

# Veterinary medicine mock interview

A fourth circuit, leaning towards farm work, food and antibiotic use.

MOCK INTERVIEW 4   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

## What have you learned about this job that puts other people off it, and why has it not put you off?

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- Who told you that, and did you believe them at the time?
- Which of those things do you think you have not fully understood yet?

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

- Names things that genuinely deter people: the hours, the pay against the debt, the emotional load, complaints, and the physical risk.
- Shows the knowledge came from somewhere real, such as a vet they spoke to or a placement they did.
- Answers the second half honestly, rather than claiming that none of it bothers them at all.
- Gives a reason for staying that is personal and specific rather than a slogan.

## NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

This is the motivation station in disguise and it is hard to answer from a script. A student who admits one of the deterrents does worry them, and says how they are testing it, is answering 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

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## WORK EXPERIENCE AND REFLECTION

**Tell us about handling an animal whose behaviour you could not read. What did you do, and what did you learn from it?**

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- How did you know your first approach was not working?
- What would you want somebody to have told you beforehand?

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

- A concrete occasion with a real animal, from a yard, a kennel, a farm, a shop or at home.
- Describes what the animal was doing, rather than labelling it difficult and moving on.
- Says what they changed: their speed, their position, their voice, or asking someone else to take over.
- Takes safety seriously, theirs and the animal's, without being asked to.
- Draws a transferable lesson about reading a situation before acting in it.

## NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

A pet at home counts, so a student with no veterinary placement is not disadvantaged here. Mark whether they observed before acting, and whether they knew when to hand over.

## 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               |
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## ETHICAL REASONING

**A farmer wants to treat a whole herd with antibiotics rather than only the animals that are ill. What are the issues, and what would you want to happen?**

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- Who else is affected by that decision, beyond this farm?
- What if the farmer says he will lose money without it?

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

- Understands the basic idea that using antibiotics widely makes them work less well over time.
- Takes the farmer's position seriously: sick animals, real money, and a business that has to survive.
- Sees the people downstream, on other farms and in human medicine, who never had a say in this decision.
- Looks for a workable route: treating the sick animals, testing, improving housing or hygiene, and reviewing it.
- Holds a position under pressure without becoming preachy about it.

## NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

No science detail is expected beyond the idea that overuse breeds resistance. Mark whether the student can defend a public interest to someone whose livelihood sits on the other side of 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               |
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## THE PROFESSION AND THE PUBLIC

## What part do vets play in the food we eat, and why does the public need to be able to trust them?

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- What would happen to that trust if a vet signed off something they had not checked?
- Does the public know vets do this work, and does it matter if they do not?

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

- Knows vets work beyond the consulting room: on farms, in abattoirs, and in inspection and certification.
- Connects animal health to human health through food safety, rather than treating them separately.
- Sees that certifying something is a promise made on behalf of the public, not a piece of paperwork.
- Understands why independence matters when the person paying wants a particular answer.
- Admits the gaps in what they know rather than inventing detail to fill them.

## NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

Most students have never thought about this side of the profession at all. A candidate who reasons their way towards it during the station is doing exactly what is being tested.

## MARK ALL FOUR DOMAINS

|                                | Little evidence | Some evidence | Clear evidence | Strong evidence |
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## COMMUNICATION ROLE PLAY

## A farmer disagrees with the advice to isolate part of the herd while tests are done. Speak to them now.

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- What would you do if they simply refused at the end?
- What would you write down afterwards, and why?

## BRIEF FOR THE PERSON PLAYING THE PART

|                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Your part        | You farm beef cattle and have done so for thirty years. Isolating a group now costs you time, space and money, and you think the tests are a formality. You are blunt but fair, and you respect anybody who listens before arguing. |
| Open with        | I have kept cattle since before you were born. This will cost me a fortune for nothing.                                                                                                                                             |
| If handled well  | Agree to isolate the group for now, if they tell you honestly how long it will take.                                                                                                                                                |
| If handled badly | Say they are only following a rule book, and that you will ring their practice and complain.                                                                                                                                        |

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

- Listens to the objection in full before answering it.
- Explains the reason for isolating in farming terms, not textbook ones.
- Takes the cost and the disruption seriously rather than brushing past.
- Holds the advice while looking for a version he can live with.

## NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

One person marks, one plays the farmer from the brief. Mark whether they stay firm and respectful at once, not whether they win.

## MARK ALL FOUR DOMAINS

|                                | Little evidence | Some evidence | Clear evidence | Strong evidence |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Motivation and insight         | 1               | 2             | 3              | 4               |
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## DATA AND PROBLEM SOLVING

**Look at the table. What would you say to the farm with the highest figures, and what would you want to know first?**

## ANTIBIOTIC USE AND RESISTANT SAMPLES ON FOUR FARMS, ONE YEAR

| Farm | Animals | Antibiotic use (index) | Resistant samples (%) |
|------|---------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| W    | 260     | 18                     | 9                     |
| X    | 410     | 47                     | 26                    |
| Y    | 150     | 51                     | 11                    |
| Z    | 380     | 9                      | 5                     |

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

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- One farm does not fit the pattern. What might explain it?
- What would you want to see that this table does not show?

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

- Reads both columns before judging any farm, and notices the herds are different sizes.
- Sees that the farms using most antibiotic tend to show most resistance, and calls that a pattern rather than proof.
- Asks what the farms were treating, since a farm with sicker animals may have had little choice.
- Notices the farm that does not fit the pattern and asks what is different about it.
- Suggests a next step that begins with a conversation rather than a telling off.

## NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

Print this station page so the candidate can see the table. No farming knowledge is needed. Mark whether they hold the pattern and its limits at once, and whether the farmer is treated as somebody to work with.

## MARK ALL FOUR DOMAINS

|                                | Little evidence | Some evidence | Clear evidence | Strong evidence |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Motivation and insight         | 1               | 2             | 3              | 4               |
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## PERSONAL INSIGHT

**Tell us about something practical you were not good at and had to get better at. How did you go about it?**

IF THEY STALL OR FINISH EARLY, YOU MAY ASK

- How did you know you had improved, rather than simply felt better about it?
- Who watched you do it, and what did they tell you?

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

- Picks something genuinely practical: a hand skill, an instrument, a sport, or a task at work.
- Says plainly how bad they were at the start, without hedging about it.
- Describes deliberate practice and feedback, rather than simply doing it more often.
- Has a way of measuring the improvement that is not only their own opinion.
- Connects it to a degree assessed on what their hands can do as well as on what they know.

## NOTE FOR THE INTERVIEWER

Veterinary work is a practical craft, so this station is really about whether a student can be taught. Mark how they took correction, not how impressive the skill was.

## MARK ALL FOUR DOMAINS

|                                | Little evidence | Some evidence | Clear evidence | Strong evidence |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
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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

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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.

**What have you learned about this job that puts other people off it, and why has it not put you off?**

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

**Tell us about  
handling an  
animal whose  
behaviour you  
could not read.  
What did you do,  
and what did you  
learn from it?**

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

**A farmer wants to treat a whole herd with antibiotics rather than only the animals that are ill. 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 part do vets  
play in the food  
we eat, and why  
does the public  
need to be able to  
trust them?**

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

**A farmer disagrees with the advice to isolate part of the herd while tests are done. Speak to them now.**

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

**Look at the table.  
What would you  
say to the farm  
with the highest  
figures, and what  
would you want to  
know first?**

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

**Tell us about  
something  
practical you were  
not good at and  
had to get better  
at. How did you go  
about it?**

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