FOR TEACHERS AND CAREERS LEADS

Veterinary medicine mock interview

A second circuit, with no question repeated from mock 1.

MOCK INTERVIEW 2 · 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 veterinary medicine rather than human medicine, or a degree in animal science?

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- What can a vet do that a very good animal scientist cannot?
- What appeals to you about treating people's animals rather than treating people?

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

- Knows roughly what the other two routes involve, rather than dismissing them on a guess.
- Names something only the veterinary job offers them, such as the clinical decision, the range of species, or owning the case from start to finish.
- Accepts the trade offs honestly, including the hours, the pay against the debt, and how much of the week is spent with owners rather than animals.
- Makes the comparison personal rather than turning it into a ranking of which course is better.
- Has done something to test the choice, and can say what it showed them.

NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

The point is the comparison, not a defence of the profession. A student who has genuinely considered another route and can say why they set it aside is stronger than one who has never thought about it.

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 a commitment you kept when it was cold, early or inconvenient. What did it teach you?

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- Was there a morning you nearly did not go, and what happened?
- How did the people around you react on the days you found hardest?

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

- A specific commitment kept over time, whether that is lambing, kennels, a stable, a paper round or a weekend job.
- Says what was actually hard about it, rather than describing the setting and leaving it there.
- Shows they turned up for someone or something else, not only for the personal statement.
- Draws a lesson about routine and reliability that applies to a course and a job with the same demands.

NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

Placements in veterinary practices are hard to get, so a stable, a kennel, a farm, a shop or a volunteering rota all count fully here. Mark the commitment and the reflection, not the setting.

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	Little evidence	Some evidence	Clear evidence	Strong evidence
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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

An owner asks a vet to put down a healthy young dog because they are moving house and cannot take it with them. What are the issues, and what would you want to happen?

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- What if the owner says they will abandon the dog if the vet refuses?
- Should a vet ever be required to do something they believe is wrong?

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

- Recognises that the animal has done nothing wrong, and that a healthy life is not the vet's to end lightly.
- Takes the owner seriously enough to find out what is really going on before answering.
- Looks for alternatives first: rehoming, a rescue, family, or simply time to arrange something.
- Understands the vet can decline, and that declining carries a risk to the animal that cannot simply be ignored.
- Reaches a position and gives a reason for it, soberly and without melodrama.

NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

Handle this calmly. It is a real and fairly common request rather than a shock question. If a student becomes upset, pause, offer them a moment, and let them either return to it or move on.

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

THE PROFESSION AND THE PUBLIC

What do you think is different about working in farm practice compared with treating pets, and which of the two would suit you better?

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- How does the way a decision gets made change when the animal is part of a business?
- What would you find hardest about the one you did not choose?

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

- Knows the practical differences: where the work happens, the hours, the driving, the weather and the physical demands.
- Sees that a farm animal is part of a business, so decisions weigh the herd and the money as well as the individual animal.
- Does not treat farm work as less caring, or pet work as less serious.
- Makes a choice and gives a personal reason, while accepting they may change their mind at university.

NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

Most sixth formers have only ever seen one of the two. A student who says plainly that they have never been on a farm, and then reasons about the difference anyway, is answering the question properly.

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COMMUNICATION ROLE PLAY

A ten year old is in the consulting room. Their rabbit is very ill and may not get better. Speak to them now.

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- How would you change it if the child's parent were not in the room?
- What would you not say to a child this age?

BRIEF FOR THE PERSON PLAYING THE PART

Your part	You are ten years old and your rabbit, Pepper, is at the vet. You are frightened and you ask direct questions, including whether he is going to die. You are not naughty, only young. Say you promise to look after him better if he comes home.
Open with	Is Pepper going to be all right? I fed him this morning like I always do.
If handled well	Ask a sensible question about what happens next, and say you are glad they told you the truth.
If handled badly	Go quiet and ask whether it is your fault, or repeat the same question in a smaller voice.

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

- Gets down to the child's level, in words a ten year old actually uses.
- Tells the truth simply, without false hope and without bluntness.
- Checks what the child has understood, and lets them ask.
- Leaves room for the adult without talking over the child.

NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

One person marks, one plays the child from the brief. Mark the pitch and the honesty, not whether they sound like a vet.

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DATA AND PROBLEM SOLVING

Look at the table. What does it suggest about vaccination in these areas, and what would you want to know before acting on it?

VACCINATION UPTAKE AND DISEASE OUTBREAKS, FOUR AREAS, ONE YEAR

Area	Animals registered	Vaccinated (%)	Outbreaks
North	4,200	82	3
East	3,900	61	11
South	5,600	88	2
West	900	58	4

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

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- Would you say low uptake caused those outbreaks?
- Which area would you visit first, and why that one?

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

- Reads the table accurately first, including how many animals each area covers.
- Spots that outbreaks are highest where uptake is lowest, and calls that a pattern rather than something proven.
- Resists the leap from a link to a cause, and can name something else that might explain it.
- Notices that the smallest area has few animals, so a single outbreak moves its figures a long way.
- Suggests finding out why uptake is low there before telling owners to do better.

NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

Print this station page so the candidate can see the table while they talk. Do not supply the point about cause and correlation. Wait, and mark whether they reach it themselves.

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

PERSONAL INSIGHT

Tell us about a time you had to tell someone something they did not want to hear. How did you go about it?

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- What did you notice about the way they took it?
- What would you say differently if you had that conversation again?

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

- A real occasion, described from both sides rather than only from their own.
- Says how they prepared, including where and when they chose to do it.
- Shows they said it plainly rather than burying it, and then stopped to listen.
- Honest about the part that went badly, and what they took from that.
- Connects it to a job where bad news is delivered most weeks.

NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

Students often reach for a small example and then apologise for it. A modest example handled thoughtfully marks higher here than a dramatic one described from the outside.

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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

	Station 1				Station 2				Station 3				Station 4				Station 5				Station 6				Station 7				Total
STUDENT	M	C	R	V	M	C	R	V	M	C	R	V	M	C	R	V	M	C	R	V	M	C	R	V	M	C	R	V	/ 112

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 veterinary medicine rather than human medicine, or a degree in animal science?

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

Tell us about a commitment you kept when it was cold, early or inconvenient. What did it teach you?

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

STATION 3 OF 7

ETHICAL REASONING

An owner asks a vet to put down a healthy young dog because they are moving house and cannot take it with them. What are the issues, and what would you want to happen?

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

What do you think is different about working in farm practice compared with treating pets, and which of the two would suit you better?

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

A ten year old is in the consulting room. Their rabbit is very ill and may not get better. Speak to them now.

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

Look at the table. What does it suggest about vaccination in these areas, and what would you want to know before acting on it?

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STATION 7 OF 7

PERSONAL INSIGHT

Tell us about a time you had to tell someone something they did not want to hear. How did you go about it?

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