VETERINARY SCIENCE IN AUSTRALIA
Information for Overseas’ Qualified Veterinarians
November 2016
INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been prepared by the Australasian Veterinary Boards Council Inc for the information and guidance of overseas-trained veterinarians who are resident in Australia and for those interested in migrating to Australia. The AVBC regularly up-dates the information.

This booklet is intended as a guide only and is not legally binding on any of the bodies listed. The information in this booklet is believed to be accurate at the time of printing; however, requirements may change from time to time.

Australia has a federal system of government and is divided into six independently governed States and two Territories. As in most countries, the practice of a profession in Australia requires evidence of an appropriate level of education and practical experience.

Each State and Territory has separate legislation covering the recognition of veterinary qualifications. It is the law in Australia that if you wish to practice veterinary medicine you must be registered with the local State or Territory Veterinary Registration Board.

The steps that you will need to take to obtain registration as a Veterinarian in Australia are explained on page 3 in “Entry of Overseas Qualified Veterinarians into the Profession in Australia”.

The AVBC has been approved by the Minister for Immigration in accordance with the Migration Regulations 1994 as the assessing authority for the occupation Veterinarian (ANZSCO Code 234711).

If you wish to apply to migrate to Australia as a Veterinarian under the General Skilled Migration visa categories, you must apply to have your skills assessed by the AVBC prior to submitting your visa application. The AVBC will assess your skills as “suitable” or “not suitable” for your nominated occupation against the requirements it has established.

Your skills assessment must be included with your visa application to the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP). You should keep a certified copy of it for your own use.

Successfully migrating to Australia as a Veterinarian is no guarantee of employment in Australia as a Veterinarian. Requirements additional to those for migration may need to be met, and you will need to contact the relevant organisation for advice. Contact details are listed in this brochure.

The AVBC can only provide advice on applying for a skills assessment. All other questions relating to migration should be directed to DIBP - visit their website www.immi.gov.au for information and contact details both in Australia and overseas.
VETERINARY SCIENCE IN AUSTRALIA

Veterinary science is a well established profession in Australia. There are over 11,000 professional veterinarians in practice in Australia. About 70% of those are in private practice, caring for the companion animals of city people, the agricultural animals of farmers and racing greyhounds and horses. Others work for governments to control and prevent diseases, which could affect animals throughout the country. Some veterinarians are field officers and some work in laboratories with diagnostic or research duties. Others are in higher education as well as research and development in the chemical and pharmaceutical industries.

Since the 1990s there have been developments to:

- encourage the establishment of more and bigger private practices in the cities and towns to care for the larger population of companion and racing animals;
- stimulate the development of herd and flock health programs in rural areas by private practitioners;
- stimulate the development of specialisation in many aspects of veterinary science and the establishment of registers of specialists to advise general practitioners; and
- maintain and improve standards in the fields of veterinary public health and veterinary preventive medicine.

VETERINARY EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

Currently there are seven AVBC accredited veterinary schools in Australia and one in New Zealand. They are at the University of Melbourne (Victoria), University of Queensland (Gatton, Qld), University of Sydney (New South Wales), Charles Sturt University (Wagga Wagga, NSW), Murdoch University (Western Australia), James Cook University (Townsville, Qld), the University of Adelaide (South Australia) and Massey University in New Zealand. The seven Australian veterinary schools supply over 400 graduates each year.

The qualifications awarded by these schools satisfy the formal academic requirements for registration by all of the Australian and New Zealand veterinary registration boards. The contact details of the veterinary schools and registration boards are listed at the end of this booklet.

Current training in Australia and New Zealand emphasises preventive medicine, animal welfare and sophisticated diagnostic techniques such as ultrasonography, endoscopy and electro diagnostics.

ENTRY OF OVERSEAS QUALIFIED VETERINARIANS INTO THE PROFESSION IN AUSTRALIA

If you are an overseas-trained veterinarian, there are three ways in which you can enter the profession in Australia:

1. by immediate recognition of your overseas qualifications;
2. by completion of a primary veterinary degree at an Australian or New Zealand veterinary school; or
3. by successfully completing the National Veterinary Examination (NVE).
1. Qualifications immediately recognised for the purposes of registration in Australia

If you have -

• a primary qualification (BVSc or equivalent) obtained via an Australasian Veterinary Boards Council (AVBC) accredited veterinary school;

• a qualification from an American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) accredited veterinary school plus the NAVLE;

• a qualification from a Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) accredited veterinary school in the UK and South Africa;

OR

• you have membership of the RCVS by passing the RCVS examination;

• you have successfully completed the Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates (ECFVG) plus the NAVLE;

• you have successfully completed the American Association of Veterinary State Boards Assessment Veterinary Education Equivalence (PAVE) plus the NAVLE.

then you are eligible to apply for registration with an Australian veterinary registration board without further examination. For information about this, you should contact the veterinary registration board in the State or Territory in which you wish to practice.

If you wish to apply for a skills assessment from AVBC for migration purposes then you must first be registered with an Australian State or Territory registration board. Detailed information about applying for a skills assessment can be found on the AVBC website www.avbc.asn.au.

2. Qualifications not immediately acceptable for registration in Australia

If your qualifications are not acceptable for immediate registration, you can either apply to enrol at an Australian or New Zealand university where you may be granted credit for your overseas studies and complete the veterinary science course or you can apply to take the National Veterinary Examination.

3. National Veterinary Examination (NVE)

The NVE has been designed to assess, for registration purposes, the veterinary knowledge and clinical competences of overseas qualified veterinarians whose veterinary qualifications are not immediately acceptable for registration in Australia or New Zealand.

NATIONAL VETERINARY EXAMINATION (NVE) PROCEDURES

The examination consists of the following components:

• Eligibility Assessment – assessment of qualifications, English language proficiency and associated documents to determine eligibility to undertake the NVE.

• Preliminary Examination – a multiple-choice question (MCQ) examination.

• Final Examination – Clinical Examination.
ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT
You can take the NVE only if you have been formally assessed by AVBC as meeting the eligibility criteria to sit the examination. You need to:

- hold a degree or diploma awarded after at least four years of study at a veterinary school listed in the “World Veterinary Directory” or at a school which was part of a college or university listed in the “World List of Universities” or the AVMA-Listed Veterinary Colleges of the World; and
- be registered, licensed or eligible to be recognised as a veterinarian of good standing in the country in which you studied your undergraduate veterinary degree or first worked as a veterinarian; and
- hold a current pass to the required standard in either the OET, the IELTS (academic) or the TOEFL-iBT. Exemptions may apply if you are a native speaker of English, born and educated in the UK, Ireland, Canada, USA, Australia, New Zealand or South Africa.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT
A comprehensive knowledge of English is essential to the practice of veterinary science in Australia. If your first language is not English, ie you were not born and educated in an approved English speaking country, you will need at least a current B pass in each section of the Occupational English Test (OET), or a score of at least band 7 in each component of the academic version of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test or, in the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL-iBT), a score of at least 24 in Listening, 24 in Reading, 27 in Writing and 23 in Speaking to satisfy the AVBC requirement.

Should you fail to achieve the required standard, you must re-sit the entire English language test. The Board of Examiners does not permit re-sits of sub-sections of these examinations.

Occupational English Test (OET)
The OET is administered by the OET Centre and assesses reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. It is available both within Australia and overseas.

For more information please refer to the OET Centre website at www.occupationalenglishtest.org

International English Language Testing System (IELTS)
IELTS provides an assessment of whether candidates are ready to study or train in the medium of English. It is readily available at test centres around the world, which arrange test administration according to local demand.

Results are usually issued approximately two weeks after candidates have taken the test. Band scores are recorded on a test report form showing overall ability as well as performance in listening, reading, writing and speaking.

For more information please refer to the IELTS website at www.ielts.org

Test of English as a Foreign Language - internet-Based Test (TOEFL-iBT)
The TOEFL-iBT test is administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS); it is an internet-based test.

The test measures a candidates’ ability to use and understand English at the university level. The test measures reading, listening, speaking and writing skills. It is offered more than 50 times a year and is administered online at testing sites around the world.

For more information, please refer to the ETS/TOEFL website at www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/about
NVE PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION (MCQ) (computer-based delivery)

You must pass the Eligibility Assessment including the English language requirement in order to be eligible to sit the Preliminary Examination. The Preliminary Examination consists of two papers of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ). Paper 1 has 120 questions and Paper 2 has 100 questions. The questions are designed to test your general knowledge of veterinary science and clinical judgement. Further detail can be found in the Candidates’ Information Handbook which is available from the AVBC website www.avbc.asn.au. The handbook also contains sample questions.

NVE FINAL EXAMINATION (Clinical)

You must pass the NVE Preliminary Examination in order to be eligible to sit the Final (Clinical) Examination. The Final Examination is held over five days and is conducted in an Australian veterinary school. You will be examined at the same level as recent graduates from Australian universities. The format of the examination is described fully in the Candidates’ Information Handbook.

EXAMINATION VENUES AND TIMING

The NVE Preliminary Examination is held once a year, usually in April. It can be sat at a number of venues in Australia and at some overseas venues, including New Zealand. The closing date for applications is 8th February.

The Final Examination is held only in Australia during November or December each year. The closing date for applications is 1 September. If you live overseas you may apply for a temporary visa to come to Australia, at your own expense, to take this examination.

Late applications to sit any of the examinations described above will NOT be accepted.

FEES

For current fees for the Eligibility Assessment and the NVE Preliminary and Final Examinations, please contact the AVBC, or refer to the AVBC website.

Each fee allows only one attempt at the examination. Withdrawal from any examination will result in a cancellation fee being charged.

For current fees for the OET, the IELTS academic or TOEFL-iBT tests, please contact the OET Centre, IELTS or TOEFL-iBT.

NVE CERTIFICATE

If you successfully complete the NVE you will be issued with a Certificate. This entitles you to apply for registration with any Australian State, Territory or New Zealand Registration Board. The Certificate will be sent direct to you. You must present the Certificate to the registration board in the State or Territory in which you intend to practise or to the VCNZ if in New Zealand.

Once you are registered in Australia (or New Zealand) you will have the same rights and responsibilities as all other registered veterinarians in Australia (or New Zealand).

HOW TO APPLY

To obtain an application for a Skills Assessment or an application for an Assessment of Eligibility to Undertake the Professional Examinations in Veterinary Science you should consult the AVBC website www.avbc.asn.au or contact the AVBC:

Australasian Veterinary Boards Council Inc (AVBC)
Tel: +61 3 9620 7844
email : nve@avbc.asn.au

If you pass the Eligibility Assessment, you will be sent the application form for the NVE Preliminary Examination.
NEW ZEALAND CITIZENS

Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangements (TTMRA)

The Trans-Tasman Travel Arrangement allows Australian and New Zealand citizens to live and work in each other’s country without restrictions.

Under the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement (TTMRA), individuals registered or licensed to practice an occupation in New Zealand are entitled, upon application, to practise the equivalent occupation in any Australian State or Territory, and vice versa. For information on applying for registration under the provisions of the TTMRA, you should contact the registration board in the Australian State or Territory in which you intend to practise.

New Zealand citizens who wish to have their skills and qualifications assessed for the purpose of working in Australia should approach the AVBC or the registration boards directly.

OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

Australian residents can obtain information about English language learning programs in Australia from:

- Centrelink
- Local offices of the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP)
- Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) providers
- Technical and Further Education (TAFE) colleges
- Migration Resource Centres (MRC)
- IELTS
- OET
- TOEFL-IBT

PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATIONS

The Australian Veterinary Association and the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists are professional organisations which provide information on a variety of professional matters for veterinarians in Australia.

Membership of the Australian Veterinary Association is voluntary and is open to the majority of veterinarians.

Admission to the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists is also voluntary, but an entrance examination must be passed before admission is granted. Fellowships are also available for the College and are considered an important qualification for any veterinarian who wishes to register as a specialist.

Contact details for these organisations and for the New Zealand Veterinary Association are listed below.

**Australian Veterinary Association**

National Office
Unit 40, 6 Herbert Street
ST LEONARDS NSW 2065
AUSTRALIA
Tel: +61 2 9341 5000
email : members@ava.com.au
website : www.ava.com.au

**Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists (ANZCVS)**

Building 3, Garden City Office Park
2404 Logan Road
EIGHT MILE PLAINS QLD 4113
AUSTRALIA
Tel: +61 7 3423 2016
email : admin@anzcvs.org.au
website : www.anzcvs.org.au

**New Zealand Veterinary Association**

PO Box 11 212
WELLINGTON 6142
NEW ZEALAND
Tel: +64 4 471 0484
email : nzva@vets.org.nz
website : www.nzva.org.nz
AUSTRALIAN AND NEW
ZEALAND VETERINARY
REGISTRATION AUTHORITIES

New South Wales
Veterinary Practitioners Board of New South Wales
Tel: +61 2 8338 1177
email : admin@vpb.nsw.gov.au
website : www.vpb.nsw.gov.au

Victoria
Veterinary Practitioners Registration Board of Victoria
Tel: +61 3 9620 7444
email : RegistrarEO@vetboard.vic.gov.au
website : www.vetboard.vic.gov.au

Queensland
Veterinary Surgeons Board of Queensland
Tel: +61 7 3087 8777
email : vsbqld@daf.qld.gov.au
website : www.vsb.qld.gov.au

South Australia
Veterinary Surgeons Board of South Australia
Tel: +61 8 8359 3334
email : admin@vsbsa.org.au
website : www.vsbsa.org.au

Western Australia
Veterinary Surgeons Board of Western Australia
Tel: +61 8 9317 2353
email : admin@vsbwa.org.au
website : www.vsbwa.org.au

Tasmania
Veterinary Board of Tasmania
Tel: +61 3 6294 6961
email : vbt@netspace.net.au
website : www.dpiw.tas.gov.au

Australian Capital Territory
ACT Veterinary Surgeons Board
Tel: +61 2 6207 0012
email : tcsvetboard@act.gov.au
website : www.tcsvetboard.act.gov.au

Northern Territory
Veterinary Board of the Northern Territory
Tel: +61 8 8999 2028
email : vetboard@nt.gov.au
website : www.vetboard.nt.gov.au

New Zealand
Veterinary Council of New Zealand
Tel: +64 4 473 9600
email : vet@vetcouncil.org.nz
website : www.vetcouncil.org.nz

ACCREDITED VETERINARY SCHOOLS

Accreditation of veterinary schools is an integral part of quality assurance procedures for veterinary education. In Australia and New Zealand this system is managed by the Veterinary Schools Accreditation Advisory Committee (VSAAC) which reports to the AVBC.

Veterinary degrees which are currently accredited as a result of the VSAAC process in Australia and New Zealand are listed below.

The University of Melbourne (Vic)
Faculty of Veterinary and Agricultural Sciences
website : www.fvas.unimelb.edu.au

The University of Queensland (Qld)
School of Veterinary Science
website : www.veterinary-science.uq.edu.au

The University of Sydney (NSW)
Faculty of Veterinary Science
website : www.sydney.edu.au/vetscience/

Murdoch University (WA)
School of Veterinary and Life Sciences

Massey University (NZ)
Veterinary and Animal Sciences
website : www.massey.ac.nz

Charles Sturt University (NSW)
School of Animal & Veterinary Sciences
website : www.csu.edu.au/schools/animal-vet

James Cook University (Qld)
College of Public Health, Medical and Veterinary Sciences

The University of Adelaide (SA)
School of Animal and Veterinary Sciences
website : www.adelaide.edu.au/vetsci/