



# Information for Candidates ACV BULLCHECK™ Accreditation Scheme

**This document contains the Standards for the Accreditation of Veterinarians providing Bull Breeding Soundness Evaluation Services under the governance of the Australian Cattle Veterinarians.**

Version 2.0 (2024)



Australian Cattle Veterinarians

P 02 9431 5085

E [acv@ava.com.au](mailto:acv@ava.com.au)

W [ava.com.au/cattle](http://ava.com.au/cattle)



## Table of Contents

1. Background.....	2
2. Scope of standards for accreditation .....	2
3. The scheme aligns with AVA objectives; benefits members; and the community.....	2
4. Mission statement and core objectives of the ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation Scheme.....	3
4.1 Mission statement.....	3
4.2 Core purposes of the scheme:.....	3
4.3 Benefits of the scheme: .....	3
4.4 Stakeholders and beneficiaries:.....	3
5. How the ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation scheme operates .....	4
5.1 The accreditation process.....	4
5.1.1 Core requirements .....	4
5.1.2 BULLCHECK™-specific requirements.....	4
5.1.3 Accreditation requirements.....	4
5.1.4 In case of dispute in the accreditation process .....	5
6. Documentation, manuals and forms.....	5
6.1 The accreditation online examination .....	5
6.2 Application for BULLCHECK™ accreditation .....	6
6.2.1 Certificate of BULLCHECK™ accreditation .....	6
6.2.2 Manual.....	6
6.2.3 Protocol for the investigation of complaints against veterinarians with ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation...6	6
6.2.4 Procedure for annual audit.....	7
6.2.5 Procedure for return to the scheme following absence.....	7
7. Pathway to ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation .....	7



## 1. Background

Veterinary bull breeding soundness evaluation (BULLCHECK™) has become a crucial service that veterinarians provide to the cattle industry. This procedure helps identify abnormalities in bulls that can lead to infertility or subfertility. One significant application of BULLCHECK™ is assessing young bulls prior to sale, reducing the number of unsuitable bulls entering the commercial industry. Accredited operators are essential for maximising the specificity and sensitivity of identifying unsuitable bulls. Failure to accurately identify unsuitable bulls not only reflects poorly on the vendor but also has the potential to significantly reduce the income of the purchaser and the productivity of the national beef herd. Conversely, incorrectly identifying fertile bulls as abnormal can lead to substantial financial loss for the vendor and hinder the dissemination of quality genetics throughout the industry. Therefore, it is imperative for veterinarians to be accredited in BULLCHECK™ procedures to ensure standardisation and a high level of competency.

As cattle prices continue to rise and management procedures become more tightly controlled, the demand for competent veterinarians performing BULLCHECK™ has increased among bull breeders and other industry stakeholders, including breed societies, cattle agents, and departments of primary industry. Competency in BULLCHECK™ encompasses being up-to-date with techniques for evaluating bull breeding soundness, skilled in the operation and maintenance of equipment to ensure high standards of animal welfare, and proficient in accurate data recording and consistent reporting and certification of results.

## 2. Scope of standards for accreditation

The standards described in this document concentrate on ensuring accredited veterinarians perform the BULLCHECK™ in the manner prescribed by the ACV, from the bull evaluation procedures employed, to the recording and reporting of results. They reflect what a veterinarian would be reasonably expected to do to provide a quality BULLCHECK™ service.

The standards in this document are intended to apply to all veterinarians wishing to become accredited under the ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation scheme.

Since the ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation scheme was implemented in August 2007, veterinarians are only eligible to use the title “ACV Accredited BULLCHECK™ Veterinarian” when they are members of the ACV and have complied with the agreed requirements for accreditation. Only ACV accredited veterinarians will be eligible to use specifically identified BULLCHECK™ computer generated reports and specially identified ACV BULLCHECK™ certificates.

## 3. The scheme aligns with AVA objectives; benefits members; and the community

Since its introduction, the ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation scheme has become a well-known and integral part of the Australian Cattle Veterinarian (ACV) and broader industry practices. Originally proposed due to the need for standardising bull fertility testing procedure within the profession, it has now firmly established its value. Today, the scheme enjoys strong support from industry groups and cattle breed societies, providing significant benefits to both veterinary members and the industry.

The ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation scheme has proven to be a superior member service and continuing education (CE) opportunity for ACV and Australian Veterinary Association members. It has advanced veterinary science by ensuring accredited members understand and apply recognised scientific standards in bull fertility assessment and treatment. BULLCHECK™ equips members with the competency to examine bulls for breeding soundness and consistently record and report evaluations.

While achieving recognised competency in the ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation scheme remains optional, BULLCHECK™ accreditation offers a distinct competitive advantage. Accredited veterinarians can generate reports through upgraded software, which includes a clear identifier marking them as accredited professionals. Only contacts of accredited members who consent to public listing are shared by the ACV, further enhancing their market presence.



In summary, the ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation scheme has become an essential and respected component within the ACV and the cattle industry, ensuring high standards and providing a competitive edge for accredited veterinarians.

## 4. Mission statement and core objectives of the ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation Scheme

### 4.1 Mission statement

The mission of the ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation scheme is to provide Australian cattle veterinarians and the cattle industry with a consistent, scientifically-based system for bull breeding soundness evaluation, data recording, and reporting.

### 4.2 Core purposes of the scheme:

- To offer a pathway for veterinarians with a deep understanding of the scientific principles underpinning BULLCHECK™ and the ability to consistently meet ACV standards to become accredited.
- To ensure that BULLCHECK™ accredited veterinarians are recognised within the cattle industry for their ability to consistently apply scientific standards to the BULLCHECK™ process and to report their findings in line with ACV standards.
- To provide a framework ensuring that cattle veterinarians have ready access to current BULLCHECK™ information and peer advice.
- To promote the welfare of cattle by ensuring accredited veterinarians practice BULLCHECK™ to the highest standards.

### 4.3 Benefits of the scheme:

- To provide an excellent member service to interested ACV members and to offer continuing education in the field of BULLCHECK™.
- To assist the Australian cattle industry by ensuring BULLCHECK™ is delivered to a consistently high standard, thus enhancing the overall quality of breeding bulls.
- To ensure a high percentage of reproductively sound bulls are available to the Australian cattle industry, preventing the inadvertent removal of reproductively sound bulls from the breeding herd.

### 4.4 Stakeholders and beneficiaries:

The stakeholders and beneficiaries of the BULLCHECK™ scheme include ACV members (who are also AVA members), breed societies, cattle producers, Departments of Primary Industry, the Australian cattle industry, and ultimately, Australian beef consumers and exporters.



## 5. How the ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation scheme operates

The ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation scheme is now a well-established and integral part of the ACV and industry practices. The scheme ensures that veterinarians possess the knowledge and skills to apply these standards and report their findings consistently with ACV's BULLCHECK™ standards.

### 5.1 The accreditation process

The ACV BULLCHECK™ Subcommittee, representing the ACV Executive Committee and ultimately the AVA Board, along with support from the ACV SIG office, manages the process. The AVA's My Learning platform facilitates the accreditation and reaccreditation processes, supported by the ACV office.

The accreditation requirements are presented within a framework comprising core requirements and BULLCHECK™-specific requirements. Although not all BULLCHECK™ procedures may be used by all veterinarians (e.g., semen collection by artificial vagina), it is expected that all veterinarians wishing to be accredited are familiar with all procedures and meet all scheme requirements.

Veterinarians seeking accreditation should use these guidelines for self-assessment before applying. Each accreditation criterion is associated with example indicators to provide evidence of compliance with the requirements.

#### 5.1.1 Core requirements

The core requirements cover general aspects that each veterinarian should meet, regardless of the scope of BULLCHECK™ services they provide. These requirements support the provision of quality BULLCHECK™ services. Accreditation is for individual veterinarians, not veterinary businesses, and is maintained regardless of employment changes. Accredited veterinarians must ensure that the core requirements are met within the first 12 months of new employment and keep their contact details updated for the public list.

The core requirements include:

- Practice and organisational management standards
- Animal handling and welfare standards
- Safety standards
- Equipment standards

#### 5.1.2 BULLCHECK™-specific requirements

The BULLCHECK™ specific requirements are unique to the procedure and must be met in addition to the core requirements. Detailed demonstration of these requirements is provided in Section 5.1.3.

These requirements include:

- Expertise in the identification and physical reproductive examination of bulls
- Ability to produce repeatable and reproducible scrotal circumference measurements
- Expertise in the safe and efficient collection of representative semen samples
- Expertise in the handling and crush-side assessment of semen
- Ability to accurately record and interpret data and use BULLCHECK™ software to produce a certificate with useful feedback

#### 5.1.3 Accreditation requirements

To fulfil the accreditation requirements, an ACV member must:

- A. Provide documentation to satisfy the core requirements outlined in Section 5.1.1.
- B. Declare sufficient experience in BULLCHECK™, including the assessment or participation in the assessment of at least 100 bulls.



- C. Declare possession of the skills and access to equipment necessary for humane and efficient semen sample collection.
- D. Declare access to necessary equipment, including a binocular microscope with a warm stage, a portable incubator or slide warmer, and access to the BULLCHECK™ software.
- E. Prepare five single-bull BULLCHECK™ certificates using either real or dummy information.
- F. Complete an online examination on BULLCHECK™ standards, achieving a minimum pass mark of 80%. The examination is open book and can be completed at any pace.

The completed documents will be uploaded to My Learning by the ACV member for assessment by the BULLCHECK™ Convenor or nominee. The BULLCHECK™ Subcommittee will validate the documentation and review the examination results. Ideally, all members of the BULLCHECK™ Subcommittee will have ACV accreditation in BULLCHECK™. At a minimum, the BULLCHECK™ Convenor and one member must have ACV accreditation in BULLCHECK™.

The ACV will maintain a register of members accredited in BULLCHECK™ according to ACV standards. This list, with members' permission, will be regularly published on the AVA website and provided to breed societies and the public upon request.

#### 5.1.4 In case of dispute in the accreditation process

If an applicant cannot or will not provide the necessary documents and declarations described in items 5.1.3 A, B, C, D, and E, they cannot become accredited with the BULLCHECK™ accreditation scheme. The BULLCHECK™ Subcommittee may provide mentorship to assist with skill or equipment acquisition at its discretion.

If an applicant fails to achieve the 80% pass mark on the examination, they may:

- Re-sit the examination up to three times without reapplying to the ACV BULLCHECK™ Subcommittee.
- Appeal the examination result and request a re-mark.
- Appeal based on ambiguity or unsuitability of one or more questions, providing referenced evidence to support their case.

## 6. Documentation, manuals and forms

### 6.1 The accreditation online examination

The online examination will be in the form of an open book examination, taken online on My Learning. The process does not require a member to attend a workshop. However, ACV reserve the right to modify the examination process provided a minimum of 6 months' notice is provided to applicants.

The examination can be completed at a date to suit the candidate. The completed examination records will be accessible by the ACV office and BULLCHECK Subcommittee via the AVA's My Learning platform. It is recommended that the candidate allow at least four hours to complete this examination. While four hours is suggested for non-stop completion of the examination, it is expected that most candidates will do an hour-or-two per day and take two or three days to complete the examination.

Prior to commencing the examination, it is highly recommended that candidates ensure they are adequately prepared. The examination will primarily be based on information contained in the ACV publication BULLCHECK™: Veterinary Bull Breeding Soundness Evaluation Edition: 4th edition (2024). However, this does not exclude questions derived from other sources.

Books which are highly recommended to have available during the examination are:

- Barth and Oko, "Abnormal Morphology of Bovine Spermatozoa", 1989, ISBN 0-8138-0112-5 (currently out of print and may not be able to be obtained)
- Youngquist, "Current Therapy in Large Animal Theriogenology", 2007, Saunders, ISBN 0-7216-9323-7



- Senger, P. “Pathways to Pregnancy and Parturition”, 2003. Current Conceptions, Inc. ISBN 0-9657648-1-8. Although, most reproductive anatomy and physiology texts will be suitable substitutes.

Ideally you will be familiar with the content of these books prior to commencing the examination.

The examination consists of multiple-choice questions. The examination questions will be updated regularly at the discretion of the BULLCHECK™ Subcommittee.

## 6.2 Application for BULLCHECK™ accreditation

An ACV Member can gain access to the ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation scheme by visiting the AVA’s Education and Events Calendar and submitting a registration for the ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation scheme. Following registration, the ACV member can commence the application and examination process by following the instructions in the confirmation email received.

If successful, the ACV member will be informed by email of their accreditation including their unique accreditation number for this scheme. The member will also gain access to their certificate on My Learning. If the member requires assistance to pass the accreditation process, the ACV will offer one hour of tutor support to the member. This will be by way of one-on-one tutoring of the member in the identified areas where the member needs assistance either by email or over the telephone.

Successfully achieving BULLCHECK™ accreditation grants the newly accredited veterinarian 12 CPD credits.

### 6.2.1 Certificate of BULLCHECK™ accreditation

Applicants will receive a Certificate of BULLCHECK™ accreditation and have their details added to the list of accredited veterinarians made publicly available if they agree. This certificate will be available on My Learning upon successful accreditation.

### 6.2.2 Manual

The ACV publication BULLCHECK™: Veterinary Bull Breeding Soundness Evaluation Edition: 4th edition (2024) will be considered the main technical reference manual for this accreditation program. It is anticipated that this publication will be modified and updated from time-to-time. Additional texts may be added in future where deemed appropriate by the BULLCHECK™ Subcommittee.

### 6.2.3 Protocol for the investigation of complaints against veterinarians with ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation

1. Any complaints about the scheme must be directed to the ACV office in writing. All complaints must include the address and contact details of the complainant. The ACV office will refer the complaint to the BULLCHECK™ Convenor who will undertake the investigation in consultation with the ACV President and BULLCHECK™ Subcommittee.
2. The ACV office will acknowledge receipt of the complaint to the complainant, noting that the matter has been referred to the BULLCHECK™ Convenor.
3. The BULLCHECK™ Convenor or his/her nominee will make direct contact with the accused party and advise them of the nature of the complaint. This initial contact will be face to face or by telephone, and subsequently with a letter detailing the nature and or details of the complaint.
4. The BULLCHECK™ Convenor or his/her nominee will then ask each party to provide written submissions and will advise each party that recommendations will be based on these written submissions.
5. The BULLCHECK™ Convenor will provide a written recommendation to the ACV Executive, including any suggested remedy.
6. The BULLCHECK™ Convenor, in consultation with the ACV President and BULLCHECK™ Subcommittee, will provide a written response to the complainant and to the veterinarian involved.
7. If the complaint is deemed to be fair and reasonable, the respondent veterinarian will be required to submit themselves for re-accreditation by two ACV appointed members of the BULLCHECK™ Subcommittee to resolve the issue of ongoing accreditation for the veterinarian. At the discretion of the appointed examiners, the accused veterinarian may be



required to perform the BULLCHECK™ procedure, or selected aspects of the procedure, on a live bull. The ACV Executive Committee, on the advice of the BULLCHECK™ Convenor, will then resolve if accreditation for the veterinarian is to be continued, suspended or revoked.

8. If the investigation and examination suggests deficiencies in the accused veterinarian's BULLCHECK™ skills, then the veterinarian will be required to attend a BULLCHECK™ workshop at their own expense prior to being re-accredited.

#### 6.2.4 Procedure for annual audit

All accredited members will be required to submit an annual return stating the number of bulls tested and to provide a copy of one certificate which should have the client identification information removed prior to submission.

No less than 3 veterinarians accredited with the ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation scheme will be randomly selected each year and asked to produce records of the number of BULLCHECK™ procedures that they have carried out in the past 12 months to satisfy the BULLCHECK™ Subcommittee that their experience is current and that they are keeping adequate records.

#### 6.2.5 Procedure for return to the scheme following absence

When an accredited veterinarian wishes to return to the scheme after a period of absence (for example after prolonged overseas travel or employment without having conducted BULLCHECK™s), it is necessary for this person to apply to the ACV office for reinstatement of their accreditation. This may require the veterinarian to produce records of BULLCHECK™ testing in the interim, or to submit themselves for a modified re-accreditation practical examination at the discretion of the BULLCHECK™ Convenor.

Accredited veterinarians who fail to remain financial members of the ACV will lose their accreditation status until they are again financially current. After consideration of the duration for which they have not been current, the BULLCHECK™ Subcommittee may request information outlined in the preceding paragraph prior to their reinstatement.

## 7. Pathway to ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation

The ACV BULLCHECK™ accreditation requires completion of the following:

1. Practical component (refer Form 1.1 and 1.2)
2. Online examination on My Learning
3. Submission of the below forms and documents on My Learning:
  - a. **SUBMISSION 1 | Practical Examination Forms:**
    - i. Form 1.1 | BULLCHECK™ - Examiner's Report for Practical Examination
    - ii. Form 1.2 | BULLCHECK™ - Practical Accreditation Checklist
    - iii. Form 1.3 | BULLCHECK™ - Request for Special Accommodations for Practical Examination (Optional)
  - b. **SUBMISSION 2 | Application Forms:**
    - i. Form 2.1 | BULLCHECK™ - Undertaking by Candidates
  - c. **SUBMISSION 3 | Other documents:**
    - i. Five (5) single-bull BULLCHECK™ Certificates
    - ii. Form 3.1 | BULLCHECK™ - Curriculum Vitae and Statement of Experience
    - iii. Form 3.2 | BULLCHECK™ - Nomination for Reference (optional)
  - d. **SUBMISSION 4 | Public Listing**
    - i. Form 4.1 | BULLCHECK™ - Your Preferred Details (online form on My Learning)