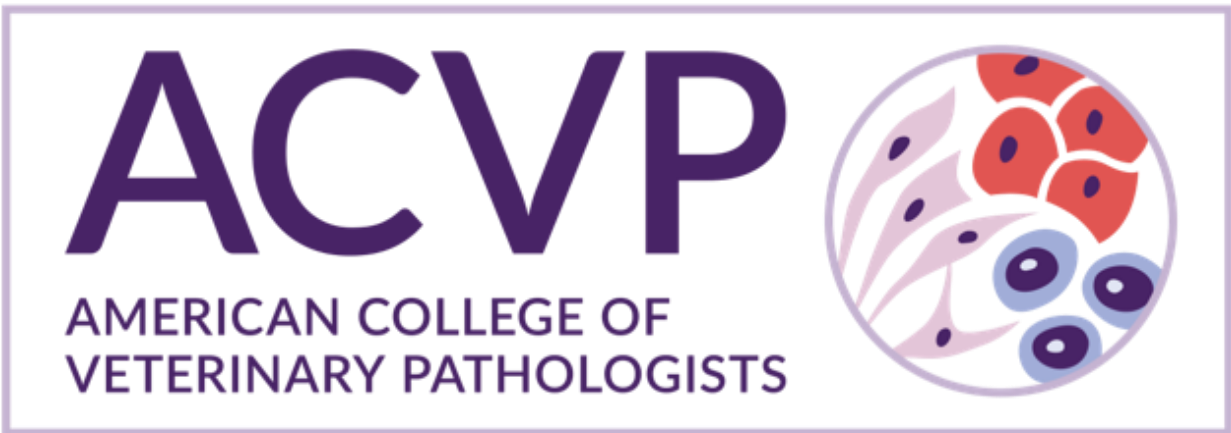




American College of Veterinary Pathologists

Candidate Handbook

For the Phase I and Phase II 2027 Certifying Examinations

The mission of the ACVP is to promote excellence in veterinary pathology through our members as they protect and improve animal, human, and environmental health to benefit society.

Questions about the ACVP Certifying Examinations may be addressed to exam@acvp.org.

Updated August 1, 2026

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Policies, Procedures, and Requirements

This document supersedes all previous publications of the American College of Veterinary Pathologists (ACVP) concerning its policies, procedures, and requirements for certification. The admission of a candidate to the ACVP Certifying Examination is governed by the policies, procedures, and requirements in effect during the current application period. The ACVP reserves the right to make changes in its fees, policies, procedures, and requirements at any time, with or without prior notice.

Introduction

The ACVP Certifying Examinations Candidate Handbook is a resource for trainees, sponsors, mentors, and training programs interested in ACVP board certification. Information relevant to both the Phase I and Phase II Certifying Examinations is included in this Handbook. The Handbook should be consulted by new trainees at the beginning of a training program, whenever changes in training are considered, during training to ensure that eligibility requirements are being met, and again near the end of training to prepare, apply, and sit for the ACVP Certifying Examination. The Handbook for the Certifying Examinations will be updated as requirements or examination details change, and the examination section of the ACVP website should always be referenced for the most current version of the Candidate Handbook, reading lists, and other important examination information.

Contact Information

Questions regarding the ACVP Certifying Examinations or eligibility criteria should be sent to exam@acvp.org.

Certifying Examination

The ACVP Certifying Examination is a two-phase process that candidates must pass to be certified as Diplomates in either veterinary anatomic or clinical pathology.

Certifying Examination content is based on a blueprint of key tasks and species, organ systems and processes, and distribution of topics. The blueprint documents for anatomic pathology and clinical pathology are available at the link below. Candidates are strongly encouraged to review the blueprints for their respective examinations prior to making study plans.

[Job Task Analysis Blueprints](#)

Administration of the Phase I and Phase II Examinations

The examinations are administered in partnership with Meazure Learning, a credentialing examination administrator. The examinations may be taken at a Meazure Learning Testing Center (locations around the world) or by Live Remote Proctoring (LRP). Additional information regarding Meazure Learning testing centers and resources can be found on the ACVP website [Phase I](#) and [Phase II](#) pages.

Approximately six weeks prior to the testing dates for each examination, candidates will receive an email from Meazure Learning with instructions to schedule their examination at a testing center or by LRP. The notice to schedule will provide each candidate with a unique username/password and the URL to access the scheduling system to select an appointment, based on seating availability.

Examination Length and Item Distribution

Phase I Examination

The 2-hour Phase I Examination is composed of 100 multiple-choice questions, which may include image-based identification questions. Please see the [ACVP Job Task Analysis](#) page and subsequent Phase I Blueprint for details regarding examination topics and target distributions. The mechanisms tested in this section are general and relate to most animal species and exclude entities in a single species. Candidates must pass the Phase I examination to be eligible to take the Phase II certifying examinations in veterinary anatomic or clinical pathology. Candidates who fail the examination will be provided with their scores.

[Example Phase I Questions](#)

Phase II Examination

The Phase II Certifying Examinations are one-day, 7.5-hour (including 45 minutes total over two breaks) examinations in either veterinary anatomic pathology or veterinary clinical pathology. The Phase II Examinations are composed of 300 multiple-choice questions, administered in 3 sections of 100 questions each, that assess the skills and knowledge that a minimally competent pathologist should possess. Please see the [ACVP Job Task Analysis](#) page and subsequent Phase II Blueprint for details regarding examination topics and target distributions. Candidates who fail the examination will be provided with their scores.

Phase II Anatomic Pathology

The following topics are core concepts for Phase II examination questions, but questions are not limited to these topics: knowledge of macroscopic and microscopic features, appropriate descriptive

terminology, morphologic and etiologic diagnoses and differential diagnoses, and understanding of pathogenesises. Candidates should be able to select appropriate ancillary tests, and interpret expected macroscopic, microscopic, and clinicopathologic changes. Interpretation of clinicopathologic data includes knowledge of clinicopathologic abnormalities using common laboratory instrumentation and assays, and identification and interpretation of cytologic features. Knowledge of information in current literature and textbooks, including well-recognized animal models of human disease, is expected.

Example [Anatomic Pathology Questions](#)

Phase II Clinical Pathology

The following topics are core concepts for Phase II, but questions are not limited to these topics: identification and interpretation of normal and abnormal microscopic hematologic, cytologic, and histopathologic features, knowledge of species variation and artifacts, recognition of infectious agent morphology, causes of inflammation, and determination of most likely diagnoses associated with cytochemical, histochemical, or immunologic staining results. Candidates are expected to identify and prioritize multiple disease processes and interpret hematology cytograms, platelet and hemostasis results, flow cytometry plots, electrophoretograms, immunofixation reactions, and PCR-based clonality results. Candidates should have an understanding of normal physiology and pathophysiology and be able to select differential diagnoses and appropriate ancillary tests. An understanding of biologic variation in laboratory animals and species-specific terminology is also expected. Candidates should have knowledge of analyzer methodology, method validation and comparison charts, pre-analytical to post-analytical errors and interferences, reference interval determination and validation processes, QA/QC data and statistics interpretation, test prioritization and selection, staining procedures and uses, basic statistics for data analysis, and laboratory safety.

Example [Clinical Pathology Questions](#)

Recommended Reading Lists

The Phase I and Phase II Examination reading lists are provided as **guidance** for candidates. The sources are common journals and textbooks that represent the appropriate level of pathology knowledge. Candidates should feel free to utilize other equivalent sources and should seek mentor guidance if they are unclear about source equivalency. See the current Phase I and Phase II reading lists on the ACVP website.

[Phase I Reading List](#)

[Phase II Reading Lists](#)

Responsibilities of Candidates, Sponsors, and Training Programs

Responsibilities of the Candidate

Trainees have a high level of responsibility for their own education, which demands extensive independent study of textbooks and journals, and consultation with pathologists, clinicians, and other specialists. Supplementary participation in lectures or participation in seminars may be useful but should not be the major emphasis of training. The Certifying Examination is the culmination of several years of intensive preparation involving a wide range of animal species. A final phase of concentrated study is successful only if the preceding training has been suitable in breadth and depth.

Responsibilities of the Sponsor

The sponsor's endorsement of a candidate's application confirms that the candidate has had adequate training and will be ready to take the examination by the time the examination is administered. The ACVP Board of Directors and Credentialing Committee put considerable trust in sponsors to evaluate candidate readiness to take the examination. A sponsor's endorsement does not guarantee success for the candidate, but it should guarantee that the candidate has fulfilled the minimum requirements and is or will be thoroughly prepared to take the examination. For candidates in standard route programs or alternate route programs, the sponsor must be directly involved with the training of the candidate. The sponsor must know in detail what is being done for and by the candidate and should review all aspects of the candidate's training and progress regularly. A sponsor must not have a conflict of interest with the candidate as viewed by an objective outside observer.

Responsibilities of the Training Program for the Phase I Examination

Training programs should provide resources that include current journals and reference textbooks commonly used by veterinary pathologists, and access to computerized literature searches.

Responsibilities of the Training Program for the Phase II Examination

Training should include participation in and responsibility for some portion(s) of pathology service, training, or research. The training should offer academic studies designed to provide adequate understanding of the basic principles of pathology and provide facilities and case materials for the trainee to gain practical experience in performing professional duties. These should include the application of all standard methods and procedures and discussions of pathogenesis and differential diagnoses. For veterinary anatomic pathology, this usually relates to performance and interpretation of gross, histologic, histochemical, immunohistochemical, molecular biological and ultrastructural examinations, and correlating results with clinical findings and clinical laboratory data. For veterinary clinical pathology, this usually relates to interpretation of hematologic, cytologic, biochemical,

immunological, and molecular biological evaluation of blood, urine, body fluids, and other specimens and histologic evaluation of surgical biopsy specimens. Interpretation includes correlating test results with clinical findings. The pathologist need not be technically proficient in the performance of laboratory procedures but should be familiar with the methods, applications, limitations, and interpretation of such tests.

Training institutions should provide resources that include current journals and reference textbooks commonly used by veterinary pathologists, and access to computerized literature searches. In addition, archival case materials or organized study sets containing case materials should be made available.

If candidates have questions about their training program and its acceptability for training, they can contact exam@acvp.org.

Examination Preparation and Mock Examinations

ACVP does not endorse any examination preparation courses or mock examinations. ACVP does not share examination content, other than what is publicly available on the ACVP Website, with providers of examination preparation courses or mock examinations. The providers are solely responsible for the content of their offerings.

References for Training

- Elements of Good Training in Anatomic Pathology, Vet Pathol 47: 995-1002, 2010.
- Guidelines for resident training in veterinary clinical pathology: I. Clinical chemistry. Vet Clin Pathol 32: 202-208, 2003.
- Guidelines for residents training in veterinary clinical pathology: II. Hematology. Vet Clin Pathol 35: 382-387, 2006.
- Guidelines for resident training in veterinary clinical pathology: III. Cytopathology and surgical pathology. Vet Clin Pathol 38: 281-287, 2009.

Training Routes and Sponsors

The ACVP Training Program Accreditation process has begun and will be deployed over the next five years. Accredited programs are pathology training programs that have applied for and received full ACVP accreditation by demonstrating compliance with ACVP Training Program Accreditation Standards.

Candidates should follow the training route requirements for standard and alternate routes until such time as there are examination candidates who have completed the entirety of their training in an accredited program. There will be no applicants who have completed their full training in an accredited program for either phase of the 2027 examination.

Phase I Examination Training

For Phase I Examination eligibility, candidates must have completed 12 full-time months of in-person training, at the equivalent of 40 hours per week, in veterinary pathology under the direction of a sponsor. Remote training can serve as a supplement to, but not a substitute for, in-person instruction. At the time of Phase I Examination application, the candidate must declare whether they are training under the Standard Route or Alternate Route of Training for the Phase II Examination. ACVP Diplomates who are already certified in either veterinary anatomic pathology or veterinary clinical pathology and are seeking dual certification are not required to retake the Phase I Examination to be eligible to take the other Phase II Examination.

Phase II Examination Training

Candidates must be trained in veterinary anatomic pathology if they are seeking certification in veterinary anatomic pathology, and in veterinary clinical pathology if they are seeking certification in veterinary clinical pathology. Remote training can serve as a supplement to, but not a substitute for, in-person instruction, except where noted for Dual Certification candidates. Remote training is defined as any geographically distant training, whether synchronous or asynchronous. Candidates must complete training under one of the following program scenarios prior to taking the Phase II Certifying Examination:

Standard Training Route

Training occurs in a traditional training program in veterinary pathology specifically designed to train veterinary anatomic or clinical pathologists as one of its primary functions. The program is supervised and directed by a Diplomate of the ACVP or European College of Veterinary Clinical Pathology (ECVCP) for clinical pathology candidates, or by a Diplomate of the ACVP or European College of Veterinary Pathology (ECVP) for anatomic pathology candidates. The training must include at least 36 full-time calendar months, at the equivalent of 40 hours per week, with direct, in-person supervision in the primary field (anatomic or clinical pathology) for which certification is sought. This training timeframe cannot include training to meet the requirements of dual certification.

Alternate Training Route

Training occurs in a program specifically designed to train veterinary anatomic or clinical pathologists as one of its primary functions. If a program does not meet the criteria for the standard route above, then training must consist of at least 48 full-time months, at the equivalent of 40 hours per week, of relevant, in-person experience in veterinary anatomic or clinical pathology with at least 12 of the 48 months spent in-person under the supervision and direction of an ACVP Diplomate at the same institution. This training timeframe cannot include training to meet the requirements of dual certification.

Dual Certification

ACVP Diplomates certified in either veterinary anatomic pathology or veterinary clinical pathology may seek certification in the other discipline. Training must consist of at least 12 full-time months, at the equivalent of 40 hours per week, in the discipline sought. At least 50% of the training must be completed in person with the sponsor who is board certified in the discipline sought, but the remaining time may be completed remotely. Anatomic pathology sponsors must be either ACVP or ECVCP Diplomates, and clinical pathology sponsors must be either ACVP or ECVCP Diplomates. The 12 months of training may be obtained over a period of one to five years and may be either done pre- or post-certification in the first discipline. Training for both disciplines cannot occur simultaneously. Specifically, portions of training weeks or months from the primary training program cannot be applied to the secondary discipline; concurrent training in both specialties will not be accepted.

Sponsors

All applications for Phase I and Phase II require a signed sponsor form.

Accredited Programs: There will be no individuals who have completed the entirety of their training in an accredited program at the time of 2027 Phase I and Phase II examination eligibility determination. Therefore, all candidates will follow either the Standard or Alternate Route requirements for Phase I and Phase II.

Standard and Alternate Routes: The sponsor who endorses the application must be the person most responsible for the candidate's training in veterinary pathology for Standard and Alternate Route candidates. Occasionally, circumstances dictate that a sponsor is not the principal mentor, in which case the ACVP Credentialing Committee and Board of Directors require an explanation/justification at the time of application.

Phase I Examination Sponsors

Candidates must declare, at the time of application for the Phase I Examination, if they will be training under the Standard or Alternate Route for the Phase II Examination.

If the candidate is training via the Standard Route, the Phase I sponsor must be an ACVP, ECVCP, or ECVCP Diplomate for the 12 months of Phase I training to be applied to the 36 months of Standard Route Phase II. If the candidate is training via the Alternate Route for the Phase II Examination, the Phase I Examination sponsor does not need to be an ACVP, ECVCP, or ECVCP Diplomate.

Phase II Examination Sponsors

Standard Route Candidates: The Diplomat sponsor who endorses the application must be the person most responsible for, and involved in, the candidate's training in veterinary pathology. Occasionally circumstances dictate that a sponsor is not the principal mentor, in which case the ACVP Credentialing Committee and Board of Directors require an explanation/justification of sponsor choice at the time of application.

Alternate Route Candidates: If an ACVP, ECVP, or ECVCP Diplomat is not the person most responsible for a candidate's training, then the Sponsor Form must be co-signed by the principal mentor. The Diplomat will complete all portions of the form relevant to the sponsor, whereas the principal mentor will sign as the co-signing mentor.

Dual Certification Candidates: Anatomic pathology sponsors must be either ACVP or ECVP Diplomates, and clinical pathology sponsors must be either ACVP or ECVCP Diplomates.

Accredited Program Candidates: The following information is included for informational purposes only. This sponsorship information DOES NOT apply to 2027 Phase I and Phase II examination cycles. Candidates who complete all required training in an accredited program will be sponsored by the program, rather than an individual. Candidates seeking program sponsorship will be evaluated by group discussion and determined by consensus of the supervising diplomates after a review of the candidate's competency documentation and any additional program-specific requirements. Program sponsorship decisions must be made during candidate training, and sponsorship must only be given to candidates who have met, or are on track to meet, program requirements and are ready to take the certifying examination. The training program director must sign the sponsorship form on behalf of the program's supervising diplomates. Program sponsorship will be valid for four consecutive exam cycles. Program sponsorship must be obtained while a candidate is still enrolled in the training program; candidates may not seek program sponsorship after leaving the training program.

Examination Eligibility

Credentialing Requirements for Phase I Examinations

There will be no individuals who have completed the entirety of their training in an accredited program at the time of 2027 Phase I examination eligibility determination. Therefore, all candidates will follow either the Standard or Alternate Route requirements for Phase I. ACVP must examine only veterinarians who have a degree necessary for the practice of Veterinary Medicine from a North American, [American Veterinary Medical Association \(AVMA\)-accredited](#) or international [AVMA-listed](#) veterinary college.

For the Phase I examination, all candidates must provide a photocopy of their veterinary degree (degree, diploma, or certificate) from a college fulfilling the above criteria. If the original documentation is not in English, then the candidate must provide an English translation certified by an independent translation service.

If a name change has occurred since the veterinary degree was awarded, the candidate is required to upload a photocopy of any legal documentation attesting to this change.

NOTE: Candidates who began their standard or alternate route pathology training prior to April 2020 can submit a veterinary degree from any veterinary college regardless of the institutional AVMA-listing status. These candidates may be asked to provide documentation confirming their training start date.

Criteria to Take the Phase I Examination

- A candidate must have completed 12 months of in-person veterinary pathology training as described above, prior to the Phase I Examination date and must submit a signed sponsor form attesting to that training with their application. (See Application Section below.)
- A candidate must complete the online application and pay the Phase I Examination fee by the application deadline.
- A candidate must declare, at the time of application for the Phase I Examination, if they will be training under the Standard or Alternate Route for the Phase II Examination.
- Should the planned training noted in the exam application not be completed for any reason, it will be the candidate's responsibility to notify ACVP.

All candidates are required to pass the Phase I Examination prior to taking the Phase II Examination.

A candidate may elect to take the Phase I and Phase II Examinations in the same year if they meet the eligibility requirements for both examinations and pass the Phase I Examination prior to taking the Phase II Examination. Candidates intending to take both the Phase I and Phase II Examinations in the same year must register for each examination by the respective deadlines. Candidates who do not pass the Phase I Examination will have their registration fee for the Phase II Examination refunded (minus a processing fee) within 30 days of receiving their Phase I Examination results.

Credentialing Requirements for Phase II Examinations

ACVP must examine only veterinarians who have a degree necessary for the practice of Veterinary Medicine from a North American, American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)-listed veterinary college or international AVMA-listed veterinary college. Proof of veterinary medicine degree must be provided when applying to take the Phase I examination.

If a name change has occurred since the veterinary diploma was awarded, or since passing the Phase I Examination, the candidate is required to upload a photocopy of legal documentation attesting to this change.

Criteria to Take the Phase II Examination

- All candidates are required to pass the Phase I Examination prior to taking the Phase II Examination.
- There will be no individuals who have completed the entirety of their training in an accredited program at the time of 2027 Phase II examination eligibility determination. Therefore, all candidates will follow either the Standard or Alternate Route requirements for

Phase II. A candidate must have completed 36 months in a Standard Route program or 48 months in an Alternate Route program of veterinary pathology training prior to the Phase II Examination date and must submit a signed sponsor form attesting to that training with their application.

- A candidate must complete the online application and pay the Phase II Examination fee by the application date. Payment of the Phase II Examination fee is required to ensure full consideration of the exam application.
- Should the planned training noted in the exam application not be completed for any reason, it will be the candidate's responsibility to notify ACVP.
- A previously certified Diplomate seeking to re-certify following incompleteness of Maintenance of Certification (MOC) requirements will not need to be evaluated by the CEC Credentialing Committee. These exam candidates will only be required to submit payment for the Phase II Examination fee and register for the Phase II by deadlines posted on acvp.org.

Criteria to Take Phase II Examination for Dual Certification

ACVP Diplomates seeking dual certification must adhere to the following training requirements prior to attempting the relevant certification examination:

- A minimum of 12 full-time months, at the equivalent of 40 hours per week, of training under the mentorship of an ACVP Diplomate who is certified in the discipline sought. If a mentor is not an ACVP Diplomate, then he or she must be an ECVCP Diplomate (for anatomic pathology candidates) or an ECVCP Diplomate (for clinical pathology candidates).
- The 12 full-time months of training may be obtained over a period of one to five years and may be either done pre- or post-certification in the first discipline. Training for both disciplines cannot occur simultaneously. Specifically, portions of training weeks or months from the primary training program cannot be applied to the secondary discipline; concurrent training in both specialties will not be accepted. A minimum of 50% of the training time should be in person with the ACVP (or ECVCP or ECVCP) certified Diplomate (mentor).
- Following the training, the ACVP (or ECVCP or ECVCP) certified Diplomate will sign the sponsorship form attesting to the readiness to attempt the certification examination (testable competencies) and training and mastery of non-testable competencies.
- For dual certification eligibility, a candidate must be ACVP-boarded in one discipline before applying for the Phase II Examination in the second discipline. This necessitates Phase II testing in separate years for anatomic pathology and clinical pathology except if a candidate meets full eligibility requirements for both disciplines in the same examination year. In this scenario, a candidate would have both 36/48 months of training in anatomic pathology and 36/48 months of training in clinical pathology, met other eligibility requirements, and wished to apply for and take both Phase II Examinations in the same year.

Criteria to Repeat Failed Examinations

If a candidate fails the Phase I Examination, they are eligible to apply to repeat the examination the following year. There is no limit to the number of attempts or years a candidate may repeat the Phase I Examination.

After passing the Phase I Examination, candidates are allowed four attempts within 10 Phase II Examination cycles to pass the Phase II Examination. The 10 cycles include the Phase II Examination in the year that the candidate passed Phase I, regardless of eligibility to take Phase II that year. If a candidate has not passed the Phase II Examination after four attempts, or has exceeded their 10-cycle limit, they must apply for, retake, and pass the Phase I Examination prior to retaking the Phase II Examination. (Note: The Phase II Examination was not administered in 2020. Therefore, 2020 will not count toward the 10-cycle limit).

See table below specifying the final year in which a candidate may attempt to pass the Phase II examination, according to the year they passed Phase I.

Phase II Eligibility Time Limit

Year Passed Phase I Examination	Final Year to Pass Phase II Examination
2017	2027*
2018	2028*
2019	2029*
2020	2030*
2021	2030
2022	2031
2023	2032
2024	2033
2025	2034
2026	2035
2027	2036

*No Phase II examination was offered in 2020.

Application

Application Deadlines

Candidates must apply separately for the Phase I and Phase II Examinations. Application periods for each examination are announced on the ACVP website and are subject to change from year to year.

Candidates should check the dates each year and meet deadlines. No exceptions to published deadlines

will be made.

The application, Sponsor Forms, and detailed application steps are available on the ACVP website. Questions about the application process can be directed to exam@acvp.org.

[Examination Application Page](#)

Americans with Disabilities Act Requests

The ACVP complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act of 2008 by providing reasonable accommodations. If a candidate has a disability or impairment which may require special accommodation(s) to take an examination, they must request accommodation(s) by the published deadline.

Accommodation cannot be granted retroactively, so that if a candidate informs ACVP of an impairment or disability after the examination has been completed, there can be no changes made in that candidate's examination results or changes in how that candidate's examination is graded in comparison to other candidates.

[Accommodations information and request form](#)

Candidates applying for accommodation are encouraged to read the published information thoroughly before applying.

Application Process and Withdrawal

Candidates pay the examination fee at the time of application. The applicant and sponsor will be notified once the Credentialing Committee has reviewed the documentation and determined if the applicant is eligible to sit for the examination. A recommendation for acceptance, provisional acceptance, or rejection to sit for the examination is made by the Credentialing Committee and is reviewed and approved by the ACVP Board of Directors. A message from ACVP indicating acceptance, provisional acceptance, or rejection will follow that review, approximately 120 days prior to examination administration.

Candidates may appeal the decision if rejected to take an ACVP examination. Additional information regarding this process is included in the Appeals section below.

If the applicant's credentials are not accepted, or if a candidate's request to withdraw from the examination is received by the withdrawal deadlines listed on the ACVP website, fees will be refunded, minus a processing fee. No withdrawal refunds will be made after this date, and no fees may be carried over to apply in subsequent years.

If a candidate applies for both the Phase I and Phase II Examinations and fails the Phase I Examination,

they will automatically receive a refund for the Phase II Examination fee (minus processing). No request for withdrawal from the Phase II Examination is necessary for these candidates.

Withdrawal prior to the examination, or failure to appear for the examination, will not constitute an attempt to sit for the examination. A candidate's illness during preparation for, or during the actual examination, will not be considered a valid reason to waive the rules of the College. In the event a candidate starts, but is unable to complete the examination, results will be reported and will constitute an attempt to sit the examination.

Terms of Agreement for Admission to the ACVP Examination

All candidates are expected to accurately represent their credentials. All examinations are taken under an honor system. Candidates are required to read and sign to agree to all terms for admission to the examination at the time of application. Test items are copyright protected. If a candidate is found to have misrepresented any portion of their credentials, to have received outside assistance on an examination, to have cheated on an examination, to have misrepresented their work on an examination, to have violated the confidentiality or copyright protection of the examination, or to have behaved unethically in any other way during the credentialing or examination process, their credentials may be rejected, they will receive a failing grade on the examination, they will forfeit fees for the examination, and they will be subject to any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the ACVP. These actions may include denial of permission to retake the examination in future years and/or denial of the ability to attain certification.

Preparation, Validation and Scoring of the ACVP Examinations

Test items for the ACVP examinations are written and assembled by ACVP Diplomates who are members of the Test Item Writing Group (TIWG) and the Examination Assembly and Administration Group (EAAG), respectively. Members of these groups are selected based on experience, expertise, areas of interest, and employment sector (academia, diagnostics, industry).

The TIWG composes test items for consideration for ACVP examinations. Submitted test items are reviewed for difficulty, accuracy, clarity, and relevance. Following a rigorous review process, test items are entered into a database for use on subsequent examinations. Each item in the database is accompanied by metadata, including Job Task Analysis Examination Blueprint Categories, and performance data from previous examinations. This information is used by EAAG members when assembling an examination.

EAAG members prepare the ACVP examinations. Test items are selected from the test item database to produce an examination that is aligned with the ACVP Job Task Analysis Blueprints. Test items with performance established in previous examinations are included for equating purposes (see below).

Grading of multiple-choice questions is automated. The computer-generated item analysis, including the

discriminatory and difficulty coefficients of each question, is considered by the committee before final determination of candidate scores.

To pass an examination, a score equal to or greater than the passing point (cut score) must be achieved. Cut scores are established by ACVP Diplomates in consultation with a psychometrician via a standard setting study. Established cut scores will remain the same for all future examinations until a new standard setting study is conducted.

To ensure that examinations are of comparable difficulty, regardless of the year in which they were administered, an equating process is used to compare the difficulty of examinations given in separate years and to adjust scores to reflect any differences.

Additional information regarding establishment of the cut score and the equating process is available on the ACVP website. The cut score and pass rate for the previous year is posted on the Phase I and Phase II pages of the website, when results become available.

[Standard Setting and Equating](#)

Reporting Examination Results

Written notification of the results of each examination will be sent by email to candidates and sponsors within 45 days of the conclusion of examination administration.

Results for the automated multiple-choice item scoring process are statistically and psychometrically analyzed, and items with specific scoring criteria are assessed and re-analyzed prior to final results being reported.

Appeals

Members, examinations applicants, and examination candidates may appeal an adverse decision by a College entity. Such decisions may include, but are not limited to, concerns about examination administration, denial of adequacy of credentials prior to examination for Certification, denial of Certification, and cancellation of Membership or Certification by disciplinary action. All appeals will be considered by the ACVP Appeals Committee, whose purpose is to review any decision by the College that adversely affects a person seeking to gain, continue, or reinstate membership in the College, upon the request of an eligible person.

Appeals from candidates must be submitted in writing to the ACVP Executive Director, at sbilissis@connect2amc.com, within 30 calendar days of such person's notification of the decision being appealed. Appeals must include a statement of justification for the appeal with supporting documentation, if any. When an appeal is received, the Executive Director shall submit the appeal materials to the Chair of the Appeals Committee and to the Chair of the ruling entity that made the original decision. Within 14 days of receiving these materials, the Chair of the ruling entity that made the original decision shall submit any documentation relevant to the appeal and a statement of justification for its original decision to the Appeals Committee Chair. Within 14 days of receiving these additional materials, the Appeals Committee Chair shall convene a meeting of the Appeals Committee to

review all documents relevant to the appeal and determine the validity of the appeal. Within 14 days of this meeting, the Appeals Committee Chair shall submit the results of that decision to the Executive Director who shall inform the appellant of the Appeals Committee's decision. If the appeal is denied, no further appeal procedure shall be undertaken by the College.

Maintenance of Certification

All ACVP-boarded Diplomates certified in 2016 or thereafter are required to meet minimum Maintenance of Certification (MOC) standards over 10-year period (in accordance with American Board of Veterinary Specialties standards). Regular documentation of defined continuing education and scholarly activities, maintenance of professional proficiency, and efforts in professional organizations are required for renewal and is the responsibility. The MOC portal is designed to efficiently facilitate ACVP members in documenting their maintenance of certification.

[MOC information](#)