

4.2.2 Appendix F – AVMA -COE Emergency Conditions Policy

The provisions in the policy only apply under Emergency Conditions, as designated by the AVMA-COE.

Emergency Conditions are defined as situations where, in the view of the AVMA-COE, the usual AVMA-COE site visit operations cannot be reasonably undertaken. The first of these emergency conditions occurred in March of 2020, where COVID-19 caused the need for the AVMA-COE to conduct site visits that are audio and/or audiovisual in whole or in part (“virtual site visits”). For the purposes of this policy, examples of emergency conditions include, but are not limited to, pandemics, large scale natural disasters, and military conflicts.

The AVMA-COE, at its discretion, may designate the Emergency Conditions Policy to apply globally, to an individual country, or to a particular region within a country.

The Council will notify communities of interest when the Emergency Conditions Policy is in effect. The Council will reevaluate the plan on an as-needed basis, but no later than at each biannual Council meeting until the policy is no longer in effect.

The Accreditation Policies and Procedures Manual of the AVMA Council on Education remains the primary source document for policies and procedures of the AVMA-COE. The following policy modifications are designed for use in Emergency Conditions only. All other aspects of the AVMA-COE Policies and Procedures Manual continue to apply.

Assignment of an Accreditation Risk Category

Under Emergency Conditions, Colleges will be divided into risk categories, based on the following Accreditation Risk Categories Definitions:

Risk Category	Definition
Risk Category 1	New colleges on the AVMA-COE pathway to receipt of a Letter of Reasonable Assurance.
Risk Category 2:	Colleges on Provisional Accreditation Colleges on Probationary Accreditation Colleges Accredited with Minor Deficiencies Colleges on Terminal Accreditation Colleges with focused site visits scheduled by the AVMA-COE
Risk Category 3	Accredited Colleges
Risk Category 4	Colleges outside of the US and Canada seeking accreditation.

The AVMA-COE will use the assigned risk category under emergency conditions for risk-based contingency planning.

Site Visits

Upon authorization of AVMA Council on Education, a site visit may occur through audio and/or audiovisual means, in whole or part.

The functions of the virtual comprehensive site visit and the virtual focused site visit are the same as those of the comprehensive site visit and the focused site visit. Although the conduct of the virtual site visit is similar to that of the non-virtual site visit, it differs in adjustment to its modalities.

In the case where a virtual site visit is conducted, an in-person site visit will occur at the College within a period not to exceed 18 months. The Council may grant an extension of up to an additional 12 months to this time period for (Emergency Conditions related) cause.

If site visits are to be conducted virtually, AVMA-COE staff, the Chair of the Site Visit team, and the College will work collaboratively to determine the most appropriate modalities and Site Visit schedule to facilitate the visit.

Risk Category	Site Visit
Risk category 1	The AVMA-COE will work individually with the College to address accreditation issues. Options include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay of the scheduled site visit • Virtual site visit to be followed by an in-person site visit within 18 months The AVMA-COE will discuss the options with the College and decide how to proceed.
Risk category 2	Options are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay of the scheduled site visit • Virtual site visit to be followed by an in-person site visit within 18 months The AVMA-COE will discuss the options with the College and decide how to proceed.
Risk category 3	Options are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay of the scheduled site visit • Virtual site visit to be followed by an in-person site visit within 18 months The AVMA-COE will discuss the options with the College and decide how to proceed.
Risk category 4	Colleges in Risk Categories 1, 2, and 3 will have scheduling preference over Colleges in Risk Category 4. Options are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delay of the scheduled site visit

Accreditation Interval

For Colleges in Risk Categories 2 and 3, the Council may grant a temporary Emergency Conditions extension of the accreditation interval by a period not to exceed 18 months.

Where a temporary extension to the accreditation interval was granted to a college, the next re-accreditation interval may be, at the discretion of the Council, shortened by a period of time no longer than the extension granted.

Reporting to the AVMA-COE

Under Emergency Conditions, a temporary waiver is granted to the requirement for prior approval for the following substantive changes related to the management of Emergency Condition by colleges.

- The addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure, either in content or method of delivery, from those that were offered when the AVMA-COE last evaluated the institution.
- A change in the clock hours (student contact hours) to credit hours ratio.
- A substantial change in the number of clock hours (student contact hours) or credit hours awarded for successful completion of the program

Colleges will be expected to update the AVMA-COE in the annual interim report for all changes related to the management of the Emergency Condition.

Virtual Site Visit Verification Policy

The term ‘Virtual Site Visit Verification’ is used to satisfy the USDE requirement for an in-person site visit after a virtual site visit (“verification visit”).

In the case where a virtual site visit is conducted, a verification visit will subsequently occur at the College within a period not to exceed 18 months. The Council may grant an extension of up to an additional 12 months to this time period for (Emergency Conditions related) cause.

The verification visit may provide additional information to the AVMA-COE, at the discretion of the AVMA-COE, or as otherwise noted during the verification visit.

Verification Visit Team

The Verification Visit Team will consist of no less than two (2) AVMA-COE trained site visitors, with one (1) AVMA-COE Observer. The Verification Visit Team will be supported by one (1) staff member. Preferably, the Verification Visit Team would have also been members of the Virtual Visit Team, and ideally, the Chair of the Virtual Visit would Chair the Verification Visit.

To accomplish the agenda of the Verification Visit, the size of the Verification Visit Team for an individual visit may be increased by the Chair of the Evaluation Committee.

Verification Visit Agenda

The Council will determine the Verification Visit agenda. Noting, where appropriate, and linked to the Standards of Accreditation, specific areas of verification the Council is seeking.

The duration of the Verification Visit will depend on the agenda set by the Council.

An agenda template for the Verification Visit is included below.

Agenda Item	Standards Addressed	Goal of the Meeting
Day 1		
Required Items		
Meeting: Dean +/- selected administration		Overview of the Verification Visit
Facilities Confirmation	Physical Facilities and Equipment	Confirm the presence of facilities viewed during the virtual site visit, which may include a visit to on-campus and/or off-campus facilities as directed by the Council.

Agenda Item	Standards Addressed	Goal of the Meeting
Optional Items as Directed by the Council		
<i>Lunch</i>		
Meeting: DVM Students (If appropriate)	Students, Curriculum, Admissions, Organization, Physical Facilities and Equipment, Clinical Resources,	Provide an in-person opportunity to gather students' impressions/ concerns regarding all aspects of their experience in veterinary school. Pose specific questions (if any) requested by the Council.
Optional Additional Meetings	As directed by the Council	As directed by the Council
Day 2		
Optional Visits to on- or off-campus sites	Physical Facilities and Equipment Clinical Resources	As directed by the Council
Meeting: Exit Interview with the Dean		Summary of the Verification Visit
Optional Meeting: Exit Interview with university administration		Summary of the Verification Visit

Verification Visit Report

The Verification Visit Team will prepare a report to the Council, using the Verification Visit Rubric. The report will reference the agenda directed by the Council, and (1) confirm (or not) the presence of facilities viewed during the virtual site visit, and (2) provide additional comments, broken down by appropriate Standard, if directed by the Council, or as otherwise noted during the verification visit.

The draft of the Verification Visit Report will be sent to the Dean for correction of factual errors.

The Verification Visit Team will review the Dean's comments, and amend the report, or provide comments, as appropriate, prior to submission of the report to the Council.

Council Deliberations

The Council may make an accreditation decision based on a Virtual Site Visit preceding the Verification Visit.

The Council will consider the report from the Verification Visit. The Verification Visit may or may not result in the Council making an accreditation decision.