Examination Council leaders.

Free text feedback was evaluated in concert with the statistical data. Using both top-down and bottom-up approaches, the JTA panels developed new test specifications for each examination. These specifications determined the percentage of examination items allocated to each task.

Minor adjustments were made to ensure feasibility in item writing and alignment with current practice. Specialty panels also reviewed species group, organ system, and foundational topic weightings to come to consensus.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The JTA confirmed that the revised content outlines and test specifications accurately reflect the competencies required of ACVP Diplomates. The report recommends:

- Reclassifying current examination database items
- Writing new examination items aligned with updated task, knowledge and skill statements
- Ensuring future examination (beginning in 2026) forms match the validated specifications

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