

AVMA Council on Education (COE) Frequently Asked Questions

Got a question ask it here coe@avma.org.

Which European colleges are accredited?

Question: I understand that there are four AVMA accredited veterinary colleges in Europe. Is that the correct number, and which ones are these?

Answer: There are actually five AVMA accredited European colleges. These are: the University of London, the University College of Dublin, the State University of Utrecht, the University of Glasgow and the University of Edinburgh. [Get more information on these and other AVMA accredited colleges.](#)

What is the best school?

Question: I'm planning on pursuing a veterinary career. What is the best veterinary school to attend?

Answer: The COE does not rank veterinary schools; nor do we recommend schools. The COE never compares schools to one another. The COE evaluates each school individually based on the 11 Standards of Accreditation. The AVMA accredited schools that adhere to these standards offer high-quality educational experiences. To find out the best school for you and your individual career goals, we suggest you [contact the schools directly](#).

Question: What are the essential aspects required in an SOP, such as controlled copies or authorizing signatures that the site visit team would look for during a visit?

Answer: The Council is not that prescriptive. A college is expected to evaluate its needs and to develop systems that meet those needs effectively. It's important to demonstrate that the SOPs are current and in use. For example, if students or faculty are asked about SOPs related to bio-security or isolation procedures, they should be aware that the SOPs exist, demonstrate some familiarity with them, and know where they are available for reference.

Question: What is an effective records retrieval system, do records have to be coded with SNOMED-CT, one of the official informatics standards for veterinary medicine, per the April 2002 AVMA Executive Board action?

Answer: The COE is not that prescriptive. A college is expected to consider what material their students and faculty need to retrieve and why (e.g. teaching purposes, retrospective studies, reference to previous cases to aid with current cases, etc.) and then design a system that meets those needs. The Council has not been concerned about

“retrievability” across/among colleges. Use of SNOMED-CT is great if that serves your needs, but the Council will not be enforcing its use in the near future. That would require stakeholder comment and a lengthy phase-in period before compliance could be mandated.

Question: In performing analysis of outcomes involving student achievement, what is the percentage of absolute attrition?

Answer: Colleges are required to provide an [analysis of outcomes involving student achievement](#), including analyzing the reasons why students leave the program. The percentage of absolute attrition is the number of students who will not return, divided by the original number of students in their class when they entered the program.

Question: Is the first attrition column of [Table B](#) meant to capture all students who will not graduate with their class regardless of reason?

Answer: Yes

Question: Is the [relative attrition personal column](#) meant to capture anyone who won't graduate with their class for any reason other than academic? For example, does this include those in a PhD program, or just those who left for a truly personal reason like a change in career goals?

Answer: This includes just those who left for a personal reason.

Question: I recently heard someone say that she graduated from a veterinary school that was “fully accredited.” Isn't accreditation an “all or none” classification?

Answer: You are partially right about “all or none”. The AVMA Council on Education (COE) accredits DVM or equivalent educational programs. The AVMA COE assures that minimum standards in veterinary medical education are met by all AVMA-accredited colleges of veterinary medicine, and that students enrolled in those colleges receive an education which will prepare them for entry-level positions in the profession. When a student graduates from a veterinary school or college which is operating under **any** classification of AVMA-COE accreditation, the student is considered a graduate of an accredited school for purposes of licensing examinations or other certification that requires graduation from an AVMA-COE-accredited institution as a prerequisite. Different classifications of accreditation, however, do exist and reflect the compliance of an institution with the Standards of Accreditation (http://www.avma.org/education/cvea/coe_standard.asp).

Question: What does “fully accredited” mean?

Answer: Colleges which meet all Standards of Accreditation are granted **Full** Accreditation for a period of no more than seven years, contingent upon satisfactory review by the COE of annual progress reports. It is possible that one or two of the eleven

standards may not be fully met, but if the COE is convinced that student outcomes are only minimally affected and that student safety is not compromised, a College may still receive a classification of Full accreditation, as long as the deficiencies are corrected within a two year time period.

Question: What happens if a college doesn't meet the criteria for Full accreditation?

Answer: Colleges that have specific deficiencies in one or more Standards that adversely affect student outcomes or safety are granted an accreditation status of **Limited Accreditation**. Alternatively, if the College has deficiencies of a nature that, as mentioned above, only minimally affect student outcomes and do not compromise safety, in more than two of the eleven standards, Limited Accreditation may also be granted. Measures must be taken to ensure the education and safety of the students. Colleges operating under limited accreditation must, minimally, provide annual progress reports and correct the cited deficiencies within two years.

Question: What happens if a college with Limited accreditation status doesn't correct the deficiencies?

Answer: If colleges do not correct deficiencies cited while operating under Limited Accreditation status or if evidence indicates that the severity or number of deficiencies exceed the requirements for Limited Accreditation, a college is granted a status of **Terminal Accreditation**. The college must cease enrollment of additional students and commit resources adequate to complete the education of currently enrolled students.

Question: Does the performance of a college's graduates on licensing examinations have any effect on a college's accreditation status?

Answer: Yes. If fewer than 80% of a college's graduates pass the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE) for two or four successive years an accreditation status of Limited or Terminal Accreditation status, respectively, may be granted.

Question: How does a new veterinary college become accredited?

Answer: Newly established colleges of veterinary medicine in the United States and Canada function under **Provisional Accreditation**, contingent upon their demonstration of plans and intent to administer a program that will comply with the Standards. Site visits by the COE are conducted during the period of Provisional accreditation, in addition to review of semi-annual reports by the college. Provisional accreditation cannot exceed five years, after which the school is visited and assessed by the COE and granted one of the other (Full, Limited, or Terminal) accreditation classifications.