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ACVS 2021 Phase II Examination
Administration and Contingency Plan
Webinar Q&A
November 30, 2020

These questions were submitted and answered during the webinar. Questions that were answered live are noted. Please view the webinar recording to hear the live answers.

Q: What are the credential requirements for a professional proctor if it is not a Diplomate?

A: They have to proctor as a part of their job; there are some proctors that have actual certifications, others work for a proctoring company and have internal certification. You will just need to provide their information (job title, who they work for, etc.).

Q: During the exam, are we typing our answers, or will we handwrite the answers?

A: Everything is electronic this year—answers will be typed.

Q: I haven't had much luck identifying a source for hiring a professional proctor. Do you know of any companies or resources?

A: The best local resources are typically colleges/universities in the area or a public library. There is no central resource we know of for the country.

Q: Are we going to get a copy of the transcript of these questions and answers?

A: I think so. The session is being recorded.

Q: If a Pearson center happens to not shut down until the day of the exam (less than 24 hours notice to test taker), would we be refunded and would we not be penalized for this in order to take it the following year?

A: You will not be penalized on time as long as you let us know ASAP. If the cancellation is <24 hours in advance, then I would guess Pearson would honor a refund. ACVS policies for refunds remain in place.

Q: Sorry, I lost the sound. What is about December 15, please can you repeat that

A: The exam mock-up so you can get familiar with what the exam will look like will be available on the ACVS website by December 15. You will get an email when it is available.

Q: Can an ACVS Diplomate who is currently on the 2021 exam committee serve as a proctor?

A: Yes.

Q: Is there a chance that some people will take the test at Pearson's and some will take a contingency exam on the test day? Or will all either take it at Pearson's, or all will take it via contingency plan on the test day?

A: It is likely that some people will end up taking it at Pearson, and some will have to use the contingency plan. We are hopeful that the majority of people will be able to take it at Pearson.

Q: Can one person proctor multiple examinees?

A: Yes, as long as the requirements laid out in the contingency plan are followed with regards to candidate distancing, etc.

Q: If we do not have access to our phone, but you say that if the internet cuts out at any point or the exam program shuts down, what is our next step? As the email pdf said to “call” a number... but we don’t have our phones. Is the proctor calling then?

A: Your proctor is in charge of contacting the emergency number in that circumstance.

Q: Can your proctor be your coworker?

A: As long as they are a specialty diplomate and sign all of the confidentiality paperwork, then yes. The reason they can do this is because we have an additional online proctor.

Q: Initially, when we were polled, the ACVS diplomate proctoring could not work in the same practice. Is this still a stipulation to being allowed to proctor? If that is the case, if I am in a multi-location hospital, can I get a diplomate from another location?

A: You can have someone from your practice be your proctor as long as they meet the specialty diplomate requirements.

Q: Are any schools offering a proctor group?

A: Not formally. However, feel free to reach out to diplomates at a nearby university to see if they are willing to proctor you.

Q: I am currently registered to take the exam at a Pearson center. Do I need to come up with a contingency plan and find a proctor just in case the center closes, or can I just stay with my current Pearson center?

A: live answered

Q: I struggled to find a Pearson testing center. I found one a ways away, but their “start-time” for the examination wasn’t until 9:30—is this going to be ok?

A: Yes, that will be fine.

Q: Do we submit this contingency plan as a word document, or what format does this look like? Is there a standard document?

A: The contingency plan is submitted via the registration link. All the required documentation is there.

Q: Since answers need to be typed, do we get more time to answer questions?

A: The practical exam is given as one block of time (188 minutes). You can move freely through the exam during that time. The case-based continues to be timed with 2-6 minutes per “page”. The exam was written with the intention that it would be typed and timing was designed for that method.

Q: Why not just offer the test as a contingency plan now? Why wait 2 months to make that decision when there is so much uncertainty surrounding this?

A: Pearson is still the preferred testing location because it provides the greatest equity in equipment and testing experience.

Q: Does all of these also apply to the phase 1 examination?

A: No, Phase I is still under discussion.

Q: When is the last date to activate the contingency plan, not necessarily submit the plan? Additionally, if the contingency plan is activated, but an additional circumstance arises, such as the contraction of COVID, which would inhibit our ability to take the exam?

A: The last date to activate the contingency plan is ~~January~~ February 18. You can defer without penalty up to the day of the exam as long as you notify ACVS immediately.

Q: Is there a penalty for spelling since we are typing?

A: No

Q: What if the contingency plan we submit is not approved?

A: We will work with you to figure out where the problem with your plan lies.

Q: If the proctor is going to not be in the room you are taking your exam but standing outside the door to “man the door”, are there requirements for them to come in at certain points to check in with the online proctor?

A: The online proctor and in-person proctor are separate; however, we will ask the in-person proctor to check in periodically if they are not in the room the whole time.

Q: MAC or PC or either one

A: Either.

Q: If it goes to a contingency plan, will our original registration fees apply? (for instance, with phase 1 this year, the fee was refunded, and they had to re-register)

A: live answered

Q: Why will ACVS “force” us to write at the contingency slot if we still have access to a Pearson site—if we are not in the USA where COVID is out of control.

A: You have the option to waive the contingency option.

Q: Are multiple candidates able to use the same proctor at the same institution?

A: Yes.

Q: If Pearson cancels our exam after February 18—can we still enact a contingency plan, or are we forced to defer?

A: This will probably be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Q: Do you project this will affect the outcome of the exam?

A: The exam was always going to be online this year.

Q: If I choose not to wait and want to defer now. Can I do that now?

A: live answered

Q: What is the ratio of test takers to proctors that is required? To follow up on the last question.

A: No more than 10 test takers per proctor. Multiple candidates require the proctor to be in the room for the whole exam, and a second proctor would be needed to accompany for bathroom breaks.

Q: what if one or both proctors become unavailable just before the exam (get sick)?

A: That is why we are recommending you identify 3.

Q: If I understood correctly, the proctor can be a diplomate from any college? Not just surgery?

A: live answered

Q: What about people with disabilities?

A: Kim will contact you with your specific accommodation information.

Q: Sorry, I missed the timeline. What was the date in February that is the last day to defer the exam?

A: You can defer up to the day of the exam as long as you notify ACVS immediately. Pearson seats must be canceled 24h in advance.

Q: If I defer, can I rollover my test registration fee, or do I have to request a refund from ACVS?

A: live answered

Q: Sorry, I probably missed this, but if we choose or are forced to defer for COVID-related issues, will our registration fee roll over to the following year, or will we lose those fees?

A: You will need to request a refund from ACVS if you elect to defer.

Q: Does a house/apartment work for the location for a contingency, or do we have to use a place of work, etc. My concern is reliable internet.

A: As long as your proctors are willing to go to a private residence, that is fine.

Q: Worst case scenario that could happen during a contingency option: computer breaks/wifi goes down. Is there a plan or a solution if that happens?

A: Make friends with your IT person. There will be an emergency number for your proctor to call. However, this is one reason why we have Pearson as the preferred option.

Q: Is there any compensation for being a proctor?

A: live answered

Q: So if I continue with Pearson and the Jan 18 deadline to activate the contingency has passed, and in early February, my testing center closes, is my only option to defer the exam at that point? And if that's the case, then should we just activate the contingency plan?

A: February 18 is the last date to activate a contingency plan. If everything in your area is shutting down, you may want to activate it.

Q: What happens if there are unforeseen technical difficulties experienced during the exam, especially in a contingency location, where the internet connection may not be as stable as a

Pearson centre?

A: live answered. There will be contact information provided for technical difficulties.

Q: In case you take the test with a proctor who is supplying the computer?

A: If you are taking the exam as part of the contingency plan, you are responsible for providing all hardware.

Q: Deferment is only available if COVID related issues?

A: No, this year deferment is available for almost any reason if you request it.

Q: I'm concerned about the bias of the online proctor, both in examining the room requirements (an office, for example, that has bookshelves behind us or something like that), how will we know in advance if our room is acceptable per ACVS standards?

A: This is why you also have an in-person proctor.

Q: The Pearson system for checking testing locations is not very efficient; it only lets you check 3 locations at a time. It's rather onerous to be checking dozens of locations frequently; how frequently should we be looking for test slots close to us and ho

A: Every few days is recommended to check.

Q: But what happens with the time clock if the internet drops out?

A: live answered

Q: Examity doesn't have a 'register now' button, but it asks me to submit a contact request to be contacted...is that the normal procedure?

A: live answered

Q: What system does Pearson use, so I know what to look for on Examity? i.e., canvas vs. blackboard, vs. moodle, etc.

A: live answered

Q: I am working in a small practice. Is there a list of universities already organizing proctoring by any chance...?

A: There is nothing official being organized, but we encourage you to contact a diplomate at your local university.

Q: the website says you have to log in to Examity through our learning management system (LMS) and the Examity dashboard is available through that LMS.

A: We'll have to give you more details when available.

Q: Can you go through the timeline of events once more?

A: live answered

Q: Is there a recommended monitor size?

A: Minimum hardware recommendations are listed in the documentation on the website.

Q: What are the credential requirements for a professional proctor that is not a specialist? Can I ask the medical director (who is non-vet personnel) to be my proctor as long as she is not

related to me? Also, can I have different proctors for different sections?

A: You can have different proctors for different sections. Your in-person proctor must be a boarded diplomate.

Q: You mentioned no web extensions - do you mean just popup blocker, or what other extensions are you referring to?

A: No spell-checkers, etc. Please refer to the documentation for the instructions from Examiity.

Q: If we defer Phase II to next year, can we still take Phase I in April 2021?

A: Yes, as long as you have accepted credentials.

Q: Can we enact a contingency plan without Pearson canceling? i.e., due to regional covid concerns near the Feb 18th deadline?

A: If you have a seat, you are expected to use it.

Q: Currently, I have organized to take the test out of state as there are no local testing centers, and I am also organizing a contingency plan, but it seems like there is very little risk of not being able to take the test with a contingency plan, and moderate

A: live answered

Q: But what that person means is if Pearson cancels after Feb 18th for some random reason, and we didn't activate the contingency, how do we handle that?

A: If you have an approved contingency plan, we will look at this on a case-by-case basis. If you do not have an approved contingency plan, you will have to defer.

Q: We had our hospital director proctor the critical care board exam, but they are still not able to proctor Phase II, correct?

A: Correct. The requirements for proctors have been approved by the ACVS Board of Regents and will not change.

Q: So if a snowstorm closes my testing center the morning of, is there any way to still take the test? Or do I have to wait another year?

A: live answered

Q: Thank you for offering this contingency plan option

A: You are welcome.

Q: ACVS reserved the right to cancel the test up to February 22nd. What circumstances would cause you to cancel it entirely?

A: Nationwide shutdown, basically.

Q: Can we activate our contingency plan as a "fail-safe" but still plan to go to Pearson? Or does activation of the contingency plan mean we have to use the contingency?

A: live answered

Q: Is it not possible that for those of us who may not know anyone available directly in the area that you (ACVS) can ask for volunteer diplomates in several regions who would be willing to

help? It's clear some people are having a hard time finding a proctor?

A: live answered

Q: Can we only activate the contingency plan if Pearson closes or cancels our seats for those of us registered for Pearson?

A: Correct. If you are registered within the designated travel radius.

Q: I don't totally understand the Jan 25th thing. If we have a Pearson seat, why can't we keep it? It just seems easier.

A: This was a Board of Regents decision if the pandemic becomes severe again.

Q: Will you put the email/phone number for the contact person in case of emergency (snowstorm near test date, sudden Pearson closure, etc.) on the website?

A: Yes. ACVS will provide emergency contact information on the website. Live answered.

Q: Can you please post your number in the Q&A, Dr. Krotscheck?

A: live answered

Q: Would there be a situation where Phase II would be offered later like it was for Phase I, though?

A: live answered

Q: Does this raise the question to convert to a multiple-choice exam for phase II?

A: No, that is not currently being considered an option given the nature of the material.