

Certificates and Diplomas

RCVS awards a broad range of postgraduate Certificate and Diploma qualifications, which can be achieved by veterinary graduates on a 'self-study' basis. The Certificate is the first level of postgraduate qualification. To enrol, you need to have been qualified for at least two years, and be working on a day-to-day basis in an appropriate veterinary practice or in an approved centre.

The Diploma is the second level qualification, and indicates that the holder has achieved a high standard of academic and professional expertise as proven by examination in the specialist subject. Diplomates who are available for referrals may apply for inclusion on the List of RCVS Recognised Specialists. Candidates should normally have first achieved the related Certificate qualification before enrolling for a Diploma.

Application process

The application process consists of three stages. Fees are payable at stages 1 and 3. Details of current fee rates are available separately.

1 Enrolment:

The closing date for initial enrolments is 1 November each year. You can be enrolled for up to 5 years for a Certificate, and 7 years for a Diploma.

2 Experience:

When you have built up enough experience in the subject area, you must then apply for 'final approval of experience', and submit your CPD record cards and evidence of your experience by 1 November in the year before you intend to take the examination.

3 Examination:

Finally, when you are ready to take the examination, you must submit your exam entry by 1 March for the exam year in question. The examination is in three parts:

Submitted work: This normally consists of either case reports, or dissertations/published papers. It must be submitted to RCVS by 1 March (for Diplomas) or by 1 April (for Certificates).

Written Examinations: These are usually held in July or August in London.

Clinical/Oral/Practical Examinations: These are usually held during September or October. The location varies depending on the subject area.

Subjects available at both Certificate & Diploma level unless otherwise specified

Animal Welfare Science, Ethics & Law

Cattle Health and Production

Equine Practice (Certificate level only)

Equine Medicine (at Certificate level with electives in either Internal or Stud Medicine)

Equine Internal Medicine (Diploma level only)

Equine Stud Medicine (Diploma level only)

Equine Surgery (at Certificate level with electives in either Soft Tissue or Orthopaedics)

Equine Orthopaedics (Diploma only)

Equine Soft Tissue Surgery (Diploma only)

Fish Health and Production

Laboratory Animal Science

Pig Medicine

Poultry Medicine and Production

Sheep Health and Production

Small Animal Medicine (Certificate only)

Small Animal Medicine (Feline) (Diploma only)

Small Animal Surgery (Certificate only)

Small Animal Surgery (Orthopaedics) (Diploma only)

Small Animal Surgery (Soft Tissue) (Diploma only)

State Veterinary Medicine

Veterinary Anaesthesia

Veterinary Cardiology

Veterinary Dermatology

Veterinary Ophthalmology

Veterinary Public Health (Meat Hygiene)

Veterinary Radiology

Veterinary Reproduction

Zoological Medicine

RCVS Fellowship (FRCVS)

There are two routes available to members of the RCVS who wish to apply for the Diploma of Fellowship (FRCVS), namely by submission and examination of a thesis or, for those who have been members of RCVS for at least 20 years, by 'meritorious contributions to learning (MCL)'. In either case, the Fellowship represents a high level of achievement, and the holder will have made original and significant advances in knowledge in the subject area concerned.

Unlike Certificates and Diplomas, where candidates work to a pre-defined syllabus, the subject of a Fellowship thesis may relate to any aspect of the art or science of veterinary medicine, whether clinical, experimental or otherwise, or it may relate to the general development of the veterinary profession. Applicants for the Fellowship under the 'MCL' route submit copies of their published work, which must consist of their own observations and research. Such work will have contributed to the understanding of one or more subjects of veterinary relevance. For both routes, the applicant's work is submitted to a team of examiners and there may also be an oral examination.

Application Process

Applicants for the Fellowship by thesis must first apply for provisional registration which is valid for up to three years. This must then be converted to full registration, which is valid for a further four years. Applicants therefore have a maximum of seven years, from provisional registration, during which time they can prepare and submit their thesis for examination. Applicants for Fellowship by MCL should contact the Education Department for further information on the application process.

Further information on Fellowships can also be found on the RCVS website.

RCVS List of Recognised Specialists

To be included on the RCVS List of Recognised Specialists, applicants must hold a relevant RCVS Diploma, or other high level postgraduate qualification such as the Fellowship, or a Diploma from one of the European or American specialist colleges or the Australian Fellowship. Applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have maintained a high level of competence in their specialist field. They must produce evidence of how they have kept up to date with their specialism, and provide information about their contribution to the specialism, such as information about their clinical case work and publications. They must be currently active in the specialism and be available for consultations and referrals by other veterinary surgeons.

Recognition as a Specialist is valid for up to five years, after which time Specialists must re-apply for consideration. The list of RCVS Recognised Specialists is printed in the *RCVS Register of Members*, and also on the RCVS website.

Application Process

The closing date for applications for inclusion on the list is normally in September each year. Applicants must complete an application form and provide evidence of how they meet the various criteria for acceptance. Successful applicants will be included in the following year's published list.

A full information pack, together with application form, is available on the RCVS website.

Member of the RCVS (MRCVS)

The holder will have met the criteria for RCVS membership:

- by possessing a degree from a university approved by the RCVS, or
- by having qualified as a veterinary surgeon elsewhere and also having passed the MRCVS examination

Fellow of the RCVS (FRCVS)

'Fellow' is the senior category of membership of the RCVS for members who have demonstrated significant original contribution to their subject

RCVS Recognised Specialist

To be listed as a RCVS Recognised Specialist the veterinary surgeon must:

- hold a high level qualification such as the RCVS Diploma, or other high level postgraduate qualification
- keep up to date and contribute to the advancement of the specialism
- be available for referrals

Recognition is renewable every 5 years

RCVS Certificate e.g. CertSAM, CertVA, CertEP

A certificate is the first level postgraduate qualification awarded by the RCVS. A holder:

- is a competent clinician who has expertise in the subject proven by examination
- has had at least 2 years experience working in the subject area

RCVS Diploma e.g. DEO, DSAM, DVA

The Diploma holder has:

- a high level of expertise in the specialist area
- passed an examination
- normally has at least 5 years experience working in the specialist area

RCVS Postgraduate Qualifications

Certificates
Diplomas
Fellowship

Specialist Recognition