

Veterinary medicine mock interview

A seven station MMI circuit, ready to print and run in an afternoon.

MOCK INTERVIEW 1 MMI CIRCUIT 7 STATIONS 7 MINUTES PER STATION

BEFORE YOU START

How to run this mock

- 1 Set up seven stations, one room or clearly separated space each, with a door card from the back of this pack on the door and one interviewer holding the matching station page.
- 2 Run students round in order: 7 minutes in the station, 2 minutes to move on. Seven students fit in one 63 minute circuit, twenty one if you start three at different points.
- 3 Interviewers mark all four domains at every station on the 1 to 4 scale, and write one line of evidence before the next student comes in, while it is still fresh.
- 4 Collect the station pages, copy the marks onto the scoring summary, and give every student one strength and one thing to work on. The debrief is the part that changes results.

MARKED THE SAME WAY AT EVERY STATION

The four scoring domains

M Motivation and insight

Knows what the work involves beyond animals: early starts, hard graft, money and death.

- 1 Loves animals, and has looked no further.
- 4 Personal, tested, honest about the hard parts.

C Communication

Explains and listens well to an owner or farmer who is worried, rushed or short of money.

- 1 Speaks only about the animal.
- 4 Clear and kind, and hears what is unsaid.

R Reflection and self awareness

Learns from experience rather than listing it, and knows how they react when it is hard.

- 1 Lists the experience, learns nothing.
- 4 Says what changed, and what still needs work.

V Professional values and ethics

Holds animal welfare, the owner's circumstances and public health together.

- 1 Picks one side, ignores who else it hits.
- 4 Weighs welfare against what is possible.

MOTIVATION FOR VETERINARY MEDICINE

Why do you want to be a vet?

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- What have you seen or done that tested the idea rather than confirmed it?
- Which part of a vet's week do you think you would look forward to least?

WHAT A STRONG CANDIDATE COVERS: A LISTENING AID, NOT A MODEL ANSWER. DO NOT READ IT OUT.

- A specific starting point rather than a slogan: something they saw, did or were responsible for, with enough detail that it could only be theirs.
- Evidence the idea has been tested against the real job, through placements, volunteering, reading or talking to people who do it.
- An understanding that most of the week is routine, physical and full of owners, rather than rare and dramatic cases.
- Why the mix of science, hands and people suits them in particular, rather than why the profession is admirable in general.
- Knows that loving animals is the starting point and not the argument, and says what they bring beyond it.

NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

Almost every candidate will say they love animals. Push gently past it with the follow ups and mark what is underneath. A student who admits their picture of the job is still incomplete, and says how they are filling it in, is doing well.

MARK ALL FOUR DOMAINS

	Little evidence	Some evidence	Clear evidence	Strong evidence
Motivation and insight	1	2	3	4
Communication	1	2	3	4
Reflection and self awareness	1	2	3	4
Professional values and ethics	1	2	3	4

EVIDENCE: ONE LINE, IN THEIR WORDS, BEFORE THE NEXT STUDENT COMES IN

WORK EXPERIENCE AND REFLECTION

Tell us about something you saw on a placement or in a job that changed how you think about working with animals.

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- What did you think before that day, and what do you think now?
- Has it changed anything about how you would want to work?

WHAT A STRONG CANDIDATE COVERS: A LISTENING AID, NOT A MODEL ANSWER. DO NOT READ IT OUT.

- One occasion described concretely, with enough detail that they were clearly there and paying attention.
- Says plainly what they believed beforehand, without embarrassment about having believed it.
- Names what did the changing: something they watched, something they were told, or something they were asked to do themselves.
- The change is about the job rather than only about their own feelings on the day, although both can be true.
- Carries the learning forward into how they would want to work, not just how it felt at the time.

NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

This is answerable from kennels, a stable, a farm, a shop or a rescue centre, and a student who never got near a veterinary practice is not at a disadvantage. Mark what they noticed, not where they were standing.

MARK ALL FOUR DOMAINS

	Little evidence	Some evidence	Clear evidence	Strong evidence
Motivation and insight	1	2	3	4
Communication	1	2	3	4
Reflection and self awareness	1	2	3	4
Professional values and ethics	1	2	3	4

EVIDENCE: ONE LINE, IN THEIR WORDS, BEFORE THE NEXT STUDENT COMES IN

ETHICAL REASONING

A dog needs an operation that would very probably fix it. The owner cannot afford it and has no insurance. What are the issues here, and what would you want to happen?

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- If the owner cannot pay, who should?
- Does it change anything if the owner has three other healthy dogs at home?

WHAT A STRONG CANDIDATE COVERS: A LISTENING AID, NOT A MODEL ANSWER. DO NOT READ IT OUT.

- Holds the animal's suffering and the owner's circumstances at the same time, rather than choosing one and dismissing the other.
- Knows a practice is a business with wages to pay, so free treatment for one owner is paid for by somebody.
- Looks for middle ground: a cheaper option that still treats the pain, a payment plan, a charity, or asking a senior colleague.
- Faces the possibility that the kindest option available is to end the animal's suffering rather than leave it untreated.
- Reaches a position and gives a reason for it, rather than sitting on the fence to stay safe.

NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

There is no right answer and no veterinary knowledge is needed. Mark whether the student can hold welfare and money together, and whether they can find a middle option instead of treating it as treat or put to sleep.

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THE PROFESSION AND THE PUBLIC

Some diseases pass between animals and people. What does that mean for the job of a vet, and why should it matter to someone who does not own an animal?

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- Can you give an example of a disease that moves between animals and people?
- Where would a vet fit in if a new one appeared in this country?

WHAT A STRONG CANDIDATE COVERS: A LISTENING AID, NOT A MODEL ANSWER. DO NOT READ IT OUT.

- Explains the idea in their own words: an infection that can move between animals and people, in either direction.
- Offers at least one real example, and is honest where they are unsure of the detail rather than inventing it.
- Sees that vets protect human health as well as animal health, through vaccination, surveillance, food hygiene and advice to owners.
- Connects animal health, human health and the surroundings they share, rather than treating them as three separate problems.
- Says what they do not know without guessing, which is the honest answer to a science question at seventeen.

NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

Accuracy on any one disease matters far less than whether the student can see past the individual animal to public health. Do not correct a wrong detail in the middle of the answer; note it and mark the reasoning.

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COMMUNICATION ROLE PLAY

An owner has just been handed a written estimate for their dog's surgery that is far more than they expected. Speak to them now.

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- What would you do if they asked you to do it cheaper as a favour?
- What would you want them to leave the room knowing?

BRIEF FOR THE PERSON PLAYING THE PART

Your part	You own a six year old spaniel that needs surgery. You expected a fraction of this figure and you feel ambushed and embarrassed. You are not rude. If the candidate is warm and asks, you admit money is very tight this year.
Open with	That cannot be right. I only brought him in because he was limping.
If handled well	Calm down, ask what the options are, and say you would like time to think it over at home.
If handled badly	Go quiet, then say you feel judged and ask whether they think you should not have a dog.

WHAT A STRONG CANDIDATE COVERS: A LISTENING AID, NOT A MODEL ANSWER. DO NOT READ IT OUT.

- Lets the owner say how they feel before explaining anything.
- Explains plainly what the money is for, without jargon and without apologising for it.
- Asks about their situation rather than assuming they cannot pay.
- Offers real next steps: options, a payment plan, or time to think.

NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

Two people run this station: one marks, one plays the owner from the brief. Mark the conversation, not the number.

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DATA AND PROBLEM SOLVING

Look at the table. Which option would you talk through first with this owner, and what else would you need to know?

THREE TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR THE SAME KNEE INJURY IN ONE DOG

Option	Estimate (pounds)	Full use again	Recovery (weeks)
Rest and pain relief	180	30%	12
Keyhole repair	1,400	75%	8
Full surgical repair	2,600	90%	10

These figures are invented for this exercise. They are not prices or outcomes from any real practice and should not be quoted as such.

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- What happens to the total if the cheapest option does not work?
- What would you measure that this table does not show?

WHAT A STRONG CANDIDATE COVERS: A LISTENING AID, NOT A MODEL ANSWER. DO NOT READ IT OUT.

- Reads the whole table before judging it, including how long each option takes to recover from.
- Notices that the cheapest option is also the least likely to work, so cost and outcome have to be weighed together.
- Sees that a second attempt after a failed first one costs more in total than starting with the better option.
- Names what the table cannot say, such as the dog's age, its pain in the meantime, and what the owner can actually afford.
- Reaches a recommendation, and remembers the decision belongs to the owner rather than to the vet.

NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

Print this station page so the candidate can see the table while they talk. No option is the right answer. Mark whether they weigh cost against outcome and stay aware of what they do not know.

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PERSONAL INSIGHT

Tell us about a time you kept going with something when you were worn out, physically and emotionally. What got you through it?

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- Looking back, should you have stopped instead?
- What would you do differently the next time it happens?

WHAT A STRONG CANDIDATE COVERS: A LISTENING AID, NOT A MODEL ANSWER. DO NOT READ IT OUT.

- A real example with enough detail to be theirs, whether that is a job, a sport, caring for someone or an early start in bad weather.
- Honest about what it actually felt like, rather than presenting themselves as someone who never gets tired.
- Names what carried them: a reason, a routine, a person, or simply finishing what they had promised.
- Knows the difference between pushing through and ignoring a limit, and can say which of the two this was.
- Connects it to a job with early starts, long days and emergencies, without overclaiming that they would be fine.

NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

Veterinary work is physically hard and emotionally draining, so this station is where a school listens for stamina and self knowledge. If a student describes something genuinely distressing, take it gently and move on when they are ready.

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Scoring summary

One row per student. Copy each mark across from the station sheets, then total the row. Every station is marked out of 16, so the circuit totals 112.

M Motivation and insight C Communication R Reflection and self awareness V Professional values and ethics

[illegible]

THE SCALE, AT EVERY STATION

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|---|
| 1 | Little evidence | Barely addressed, or addressed in a way that raises a concern. Would need substantial work before a real interview. |
| 2 | Some evidence | Touched on it, but thinly or only when prompted. The material is there and the answer is not. |
| 3 | Clear evidence | Covered it well and unprompted. The kind of answer that does the candidate no harm at a real interview. |
| 4 | Strong evidence | Covered it with insight and specifics, and made the interviewer want to hear more. Rare, and should stay rare. |

Briefing for interviewers

Read this once before the circuit starts. It takes about three minutes, and it is the difference between a mock that flatters everyone and one that tells a student something they can act on.

You do not need to be a vet to interview

You are not judging veterinary knowledge. You are judging whether a seventeen year old can think out loud, listen, reflect honestly and hold the animal, the owner and the cost in mind at the same time. Everything you need is on your station page, and the four domains mean the same thing at every station in the circuit.

Before the circuit starts

- Read your station page twice, including the two follow up prompts, and check the door card outside matches your station.
- Have the page, a pen and a watch or a phone timer in front of you. Someone will call the changeover, but keep your own eye on the time.
- Decide with the coordinator who calls time if you are running the role play station, because that station needs two people.

Running your station

- Ask the question exactly as written, so every student gets the same station.
- Then stop talking. Let a silence run for a good five seconds before you prompt: thinking time is not a fault.
- Use a follow up only if the candidate has stalled or has finished early. Two prompts is the maximum.
- Do not teach, correct or react. Nodding along warmly to one student and sitting stony faced with the next is the most common way a circuit becomes unfair.
- Keep the listening aid beside you, not in front of the candidate. It is there to help you hear a thin answer, and it is not a checklist to tick off or read aloud.

Marking

- Mark all four domains, every time, even at a station that leans on two of them. A candidate who communicates beautifully and says nothing can score 4 and 1 on the same answer.
- Mark immediately, before the next student walks in. Marks written at the end of the afternoon are memories of the strongest and the weakest, and nothing in between.
- Write one line of evidence per student, in their words if you can. That line is what makes the debrief useful, and it is the part students remember.
- Use the whole scale. If everyone gets a 3, the circuit has told the student nothing.

Afterwards

- Hand your station pages to the coordinator with every mark and evidence line filled in.
- Flag anything that worried you, for example a student who was very distressed or an answer that raised a safeguarding concern, to the member of staff running the day rather than to the student.
- If you can stay for ten minutes, the students get far more from hearing one strength and one improvement from you directly than from a score.

Why do you want to be a vet?

Take a moment to think before you answer. The interviewer may ask you more.

**Tell us about
something you
saw on a
placement or in a
job that changed
how you think
about working
with animals.**

Take a moment to think before you answer. The interviewer may ask you more.

A dog needs an operation that would very probably fix it. The owner cannot afford it and has no insurance. What are the issues here, and what would you want to happen?

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Some diseases pass between animals and people. What does that mean for the job of a vet, and why should it matter to someone who does not own an animal?

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An owner has just been handed a written estimate for their dog's surgery that is far more than they expected. Speak to them now.

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**Look at the table.
Which option
would you talk
through first with
this owner, and
what else would
you need to know?**

Take a moment to think before you answer. The interviewer may ask you more.

**Tell us about a
time you kept
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something when
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out, physically
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What got you
through it?**

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