PAVE
PROGRAM FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF VETERINARY EDUCATION EQUIVALENCE
A Service of the AAVSB

Program for the Assessment of Veterinary Education Equivalence (PAVE)

Candidate Information Handbook

AAVSB
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF VETERINARY STATE BOARDS

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Introduction

Introduction

This candidate handbook is designed to be the main source of information for those applying to the Program for the Assessment of Veterinary Education Equivalence (PAVE®). This handbook contains the essential information regarding eligibility requirements, application procedures and fees, required documentation, examination content, and other important information including guidelines related to the program.

The AAVSB recommends that candidates carefully read and understand all topics covered in this handbook. Candidates may also consult the **AAVSB website** for additional information about the program.

About the AAVSB

The AAVSB is a 501(c)(3), nonprofit corporation dedicated to its overall objective and mission - to support and advance the regulation of veterinary medicine, and its vision - to provide comprehensive information and services to enhance the efficiency of veterinary regulation.

The PAVE program, including exam administration and development, are overseen by the AAVSB.

About PAVE

Purpose

The Program for the Assessment of Veterinary Education Equivalence (PAVE) is the pathway for veterinarians who are graduates of international, non-accredited veterinary programs, to practice in the United States and Canada.

PAVE evaluates the education equivalence of these graduates on behalf of participating AAVSB Member Boards.

The program has four major components:

1. Verification of Education and English Proficiency
2. Pass the Qualifying Science Exam (QSE)
3. Complete the Evaluated Clinical Experience (ECE)
4. Submit all final documentation and receive the PAVE Certificate of Completion

About the Exam (QSE)

The QSE is designed and used to evaluate the education gained in the first three years of veterinary school. The examination is constantly updated, reviewed, and reevaluated by highly qualified subject matter experts. With the AAVSB's commitment to examination development, the QSE remains a valid tool, useful in the evaluation of candidates for education equivalence of foreign veterinary graduates. The QSE is one required step of the PAVE program.

The QSE has four main objectives:

1. Provide a comprehensive examination in basic veterinary medical sciences for use by the PAVE program.
2. Evaluate the education equivalence of veterinarians who are graduates of veterinary schools not accredited by the Council on Education of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA).
3. Provide a common standard for the evaluation of candidates that is comparable across jurisdictions.
4. Protect the public by ensuring that veterinarians demonstrate a specified level of knowledge and skills before entering veterinary practice.

Development

The QSE is a multiple-choice examination prepared under a contractual agreement between the AAVSB and its exam vendor, PSI. The AAVSB is responsible for the annual development and validation of the QSE. The PAVE Committee, under the guidance of the AAVSB and PSI, ensures the QSE reflects a basic level of knowledge in veterinary medical sciences.

The PAVE Committee is comprised of representatives from:

- American Association of Veterinary Clinicians (AAVC)
- American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC)
- Veterinarians in private practice and education

Questions for the QSE are written by veterinarians who represent all aspects of the profession, including educators, practitioners, members of specialty boards, and national practice associations. Each newly written question is reviewed and validated by additional experts in the field of veterinary medicine for content relevance, importance, difficulty, and accuracy. These questions are then reviewed and validated by psychometricians and editors to ensure conformity to psychometric principles and rules of grammar and style.

Once a question is accepted following this validation process, it is placed into a computerized item banking system. The questions for potential use on the QSE are selected by the computer in accordance with the examination content outline (page 35). The PAVE Committee then reviews the computer-generated test, item by item, making changes and substitutions as necessary.

Exam Overview

The QSE is delivered in one 220-minute* block session.

- The QSE consists of 200* multiple-choice operational questions and 25 multiple-choice pilot questions derived from the test specifications.
- The candidate's score on the QSE is based on the candidate's responses to the 200 operational questions only.
    - The 25 pilot questions do not count towards the candidate's final score. The 25 pilot questions will be embedded within the exam and candidates will not be able to distinguish between the pilot and operational questions. The pilot questions will be used in constructing future examinations.

Exam Breakdown

The QSE covers the six (6)* primary areas of responsibility (domains).

- The QSE domains of practice are made up of the major areas of basic science or pre-clinical subjects taught from the curriculum in the first three years of accredited veterinary schools.

Exam Evaluation

The QSE content domains and practice areas are assessed every 5 years through a content analysis study performed by the AAVSB and its exam vendor. A complete list of the QSE practice domains is presented on pages 35-40.

A content analysis study was performed in 2025, and the updated Content Outline can be found on pages 38-40. The new content outline will take effect after the September 2026 exam date.

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The Application Process

The Application Process

PAVE Program Recognition in the United States and Canada

Currently 47 states and territories in the United States, all provinces and territories in Canada*, and the countries of Australia and New Zealand recognize the PAVE program. Before applying, please make sure the state or province you intend to gain licensure in is on the **PAVE Recognition List**.

**Canada only recognizes PAVE Certificate holders who passed the QSE after September 2024.*

The AAVSB does not license veterinarians. PAVE is designed to evaluate educational equivalency of international veterinary graduates to AVMA-accredited veterinary programs on behalf of Member Boards. To apply for a credential, contact the state or provincial agency in the jurisdiction where you are planning to work.

To find information about contacting your states regulatory board, click **here**.

Fees

You must pay the PAVE application fee of $390 and QSE fee of $1550 when you complete your application. If you need to retake the exam, you must reapply and pay the exam fee again. If you have passed the QSE, you cannot take it again.

All fees must be paid by credit card or debit card. Fees are evaluated annually by the AAVSB Board of Directors and are subject to change.

The QSE is only offered in English. Candidates residing in Canada, where French is the official national language may request to take the exam in French.

You may change your selected examination window once for a $90 administrative fee per application. After the one-time window transfer, you will not be able to move your exam again and will need to reapply and pay the full exam fee for additional attempts. Window transfer requests must be submitted to **pave@aavsb.org** 48 hours before your scheduled exam appointment.

The application fee and any administration fees charged to change the exam window are nonrefundable.

Eligibility

U.S. citizens who have completed their veterinary education outside the U.S. in non AVMA-accredited schools are considered "international veterinary graduates," while foreign nationals who have graduated from accredited schools in the U.S. or Canada are not.

PAVE candidates applying to the PAVE Program must be enrolled in or have graduated from a school on the AVMA-ECFVG school list. Candidates can view this list on the **AVMA website**. The AVMA-ECFVG school list confirms applicants to the program have earned their veterinary degree from an institute that is formally recognized by the appropriate educational authority in that country. If your school is not on the AVMA-ECFVG list, you will need to **work with the AVMA to get it added.** The AVMA will require information from you *and* the school, so this process can take some time. The AAVSB is not part of the AVMA and we are unable to provide an estimated time frame for this process.

To enroll in PAVE, candidates must have successfully completed at least 50% of their veterinary curriculum, submitted all required credential documents, and completed the English Proficiency requirement.

Application Requirements

Application Windows and Exam Dates

Although applications are accepted year-round, to be eligible for a specific QSE date, candidates must submit your PAVE application and all required documents by the corresponding cutoff:

APPLICATION CUTOFF DATES PER QUALIFYING SCIENCE EXAM DATE

May Exam Date	Sept Exam Date	Jan Exam Date	May Exam Date
Application Cutoff of ***March 31***	Application Cutoff of ***June 30***	Application Cutoff of ***October 31***	Application Cutoff of ***March 31***

Applications for a specific exam date will not be accepted after the application cutoff. If your documents are not received by the cutoff date, you can log into your AAVSB portal and request a one-time move to the exam window immediately after the window for which you applied, for a $90 fee. This must be done no later than 48 hours before the original exam window. If you do not move your appointment by this time, your application fee will be forfeited, and you will have to reapply and pay the full fee for a different window.

During the application, candidates must complete the Electronic Identity Verification via DocuSign to authorize the AAVSB to review your documents. If you are unable to complete the DocuSign authorization, you must upload a separate notarized passport **and** notarized affidavit to your portal.

Documents will not be reviewed without a completed affidavit.

and

You must complete your PAVE application using your legal first and last name as they appear on your unexpired, government-issued, photo identification. If you do not have both a first and last name, please put a period in the first name field.

Documents Checklist

All candidates must submit the following required documents to be approved to schedule their Qualifying Science Exam (QSE):

Proof of English Proficiency:

English Proficiency Verification Options:

Option 1: TOEFL iBT® or iBT TOEFL Home Edition

(Test of English as a Foreign Language)

You must achieve at least the following scores in each section:

Reading	18*	4.0
Listening	26*	5.5
Speaking	26*	5.0
Writing	20*	4.0
Overall Score	No Minimum	

**for tests taken before January 21, 2026*

- Valid for two years after test date
- English proficiency scores must be valid at the time you sit for the QSE
  - Scores from multiple score reports cannot be combined. There are no exceptions to this policy
- You must achieve all section requirements within one exam
- Include the AAVSB's Institution Code 8216 on the TOEFL exam forms to ensure scores are sent directly to the AAVSB office Then, **notify PAVE Staff**.

Option 2: IELTS Academic Examination

(International English Language Testing System)

You must achieve at least the following scores in each section:

Reading	6.0
Listening	6.5
Speaking	7.0
Writing	6.0
Overall Score	6.5

- Can be performed in person or online
- Valid for two years after test date
- English proficiency scores must be valid at the time you sit for the QSE
  - Scores from multiple score reports cannot be combined. There are no exceptions to this policy
- You must achieve all section requirements within one exam
- You must send the Test Report Form Number via **email**. It can be found on the bottom right corner off your Test Report Form

Option 3: Alternative to the English Proficiency Examinations

Provide proof of attending at least three years at a secondary high school or graduating from a professional veterinary school where English was the primary language of instruction.

You will need:

An official letter, with the school's letterhead, sent directly by the school that lists:

- Dates of attendance
- Complete language of instruction was in English

Plus, one of the below options:

Option A.

- A certified or notarized copy of your final diploma or transcript

OR

Option B.

If you were homeschooled for all or part of your high school education (grades 9-12):

- A letter submitted by a school district official that had oversight over your curriculum, confirming English was the complete language of instruction

Academic Documents:

For Graduates:
- Request your veterinary school send the following directly to the AAVSB:
  - An official final transcript, and
  - Official proof of your veterinary degree or qualification (diploma).

For Current Students:
- Request your veterinary school send the following directly to the AAVSB:
  - A letter from the Dean or Principal indicating your academic standing, the anticipated date of graduation, and verification that you have completed at least 50% of the program, **and**
  - An unofficial transcript or grade report detailing courses and grades

Application Approval

Document processing may take up to two weeks from the time of receipt. Email responses may be delayed during peak application times. You can track your application progress through your AAVSB portal.

Once all documents have been reviewed, you will receive an email from **pave@aavsb.org** to create a PSI account and schedule your exam.

Retaking the QSE

If you are not successful in passing the QSE, you may retake the exam. The current fee for each attempt is $1,550. Please note that if you pass the exam, you will not be permitted to retake it, as passing the QSE fulfills this component of the PAVE Program.

In most cases, you will not need to resubmit documentation when retaking the exam. However, if certain materials, such as TOEFL or IELTS scores, or documentation related to an Accommodation Application, have expired, you may be asked to provide updated versions.

Candidates are permitted up to three attempts at the QSE. If you do not pass the exam after three attempts, further retakes must be approved in advance by the AAVSB.

AAVSB Limitations

The AAVSB will permit you to take the QSE three times. Should you need to retake the exam a fourth time or more, you must start a QSE retake application through the normal process. You will need a written statement that indicates what you have done to prepare for your next QSE attempt. Your information will be sent to the AAVSB Board of Directors for review and approval. Once the Board of Directors has reviewed your retake request, you will receive a letter with their decision. Board review and approvals can take up to 45 days from the date the retake request is made. If the Board approves your next attempt, you can complete your application and schedule your exam once you receive their decision.

ADA Accommodations

Accommodations

The AAVSB is committed to testing individuals in a manner that will yield valid and reliable examination results. In some instances, the examination administration procedures may need to be modified to provide reasonable accommodation for candidates with disabilities. Candidates with a documented disability covered under the U.S. Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) or the Canadian Human Rights Act may be granted exam accommodation(s) after a review of the required documentation.

The cutoff for submitting accommodation applications is the same as the application cutoff (see Application Windows and Exam Dates above). If you cannot provide the required documentation for your accommodations application and wish to take your exam without the requested accommodations, you must send an email to **accommodations@aavsb.org**.

Candidates requesting accommodations must complete an **Accommodations Application**.

Section I must be completed in full by the candidate. Incomplete documentation will not be accepted. Section II must be filled out in full by a licensed health care provider. In addition to the completed sections I & II, candidates must submit supporting documentation which could include the following:

- College letter
- Diagnostic report
- IEP
- 504 plan
- Pending Requests

All documents may be securely uploaded through your AAVSB portal.

Accommodation(s) applications may take up to two weeks to review. You may not schedule an accommodated examination until you receive an approval letter from the AAVSB. Pending the AAVSB's review of an accommodation(s) request, you may notify the AAVSB at **accommodations@aavsb.org** that you wish to schedule a standard (non-accommodated) examination. However, if accommodation(s) are later approved and you have not taken the standard examination, you will need to cancel your currently scheduled exam to use the approved accommodation(s). PSI will contact you to schedule your exam with the approved accommodation(s).

If you did not indicate a need for accommodation during your PAVE application, your accommodation request will be considered a late request. The AAVSB will review requests received at any time; however, late requests cannot be guaranteed to meet scheduling deadlines. Should your accommodation(s) application not be approved, you may resubmit your request with additional supporting documentation.

Accommodation Applications and Retaking the QSE

Should you need to retake the QSE, the same accommodation documents previously submitted to the AAVSB may be used to request accommodations for the retake for up to two years. Additionally, all applications and letters from healthcare providers must be dated within the past two years to remain valid.

*PLEASE NOTE: If you wear a religious head covering, notify the AAVSB through your application or by emailing **accommodations@aavsb.org** if you wish to wear it during the exam.*

Updating Your Information

You will not be able to take the QSE if your legal first name and last name as they appear on your unexpired, government-issued, photo identification does not match the name on your QSE application.

If there is a name change on the legal identification any time after an application has been submitted, please contact the AAVSB no later than one week prior to the scheduled exam date in writing via pave@aavsb.org with the information to change. You can upload to your portal a pdf copy of an unexpired, government-issued, photo ID (a military ID cannot be emailed) AND a notarized copy of the legal name change document (such as a marriage certificate, divorce decree, etc.) to your portal. If unable to upload the required documents to your portal, you may send them via email to **pave@aavsb.org**.

In your communication, please include your name as submitted on the online QSE application, your new name as it appears on the proper ID, and your VIVA ID number.

Changes to a mailing address or email address can be made by logging into your MyAAVSB account.

PLEASE NOTE: The AAVSB must have a current and unique email address on file as all communication regarding the exam process is sent via email, including the eligibility/scheduling email and notifications regarding scores.

Signature and Security Acknowledgement

The QSE is the property of the AAVSB and is protected by federal copyright laws. It is a violation of those laws, and thus illegal to share any information whatsoever about any QSE question. In particular, sharing information about a QSE question recalled from memory or asking someone who has taken the QSE to share such information is illegal. Below is the Candidate Agreement which you must agree to in order to complete the QSE application.

I acknowledge and understand that the Qualifying Science Examination (QSE) is owned by the American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB) and is protected under applicable intellectual property rights, including copyright protections. I further acknowledge and understand that the QSE is a high-stakes examination used by licensure and certification entities as one component of determining eligibility for a credential.

I affirm that I am sitting for the QSE solely for the purpose of seeking a credential. Based upon the significance of the QSE and acknowledging the legal rights, ownership and protections of the examination in the AAVSB, I hereby agree that, with the exception of previous QSE administrations, I have not had access to any part of QSE examination questions and/or responses prior to this administration of the QSE and that my responses to the questions on the QSE will be based upon my knowledge, skills, and abilities, and not prior exposure to exam questions.

I further acknowledge and understand that I will not remove QSE examination questions from the test center in any manner, including memorization, electronic downloads, recording devices, copying, or through any other means. I also acknowledge not to distribute or discuss any questions to any persons and in any manner whatsoever either before, during, and/or after taking the QSE. This includes through my own personal social media channels, the official AAVSB social media channels, or other social media channels.

I understand that during the examination, including breaks, I may not communicate with other candidates, refer to any materials other than those provided to me by the testing center, or assist or obtain assistance from any person.

I understand and agree to the security and confidentiality of the QSE and acknowledge that the AAVSB has the right to investigate any alleged wrongdoing related to my administration of the QSE and to take action to protect the integrity of the examination and the credential process, including but not limited to withholding or invalidating my examination score and refusing to allow access to future QSE administrations.

Candidates will review the PSI Security Agreement at the PSI Test Center. If you refuse to consent to the conditions of this PSI Security Agreement, you will not be authorized to take the examination. PSI Headquarters and the AAVSB will be informed, and this form will be retained as a permanent part of your candidate file.

I HAVE READ THE FOLLOWING PSI SECURITY AGREEMENT AND CONSENT TO TAKE THE EXAMINATION UNDER THE CONDITIONS STATED HEREIN:

- I will not give or receive assistance while taking the test, including the use of unauthorized study material or unauthorized notes. I acknowledge that I have not taken any unauthorized study material or unauthorized notes into the testing area.
- I will not copy and remove exam questions or answers from the test center.
- I will not have in my possession a cell phone, pager, or other unauthorized materials.
- I will inform the proctor when needing to use the restroom, but I understand that leaving the building at any time before completing the exam is prohibited.
- I understand that violating the confidential nature of the licensing test can result in severe civil or criminal penalties, invalidation of test scores, and you will be reported to the authorized agency.

Note: If a candidate refuses to consent to the conditions of this PSI Security Agreement, the proctor will notify the candidate that he/she will not be authorized to take the examination. PSI Headquarters will be so informed. This form is retained as a permanent part of the candidate file.

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Scheduling the QSE

Schedule Your QSE

Once you complete your application, you will receive an email from **pave@aavsb.org**. You will be prompted to set up a PSI account, select your exam delivery method, plus date and time of your exam administration. To view test center availability prior to completing your QSE application, **visit PSI's website**. ***Please save your PSI login information, as you will need it to log into the testing platform and take the QSE.***

Note: You will receive an email from PSI 60 days prior to the scheduled exam date to select your exam time.

Scheduling an Accommodated Exam

Once submitted accommodation applications have been reviewed, candidates will receive a letter from the AAVSB detailing the approved accommodation(s). If the only accommodation is additional time for testing, scheduling can be done through the PSI portal when the eligibility/scheduling email is received.

For all other approved accommodations:

- PSI will call the candidate directly to schedule the exam.
- If PSI is unable to reach the candidate, the caller will leave a voicemail.
- If a voicemail is left, PSI will also email a link to an online scheduling request form that will need to be completed.
- Call PSI at 1-800-367-1565, ext. 6750 for assistance.

Exam Delivery

Taking the Exam by Computer

A brief tutorial will be provided at the start of the examination to instruct candidates on how to mark and unmark answers and how to navigate through the examination. The timed portion of the examination will begin after the computer tutorial, once the actual exam has started.

Candidates have 220 minutes in which to complete the QSE. A clock counting down the remaining examination time will appear onscreen. Candidates can choose to hide the timeclock feature. When taking the examination, candidates can skip questions, change answers to questions, and mark questions for review.

Each question on the QSE is multiple-choice listing four choices, only one of which is the correct or the best answer. Read the entire question and all four choices before marking an answer. There is no penalty for guessing, so if possible, candidates should answer all the questions.

Should you encounter any technical issues before or during your exam, please contact the AAVSB at **pave@aavsb.org** within 48 hours of your scheduled exam time.

Required Identification

Candidates must provide one valid form of non-expired, government-issued identification bearing photo and signature. The ID must be in the official language where the testing center is located and cannot be expired. Candidates must register for the exam with their legal first and last name as it appears on their government-issued identification. Please refer to this list for acceptable identification:

- State or Canadian provincial or territorial-issued driver's license
- State or Canadian provincial or territorial-issued identification card
- US Government Issued Alien Registration Card
- Canadian Health ID
- US or Canadian Government Issued Passport or Passport card
- International Passport which includes English translation on the passport
- US or Canadian Government Issued Military Identification card (cannot be used as identification for live remote proctoring due to government restrictions).

Temporary IDs, digital IDs, and any additional forms of ID are not accepted.

Inability to provide legal identification that matches the name in which you applied for your exam will result in forfeiture of your exam fee.

To avoid potential issues with your identification on exam day, you may use the PSI website to validate your identification when you schedule your exam.

Test Center Exam Delivery

You must arrive at the PSI test center 30 minutes before your scheduled testing time. Those arriving more than 15 minutes late will not be permitted to take their exam and will forfeit their exam fee.

If you experience any issues with your testing experience, you must contact the AAVSB at **pave@aavsb.org** within 48 hours of your scheduled exam time. After this time frame, all scores will stand.

Testing Center Security

PSI test centers are continuously monitored by audio and video surveillance equipment for security purposes. The following security procedures apply during the examination:

- Examinations are proprietary. No cameras, notes, tape recorders, pagers or cellular/smart phones are allowed in the testing room. **Possession of a cell phone or other electronic device is strictly prohibited and will result in dismissal from the examination and forfeiture of exam fees.**
- A calculator will be provided through the exam platform. Handheld and other digital calculators are not permitted without approved accommodation.
- No guests, visitors, or family members are allowed in the testing room or reception areas.
- Candidates may be subject to a metal detection scan upon entering the examination room.

It is recommended that candidates do not bring personal items with them to the testing center. However, if a candidate does bring personal belongings, he/she will be required to place all personal items in a lockable storage compartment prior to testing.

Candidates must not bring any personal/unauthorized items into the testing room.

Candidates will be asked to empty and turn their pockets completely inside out prior to every entry into the testing room to confirm they have no prohibited items. Such items include but are not limited to - outerwear, hats, food, drinks, tissues, paper, writing instruments, medications, purses, briefcases, notebooks, pagers, watches, cell phones, calculators, recording devices, photographic equipment, or electronic devices. Weapons are not allowed at any PSI testing center.

In certain circumstances, exceptions to this policy may be made for medical reasons, provided permission is approved by the AAVSB prior to the application deadline.

- If there is a medical condition requiring use of medication, an external appliance, or an electronic device in the secure areas of the test site, please note the request during the QSE application.
- A list of pre-approved medical devices is available on **PSI's site**.

Test Center Environment

Please remember there will be other people at the testing center taking examinations (other than the QSE). Typing on keyboards for an essay examination, coughing, and/or people entering and leaving the testing room may be heard. It is impossible to provide a completely noise-free testing environment. The PSI test center will provide candidates with small earplugs that can be inserted inside the ear if needed. Candidates are not allowed to bring in their own earplugs, headsets, or headphones. All testing sessions will be on camera and monitored via audio.

Breaks

Candidates may take breaks during the examination, but the test timing continues during any breaks taken. For the duration of the exam, including breaks, candidates cannot communicate with other candidates, refer to any study materials and/or notes, or assist or obtain assistance from any person. Candidates may not leave the testing center while the examination is in progress.

Permitted Materials

Candidates will be given scratch paper and pencil at the testing center. Candidates may not bring their own scratch paper into the testing center. The testing center staff will collect the PSI-issued scratch paper and pencil after the examination.

Live Remote Proctored (LRP) Exam Delivery

By selecting LRP as the exam delivery method, candidates will receive an email from PSI with a link to ensure their computer meets the requirements and they become familiar with the exam delivery platform. Candidates may do the system check and walkthrough up to three times before their exam, and up to 90 minutes before their exam time. Failing to complete the system walkthrough may lead to challenges on exam day.

You may log into the exam platform 30 minutes before your scheduled exam time. Those logging in more than 15 minutes late will not be permitted to take their exam and will forfeit their exam fee.

If you experience any issues with your testing experience, you must contact the AAVSB at **pave@aavsb.org** within 48 hours of your scheduled exam time. After this time frame, all scores will stand.

LRP Security

Once logged in to the testing platform, candidates will be required to perform a room scan. The proctor will direct the candidate in a required 360-degree scan of the testing environment. This includes all corners of the room, under the desk surface, ceiling, and floors. Candidates will need to lift a laptop or PC if the webcam is not detachable. If a candidate is unable to perform a full room scan as directed by the proctor, they will be unable to proceed with the exam and will forfeit the exam fee.

As part of the check-in process, candidates will show the front and back of an unexpired, government-issued, photo ID with a signature. No military IDs may be used for LRP exams.

Candidates are individually monitored by a dedicated proctor for the duration of the exam. Audio, video, and chat will be recorded. To maintain the security of the QSE, the exam session is actively monitored and security violations may result in exam termination. **Major violations will result in immediate dismissal from the examination and forfeiture of exam fees.** Please review the list of violations in the **Live Remote Proctored Exam Guide**.

LRP Environment

The test area must remain free of noise and distractions. Desks must be completely cleared off; no items, including common office items like binders, books, cell phones, phone chargers, sticky notes, plants, eyeglass cases, or food, are allowed. Other people and pets are not permitted in the testing area. The presence of a person or pet, even in the background, may result in exam termination. Should you have any issues or questions during your exam or need to take any breaks, you must ask your proctor through the chat function.

Breaks

Upon request of a break via the chat function, the proctor will inform the candidate when they may take their break. The clock will continue to run during this time.

Permitted Materials

Candidates may only use a mini whiteboard, dry-erase marker, and eraser which will be reviewed at check-in and must always remain on the desk/table by the computer during the exam administration. *Scratch paper will not be permitted.* The whiteboard must be erased at the end of the exam, observed by the proctor.

Rescheduling Your Exam

If candidates do not take the exam during the testing window for which they applied, they must submit a new QSE online application and pay the full fee to take the QSE during a future window. To change an exam date, time, or location (based on seat availability) within the same exam window, candidates must reschedule online through their PSI portal.

Candidates may change their selected examination window once for a $90 administrative fee per application. After the one-time window transfer, you will not be able to move your exam again and will need to reapply and pay the full exam fee for additional attempts. Window transfer requests must be submitted to **pave@aavsb.org** either 48 hours before your scheduled exam appointment or before the end of the window if you have not yet scheduled your exam.

- Candidates must reschedule at least 48 hours before the scheduled exam appointment.
- Candidates cannot change the exam appointment within 48 hours of the scheduled examination.
- Failure to take the exam as scheduled will result in forfeiture of the full exam fee.

Absences

Excused Absences

Excused absences are defined as an emergency that makes it impossible for a candidate to keep their examination appointment and therefore, may be eligible to reschedule their exam at no charge with appropriate documentation. Qualifying excused absences are listed below:

- Serious illness (either the candidate or an immediate family member defined as - parents, spouse, grandparents, siblings, and dependents)
- Death of an immediate family member (as defined above)
- Disabling traffic accident, which is defined as damage inflicted to a vehicle that would result in further damage to the vehicle should it continue to be operated. This applies only to the vehicle transporting the candidate on the day of the exam. The AAVSB may require a police report to complete the request for an excused absence.

Should you have a qualifying excused absence, you must contact the AAVSB immediately by emailing **pave@aavsb.org**. The AAVSB will communicate what documentation will be required. If the AAVSB approves a request for an excused absence, the exam appointment may be moved to the following exam window at no charge. If the absence request is not approved, the candidate will be required to reapply and pay the full application fee to take the QSE. Candidates will also need to reconfirm eligibility with the AAVSB per the requirements of their jurisdiction.

Inclement Weather/Local or National Emergencies

In the event of inclement weather or a local or national emergency, please contact PSI at 1.833.256.1419 or go to the PSI portal to determine the status of your exam appointment. If the test center is open, candidates are expected to arrive for their appointments or forfeit all fees. If the center is closed and appointments are canceled, candidates will be contacted by PSI to reschedule their appointments within the current exam window.

Missed Appointments and Forfeitures

Candidates who do not appear for their exam appointment or who do not reschedule their appointment prior to 48 hours of their scheduled exam time, will be considered unexcused. Candidates who do not have an excused absence for missing their examination appointment will forfeit all exam fees.

Examples of unexcused absences include the following:

- Candidates who ***arrive late*** to the testing center and are ***denied entry*** are considered unexcused and will forfeit all fees.
- Candidates whose ***name on their ID does not match the name*** in which they applied for the exam will be denied entry and considered unexcused, forfeiting all fees.
- Candidates who are ***unable to launch a Live Remote Proctored Exam due to trying to use any unsupported devices***, will be marked unexcused, forfeiting all exam fees.
- Candidates who ***do not complete their exam or reschedule their exam before the exam window closes*** will be marked unexcused and will forfeit all fees.

Retaking Your Exam

If candidates fail the QSE, they must fill out a retake application.

Retaking the QSE three or more times

The AAVSB will permit candidates to take the QSE three times. This includes attempts beginning after January 1, 2006.

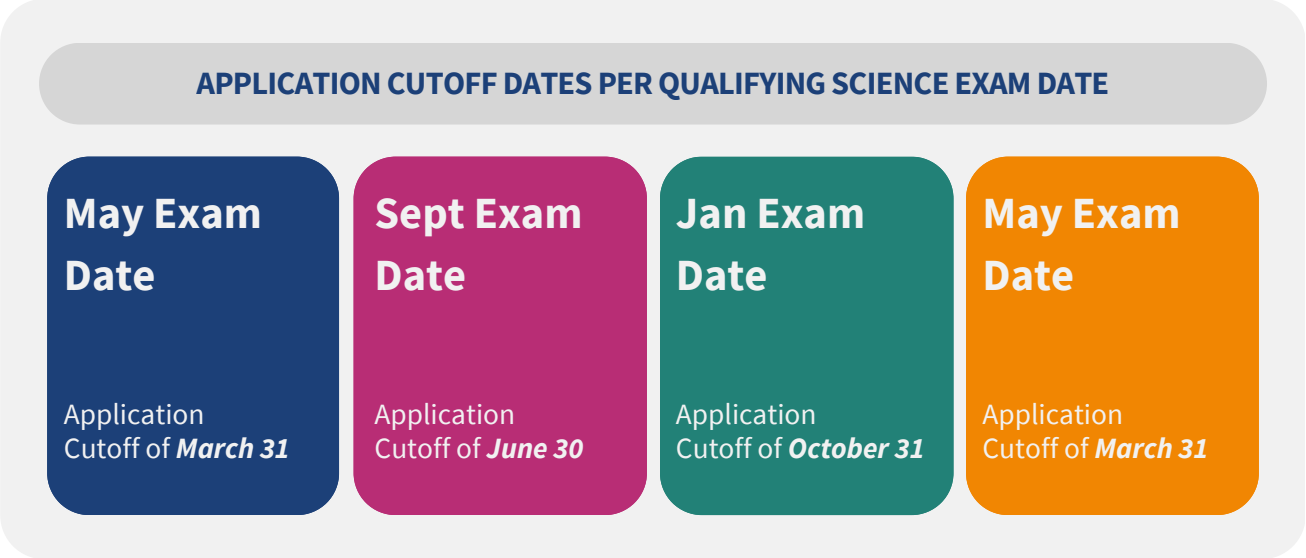
Candidates will apply for the QSE using the retake application link on the AAVSB website. The AAVSB Board of Directors must review the retake request for a candidate to take the exam again. The candidate must submit required documents for this review:

- A written statement signed by the applicant which includes:
  - Reference to all previous attempts of the QSE and/or QE, and
  - Reference to remedial measures undertaken by the candidate

For more information on the retake process and requirements candidates can reference:

- **PAVE Standards & Policies**
- **QSE Retake Policy**

After the AAVSB Board of Directors has completed their review, candidates will receive an email either indicating further action or permitting them to complete their application and schedule their exam.



QSE Scoring

QSE Scoring

Score Report

Scores are released approximately 4–6 weeks after the exam through your AAVSB portal. Performance on the QSE is reported in terms of scaled scores. QSE Scores are mathematically converted to scaled scores ranging from 200 to 800, with a passing scaled score of 425. Scaled scores are equivalent for all administrations to maintain the same standard from administration to administration. The AAVSB does not offer QSE scores as number or percentage correct.

Scores will be available in your myAAVSB portal for one year after posting; after that year, you will only see the pass/fail designation.

Additional Score Review

To ensure the accuracy of results, PSI performs numerous quality assurance procedures before scoring the exam electronically. It is extremely unlikely that a score review will result in a change in an exam score.

Candidates may request a manual exam rescoring within 48 hours of the exam appointment. Requests received after that time will not be honored. There is a $50 rescoring fee, which must be submitted before the manual rescore can be completed. Rescores may take up to 4 weeks. To request a manual rescore, email **pave@aavsb.org**.

Candidate Score Reports

Once scores are available, candidates will receive an email from pave@aavsb.org. The full score report will be available through the AAVSB portal for one year. This score report is for candidate use only and is not intended as official documentation to be shared externally.

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Evaluated Clinical Experience

Evaluated Clinical Experience (ECE)

The Evaluated Clinical Experience (ECE) is available to students currently enrolled in, or graduates of, non-accredited veterinary schools. It may be completed either before or after graduation.

Participation in the ECE involves enrollment at an AVMA-accredited veterinary college or university, where candidates complete the same clinical rotations as regularly enrolled students. The host institution evaluates PAVE candidates using the same standards applied to its own students and provides grade reports and verification forms directly to the AAVSB.

Before beginning clinical rotations, the AAVSB requires that the host school sends a completed ECE School Acknowledgement Form (provided to the school by the AAVSB) signed by the academic dean or an authorized representative.

Candidates who begin or complete clinical training prior to taking the QSE are encouraged to review the **PAVE Appeals Policy** for additional guidance.

Arranging the Evaluated Clinical Experience (ECE)

Candidates are responsible for arranging their own Evaluated Clinical Experience (ECE). This includes applying directly to an AVMA-accredited veterinary college or university and paying any associated enrollment fees directly to the institution. Enrollment fees are determined by each school and may vary; they are generally comparable to out-of-state tuition rates.

Not all AVMA-accredited veterinary colleges or universities accept non-students for ECE clinical rotations, or they may do so on an irregular basis. Each school independently sets its own acceptance criteria, so candidates are advised to research and contact schools individually to determine eligibility and availability. Candidates should review the admission policies of the selected institution, including any applicable visa requirements for international placements.

A complete list of AVMA-accredited veterinary schools is available through the **AVMA website**.

Completing Your Evaluated Clinical Experience (ECE)

Once accepted into an ECE program:

- Your program must submit an **ECE Acknowledgement Form** to **pave@aavsb.org**.
- After completion, the program must also send:
- An **ECE Letter of Completion**.
- Final grade reports or clinical transcripts.

A PAVE Certificate cannot be issued until these are received directly from the program.

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PAVE Certificate of Completion

Receiving your PAVE Certificate of Completion

Final Documents Checklist for PAVE Certificate

To receive a PAVE Certificate of Completion, the AAVSB must have received:

- Final transcript and diploma from your veterinary school
- ECE Letter of Completion from your program
- Final clinical transcripts from the program where the ECE was completed

PAVE Certificate Review and Issuance

Once you have submitted all final documents, your complete file will be reviewed by the AAVSB. Reviews are typically completed within 5–7 business days.

If you have completed all components of the PAVE program and are approved, a digital PAVE Certificate of Completion will be issued. Physical copies are mailed upon request.

Candidates may also request that official copies of their certificate be sent directly to state or provincial licensing boards. These requests can be submitted by emailing **pave@aavsb.org**. There is no fee for this service.

General Information

- PAVE certificates **do not expire**. Certification remains valid indefinitely
- A PAVE certificate is **not a license to practice veterinary medicine** in the United States, Canada, Australia, or New Zealand
- All PAVE candidates must satisfy the licensing requirements of the relevant jurisdiction. In addition, candidates seeking licensure in North America must pass the **North American Veterinary Licensure Examination (NAVLE®)**

VAULT Transfer Services

The VAULT service is only available for the transfer of official scores to a different jurisdiction. There are no refunds for any VAULT transfer service.

The AAVSB's VAULT service verifies QSE scores and credential information, then securely sends that information directly to veterinary licensing boards. There are several VAULT service options:

- The **VAULT Transfer for First-Time License Application** sends your official QSE score to a licensing board. **It is only for veterinary technician professionals or students who have never been credentialed in any jurisdiction.**
- The **VAULT Basic Transfer** sends your official QSE scores and unofficial credential history (meaning a list of jurisdictions where you have been or are credentialed).
- The **VAULT Premium Transfer Application** is the most comprehensive service. It includes a complete license credentialing packet, with QSE scores, transcript, and license verification(s)/letter(s) of good standing.

PLEASE NOTE: You do not need the VAULT service to send your QSE score to the jurisdiction you selected when registering for the exam.

The non-refundable VAULT Transfer fee is paid by credit card at the end of the online application. For more information, visit **aavsb.org/licensure-assistance** or contact the VAULT team at **viva@aavsb.org**.

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QSE Content Outline

Valid starting January 2027 exam date

Qualifying Science Examination Content Outline

For 2027 QSE Exam Dates

Domain and Content Area		Questions
1	**Foundations of Veterinary Medicine**	**54**
A	Anatomy	
B	Behavior and Husbandry	
C	Immunology and Vaccines	
D	Infectious Agents	
E	Physiology and Nutrition	
F	Principles of Anatomic and Clinical Pathology	
G	Principals of Imaging	
H	Principles of Pharmacology	
I	Principals of Surgery	
2	**Veterinary Medicine by System Including Pathology, Diagnosis, Treatment, and Prevention**	**93**
A	Alimentary Including Dental	
B	Cardiovascular and Respiratory	
C	Endocrine	
D	Hemopoietic, Immune, and Lymphatic	
E	Integumentary	
F	Multi-System	

Domain and Content Area Continued		Questions
G	Musculoskeletal	
H	Nervous System and Special Senses	
I	Reproductive and Urinary	
3	**One Health and Professional Standards**	**8**
A	Professional Skills (e.g., Animal Welfare, Ethics, Communication, Medical Records, Wellness)	
B	Public Health, Epidemiology, Regulatory	
	Total Number of Questions	**155**

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Contact Information

Contact Information

Contact the AAVSB for PAVE and Accommodations Questions

PAVE Questions

Email: pave@aavsb.org
Call: 1.877.698.8482 option 2

Accommodations Questions

Email: accommodations@aavsb.org

Contact PSI for Scheduling Assistance, Accommodations Scheduling, and Tech Support

Scheduling Assistance

Call: 1.833.256.1419

Tech Support

Call: 1.855.414.79499

Accommodations Scheduling

Call: 1.800.367.1565 ext. 6750