

## **Royal College of Pathologists**

### **Examination regulations - 2010**

#### **VETERINARY PATHOLOGY – Old examination format**

There are currently two veterinary examinations. The first is veterinary anatomic pathology, which is concerned with morbid anatomy and histopathology. The second is veterinary clinical pathology, which covers the disciplines of clinical biochemistry, haematology and cytology.

**The structure of the Veterinary Pathology examination has changed. These regulations only apply to candidates who have passed either the complete FRCPATH Part 1 examination or the FRCPATH Part 1 written examination before January 2009.**

These regulations must be read in conjunction with the *Regulations and Guidelines – College examinations for Membership and Diplomas*.

#### **ENTRY REQUIREMENTS**

Candidates who have attempted but not passed the old format Part 1 written examination must sit the new format Part 1 examination.

Candidates who passed the old format Part 1 written examination can sit the old format Part 1 practical examination.

Candidates who have successfully passed the entire old format Part 1 written and practical examinations must complete the old format Part 2 examination when eligible.

Candidates will usually sit the Part 2 examination after two further years' training following passing old format Part 1 written and practical examinations.

#### **STRUCTURE AND FORMAT OF THE EXAMINATION**

##### **Part 1 – Practical/Oral examination**

The Part 1 practical/oral examination is a two day examination. It comprises the study and analysis of specimens appropriate to the species group chosen and the writing of critical informative commentaries and reports. The examination involves the conduct of a post-mortem examination, the study and analysis of appropriate fresh, fixed or photographic materials and histological specimens and typically will include the following:

- a) **Necropsy:** at least one per candidate related to the species group of the candidate's choice. A short oral examination on the necropsy is conducted and candidates prepare a written report on the findings.
- b) **Gross specimens:** morbid anatomical specimens may be fresh or fixed, photographs or radiographs.
- c) **Case pathology:** this is normally an archival case or cases. Candidates are presented with a clinical history, a written post-mortem report (which may be supplemented with gross specimens and/or photographs) and a selection of histological slides. They are asked to prepare a description of the findings and an interpretive report.
- d) **Histopathology:** normally a maximum of 20 spots, which may include one haematology, one cytopathology and one electron micrograph.
- e) Oral examination: lasting 30 to 60 minutes.

## Part 2

The Part 2 examination comprises either a combined practical and oral examination or an oral examination following the award of a pass with respect to one of the following written options:

- a dissertation
- a doctorate thesis (DVM, PhD or equivalent)
- a collection of refereed published papers
- a casebook of five cases in the chosen species group.

For further guidance on the written options, please see the section on 'Guidance for candidates undertaking written options for the Part 2 examination' in the *Regulations and Guidelines – College examinations for Membership and Diplomas*.

### Combined practical and oral examination

The practical examination is a test of practical competence including data interpretation, normally in the species group chosen for the Part 1 examination, at a higher level than the Part 1 examination. It is designed to test the ability of candidates to deal with situations/cases likely to be met during the routine work of a consultant pathologist. Candidates must be able to show that they know how to approach unusual cases as well as those that are encountered routinely. A successful candidate should be capable of training and supervising junior colleagues in the chosen area and should be able to provide expert advice on problems arising in animal pathology of the chosen species group. Candidates will be expected to be familiar with the principles of laboratory management, budgetary control, audit, health and safety at work, quality assurance, training and continuing professional development. The examination will normally be completed within one working day and the format will be as follows.

**A first session of 3 hours:** a series of spots of not more than 25 cases. These will cover a broad range of the pathology of the species group chosen by the candidate. The series will include a large proportion of histopathology slides and may include special stains and use of the techniques of molecular pathology. Electron micrographs, cytology preparations, photographs of lesions and gross specimens may be included.

**A second session of 2 hours:** an evaluative report which may include detailed clinical history, illustrations, relevant data (if arising from an experiment) and histopathology slides. The candidate will be required to evaluate the information and prepare a case report with discussion and comment.

**The oral examination** will normally follow the practical and last 30–60 minutes. It will assess the ability of the candidate to discuss problem cases, to pinpoint salient features of differential diagnosis, to discuss inter-species extrapolation and to evaluate the relative importance of lesions in the appropriate clinical, toxicological or epidemiological context. The oral examination will cover topical issues in the chosen field and candidates will be expected to show familiarity with current scientific advances. A sound knowledge of lesions and associated clinical pathology is expected.

### **Written option and oral examination**

The completed written option must be submitted to the College **at least four months before the entry closing date of the Part 2 examination for which the candidate wishes to enter**. Candidates will not be allowed to sit the oral examination until the written option has been awarded a pass mark by the examiners

The oral examination is conducted by two examiners and lasts approximately one hour. Successful candidates must be able to demonstrate a level of competence appropriate for unsupervised practice at a consultant level, to provide expert advice and interpretation in veterinary pathology and to show familiarity with current scientific advances.

Candidates will be expected to be familiar with the principles of laboratory management, budgetary control, audit, health and safety at work, quality assurance, training and continuing professional development.

The oral examination may include questions related to the project work (i.e. one of the options listed in above) submitted as the other component of the Part 2 examination but this is not obligatory. Candidates are advised that the examiners involved in the oral examination may not have seen the submitted work and may, therefore, require the candidate to give a brief, verbal outline of its content.

### **TIMING OF THE EXAMINATIONS**

The Part 1 Practical examination will be offered once a year in Autumn.

The Part 2 Practical and oral examination will be offered once a year in Autumn.

Examinations Department  
The Royal College of Pathologists  
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