

American Veterinary Medical Association

Committee on Veterinary Technician
Education and Activities
(CVTEA)



Site Visit Guide

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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your endeavor to achieve and/or maintain accreditation by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Committee on Veterinary Technician Education and Activities (CVTEA). The CVTEA is committed to shaping the future of veterinary medicine by promoting veterinary technology and the veterinary professional team through education, quality, integrity, service, leadership, and collegiality.

The CVTEA strives to make the accreditation process an insightful and collegiate opportunity to learn, grow, and improve. In addition to the value of external review, most program directors find the process of self-analysis inherent in developing the self-study to be very beneficial. You are encouraged to contact AVMA staff as often as you need with questions or concerns throughout the process.

SITE VISIT DATE

Your site visit date is confirmed with the enclosed cover letter. If for some reason the original site visit date needs to be postponed, the AVMA CVTEA cannot guarantee availability of the desired date change.

SETTING UP THE EVALUATION TEAM

The evaluation team typically consists of five members:

- a CVTEA member who serves as chair of the team;
- a veterinarian representing the state veterinary medical association;
- a veterinary technician;
- a public representative;
- and an AVMA staff member.

Site Team Chair

AVMA staff is responsible for identifying the CVTEA member who will serve as chair of the site team and the AVMA staff member(s). CVTEA members may not chair site visits within their states of residence. As soon as known, this individual will be identified to you.

Selection of Veterinary Medical Association Representative

AVMA staff will contact your state veterinary medical association (VMA) for its recommendation. As soon as this person is identified, you will be notified. If you believe a potential conflict of interest exists with the nominated individual, please notify AVMA staff immediately.

Selection of Veterinary Technician and Public Representatives

The Program is responsible for providing the names, addresses, phone numbers, and email information of the public member and the veterinary technician by the date noted

on the cover letter. Include brief background information on each individual. Confirming availability of both individuals is your responsibility.

1. Submit the name of one public member willing to serve. The public member should not be associated with the college, may not be a veterinarian or veterinary technician, and may not serve on the program advisory committee.
2. Submit the name of a veterinary technician willing to serve. The veterinary technician member must be a credentialed veterinary technician, preferably a graduate of an AVMA-accredited veterinary technology program. If at all possible, the candidate should be chosen by the state technician association. It is preferable that the veterinary technician not be a graduate of the program; however, the CVTEA recognizes that graduates of other accredited programs may not be available and will accept graduates of your program. The technician cannot be a member of the program advisory committee.

SUBMITTING A SELF-STUDY REPORT

Where Do I Find the Self-Study Report?

The self-study template can be found in the *Accreditation Policies and Procedures of the AVMA CVTEA* (P&P). Please keep in mind that this document is continuously updated. As updates occur (usually twice per year), you will be sent a new copy; however, when you begin to prepare your report, **check with AVMA staff to confirm that you have the most recent version**. The P&P is available online at www.avma.org, or a copy can be emailed to you.

You may find it easier to use the electronic file for "fill-in-the-blank" purposes. An electronic copy can be requested by calling Ms. Julie Horvath at 800/248-2862 ext. 6624 or by email at jhorvath@avma.org.

How Many Copies?

You will need to prepare **five** hard copies of your self-study report and **one** electronic copy (maximum file size the AVMA server can accept is 4 meg).

Where Do I Send the Self-Study Report?

Mail one hard copy of your report, along with a college catalog, to each of the evaluation team members by the deadline date on your cover letter.

AVMA staff will provide you with the mailing addresses of the CVTEA and VMA team members as they are identified. Be sure to track your packages and notify AVMA staff to confirm that reports have been shipped.

Electronic Copy of Self-Study Report

Email an electronic copy of your self-study report to jhorvath@avma.org. Microsoft Word is the preferred format for the narrative portion of your report.

Self-Study Format Guidelines

All self-study reports should be:

1. Limited to 50 pages for the narrative section and 50 pages for the appendices. Course outlines may be submitted on either CD-ROM or as a separate booklet. Be judicious in the amount of material included in the report (e.g., CVs of faculty should be brief, personnel policies should be brief, feedback from graduates and employers should be summarized). If you are unsure as to whether or not to include something, call AVMA staff.
2. Single-sided, single-spaced.
3. Page numbered (including appendices).
4. Sectioned by Standard, with each section and appendix separated by a tab. Tabs should be numbered to coincide with the Standard.
5. Spiral bound (plastic tooth comb) with a soft cover. No three-ring binders.

Self-Study Review

AVMA staff and the site team chair will review your submitted self-study before the site visit. If additional information is needed or areas of concern are identified, you will be notified as soon as possible.

LOGISTICS - HOTEL, TRAVEL, AND MEALS

The site visit logistics form sent to you is due on or before the deadline for your self-study report.

Hotel

The Program is responsible for making hotel arrangements (single non-smoking rooms) for the evaluation team, as needed. If lodging needs of the team members are unknown, it is best to make a total of five room reservations and then cancel them as appropriate.

Meeting Space

Provide a secure room at the hotel or at the college to be used the second day after lunch and following dinner on the second night for the team to work on the report. Team members may need printing capabilities which can be achieved by having access to a computer with printing capabilities at the college or at the hotel business office.

Travel

Site Team members are responsible for making their own flight arrangements. If feasible, it is recommended that site team members be picked up from the airport by program personnel.

Meals

The Program is responsible for arranging all meals including both dinners. *It is best to arrange a box lunch on campus in a quiet area for the first day of the site visit.* The dinner with the advisory committee/faculty is semi-business and a private or semi-private room is highly recommended to allow for easy conversation between guests. If there are

any dietary restrictions of a team member, AVMA staff will notify the program as soon as possible.

SITE VISIT AGENDA

A tentative site visit agenda is enclosed. If changes to the agenda are needed, call AVMA staff for approval. A final agenda is due approximately **two weeks** before the site visit that includes participant names, meeting room locations, and any other unique aspects of the site visit.

The program director serves as the primary host for the site team and is required to be present for the entire visit, unless otherwise indicated by the site team chair.

A secure room should be provided for use by the evaluation team during the site visit. It generally works best if the different groups meeting with the site team come to a central location rather than the team moving from one location to another throughout the visit.

Have the following items available for the site team:

1. All animal care and use protocols
2. All signed memoranda of understanding
3. Graduate and employer surveys
4. Course syllabi

EXPENSES

During the evaluation site visit, AVMA staff will initially take care of the expenses for the team. Because of this, it is important that lodging and food arrangements are made with institutions that accept MasterCard credit cards. Eventually, all site visit travel, meals, lodging and associated expenses will be billed to the college. The average site visit cost is approximately \$2,500 – 3,500.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All evaluation team members will be asked to sign and abide by a confidentiality agreement. The program has the prerogative to reject any member of the evaluation team if it is believed there is a conflict of interest, but this must be done sufficiently far in advance to allow finding another site team member to fill the position.

The AVMA Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality statement:

Confidentiality Agreement

In accordance with AVMA policy, all information related to the CVTEA accreditation of a veterinary technology program is strictly confidential. This includes, but is not limited to reports of evaluation, letters, self-evaluation and accreditation materials, interim/annual/biennial reports, correspondence, and the content of any discussion related to the program and/or its accreditation. All requests for information related to a specific institution and/or program must be referred to AVMA staff, or the respective institution.

Freedom of Information Acts which may be applicable in a given state, province, or country do not apply to AVMA confidential information related to the accreditation of veterinary technology programs. Information requested through such acts may be obtained through due process from the respective institution or state/province/country office.

Conflict Of Interest

To ensure that all matters dealing with accreditation of programs of veterinary technology are conducted in an unbiased manner, the CVTEA has adopted a Conflict of Interest Policy. The Policy extends and pertains to those site team members who have immediate family (parent, spouse, siblings) who fall into any of the areas listed. Criteria that may pose a conflict of interest for a candidate include, but are not limited to:

- 1. Graduation from the institution being evaluated.*
- 2. Past or present employment by the institution or program being evaluated.*
- 3. Service as a consultant for the institution/program being evaluated.*
- 4. Membership on the advisory committee of the program being evaluated.*
- 5. Other potential conflicts of interest.*

It is expected that the candidate will communicate with AVMA staff for clarification of any concerns. If conflicts of interest are revealed to the entire team, and if it is agreed that the site team member will be unbiased in evaluating the program, it will be acceptable to allow the individual to remain on the site team.

POST SITE VISIT

Draft recommendations developed by the site visit team will be discussed with the program director during an exit interview. After discussing the report with the program director, the site team will present the findings to the highest levels of administration available. After the site visit, the site team creates a Report of Evaluation (ROE) based on its findings during the site visit. After review and acceptance by the site team, you will be asked to review the draft ROE for accuracy. In addition, if the program believes that the site team has erred in interpreting the Standards and/or that recommendations in the ROE are inappropriate, the CVTEA invites comments that elaborate on the concerns. A final draft ROE is presented to the CVTEA at its next feasible meeting for the accreditation decision.

Accreditation decisions are made by the CVTEA, not the site visit team. Decisions are made by a majority vote of the CVTEA. The ROE and recommendations are confidential information that is provided to the program director and to the college president by the AVMA. Distribution of information from and about the site visit and AVMA reports is the prerogative of the program and/or institution, not the AVMA or site team members.

Common Deficiencies Noted on Site Visits
By the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Committee on Veterinary
Technician Education and Activities (CVTEA)

To help programs achieve AVMA-accreditation, the CVTEA has outlined below several areas of common deficiencies found during site visits. This list is not intended for programs to place heavier emphasis on these areas, only to simply point out that the site team will include these areas during the evaluation. The below areas represent common sources of critical and major recommendations that programs should be aware are under the purview of the CVTEA evaluation.

A. Regulatory issues:

Although the site team and CVTEA are not regulatory officials, recognition that issues of non-compliance with regulations can be potentially deleterious to programs makes this germane to site visits. Frequent issues:

1. OSHA: secondary labeling, eyewash stations, MSDS, radiation safety, anesthetic vaporizer calibration/maintenance, ground fault-interrupted circuitry, signage, food in animal-use refrigerators, personal protection equipment, sanitizable surfaces, oxygen cylinder storage, large animal handling facilities
2. USDA/Animal Welfare Act: IACUC structure and functioning, animal housing and environmental control, emergency plans, animal food storage and dating, pharmaceuticals and test kits dating
3. DEA: controlled drug storage and logs

B. Policies:

1. Memoranda of understanding with all off-campus providers of instructional support
2. Written policies for student pregnancy and rabies immunization, with waivers where appropriate

C. Documentation:

1. Skills list completion
2. Criteria for evaluation of student skills acquisition
3. Criteria for student evaluation by externship site supervisors
4. Long-range plans
5. Radiology, surgery logs

D. Miscellaneous:

1. Library holdings
2. Contemporary emergency [“crash”] kit presence
3. Student computer access
4. Program faculty meetings/communications
5. Properly constituted membership on the Program Advisory Committee

E. Issues often beyond program control:

1. Adequacy of staffing
2. Adequacy of budget
3. Facilities
4. Equipment, supplies

FOR NEW PROGRAMS ONLY

Application Fee

An application fee of \$3,000 is due along with the application form.

Program Informational Material

After an application for accreditation has been received and accepted, a program may indicate to the public that the program has applied for AVMA accreditation. The program or parent institution may not in any manner insinuate that application for accreditation connotes or ensures accreditation.

Application for accreditation does not grant any preliminary accreditation status. Misleading information on licensure eligibility may jeopardize the accreditation process.

Upon successful achievement of accreditation, the AVMA will notify your state licensing board and veterinary medical association. A list of programs that have applied for AVMA accreditation is posted on the AVMA website within 30 days of acceptance of the application.

ALL QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Please direct all questions and concerns to AVMA staff as often as possible.

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