

PAVE Standards & Policies

General Information

The Program for the Assessment of Veterinary Education Equivalence (PAVE) is operated by the American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB), a not-for-profit organization whose mission furthers public protection by providing services for veterinary licensing authorities in the U.S. and Canada. The purpose of PAVE is to assess the education equivalence of international veterinary graduates on behalf of participating AAVSB Member Boards. At the discretion of its Board of Directors, the AAVSB reserves the right to deny a PAVE certificate based on ethical considerations and moral character and fitness of the applicant.

PAVE defines an "international veterinary graduate" as a veterinarian whose degree was conferred by a recognized school of veterinary medicine outside of the United States and Canada. A "recognized" school is one that is recognized by the government of its country and renders its graduates eligible to practice in that country, OR, one that is recognized by the World Health Organization (WHO). U.S. citizens who have completed their veterinary education outside the U.S. in non AVMA-accredited schools are considered to be "international veterinary graduates," while foreign nationals who have graduated from schools in the U.S. or Canada are not.

The AAVSB provides the PAVE certification as a means of documenting the equivalency of a candidate's veterinary education, as well as any foreign license and/or registration. In jurisdictions that accept PAVE certification, the PAVE Certificate is recognized as substantiating the educational requirements as one criterion toward licensure eligibility. **The PAVE Certificate is not a license to practice veterinary medicine.** Applicants who receive the PAVE Certificate must also meet additional statutory criteria, including successful completion of the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE). Because the requirements vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, candidates should directly contact the veterinary board(s) of the jurisdiction(s) in which they desire licensure.

Credentials Registration

Application to PAVE is also used to populate the AAVSB's Veterinary Information Verifying Agency (VIVA) database which provides a centralized, uniform process for jurisdictional licensing authorities to obtain a primary source record of veterinary credentials. The service maintains information about veterinarians in the areas listed below:

- Identifying Documents
- Education & Training Background
- English Language Proficiency
- Professional Examination History
- Employment History
- License History

Enrollment

Applications are accepted only online via the AAVSB website. Only complete applications will be processed, including full payment of the application/initial fee via credit or debit card.

Accommodations

To the extent applicable, the AAVSB complies with state and federal law, including the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act of 2008 (ADAAA) regarding the administration of the PAVE program.

Candidates seeking accommodations under the ADAAA for any PAVE examination(s) must complete and submit the Accommodations application with the PAVE application. Reasonable accommodations for the examination(s) will be determined, authorized, and implemented in collaboration with the test vendor and the requesting candidate, while ensuring validity and security considerations are addressed.

Please note the appropriate documentation must be submitted to substantiate the request for accommodation. Accommodation applications and supporting documentation may be securely uploaded through the AAVSB portal. Please review the QSE Accommodations Guide [here](#).

English Proficiency

PAVE candidates must substantiate English language proficiency prior to sitting for the Qualifying Science Examination (QSE). English language proficiency may be established by meeting the minimum requirements on one of the English language tests listed below, or by providing documentation of high school education instructed primarily in English.

Option #1: Accepted English proficiency examinations:

- Passage of the Test of English as a Foreign Language Internet (TOEFL iBT, or iBT TOEFL Home Edition) with minimum section scores as follows: listening 26; speaking 26; writing 20; and reading 18; (MyBest scores are not accepted) or
- Passage of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) with a minimum score of 6.5 overall and minimum section scores of Speaking: 7; Listening: 6.5; Reading and Writing: 6. PAVE Candidates must take the Academic Module.

NOTE: TOEFL and IELTS scores are considered valid for two years after the test date. English proficiency scores must be valid at the time a PAVE candidate sits for the QSE. Candidates must meet all section requirements on a single English proficiency examination.

Option #2: Substantiation that the PAVE candidate has attended at least three (3) years at a secondary high school or graduated from a post-secondary, professional veterinary school or equivalent program under which the complete language of instruction was English. Accepted documentation includes:

- A letter received by PAVE directly from school officials stating the dates of attendance and verifying that the complete language of instruction was English **and**
- A certified or notarized copy of the final high school or post-secondary diploma or transcript received directly from the institution.

PAVE candidates who were homeschooled for all or part of their high school education (grades 9–12) may submit a letter from a school district official who had oversight on their home school curriculum to substantiate that the primary language of instruction was English.

Documentation that the candidate has met the English Proficiency criteria is due at the time of application. If, upon review of the candidate’s application, this requirement has not been met, the candidate will be deferred to the next scheduled examination date.

Qualifying Science Examination

Administration and Score Reporting

The PAVE program utilizes the Qualifying Science Examination (QSE) as the basic science examination to assess the candidate’s competency of the first three years of an AVMA accredited veterinary program. PAVE candidates will not receive a scheduling email for the QSE unless they have successfully completed at least 50% of their veterinary curriculum, submitted all required credentials documents and completed the English proficiency requirement.

QSE results are available in the AAVSB portal approximately four to six weeks after the examination date. Results will not be released by telephone.

If examination results are released after the deadline for the next administration of the QSE, candidates who did not pass must apply to retake and pay the applicable fee within 5 business days of receiving their results to be eligible to sit for the next scheduled administration.

- PAVE candidates must pass the QSE to be eligible to take the NAVLE.
- Per exam security protocols, PAVE candidates who receive a passing QSE score may not retake the QSE in an attempt to better their score. A passing score ensures the candidate met the basic science examination step of the PAVE program. Candidates are eligible to begin the clinical proficiency requirement step.

- Upon candidate request, a letter verifying the completion of the initial program steps will be sent to the designated AVMA-accredited veterinary college or university for clinical proficiency enrollment consideration.

Rescheduling/Deferment

Candidates may request a deferment of their scheduled QSE appointment if:

- a medical issue makes them physically unable to appear as scheduled
- an academic issue makes them ineligible to sit for the QSE
- extenuating circumstances render the candidate unable to test as scheduled

Documentation will be required to substantiate a candidate's request for deferment. Requests will be reviewed by the AAVSB.

Candidates are allowed one deferment only. If the candidate is not able to test as rescheduled, they will forfeit their examination fee.

Multiple Attempts on the Qualifying Science Examination

The AAVSB has adopted a PAVE Examination Administration Policy regarding multiple administrations of the PAVE Program's basic science examination. For its basic science examination, the PAVE program uses the Qualifying Science Examination (QSE) and has previously used the Qualifying Examination (QE).

As part of the PAVE Examination Administration Policy, no examinees shall be allowed to sit for the QSE more than three times during any one calendar year.

Examinees who have failed the QSE, QE, or a combination of both the QSE and QE three times must wait a minimum of 6 months to retake the exam allowing the examinee additional time to complete remedial measures.

Examinees seeking access to the QSE after the third attempt and each subsequent attempt must submit information to the PAVE Committee identifying remedial measures taken to successfully complete the QSE. The AAVSB Board of Directors reserves the right to deny candidates the right to sit for the QSE including the right to permanently deny such access to protect the integrity and security of the program.

Clinical Proficiency

PAVE candidates must provide the following information before beginning clinical rotations for the evaluated clinical experience:

1. Copy of the acceptance letter from the AVMA-accredited veterinary college or university
2. ECE Acknowledgement form provided by the AAVSB, signed by the academic dean (or designated representative).

Upon completion of the clinical training requirement, candidates must request the school submit an ECE Completion Form and transcripts directly to the PAVE program from the academic dean (or designated representative) of the host AVMA-accredited veterinary college or university.

If a candidate changes clinical training programs or undertakes clinical training at more than one AVMA-accredited college or university program, the academic dean (or designated representative) of each AVMA-accredited college or university needs to provide written documentation (including dates of training) of clinical rotations completed. A letter of completion of the clinical training requirement must be provided by the academic dean (or designated representative) of the veterinary college or university from which the candidate will complete their clinical training, confirming the clinical training requirement necessary to satisfy the degree requirement has been met.

For candidates who have completed clinical training at an AVMA-accredited program and wish to use this training as the ECE requirement, candidates must request a letter to be sent directly from the program's Dean of students to the AAVSB indicating the training meets the AVMA program requirements for the clinical fourth year.

Translation of Foreign Documents

Any document (including all seals and/or stamps) not in English must be prepared and certified by a professional translation service. The AAVSB reserves the right to require a translation by a designated service provider. Candidates are required to submit original documents in addition to certified translations. All costs associated with the translation of submitted documents are the responsibility of the candidate.

Application Status

To remain active in the PAVE program, candidates must contact the AAVSB every two years to confirm their active interest and participation in the program.