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Approved by Council on 31 October 2002

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The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons

The Diploma of Fellowship Byelaws


The Council of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons in exercise of their powers under articles 18 and 19 of the Supplemental Royal Charter granted on the 19th day of October 1967, hereby make the following byelaws-

General

1 These byelaws may be cited as the Diploma of Fellowship byelaws.

2.1 In these byelaws, unless the context otherwise requires -

“the Act” means the Veterinary Surgeons Act, 1966;
“the Board” means the Fellowship Board;
“the Charter” means the Supplemental Royal Charter granted on the 19th day of October 1967;
“College” means the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons;
“Council” means the Council of the College;
“Diploma” means the Diploma of Fellowship awarded by the College;
“Entry” in relation to an examination shall include an application to re-sit the examination;
“Committee” means the Specialisation and Further Education Committee of Council;
“Register” means the Register of Veterinary Surgeons in
terms of section 2 of the Act;  

“Registrable qualification” means a qualification entitling a person to be registered in the Register under section 6(3) of the Act;

2.2 The Interpretation Act 1978 shall apply to the interpretation of these byelaws as it applies to the interpretation of an Act of Parliament.

3 The Diploma of Fellowship may be awarded to–

(a) any member of the College who shall have submitted, in accordance with the provisions of byelaw 9 of these byelaws, a thesis resolved by Council to be worthy of the award of the Diploma;

(b) any member of the College who shall have submitted published work, in accordance with the provisions of byelaw 10 of these byelaws, as evidence of meritorious contributions to learning which Council resolve to be worthy of the award of the Diploma; or

(c) any member of the College possessed of a registrable qualification for a period of twenty years and who has been elected to receive the Diploma in accordance with the provisions of byelaw 8 of these byelaws.

4.1 Every Diploma awarded in terms of paragraph (a) or (b) of byelaw 3 of these byelaws shall be signed by the President, and the Registrar and shall state –

This is to certify that ……. has fulfilled the necessary requirements and has been awarded the Diploma of Fellowship by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. By Order of the Council.

4.2 Every Diploma awarded in terms of paragraph (c) of byelaw 3 of these byelaws shall bear the Seal of the College and shall state –

Whereas the Council of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons has power under Royal Charter and by byelaw to elect in any one year not more than three Members to be Honorary Fellows of the
said Royal College on account of their special eminence in and services to Veterinary Science. Know all men by these Presents that the Council of the said Royal College has this day duly elected in recognition of eminence in and services to Veterinary Science to be an Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. By Order of the Council.

4.3 Every holder of the Diploma awarded in terms of paragraph (a) or 3(b) of byelaw 3 of these byelaws may signify the fact by the assumption of the letters FRCVS. Membership of the College must be maintained in order to use the letters FRCVS.

Letters signifying award (by thesis and MCL)

4.4 Every holder of the Diploma awarded in terms of paragraph (c) of byelaw 3 of these byelaws may signify the fact by the assumption of the letters Hon.FRCVS.

Letters signifying award (by election)

4.5 The Registrar shall maintain a list in which shall be recorded the names of the holders of the Diplomas in the order in which the Diploma was awarded to them.

List of holders of the Diploma

5 The identity of candidates seeking the award of the Diploma by thesis or for meritorious contributions to learning shall be known only to the Officers of the College, the examiners, the adviser, where one is appointed, and the Fellowship Board. Where, however, the Board has resolved to recommend to the Specialisation and Further Education Committee and thence to Council that the Diploma should be awarded to any candidate, the recommendation shall be made by name. Anonymity for unsuccessful candidates will be maintained.

Anonymity

6 There shall be paid to the examiners appointed under the provisions of these byelaws, such fees as Council may from time to time determine. The College will also pay any expenses necessarily incurred by the examiners mentioned above, in the course of their official duties.

Fees for Examiners etc

7.1 Any representations which candidates may desire to make with regard to the conduct of an examination must be addressed to the Registrar and not, in any circumstances, to any examiner.

Representation to the Registrar

7.2 The conduct of an examination is subject to the Examinations Appeals Rules of the College.

Appeals Procedure
Fellowship by Election

8.1 The election of a member to be an Honorary Fellow of the College and receive the Diploma in terms of paragraph (c) of byelaw 3 of these byelaws shall take place only after the name of the member proposed to be elected has been submitted to and considered by, the Nominations Committee of the Council, has been approved by that Committee, and has subsequently received the approval of at least two-thirds of the Members of Council present at the meeting of Council at which the election is proposed.

8.2 In considering any proposal that a member should be elected an Honorary Fellow of the College, the Council and Nominations Committee shall be guided by the principle that such election should take place only on the grounds of special eminence of and services to the cause of Veterinary Science by the member concerned.

8.3 No more than three members may be elected Honorary Fellows in any one year.

Fellowship by Thesis

9.1 Any candidate who seeks the award of the Diploma by submission of a thesis shall be required to –

(a) apply for registration as a provisional candidate and to be a member of the College at the time of application; and

(b) pay, at the time of the application, such registration fee as may from time to time be determined by the Council; and

(c) submit, with the application, details of the proposed course of study, and the proposed title of the thesis. The candidate may also offer suggestions as to the name(s) of a suitable adviser(s); and

(d) submit with the application a declaration that the work presented in the thesis has not or will not be submitted in substance for any other degree or comparable qualification.
9.2 Registration as a provisional candidate shall not be effective until the Fellowship Board has approved the proposed course of study and the title of the thesis. The period for which a candidate may remain registered as a provisional candidate shall not exceed three years unless for good and sufficient reasons the Fellowship Board shall grant an extension of the period. At the end of this period, subject to any extension which the Board may have granted, any candidate who has not sought and obtained registration as a full Fellowship candidate shall be deemed no longer to be a candidate for the Diploma.

9.3 The Fellowship Board will, in consultation with the candidate, appoint an adviser who will assist the candidate in the planning of the study and advise on the preparation of the thesis.

9.4 Subject to the provisions of paragraph 1 of this byelaw, a candidate shall seek registration as a full Fellowship candidate not later than three years after the date of registration as a provisional candidate. The application shall be considered by the Fellowship Board which will make a recommendation to the Specialisation and Further Education Committee in the light of a report on the progress of the study, made by the candidate’s adviser, and by the candidate himself.

9.5 Any candidate who –

(a) has been registered as a full Fellowship candidate and;

(b) is a member of the College and either has been admitted to membership for at least five years, or has held a registrable qualification for a similar period may submit the thesis for examination at any time thereafter but that any candidate who has not presented his/her thesis within seven years of the date of provisional registration shall be deemed to have withdrawn.

9.6 To justify the award of the Diploma, a thesis submitted for examination in terms of this byelaw must –

(a) demonstrate originality, significantly advance knowledge of the subject and show a level of
accomplishment comparable with a higher degree awarded after the equivalent of 3 years full time postgraduate research study by a university in the United Kingdom; and

(b) consist to a major extent of the candidate’s own observations and research. The range of subjects may include any aspect of the art or science of veterinary medicine, whether clinical, experimental or otherwise, or may relate to the general development of the veterinary profession. It may not consist of previously published papers. However work in progress at the time of, and/or published during the time of provisional registration may form a part of the thesis. A subject for thesis will not ordinarily be accepted if a similar topic has been used or is to be used as a past, present or future basis for submission for any other degree or comparable qualification; and

(d) indicate clearly by appropriate acknowledgements any work which has been undertaken with other workers or carried out by supporting staff; and

(e) be written in English; and

(f) conform to a satisfactory standard in its literary presentation; and

(g) be presented in such a form that the care with which it has been prepared and illustrated is in itself evidence of the candidate’s capabilities and will receive consideration as such; and

(h) be no longer than 30,000 words of text. Where appropriate raw data may be included as appendices which are not included in the word limit.

9.7 Every application for examination of a thesis shall be made on the appropriate form to be obtained from the Registrar and shall be accompanied by –

(a) such examination fee as Council may from time to time determine and;

(b) a declaration, which may be embodied in the
application form in the following terms – “I hereby declare that the thesis herewith submitted is the result mainly of my own original observations or research and I have not been awarded a degree or diploma by any university or other body in respect of the major part of the work incorporated into this thesis”, and

(c) two copies of the thesis in such form as may be prescribed by Council.

9.8 The Fellowship Board shall appoint two examiners in respect of each thesis submitted for examination. The two examiners shall examine the thesis in accordance with the Board’s general directive for the guidance of examiners.

9.9 Unless the examiners are agreed that –

(a) they shall recommend to the Fellowship Board that a thesis be rejected without further test, or that

(b) the thesis is of such special merit that it need not be further examined by oral, written or practical tests,

they shall examine the candidate orally and/or at their discretion, by written questions or practical tests on the subject of the thesis and on related fields of knowledge.

9.10 If a thesis is considered to be inadequate the examiners may, after oral examination, recommend that –

(a) further research, experimental work or assessment of the relevant information and a new version, based upon the original, be submitted not earlier than one nor later than three years from the date of notification from the College of the result of the first examination; or

(b) certain specified sections of the thesis should be rewritten and/or the general presentation improved and a new version based upon the original may be submitted not later than one year from the date of notification from the College of the result of the first examination.

(c) In respect of both these recommendations:
(i) the candidate shall be allowed one such resubmission only, and

(ii) Paragraph (6) of this byelaw shall apply to any such fresh submission as though this were the first submission of a thesis and the full examination fee be paid.

9.11 The examiners should prepare individual reports and then consult with each other before they submit their reports and a joint recommendation to the Fellowship Board. Every such report shall include a firm recommendation that the Diploma either be awarded or not awarded. The Specialisation and Further Education Committee shall recommend to Council in the light of recommendations from the Fellowship Board whether the Diploma should be awarded or not. The examiners shall indicate to the Fellowship Board which parts of their reports shall be transmitted to the candidate and which parts shall remain confidential to the Board.

9.12 Should Council resolve that the Diploma be awarded, the successful candidate will be required to submit two copies of the thesis in a suitable form for placing in the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Library and Information Service.

Fellowship by Meritorious Contributions to Learning

10.1 Applicants for the award of the Diploma as the result of their meritorious contributions to learning will not normally be considered unless they have been members for a period of at least twenty years, or are members who have held a registrable qualification for a period of twenty years.

10.2 Any candidate who seeks the award of the Diploma by Meritorious Contributions to Learning shall be required to make a preliminary submission of –

(a) a curriculum vitae;

(b) a list of works published in journals and of books or contributions to books which are available, and able to be purchased, which it is intended to submit for examination;
(c) a summary of the work carried out; and
(d) such fee as the Council may from time to time determine.

10.3 The work that the candidate wishes to submit for examination must consist to a major extent of the candidate's own observations and research that have contributed to the understanding of one or more subjects of veterinary relevance. Unrefereed papers or publications will not normally be acceptable.

10.4 The preliminary submission shall be considered by the Fellowship Board. Subject to approval given the candidate may submit for examination two sets of:

(a) an introduction to the theme(s) of the work of not more than 2,000 words and a summary and conclusions related to the theme(s) of the research; and
(b) copies of work published in journals and books or contributions to books which are available and able to be published.

10.5 The work submitted for examination must be accompanied by –

(a) a clear indication of any of the work that has been undertaken with other workers or carried out by supporting staff;
(b) such examination fee as Council may from time to time determine.

10.6 When the application is received, the Fellowship Board shall appoint two examiners in respect of each submission for examination. The two examiners shall examine the published work in accordance with the Board’s general directive for the guidance of examiners.

10.7 Unless the examiners are agreed that –

(a) they shall recommend to the Fellowship Board that the published work be rejected without further test, or that
(b) the published work is of such special merit that it need not be further examined by oral, written or practical tests,

they shall examine the candidates orally and/or at their discretion, by written questions or practical tests on the subject of the published work and on related fields of knowledge.

10.8 The examiners should prepare individual reports and then consult with each other before they submit their reports and a joint recommendation to the Fellowship Board. Every such report shall include a firm recommendation that the Diploma either be awarded or be not awarded. The Specialisation and Further Education Committee shall recommend to Council in the light of recommendations from the Fellowship Board whether the Diploma should be awarded or not. The examiners shall indicate to the Fellowship Board which parts of their reports shall be transmitted to the candidate and which parts shall remain confidential to the Board.

10.9 Should Council resolve that the Diploma be awarded, the successful candidate will be required to submit two copies of the published work or two copies of such portions, as the Fellowship Board may require, in a suitable form for placing in the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Library and Information Service.