



Policy on qualifications and post nominal titles for inclusion on the Register of Veterinarians

1 Definitions

Additional qualifications are qualifications which have been approved by the Veterinary Council for entry on the Register of Veterinarians.

Post nominal titles are letters placed after the name of an individual to indicate that they hold qualifications, offices and honours or are members of organisations.

2 Criteria for the inclusion of additional qualifications on the Register of Veterinarians

A qualification will be approved for entry on the Register if:

- it has relevance to veterinary practice; and
- has been awarded following successful completion of a course of training or study by a body recognised by the Council.¹

A wide interpretation of relevance to veterinary practice will be taken.

A pass in a licensing/registration examination is not considered an additional qualification and will only be included on the Register if this was the basis for New Zealand registration.

Civilian and military decorations and Fellowships of the Royal Society of New Zealand will also be approved for inclusion on the Register of Veterinarians.

2.1 Format for recording qualifications on the Register

The Council's practice is to:

- record the abbreviated name of the qualification, the date of the award and issuing authority, together with any distinctions or honours gained, for the primary qualification by which registration has been gained e.g. BVSc Massey 2002 (Dist)
- record only the abbreviated name of any additional qualifications together with any distinctions or honours gained e.g. BSc (Hons).

3 Guidance on the use of post nominal titles

The Code of Professional Conduct requires veterinarians to act in a manner that promotes the public's trust and confidence in the profession. In promoting services and

¹ Note that for veterinary technical qualifications to be recognised the body concerned normally must be a vet school; veterinary college (eg ANZCVS); veterinary regulator with a training arm (e.g RCVS); or the qualification has been reviewed and accepted by a comparable regulator (such as RCVS).

products, veterinarians must act fairly, represent their capability and competence accurately, not exaggerate the claim or comparison of the service or product over another or overstate their skills and knowledge by using misleading descriptors.

The over use of post nominals can be confusing to the public and create an inflated view of a veterinarian's skills and knowledge.

As such the Council recommends to veterinarians when considering the public display of post nominal qualifications and honorary titles to limit these to:

- Undergraduate or postgraduate veterinary qualifications and Registration Examinations by virtue of which registration or specialist registration is awarded eg BVSc Massey 2004 or BVSc Belgrade 1993, NZNVE 2005.
- Qualifications approved by the Veterinary Council as additional qualifications for inclusion on the Register of Veterinarians.
- Civilian and military decorations and Fellowships of the Royal Society of New Zealand.

Veterinarians choosing not to limit the public display of information in this way must ensure that qualifications are separated from other post nominal titles. For example, with letterhead paper, by placing qualifications at the top of the page and memberships and affiliations at the bottom.

4 What this guidance means

- Membership of professional bodies (such as MRCVS) is not approved for inclusion on the register, unless achieved by examination.
- Memberships and 'non approved' additional qualifications will not appear on the public register and veterinarians are encouraged to refrain from advertising them in their own material. Veterinarians choosing not to limit the public display of post nominal titles in this way must separate approved qualifications and civilian/military decorations from other titles.

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