

# **Common Nordic Education Program on Diagnostics of Hereditary Diseases of the Eye in Dogs and Cats relating to Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden**

Revised by the NEEC, February 2026

## **Terminology**

“Eye Scheme Examiner” (ESE) in the following text relates to a Nordic person, approved by the ECVO, who has participated in the education programme, and passed the examination on diagnostics of hereditary diseases of the eye in dogs and cats, or has equivalent training.

“Eye-panel” in the following text means all eye-examiners within one country.

“DK, F, N, S” in the following text refers to Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden respectively.

ECVO is the European College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists

The ECVO manual refers to <https://www.ecvo.eu/hereditary-eye-diseases/ecvo-manual.html>

ACVO is the American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists

ESVO is the European Society of Veterinary Ophthalmology

NEEC is the Nordic Eye Examination Committee

NEM is the “Nordic Eye Meeting”

There are four documents describing the NEEC:

1. “The Guidelines for NEEC” refers to a separate document describing the organisation and regulations for the NEEC.
2. “The Education Program” refers to the requirements and content of the education program, described in this document.
3. “The NEEC exam procedure” refers to a separate document describing the exam and appeals procedures.
4. “Principles for reimbursement” refers to a separate document describing the costs and reimbursements.

“National Head organisations” (HO) refer to the organisation in each country responsible for the approval and administration of this educational programme. They are as follows:

Denmark – Øjenudvalget (ØU), Den Danske Dyrhelgeforening

Finland – SEP Säätiö sr.

Norway – Den Norske Veterinærforening (NSVO)

Sweden – Svenska Sällskapet för Veterinär Oftalmologi (SSVO)

## **Requirements to be accepted as a candidate within the education programme.**

- The applicant should be a licensed veterinarian in one or more of the four countries DK, F, N or S.
- Before training commences, the candidate must confirm normal stereoscopic, colour vision (binocular, with a minimum visual acuity of 0,7 corrected for refractive errors).

- The candidate should have access to the basic ophthalmic instruments; direct and indirect ophthalmoscopes, a slit-lamp biomicroscope, a gonioscopy lens and a tonometer.
- An education and training plan based on the requirements of the ECVO Eye Scheme must be organised by the candidate.
- It is strongly recommended to have a main supervisor, who could be an ECVO Diplomat or an ESE from an ECVO approved national Panel.

### **The contents of the education program in ophthalmic diagnostics**

The requirements for applying as an ECVO recognised Eye Scheme Examiner is described in the ECVO Manual. These requirements are minimum requirements that must be fulfilled.

Education and examination on diagnostics of hereditary eye diseases in dogs and cats should include the following:

- A: Courses and consultation meetings
- B: Practical training in the performance of ophthalmic examinations.

#### A1. Basic continuing education in general ophthalmology

NEEC will specify the extent of the basic education (a total of 5-7 days of courses are suggested). The head organisation will control that candidate has fulfilled the requirements before examination. ESAVS and ACVO basic science courses are approved. Other relevant courses can also be accepted as Basic continuing education by the NEEC, after evaluation of the course contents.

The candidate should have basic and updated knowledge on

- Ocular embryology and anatomy
- Ocular physiology
- Basic examination techniques, Breed-related diseases and genetic testing
- Neuroophthalmology

#### A2. Special courses and consultation meetings

The candidate must document participation in at least 3 ECVO-recognized continuing education courses in ophthalmology (each of a duration of minimum 1,5-2 days), which include the use of ophthalmic equipment, diseases of the anterior and posterior segments, and basic genetic principles.

The ESAVS and ACVO Basic Science courses can be a part of these special courses.

#### B. Practical training in the performance of ophthalmic examinations:

- a) At least 1000 dogs must be examined under direct supervision of an approved supervisor (see below).
- b) At least 600 out of the 1000 must be examined under the supervision of a Nordic eye-examiner approved by ECVO (= all present Nordic eye-panellists).

- c) At least 100 out of the 1000 must be examined under the supervision of an ECVO- or ACVO diplomate.
- d) Up to 200 cases examined under the supervision of a non-Nordic ECVO Eye Scheme Examiner, who is not an ECVO- or an ACVO-diplomate may be included.
- e) Up to 400 cases examined under supervision of a non-Nordic ECVO- or ACVO-diplomate may be included.
- f) At least 100 cats must be examined. Of these, 10 must be examined together with an eye scheme examiner and/or ECVO-/ACVO-diplomate. The remaining 90 can be examined without the direct supervision of an approved supervisor. All examined cases must be recorded.
- g) Gonioscopy is part of the training. The candidate must perform and record gonioscopy on 20 canine cases under supervision according to the “qualitative list” (*the ECVO Manual, chapter 3: ECVO Scheme, appendix A*).
- h) Canine and feline patients with clearly progressive diseases can be included in the case log more than once, with at least a one-year-interval between examinations.

In addition, the candidate should examine a specified minimum number of cases showing certain normal variations and/or diseases. The candidate should also examine a specified minimum number of animals of certain breeds and certain age-groups. These “qualitative” requirements will be specified in the ECVO Manual, chapter 3: ECVO Scheme, appendix A.

All cases examined must be listed by the candidate according to instructions from NEEC.

Suggested literature according to ECVO Manual, chapter 3: ECVO Scheme, appendix B.

### **Duration of validity of the credentials and approval**

The different parts of the education programme (courses, cases, practical training, etc.) are valid for ten (10) years from the day of submission of credentials to the NEEC. Thus, the credentials are counted 10 years back from the day of submission, Example: Submission on 01. November 2026-> educational activities are only counted from 01. November 2016 until 31. October 2026.

Once approved, the credentials are valid for 6 years, counted from the date of approval until the deadline for the application to sit the final exam. Example: If a candidate submits the credentials 20.11.2021, the candidate can still go for the exam in 2028 if applied before 20.11.2027. Payment of annual fees to the national organization should follow the national rules during this period. Hence, the candidate may need to pay the annual fee until all exams have been passed.

### **Exceptions for the 10-year validity of credentials**

If the training is paused because of military service, maternal/paternal leave, serious illness etc, the candidate may apply the national HO for prolongation of the training period and increased duration of the validity of the credentials. The application shall be made immediately, and not when the credentials are expiring. The national HO decides if the prolongation is granted and the duration of the prolongation. Credentials (cases,

courses etc) obtained during a pause in training cannot be invoked as part of the training programme.

The HO shall inform the national NEEC representative as soon as possible after a decision about prolongation has been made.

### **Registration of candidates and information to the candidates**

The HO in each country will register candidates from their own country.

Lists of candidates should be circulated between the four HOs and NEEC so that an up-to-date list of all candidates is maintained.

Information from the NEEC should be sent to the four HOs that shall then distribute the information to the candidates in each respective country.

Major changes in the “Education program” (as defined by the NEEC or the ECVO, i.e. significant increase in number of animals to be examined/cases to be seen, additional courses required etc), apply to candidates who have started after the change has been made. For candidates who have started before the change was decided, a 5-year transition period is applied. This implies that if a candidate submits hers/his credentials and apply to sit the exam within 5 years from the change, they do not have to fulfil these new stipulations. If the transitional period has expired, these major changes also apply to the candidate.

Minor changes (as defined by the NEEC or the ECVO; ie. reduction of number of cases), will apply to all candidates from the day announced by the NEEC and/or ECVO.

It is the candidates’ responsibility to make sure they fulfil all requirements.

At present the following major change is valid for Nordic candidates:

- Candidates starting before February 2021: 20 gonioscopy cases until February 2026, then 20 cases of which 5 “affected” until February 2028.
- Candidates starting between February 2021 and February 2023: 20 cases of which 5 “affected” until February 2028.
- After these dates all candidates must fulfil the current numbers (20 cases of which 15 is “affected” according to the ECVO Manual, Chapter 3, Appendix A).

### **Supervisors**

All eye-panellists in all four Nordic countries are approved as supervisors for candidates in this common Nordic education programme, as all present Nordic panellists have been accepted by ECVO.