

Candidate Advocate



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Updated by	Examinations Manager	Approved on	Nov 2025
Responsible person	Examinations Manager	Scheduled review date	Nov 2026

Policy

The Candidate Advocate has been established to provide Fellowship candidates access to an independent individual with extensive recent experience of procedures and policy relating to ANZCVS training programs, who may be in a position to assist or advise with matters that may arise relating to their training program and certification.

Although the Candidate Advocate is a person with previous experience as a Board of Examiners or Chapter committee member, they no longer serve in this capacity and thus do not have any current conflicts of interest with decisions made by the Board or Chapters, ensuring the independence of the role.

The Candidate Advocate is not a substitute for the mediation role of the College President in disputes, nor a substitute for appeals or for the role of supervisors and mentors. Rather, the Advocate would aid in the resolution of issues for candidates by providing procedural guidance, giving general advice and directing candidates to the best resources for any matters of concern.

For College procedural matters, the College Office remains the initial contact point, but if the candidate feels that their concern is of a sensitive or complex nature then they may contact the Advocate directly (candidateadvocate@anzcvs.org.au)

The Advocate will provide assistance and advice to candidates independent of the Board or Chapters and direct them to appropriate resources as each individual case merits. This process may involve mediation between the candidate and supervisor, or the candidate and the College during the training program.

The Advocate must maintain written records of interactions with candidates and will provide a yearly written summary of their activities in this role for the Board of Examiners to reflect on and consider in their annual review. The information supplied would be of a general nature and anonymised if that is the preference of the candidate.

If a serious matter or allegation is raised, it is expected that the Advocate inform the candidate of the need to engage with the College Office, giving the candidate the opportunity to do so of their own accord initially.



Essential criteria for the Candidate Advocate:

- Membership of the ANZCVS
- Extensive experience on Chapter committees and/or on the Board of Examiners
- Desire to guide candidates with issues encountered during Fellowship training and certification
- Have sufficient time available to devote to this voluntary position

Desirable criteria:

- Excellent communication skills
- Experience counselling students or candidates

Terms of Reference: Candidate Advocate

1. Purpose

The Candidate Advocate serves as a dedicated point of contact and support for Fellowship examination candidates, ensuring their needs, concerns, and feedback are heard and addressed throughout the examination lifecycle. The role promotes transparency, fairness, and a positive candidate experience.

2. Scope

This role applies to all candidates participating in Fellowship training and examinations administered by the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists. The Candidate Advocate works collaboratively with the Examinations Team and Board of Examiners to resolve candidate issues and improve examination processes.

3. Responsibilities

The Candidate Advocate will:

- Act as a liaison between candidates and the Examinations Office.
- Provide guidance on examination policies, procedures, and candidate rights.
- Receive, document, and escalate candidate concerns or complaints.
- Monitor and report on candidate feedback and trends.
- Ensure confidentiality and impartiality in all interactions.
- Support candidates with special needs or accommodations.

4. Authority

The Candidate Advocate has the authority to:

- Escalate unresolved issues to senior management or relevant committees.

5. Reporting

The Candidate Advocate reports to the **Examinations Manager** in the first instance, and provides regular updates on:

- Candidate feedback and concerns.
- Resolution outcomes.
- Recommendations for process improvements.

6. Term and Review

This role is appointed for a term of 1 year, with performance and impact reviewed annually. The Terms of Reference will be reviewed and updated as needed to reflect changes in policy or practice.

7. Confidentiality and Ethics

The Candidate Advocate must adhere to the organisation's confidentiality policies and ethical standards, ensuring impartiality and respect for all candidates.