

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
AMERICAN VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
EDUCATIONAL COMMISSION FOR FOREIGN VETERINARY GRADUATES®

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CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ECFVG CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

ECFVG

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AAVMC	Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
AAVSB	American Association of Veterinary State Boards
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AVMA	American Veterinary Medical Association
AVMA COE®	AVMA Council on Education™
BCSE	Basic and Clinical Sciences Examination
CAEL	Canadian Academic English Language Assessment
CCT	Clinical Competency Test
COE	Council on Education
CPE	Clinical Proficiency Examination
ECFVG®	Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates®
ETS	Educational Testing Service
ICVA	International Council for Veterinary Assessment, former NBVME (National Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners)
IELTS™	International English Language Testing System
NAVLE	North American Veterinary Licensing Examination
NBE	National Board Examination
NEB	Canadian National Examining Board
QAP	Quality Assurance Program
TOEFL iBT®	English as a Foreign Language Internet-based Test
VIVA	Veterinary Information Verifying Agency

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF THE EDUCATIONAL COMMISSION FOR FOREIGN VETERINARY GRADUATES® (ECFVG®)

HISTORY, DESCRIPTION, AND CHARGE OF THE ECFVG®

In 1971, the House of Delegates approved a "Procedure for Recognizing Graduates of Colleges of Veterinary Medicine Outside the United States and Canada." That procedure included a provision for the formation of "a special committee to be named the Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates, advisory to the Council on Education, shall be appointed by the AVMA Board of Directors to maintain continuing surveillance over procedures for acceptance of graduates of colleges of veterinary medicine outside the United States and Canada."

Charge/Objective

1. To evaluate the professional competence of graduates of non-AVMA /Council on Education®-accredited colleges of veterinary medicine listed by the AVMA, to the benefit of such graduates and of the state and provincial veterinary licensing agencies, and of other concerned parties
2. To allow utilization of ECFVG® examinations and other assessment resources to evaluate the professional competence of graduates of AVMA/Council on Education-accredited colleges of veterinary medicine when such utilization is to the benefit of the state and provincial veterinary licensing agencies, and other concerned parties

Recommendations pertaining to changes in ECFVG policies are forwarded to the AVMA Board of Directors for consideration and approval. Decisions related to candidates and internal operational policies such as the Basic and Clinical Sciences Examination (BCSE) procedures, Clinical Proficiency Examination (CPE) Manual of Administration, petitioning processes, and application and other forms are made by the ECFVG alone and are independent of the AVMA. Further, such decisions are not influenced by the partner organization or its recognized affiliate organizations. Since the inception of the current certification program (January 1, 1973) through December 31, 2022, the ECFVG has awarded 7,318 certificates.

Membership, Method of Appointment, and Representation

The ECFVG shall consist of 12 voting members as follows: one member representing the AVMA Council on Education® (COE); two members representing state veterinary licensing boards (either appointed members [veterinarian or non-veterinarian], senior administrative executives, or other staff members of state veterinary licensing boards); one member representing the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC); one member representing government service; one member representing the Canadian National Examining Board (NEB); two members representing clinical practitioners holding an ECFVG certificate, with at least one being a non-native English speaker; one member representing public health or food safety; one member representing medical or health educators with expertise in clinical assessment methods; one member representing veterinary surgery or anesthesia (must be board-certified by the American College of Veterinary Surgeons or the American College of Veterinary Anesthesiologists); and one member representing the public. All members except members representing state veterinary licensing boards; medical or health educators, and the public must be veterinarians. ECFVG certificate holders may be appointed to positions other than the two designated specifically for ECFVG certificate holders with the stipulation that certificate holders

must comprise less than 50% of the 12 positions. ECFVG certificate holders must have completed the ECFVG program no less than 5 years prior to nomination to the ECFVG. Individuals associated with or employed by the institution or site that administers the Clinical Proficiency Examination (CPE) are not eligible for membership on the ECFVG.

Appointments for all voting representatives except the public member, AAVMC and NEB representatives, and one member representing state veterinary licensing boards are made by the AVMA Board of Directors for terms of six years beginning at the close of the AVMA annual meeting. The member representing the COE will be nominated by the Council on Education. One of the members representing state veterinary licensing boards shall be appointed by the American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB). The member representing AAVMC shall be appointed by the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges. The member representing NEB shall be appointed by the Canadian National Examining Board. The terms for all voting representatives except the representative of the Council on Education are six years beginning at the close of the AVMA annual meeting. ECFVG members who have served terms of three years or more are not eligible for reappointment. The term of the representative of the Council on Education terminates concurrently with the end of the representative's term on the Council. If a position other than the public member position remains vacant for 12 consecutive months, it will be advertised as an at-large veterinary position for appointment by the AVMA Board of Directors for the remainder of the term of the original vacancy, after which it will revert to its original categorization.

The public member is appointed by the commission when a vacancy exists, for a non-renewable six-year term that begins at the close of the AVMA Annual Convention. Criteria used in the selection of public members specify that they shall NOT be and of the following:

1. A veterinarian.
2. A current or former employee of a college of veterinary medicine.
3. A vendor to the ECFVG.
4. Currently or formerly affiliated with any other constituent group represented on the ECFVG.

One Clinical Proficiency Examination (CPE) site coordinator from an ECFVG-approved site may be invited to attend ECFVG meetings as a non-voting liaison. The liaison may be asked by the chair of the commission to recuse themselves when specific issues involving their site are discussed.

The ECFVG office is located in the Education and Research Division at AVMA Headquarters in Schaumburg, Illinois. ECFVG information, including an application form, can be found on the AVMA Web site (home page: www.avma.org) at <https://www.avma.org/education/ecfvg>.

AVMA ECFVG®-LISTED VETERINARY COLLEGES

To be eligible to apply for enrollment in the ECFVG® certification program, an individual must be a graduate of, or final-year student at, an AVMA ECFVG-listed veterinary college. The schools listed on the AVMA ECFVG-listed school directory, and their curricula, are not reviewed, accredited, endorsed, approved, accepted, granted, or certified in any manner by the AVMA or the ECFVG program. The AVMA ECFVG-listed school directory is used by the

AVMA solely to allow individuals to apply for enrollment in the ECFVG certification program. An individual from a non-listed veterinary school cannot apply for enrollment in the ECFVG program until the school becomes listed. If there is no individual applying to the ECFVG program, the ECFVG will not consider a request to list the school.

How to add a school to the AVMA ECFVG-listed school directory

If a school is not already included in the AVMA ECFVG-listed school directly, specific documentation is required to get it added. The following information and materials must be submitted to the ECFVG in English:

- Information to be **submitted by the applicant** to the ECFVG by email to ECFVG@avma.org or by mail:
 - Applicant's full name
 - Applicant's email address
 - Name of requested school
 - Year of graduation from requested school
 - Degree awarded from requested school
 - Reason for requesting the school be added

- Information to be **submitted by the school** to the ECFVG by email to ECFVG@avma.org or by mail:
 - School name
 - School contact email address
 - School mailing address
 - School telephone number (and fax number, if available)
 - School website
 - Full name of the veterinary degree awarded
 - Abbreviated name of the veterinary degree awarded
 - A letter indicating that the school is recognized by the national government and that **its graduates are eligible to practice veterinary medicine within that country without restriction**. This letter should be:
 - Written in English
 - On the official government's letterhead
 - Originating from the national education ministry or an equivalent government agency
 - Submitted by the school directly to the ECFVG by email (ECFVG@avma.org) or mail.
 - School email addresses from Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail, or personal email will not be accepted by the ECFVG.

The time required to add a school to the AVMA ECFVG-listed school directory varies and depends on many factors, such as the country or language of communication within the country of origin, and the speed at which the school responds to the ECFVG's request. Individuals interested in registering for the ECFVG certification program should plan well in advance as the time required to add a school to the directory is beyond the control of the ECFVG.

OVERVIEW OF THE ECFVG CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

An ECFVG certificate may be accepted by [state veterinary medical licensing agencies](#) as fulfilling the educational prerequisite, either in full or in part, for state licensure eligibility. The majority of states require graduates of veterinary schools not accredited by the AVMA COE® to hold an ECFVG certificate. However, because licensing requirements can change, the ECFVG and AVMA urge all veterinarians to contact the licensing agency in the state in which they wish to become licensed to determine current requirements, including educational prerequisites.

The ECFVG certification program comprises 4 steps, each one designed to build from the previous. The purpose of the [first step](#) is to confirm an applicant's veterinary college credentials. The [second step](#) is designed to assess a candidate's English language ability. The purpose of the [third step](#) is to assess a candidate's basic and clinical veterinary science knowledge, whereas the purpose of the [fourth and final step](#) is to assess a candidate's hands-on clinical veterinary medical skills.

In addition, candidates who enroll into the ECFVG program on or after July 1, 2014, must submit validated **Surgical Experience Documentation** forms as proof of having performed, in the five-year period prior to date of CPE application, at least one (1) ovariohysterectomy as the primary surgeon and at least five (5) additional surgical procedures (a total of 6) as either the primary or the assistant surgeon. The 5 additional procedures may be ovariohysterectomies or other surgical procedures, but each documented surgery should involve all elements of an aseptic surgical procedure, including gowning & gloving, draping of the patient, and use of sterile instrumentation. Validation of surgery experience can be provided by **one or more veterinarians licensed to practice veterinary medicine in any international jurisdiction**. Please note that, candidates who enrolled into the ECFVG program on or after July 1, 2014, will be eligible to register for the full CPE only when the required documentation is received in its entirety in the ECFVG office and processed by ECFVG staff. The ECFVG reserves the right to verify the documents received. Candidates are reminded that falsification of documents would be a violation of the Rules of Conduct and can result in disciplinary actions up to and including dismissal from the program. Candidates who successfully fulfill this eligibility requirement will be notified of their Step 4 eligibility by e-mail and will be able to register and apply for CPE through [ECFVG Online](#).

This CPE eligibility requirement does not apply to candidates enrolled in the ECFVG program prior to July 1, 2014. However, the ECFVG strongly recommends that all candidates have the experience described above prior to attempting the surgical section of the CPE.

The examinations used within the ECFVG certification program are rigorous. The program assesses educational equivalency of graduates of veterinary schools that are not accredited by the [AVMA Council on Education](#) (COE). Therefore, the program reflects veterinary educational and practice standards within the USA and Canada. All potential and current ECFVG candidates are encouraged to critically consider whether the veterinary education they received is sufficient to provide them with the necessary knowledge and skill level to perform well on the ECFVG Step 3 (Basic and Clinical Sciences Examination [BCSE]) and Step 4 (Clinical Proficiency Examination [CPE]) examinations. For example, to succeed in the surgery and anesthesia sections of the BCSE and CPE, candidates will need to not only have knowledge about performing surgery and anesthesia in small and large animals (for the BCSE), but they should also have experience

performing small-animal surgery and anesthesia in an instructional or clinical setting prior to attempting the CPE.

Communication skills and service to clients are also a high priority in veterinary practice in the USA and Canada. Throughout the ECFVG program, candidates will be assessed on their ability to communicate clearly and effectively in English (or French in Canada). Lack of adequate entry-level communication skills in English (or French in Canada) will negatively impact a candidate's performance in the ECFVG certification program.

An applicant who satisfactorily completes the following 4 steps (in order) will be awarded an ECFVG certificate:

1. Provide proof (diploma and final transcripts) of graduation from an AVMA ECFVG®-listed college of veterinary medicine. The ECFVG will seek verification of the applicant's credentials by direct request to the college from which the individual claims graduation.
2. Provide proof of comprehension and ability to communicate in the English language by attaining passing scores on the internet-based TOEFL (TOEFL-iBT®) as administered by Educational Testing Service of Princeton, NJ; **OR** the International English Language Testing System (IELTS™) as administered by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, the British Council, and IDE Education Australia; **OR** the Canadian Academic English Language Assessment (CAEL) as administered by Paragon Testing Enterprises, a subsidiary of The University of British Columbia, Canada. For candidates completing secondary school in the United States, United Kingdom (England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland), Australia, New Zealand, or Canada (except Quebec), the English language examinations may be waived, provided such candidates submit documentation attesting to at least three years full-time attendance at a secondary (high) school located in one of the above countries and at which the complete language of instruction was English or, for graduates of US high schools only, a certified, notarized, or official copy of the final transcript. A degree from a US college or university is not considered adequate proof of English language ability.
3. All candidates who enroll in the ECFVG program on or after January 1, 2014, must pass the Basic and Clinical Sciences Examination (BCSE) to satisfy the requirements of Step 3 of the ECFVG program. Candidates will no longer be permitted to submit passing scores from the National Board Examination (NBE), Clinical Competency Test (CCT) and/or North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE) to complete Step 3 of the ECFVG program. Those candidates who are enrolled in the ECFVG program prior to January 1, 2014, and have successfully completed the NAVLE during or prior to the April 2007 administration or the NBE and CCT prior to year 2000, can have those original score reports submitted directly from the Veterinary Information Verifying Agency (VIVA) of the American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB) for completion of Step 3 of the ECFVG program.
4. Attain a passing score on all sections of the Clinical Proficiency Examination (CPE) approved by the ECFVG.

ECFVG RELATIONSHIP WITH CANADIAN NEB

Both the ECFVG and Canadian National Examining Board (NEB; see <http://www.canadianveterinarians.net>) use the same examinations as part of their certification programs - namely the Basic and Clinical Sciences Examination (BCSE) and the Clinical

Proficiency Examination (CPE) - and each agency accepts BCSE and CPE score transfers from the other agency. As such, the ECFVG and NEB recognize that foreign veterinary graduates may wish to apply for certification concomitantly through both offices in order to earn certification that is accepted by US licensing agencies and employers (ECFVG certification) or Canadian licensing agencies and employers (NEB certification). However, each agency expressly prohibits candidates from accepting a full or retake CPE position if they are already scheduled for the CPE through the other agency. In addition, candidates may only reserve one BCSE seat per testing window, which must be reserved through either the ECFVG or NEB office.

To help ensure that ECFVG and NEB candidates do not double-book testing appointments by scheduling examinations through both agencies at the same time, the ECFVG and NEB will share candidate information. Neither the NEB nor ECFVG office will knowingly assign an examination date to candidates who have already been assigned a position through the other office. Candidates who have already accepted an examination position through one agency must also decline a testing position inadvertently offered through the other agency. Candidates who attempt to circumvent this requirement by accepting a testing position through one agency while already scheduled through the other agency will be withdrawn from the second testing position and will lose all deposits paid.

SPECIFIC STEPS OF THE ECFVG CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Step One—Registration and Proof of Graduation

To register in the ECFVG certification program, an applicant must complete the [online application](#) and submit the payment of \$1,400.00 (USD; \$675.00 ECFVG program application fee; \$725.00 ECFVG Quality Assurance Program [QAP] fee). This payment can be made by credit card (Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or American Express) online at the end of the application.

Payment can also be submitted to the ECFVG office as a personal check from a US bank only, or by cashier's check or money order made payable to the AVMA. Candidates must also submit the following to the ECFVG office within 7 business days of submitting the [online application](#):

- i. A completed and notarized ECFVG confirmation page available at the end of the online application.
- ii. Two photographs (passport size).
 - a. One photograph (Passport size) affixed to application indicated space and **MUST BE INCLUDED UNDER A PORTION OF THE NOTARIAL SEAL OR the STAMP OF THE VETERINARY COLLEGE OR CONSULAR OFFICIAL. Otherwise, the application will not be accepted. The applicant will be required to resubmit the application.**
 - b. One additional identical photograph (passport size)
- iii. As proof of graduation from an AVMA ECFVG®-listed veterinary medical college, certified, notarized, photocopies or official (issued directly by school) of the applicant's veterinary college diploma and final transcripts (for each year of study), both in the language of issuance and as a certified English translation (CERTIFIED, NOTARIZED, OR OFFICIAL PHOTOCOPIES ONLY-DO NOT SEND ORIGINALS). AVMA will not be responsible for returning originals to you.

AVMA will not be responsible for lost or destroyed originals. Provisional Certificates and Certificates of Graduation are unacceptable for ECFVG program purposes.

- a. If the applicant is a final-year student at an [AVMA ECFVG®-listed veterinary college](#), transcripts, as described above, for those years of study completed and a letter from an official of the veterinary college stating that the applicant will graduate within the year must be submitted with the ECFVG application form. After graduating from the [AVMA ECFVG®-listed veterinary college](#), such candidates will need to submit certified, notarized, or official (issued directly by school) photocopies of their veterinary college diploma and final transcripts before Step 1 can be considered complete.

All items must be sent to: ECFVG, American Veterinary Medical Association, 1931 N Meacham Road, Suite 100, Schaumburg, IL 60173-4360, USA.

Refunds: The \$675.00 ECFVG program application fee is nonrefundable. However, if a candidate wishes to withdraw from the ECFVG certification program within 60 days after initially applying, the \$725.00 ECFVG Quality Assurance Program (QAP) fee will be refunded upon request to the ECFVG office. Requests must be done online through [ECFVG Online](#) (the online candidate database) or by written request. No fees will be refunded for withdrawal requests received more than 60 days after initially applying to the program.

Re-registration: The original registration fee is valid for two years. To remain active in the program, candidates must re-register every two years by notifying the ECFVG and paying a \$120.00 re-registration fee. Candidates will be notified 60 days prior to their re-registration deadline by email and through their online status. Files of candidates who do not re-register in the ECFVG certification program will be made inactive. An inactive file may be reactivated within eight years upon the written request of the candidate and payment of all past-due re-registration fees. Inactive candidate files older than eight years will be destroyed. Future entrance into the ECFVG certification program would require new registration according to guidelines currently in effect.

Verification of educational credentials: The ECFVG verifies all applicants' educational credentials. The ECFVG Coordinator sends a "certification of graduation" form ([Appendix 1](#)) with the applicant's photograph to the dean of the veterinary college from which the applicant graduated. The dean or other college official must verify the applicant's identification and graduation date and return the completed form with the college seal affixed to the ECFVG office. Applicants may proceed with Steps 2 and 3 of the certification program while verification is being obtained. However, Step 1 will not be considered completed until such verification is obtained, and applicants will not be eligible to apply for Step 4 of the certification program (the CPE) until Steps 1, 2, and 3 are completed. The time required to verify Step 1 credentials of a candidate is variable and depends on school, country, or language of communication. Sometimes, it may take a long time – weeks, perhaps, even months or longer -- to receive the necessary information about individual candidates. Candidates interested in registering for the ECFVG certification program should plan well in advance as the time required for some aspects of the certification process is beyond the control of ECFVG.

Surgical Experience Documentation: Please note that, candidates who enrolled into the ECFVG program on or after July 1, 2014, will be eligible to register for the full CPE only when the required documentation is received in its entirety in the ECFVG office and processed by ECFVG staff. Please see this link to the [CPE Candidate Bulletin](#) for further information.

Once enrolled, candidates can make address, telephone numbers, or E-mail address changes through [ECFVG Online](#) (the online candidate database). Name changes are not able to be completed online. Candidate name changes must be submitted in writing along with a copy of appropriate notarized legal documents.

Step Two—English Language Ability

To complete Step 2, candidates must provide the ECFVG with proof of comprehension and ability to communicate in the English language by meeting the minimum requirements established by the ECFVG on one of the following assessment tools: the TOEFL internet-based test (TOEFL iBT), the IELTS, the CAEL Assessment, or Waiver policy. **Scores from multiple scores reports cannot be combined. There are no exceptions to this policy.**

TOEFL iBT®

The TOEFL iBT® is offered by Educational Testing Service (ETS P.O. Box 6151, Princeton, NJ 08541; Web site: www.toefl.org; telephone: 609-771-7100). Candidates must contact ETS for information regarding the TOEFL iBT, including dates and location of examinations, fees, and application procedures.

For ECFVG program purposes, candidates choosing to take the TOEFL iBT **MUST** take each subsection of the TOEFL iBT. The minimum required scores on the TOEFL iBT are 25 in listening, 22 in writing, 22 in speaking, and 23 in reading; no minimum overall score is required. All candidates **MUST** pass all required sections of the TOEFL iBT in a single examination administration.

The ECFVG verifies all scores. Candidate must complete the submission form ([English Submission Form](#)) in order for the ECFVG to process the step 2 requirements. Please use the institution code 1212, so ECFVG can verify your score. Because ETS only maintains score reports for two years from the date of examination, candidates should plan accordingly to ensure that score reports do not expire before requesting that they be submitted to the ECFVG. Score reports longer than two years from the date of examination are no longer valid and will not be held by the ECFVG office for individuals who are not currently enrolled in the ECFVG certification program. However, once an enrolled ECFVG candidate submits a passing score report, that score report will remain valid as long as the candidate remains actively enrolled in the ECFVG program. For candidates enrolled in the ECFVG program on or after January 1, 2015, please read the [Time Between Steps requirements](#).

International English Language Testing System (IELTS™)

The International English Language Testing System (IELTS™) is administered by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, the British Council, and IDE Education Australia.

For information in North America, contact IELTS Inc at 825 Colorado Boulevard, Suite 112, Los Angeles, CA 90041 (Web site: www.ielts.org; telephone: 323-255-2771).

For ECFVG program purposes, candidates choosing to take the IELTS **MUST** take the academic IELTS. The minimum required score on the academic IELTS is 6.5 (overall band score), with at least a 6.5 in the listening band, a 6.0 in the writing band, and a 7.0 in the speaking band; no minimum reading score is required. All candidates **MUST** pass all required sections of the academic IELTS in a single examination administration.

The ECFVG verifies all scores. Candidate must complete the submission form ([English Submission Form](#)) in order for the ECFVG to process the step 2 requirements. Because IELTS Inc. only maintains score reports for two years from the date of examination, candidates should plan accordingly to ensure that score reports do not expire before requesting that they be submitted to the ECFVG. Score reports longer than two years from the date of examination are no longer valid and will not be held by the ECFVG office for individuals who are not currently enrolled in the ECFVG certification program. However, once an enrolled ECFVG candidate submits a passing score report, that score report will remain valid as long as the candidate remains actively enrolled in the ECFVG program. For candidates enrolled in the ECFVG program on or after January 1, 2015, please read the [Time Between Steps requirements](#).

Canadian Academic English Language (CAEL)

The Canadian Academic English Language (CAEL) Assessment is administered by Paragon Testing Enterprises, a subsidiary of The University of British Columbia. Please contact the CAEL Assessment Testing Office, 110-2925 Virtual Way, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada V5M 4X5 (Web site: www.cael.ca; telephone: within Vancouver: 604-674-8664; toll-free within North America 855-520-2235).

For ECFVG program purposes, candidates choosing to take the CAEL Assessment **MUST** take each subsection of the CAEL Assessment. The minimum required score on the CAEL Assessment is 60 (overall score), with at least a 60 in the listening band, a 50 in the writing band, and a 60 in the speaking band. All candidates **MUST** pass all required sections of the CAEL Assessment in a single examination administration.

The ECFVG verifies all scores. Candidate must complete the submission form ([English Submission Form](#)) in order for the ECFVG to process the step 2 requirements. Because CAEL only maintains score reports for two years from the date of examination, candidates should plan accordingly to ensure that score reports do not expire before requesting that they be submitted to the ECFVG. Score reports longer than two years from the date of examination are no longer valid and will not be held by the ECFVG office for individuals who are not currently enrolled in the ECFVG certification program. However, once an enrolled ECFVG candidate submits a passing score report, that score report will remain valid as long as the candidate remains actively enrolled in the ECFVG program. For candidates enrolled in the ECFVG program on or after January 1, 2015, please read the [Time Between Steps requirements](#).

Waiver Policy

For candidates completing secondary school in the United States, United Kingdom (England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland), Australia, New Zealand, or Canada (except Quebec), the

English language examinations may be waived. To do so, eligible candidates must provide documentation of at least three years full-time attendance at a secondary (high) school located in one of the above countries at which the complete language of instruction was English. Acceptable documentation includes a letter directly from school officials stating dates of attendance (month and year of both initial and final dates of attendance are required) and verifying that the complete language of instruction was English or, for graduates of US high schools only, a certified, notarized, or official copy of the final transcript. A degree from an English-speaking college or university is not considered adequate proof of English language ability.

Please fill out the submission form ([English Submission Form](#)) and reach out to your secondary school for the necessary paperwork.

Step Three—Basic and Clinical Sciences Knowledge

All candidates who enroll into the ECFVG program on or after January 1, 2014 must attain a passing score on the Basic and Clinical Sciences Examination (BCSE) in order to complete Step 3 of the ECFVG certification program. Candidates who enrolled prior to January 1, 2014, and have taken the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE) during the April 2007 or prior administrations **ONLY**, or the National Board Examination (NBE) and Clinical Competency Test (CCT) prior to year 2000 may be eligible to use successful score reports from those prior examinations to complete ECFVG Step 3.

Candidates will be notified by e-mail and through [ECFVG Online](#) (the online candidate database) of their eligibility to apply for the Step 3 examination. Please note that candidates only become eligible to apply for and take the BCSE upon successful completion of ECFVG Step 2.

The AVMA owns and administers the BCSE, a computer-based examination, lasting approximately four hours and consisting of 225 questions designed to help assess basic and clinical veterinary sciences knowledge. Complete information on the BCSE, including application procedures, rescheduling rules, rules of conduct, and testing accommodations, can be found in the [BCSE Candidate Bulletin](#). All candidates must review this document before taking the BCSE.

The Canadian National Examining Board (NEB; <http://www.canadianveterinarians.net/>) also uses the BCSE as part of its certification program. NEB candidates must register for the BCSE through the NEB office; score reports for NEB candidates will also be through the NEB office. Both ECFVG and NEB candidates may reserve only a single testing seat per BCSE application, regardless through which agency that single testing seat is reserved.

For ECFVG candidates taking the BCSE, scores will automatically be entered into candidate files; a passing score will result in completion of ECFVG Step 3 and successful candidates will then be notified of their eligibility to apply for ECFVG Step 4, the Clinical Proficiency Examination (CPE). Both passing and failing BCSE scores will also be reported directly to candidates by the Testing Manager via e-mail and through [ECFVG Online](#) (the online candidate database). BCSE scores will not be available to candidates via telephone.

For ECFVG candidates who enrolled into the ECFVG program prior to January 1, 2014 and who have successfully completed the NAVLE during or prior to the April 2007 administration or the NBE and CCT prior to 2000, the ECFVG requires original NAVLE or NBE/CCT score reports directly from the Veterinary Information Verifying Agency (VIVA) of the American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB). NAVLE and NBE/CCT scores are ONLY reported to the ECFVG at the request of the ECFVG candidate. Requests for score transfers must be directed to the VIVA, 380 W. 22nd Street, Suite 101, Kansas City, MO 64108 (E-mail: viva@aavsb.org; telephone: 816-931-1504, ext. 23; Web site: www.aavsb.org/VIVA/). The ECFVG office will notify each applicant when his/her scores have been received. Again, VIVA will not report scores to the ECFVG without a request from the candidate, and the ECFVG will consider Step 3 complete only on receipt of a score report from VIVA indicating a passing score on the NAVLE (April 2007 and previous administrations only) or the NBE and CCT (prior to spring 2000) for those candidates who enrolled into the ECFVG program prior to January 1, 2014.

CQ (Certificate of Qualification) holders who enrolled after January 1, 2014 and had taken the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE) during the April 2007 or prior administrations **ONLY**, or the National Board Examination (NBE) and Clinical Competency Test (CCT) prior to year 2000 are eligible to use successful score reports from those prior examinations to complete ECFVG Step 3 of the certification program.

ECFVG candidate addresses listed on Step 3 examination score reports (BCSE, NAVLE or NBE/CCT) that vary from the address on record must be explained in writing, listing both the old and new address, before ECFVG can record and acknowledge receipt of the score report. Therefore, it is important that all candidates provide the ECFVG office with address updates as soon as possible. Address changes must be made through [ECFVG Online](#) or in writing.

For information regarding the NAVLE, which is a licensing examination, please contact the International Council for Veterinary Assessment (ICVA), PO Box 1356, Bismarck, ND 58502 (Web site: <https://www.icva.net/>; telephone: 701-224-0332).

Surgery Documentation Requirement

In addition, candidates who enroll into the ECFVG program on or after July 1, 2014, must submit validated [Surgical Experience Documentation](#) forms as proof of having performed, in the five-year period prior to the candidate's CPE, at least one (1) ovariohysterectomy as the primary surgeon and at least five (5) additional surgical procedures (a total of 6) as either the primary or the assistant surgeon. The 5 additional procedures may be ovariohysterectomies or other surgical procedures, but each documented surgery should involve all elements of an aseptic surgical procedure, including gowning & gloving, draping of the patient, and use of sterile instrumentation. Validation of surgery experience can be provided by **one or more veterinarians licensed to practice veterinary medicine in any international jurisdiction**. Please note that, candidates who enrolled into the ECFVG program on or after July 1, 2014, will be eligible to register for the full CPE only when the required documentation is received in its entirety in the ECFVG office and processed by ECFVG staff. The ECFVG reserves the right to verify the documents received. Candidates are reminded that falsification of documents would be a violation of the Rules of Conduct and can result in disciplinary actions up to and including dismissal from the program. Candidates who successfully fulfill this eligibility requirement will

be notified of their Step 4 eligibility by e-mail and will be able to register and apply for CPE through [ECFVG Online](#).

This CPE eligibility requirement does not apply to candidates enrolled in the ECFVG program prior to July 1, 2014. However, the ECFVG strongly recommends that all candidates have the experience described above prior to attempting the surgical section of the CPE.

Step Four—Clinical Skills Assessment

To complete Step 4, candidates must attain a passing score on all sections of the Clinical Proficiency Examination (CPE); only the CPE approved by the ECFVG will meet the requirements for assessment of clinical skills.

The CPE is a 3-day, 7-section, hands-on clinical skills examination, administered by the faculty of a college of veterinary medicine or other authorized testing institution. The skill level expected for a passing grade on each of the 7 sections of the CPE is that of an entry-level graduate of an accredited veterinary college. Only well-prepared candidates will be able to pass the CPE.

Complete information on the CPE, including format, eligibility requirements, fee structure, application procedures, scoring, location of approved sites, rescheduling, rules of conduct, and testing accommodations, can be found in the [CPE Candidate Bulletin](#). All candidates are encouraged to read this document to understand the CPE eligibility and application process.

Please note that candidates only become eligible to apply for and take the CPE after ECFVG Steps 1, 2, and 3 are successfully completed.

Please refer to the [CPE Candidate Bulletin](#) for complete details regarding the CPE application process and fee structure.

The Canadian National Examining Board (NEB; <http://www.canadianveterinarians.net>) also uses the CPE as part of its certification program. NEB candidates must register for the CPE through the NEB office; CPE score reports for NEB candidates will also be through the NEB office. Both ECFVG and NEB candidates may only reserve a single full or retake CPE position at any one time, regardless through which agency that single testing seat is reserved.

TIME BETWEEN ECFVG CERTIFICATION PROGRAM STEPS

Candidates enrolled in the ECFVG program on or after January 1, 2015, will be required to complete Step 3 and Step 4 requirements within seven years of completing Step 2 requirements, in order to successfully complete certification requirements. Those candidates who do not complete certification within seven years of completing Step 2 requirements, will be required to start over again at the Step 2 level of the program while maintaining registration in the program. That is, candidates who do not complete certification requirements within the stipulated seven-year period will be required to submit valid scores from English language proficiency exams and successfully complete the BCSE again prior to becoming eligible for the CPE again. Candidates beginning at the Step 2 level again will not be expected to complete Step 1 requirements again as long as registration in the program is maintained.

This seven-year time stipulation between program steps will not affect ECFVG candidates enrolled in the program prior to January 1, 2015.

All candidates working towards completion of certification requirements will be required to maintain registration in the program by paying the required bi-annual fees towards re-registration

PETITIONING PROCESSES

Petitions will be accepted only from candidates currently registered in the ECFVG certification program and not from third parties. A petition for variation in procedure will be considered only after a completed ECFVG application is on file. Letters of recommendation or character references are not considered in the petitioning process.

English Language Waiver Requirements—Spoken Section Only

The following policy for waiver of the spoken section requirements for speech impediments or other relevant disabilities was approved in April 2008:

1. The candidate must provide ECFVG a written request to have the spoken section of the English language examination waived. The request must provide the reason(s) for the request with a description of the nature of the disability.
2. An original signed letter from a physician/professional with appropriate expertise must be addressed to ECFVG. The letter must describe the candidate's speech impediments or other relevant disabilities that affect his/her speech and further certify that the speech impediment will not limit the candidate's ability to communicate with coworkers and clients in assuring safety in a veterinary practice setting.
3. A personal conversation will be conducted with the ECFVG candidate requesting the waiver. The conversation will be conducted by a) an ECFVG member or former member, b) a member of Board of Directors, or c) AVMA staff in a manner mutually acceptable to the candidate and the interviewer (eg, in person or via telephone, videoconference, Web conference or other appropriate communication devices). The identity of the candidate must be verified (eg, through use of a photograph identification card such as a driver's license or passport) at the time of the interview by an AVMA member (for interviews conducted via telephone or other communication devices) or the person conducting the interview (for in-person interviews).
4. The candidate must pass all other sections of the English language proficiency examinations.

If documentation obtained merits a waiver of the spoken section of the English language examination, AVMA staff will notify the candidate of the waiver.

ECFVG APPEAL PROCEDURE

Attention ECFVG candidates: Beginning in July 2013, all ECFVG candidates must use the appropriate forms for submitting petitions. Neither the petition for reconsideration nor the petition for review will be accepted or processed if submitted without completing the new submission forms linked to below.

[Petition for Reconsideration form](#)
[Petition for Review form](#)

An adverse decision may occur at any one of a number of required steps in the AVMA ECFVG certification program. The described appeal steps below apply only to those decisions that are made by the ECFVG. Adverse decisions by the ECFVG may include, but are not necessarily limited to: (i) determination that proof of graduation is not adequate; (ii) determination that a candidate did not abide by rules of procedure during the examination; (iii) determination that any examination score is inadequate; (iv) determination regarding testing accommodation and (v) dismissal of candidate from the program.

In the event of an adverse decision by the ECFVG, the ECFVG shall advise the affected person, in writing, of the grounds therefore and of the procedure for appeal. An affected person may appeal the Commission's adverse decision on the following grounds only—that the ECFVG has ruled erroneously by: (i) disregarding the established AVMA criteria for certification of ECFVG candidates; (ii) failing to follow its stated procedures; or (iii) failing to consider relevant evidence and documentation presented. Appeals may only be submitted and processed through the ECFVG. Any attempt to appeal or lobby through other AVMA avenues will be considered void and shall not extend the time in which to file an appeal.

If an ECFVG candidate applies to retake a failed examination while an appeal is pending, any examination fees paid will not be refunded, even if the appeal is successful and the candidate does not retake the examination. If a candidate files an appeal regarding a failed section(s) of the Clinical Proficiency Examination (CPE; ECFVG Step 4) and the appeal is unsuccessful, the time during which the appeal was pending will not count against the prescribed period in which the candidate must pass failed sections of the CPE.

An affected person desiring to appeal the Commission's adverse decision must first file a [PETITION FOR RECONSIDERATION](#) as outlined in paragraph 1 below.

1. ***Petition for reconsideration***—An affected person may petition the ECFVG to reconsider its decision by filing with the ECFVG a complete and adequate written petition for reconsideration which shall include a statement of the grounds for reconsideration and documentation, if any, in support of the petition in accordance with the following requirements:
 - a. Candidates wishing to file a petition for reconsideration of an adverse outcome related to the Clinical Proficiency Examination (CPE) must first request & receive an extended score report for the candidate's performance on that examination. An extended score report must be requested within 14 days of the notification of the adverse decision. The petition for reconsideration of the CPE adverse decision must then be received in the AVMA ECFVG office within 21 days after the date that the extended score report was sent. Petitions submitted without a request for an extended score report within 14 days of the notification of the CPE decision will not be considered by the ECFVG. All other petitions for reconsideration must be received in the AVMA ECFVG office within 30 days of the postmark date on which the ECFVG announced its adverse decision ([Petition for Reconsideration form](#)). Petitions may be submitted to the AVMA ECFVG office as follows: via US or Express Mail to 1931 N. Meacham Rd, Suite 100, Schaumburg, IL, 60173-4360, USA; via E-mail to ECFVG@avma.org; or via fax 847-285-5732.

- b. The petition for reconsideration will be immediately forwarded to the ECFVG Appeals Subcommittee, which has the authority to decide whether to affirm, modify, or reverse the adverse decision. Decisions of the ECFVG Appeals Subcommittee have the same force and effect as decisions made by the full ECFVG.
 - c. Within 35 business days of receiving the petition for reconsideration, the ECFVG Appeals Subcommittee must reach a decision as to whether to affirm, modify, or reverse the adverse decision.
 - d. The ECFVG reserves the right to seek additional information during review of a petition for reconsideration from:
 - i. The initial source of the adverse action (eg, test administrators)
 - ii. The candidate
 - iii. Other outside experts
 - e. The affected person may, at the sole discretion of the ECFVG or ECFVG Appeals Subcommittee, be invited to participate in any meeting and/or teleconference at which the ECFVG or ECFVG Appeals Subcommittee decides whether to affirm, modify, or reverse the adverse decision.
 - f. The ECFVG shall notify the affected person in writing via E-mail and/org certified mail (return receipt requested) or other traceable delivery method (eg, FedEx or UPS) of its decision to affirm, modify, or reverse its adverse decision.
 - g. In the event that the affected person is not satisfied with the ECFVG decision regarding his or her petition for reconsideration, the affected person may appeal the decision further by submitting a **PETITION FOR REVIEW** as outlined in paragraph 2 below.
2. ***Petition for Review***—The affected person may petition for a review of the ECFVG's adverse decision and subsequent determination on his or her petition for reconsideration by first submitting written notification of intent to file a written petition for review (see paragraph 2a below) followed by submitting a full and adequate written petition for review (see paragraph 2b below) in accordance with the following requirements:
- a. *Written Notification:* The affected person shall notify the ECFVG in writing that he or she intends to file a petition for review. Such written notification must be received in the AVMA ECFVG (via US or Express Mail to 1931 N. Meacham Rd, Suite 100, Schaumburg, IL, 60173-4360, USA; via E-mail to ECFVG@avma.org; or via fax 847-285-5732), within 15 days after the postmark date (or date of the E-mail) of the ECFVG's notification letter to the affected person regarding its reconsideration decision.
 - b. *Written Petition for Review:* The affected person must then file a complete and adequate written petition for review of the ECFVG's adverse decision, which shall include: (i) a statement of the grounds for review; (ii) documentation, if any, in support of the petition; and (iii) a request for a hearing and all applicable fees (refer to paragraph 2e below regarding hearing costs and procedures) if a hearing is desired by the affected person ([Petition for Review form](#)). Such written petition for review and any applicable fees must be received in the AVMA ECFVG office (via US or Express Mail, E-mail or fax to the addresses/numbers noted in paragraph 2a above) no later than 45 days after the postmark date (or date of the

E-mail) of the ECFVG's notification letter to the affected person regarding its reconsideration decision. The ECFVG office shall promptly forward the petition for review to the Chair of the AVMA Council on Education ("COE Chair"), who shall, within 12 business days of receipt, determine, in his or her sole discretion, whether the petition for review is adequate under these procedures. If the petition for review is adequate, the petitioner shall be so notified. If the petition for review is deficient for any reason, the COE Chair will notify the petitioner of the deficiencies, and the petitioner shall have 15 days in which to correct those deficiencies. If the deficiencies are not corrected within 15 days as determined by the COE Chair in his or her sole discretion, the adverse decision will be considered final and no further appeal is available.

- c. *ECFVG's Response:* The COE Chair shall forward to the ECFVG a copy of the complete and adequate petition for review. The ECFVG may file a written response to the petition for review with the COE Chair within 25 business days of receipt. This response may include a statement of the basis for the adverse decision, documentation, if any, in support of the adverse decision; and a request for a hearing, if a hearing is desired by the ECFVG (refer to paragraph 2e below regarding hearing costs and procedures).
- d. *Review Panel:* Within 25 business days after receiving a complete and adequate written petition for review, the Chair of the AVMA Council on Education shall appoint a Review Panel composed of three members of the AVMA Council on Education ("COE"), none of whom shall be, or have been within the past six (6) years, members of the ECFVG or have any other conflict of interest. The COE Chair shall designate the Chair of the Review Panel from among the three persons chosen to sit on the Review Panel.
- e. *Optional Hearing:* If the petition for review contains a request for a hearing, or if the ECFVG requests a hearing, and if appropriate fees are submitted, the Review Panel shall hold a hearing at a mutually convenient time and place within 60 days after receiving the complete and adequate written petition for review. The hearing shall comprise the affected person, the three members of the Review Panel, and the Chair of the ECFVG or his or her designee. If the Chair of the Review Panel so requests, the AVMA staff consultant to the ECFVG and/or legal counsel for the Review Panel may also attend the hearing to provide guidance on procedural issues. If a mutually convenient location cannot be agreed upon by the parties, the Chair of the Review Panel shall determine the location of the hearing in his or her sole discretion. The hearing will proceed according to the following procedures:
 - i. AVMA staff to the ECFVG will schedule and organize the hearing and provide reasonable notice (no less than 10 business days) of the time and place of the hearing to the Review Panel, the affected person, and the Chair of the ECFVG by certified mail (return receipt requested) or other traceable delivery method (eg, FedEx or UPS).
 - ii. The procedures and conduct of the hearing will be determined by the Chair of the Review Panel, in his or her sole discretion, including but not limited to the admission and order of presentation of evidence and/or testimony, the length of testimony and/or cross-examination, and the length of any argumentation and opening or closing remarks.

- iii. Subject to clause 2e(ii) above, the affected person and the Chair of the ECFVG shall, at the hearing, have the right to present witnesses and to submit any evidence pertinent to the case not previously submitted. However, all new evidence to be presented shall be in written form and distributed to the Review Panel and other participants for receipt at least five (5) business days prior to the hearing.
- iv. Neither the ECFVG nor the affected person shall be represented by legal counsel at the hearing. The Review Panel may, at the request of the Review Panel Chair, have legal counsel present to advise it in matters of procedure.
- v. At the discretion of the Review Panel Chair or upon the advance written request of either the affected person or ECFVG, a transcript of the hearing shall be made. The cost of such transcript shall be borne by the party requesting it.
- vi. Reasonable expenses for meeting arrangements in accordance with AVMA travel policy, including but not limited to travel, meals, and lodging for the Review Panel and other participants, shall be borne by the party requesting the hearing. The party requesting the hearing shall pay a deposit of \$5,000.00 (US) to cover expenses associated with the hearing. The \$5,000.00 deposit must be in the form of a cashier's check or money order only, made payable to the AVMA, and must be submitted, via certified mail (return receipt requested) or other traceable delivery method (eg, FedEx or UPS), at the same time the written petition for review and request for a hearing are submitted. Following the hearing, any additional expenses exceeding the \$5,000 deposit shall be paid by the party who requested the hearing within 30 days of receipt of an invoice from the AVMA. Any surplus of the deposit shall be returned within 30 days of the hearing date to the party who requested the hearing.
- f. *Review Panel Recommendations:* After review and consideration of the ECFVG's adverse decision, the affected person's petition for review, and the relevant evidence presented at the hearing, if any, the Review Panel shall within 12 business days of the close of the hearing, or in the event no hearing is requested within 25 business days after receipt of the affected person's complete and adequate written petition for review, issue a written report of recommendations, which may include affirming, modifying, or reversing the ECFVG's adverse decision, and the reasons therefore. The Review Panel shall provide copies of its written report via E-mail and/or certified mail (return receipt requested) or other traceable delivery method (eg, FedEx or UPS) to the Chair of the ECFVG, the affected person, and the COE Chair. In the event that the Review Panel recommends reversal of or modifications to the ECFVG's adverse decision, the ECFVG shall accord substantial deference to the Review Panel's recommendations in deciding whether to reverse or modify its adverse decision.
- g. *ECFVG Written Opinion:* Within 25 business days of receipt of the Review Panel's report, the ECFVG shall issue a written opinion stating, to the extent applicable: (i) whether and to what extent it shall abide by the Review Panel's recommendation(s); (ii) how its opinion accords substantial deference to the

Review Panel's recommendation(s); and (iii) the bases of its opinion. The ECFVG shall provide copies of its opinion to the Review Panel and to the affected person via E-mail and/or certified mail (return receipt requested) or other traceable delivery method (eg, FedEx or UPS).

3. **Rehearing**—If a hearing was held in connection with a petition for review, the affected person or the ECFVG may file a written petition for rehearing no later than 30 days after the postmark date of the written opinion of the ECFVG. Such written petition for rehearing may be filed only on the basis of new evidence that could not, with reasonable diligence, have been discovered and produced at the original hearing. The decision to grant a petition for rehearing is made by the Chair of the Review Panel, in his or her sole discretion, and his or her decision is final. The procedure for a rehearing shall be the same as that described in paragraph 2e above. No more than one petition for rehearing may be filed by any party in a case. If the ECFVG files a petition for rehearing, it shall also provide a copy of its petition for rehearing to the affected person. If a hearing was not requested by either party at the time the petition for review was initially submitted, neither the affected person nor the ECFVG can request a rehearing.

RELEASE OF INFORMATION/CHANGE OF CONTACT INFORMATION

Release of information concerning ECFVG candidate's certificate status cannot be implemented without the direct written consent of the candidate. The written consent may take the form of a letter to the ECFVG Coordinator, fax (847-285-5732), or by E-mail at ECFVG@avma.org.

The candidate should indicate in his/her request the exact contact information to be changed or the program status information to be released to a third party (include name and address of whom the release should be sent to).

Requests or consent for release of verification to state boards or other interested parties of ECFVG candidate enrollment, status, or certification must be made in writing 2 weeks prior to any deadline. The ECFVG cannot be held responsible for last minute requests or letters of verification that have been lost in the mail. Verification requests made by telephone will not be honored.

Documents submitted as part of the application process become the property of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) and will not be returned or released to third parties. Documents will be retained for a maximum period of 10 years after successful completion of the ECFVG program.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1- ECFVG Certification of Graduation Form (read only)

EDUCATIONAL COMMISSION FOR FOREIGN VETERINARY GRADUATES
AMERICAN VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
1931 NORTH MEACHAM ROAD, SUITE 100
SCHAUMBURG, ILLINOIS 60173-4360

SAMLE CERTIFICATION OF GRADUCATION



ECFVG # 111111

It is hereby certified that _____
(name of candidate)

attended the school of veterinary medicine at _____
(name of university)

from _____ to _____
(entering date) (date of graduation)

and *received* a diploma from this institution conferring on him/her the degree of
(Degree Earned) _____

(SEAL or STAMP)

DEAN

DATE _____