

## **ECAAH**

### **EUROPEAN COLLEGE OF AQUATIC ANIMAL HEALTH**

Aquatic Animal Health = name of speciality

For later versions:

(Amended Date 18/10/2016)

## **EUROPEAN COLLEGE OF AQUATIC ANIMAL HEALTH**

**(2016)**

### **CONSTITUTION (ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION)**

---

#### **Article 1. Name, place of establishment, language and registration**

1. The name of the organisation shall be the European College of Aquatic Animal Health, hereafter also to be referred to as the "College".
2. The College shall have its registered office in Unit 7b, Oranmore Business Park, Oranmore, Co. Galway, Ireland. The office address may be changed through the discretion of the Executive Committee.
3. The College shall be a part of the general scheme for veterinary education in the European Union (EU), which is coordinated by the European Coordinating Committee on Veterinary Training (ECCVT) and includes the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE), the European Association of establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE), and the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS). Specialist Colleges are members of the EBVS.
4. The language of the College, including all oral and written exchanges, shall be English (British).

#### **Article 2. Duration**

1. The College has been set up for an unlimited period.
2. The College's year, for financial and audit purposes, shall run from the start of January to the end of December, subject to the first society year ending on the last day of December of the year in which the College is established.

#### **Article 3. Mission, Objectives and Resources**

##### **1. Mission**

The mission of the College is to contribute significantly to the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of European Veterinary Specialists in the Health of cultured / maintained in captivity or wild aquatic animals, with the exception of marine or freshwater

mammals, birds and reptiles, across all European countries at the highest possible level so as to ensure that improved veterinary medical services will be provided to the public.

## 2. Objectives

The primary objectives of the College shall be the promotion of study, research and practice of cultured or wild aquatic animal veterinary medicine in Europe, with the exception of marine or freshwater mammals, birds and reptiles in Europe, and increase the competency of those who practise in this field by:

- a. establishing guidelines for post-graduate education and training as a prerequisite to become a veterinary specialist in the speciality of aquatic animal health;
- b. examining and authenticating veterinarians as specialists in aquatic animal health to serve the veterinary patient, its owner and the public in general, by providing expert care for aquatic animals with diseases;
- c. encouraging research and other contributions to knowledge in all aspects of aquatic animal veterinary medicine, including but not limited to: pathogenesis, diagnosis, therapy, prevention, welfare, zoonoses and control of diseases directly or indirectly affecting aquatic animals, and promoting communication and dissemination of this knowledge;
- d. the development, supervision and assessment of continuing education programmes in aquatic animal veterinary medicine;
- e. committing itself to the development of a culture, which recognises the importance of quality, and quality assurance, in its activities, and to this end, the College should develop and implement a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality.
- f. guaranteeing and maintaining the highest level of specialisation in aquatic animal veterinary medicine, according to European Qualifications Framework (EQF) level 8.

## 3. Resources

- a. The College is a non-profit organisation and does not pursue any commercial interests.
- b. College funds may only be spent according to the Constitution and Bylaws of the College. Members or officers of the College receive no payment from the funds of the College, except of expenses payment.
- c. No member or officer of the College may be favoured by expenditures or excessively high compensations, which are not according to the purposes of the College.
- d. The College may enlist the services of a secretariat who will be responsible for the operational management of the Executive Committee and support of the College.

## **Article 4. Membership**

### Section 4.1

The members of the College shall be the following:

- a. Founding Diplomates
- b. Practising Diplomates
- c. Non-practising Diplomates
- d. Retired Diplomates

- e. Honorary Members
- f. Associate members

## Section 4.2

### Standards for admission to membership

- a. The College must only certify veterinarians who:
  - i. Have demonstrated fitness and ability to practise the speciality by meeting the established training and experience requirements and by attaining acceptable scores on comprehensive examinations administered by the College.
  - ii. Have demonstrated satisfactory moral and ethical standing in the profession.
  - iii. Practise scientific, evidence-based veterinary medicine, which complies with animal welfare legislation.
  - iv. Have gained their veterinary degree at least 48 months previously.
- b. The College may also certify veterinarians who have passed the College's examinations, which they were allowed to sit as judged to be internationally recognised in the College's field, by the Credentials Committee and the Executive Committee.
- c. The criteria for certifying members shall be specified in the Bylaws of the College, in line with the Policies and Procedures of the EBVS.

## Section 4.3

Each individual who has successfully passed the qualification procedure of the College shall be designated Diplomate of the European College of Aquatic Animal Health (Dip.ECAAH), and, if certain criteria are met (as it shall be specified in the Bylaws and/or the Policies and Procedures), is entitled to be awarded by the EBVS the title of European Veterinary Specialist in Aquatic Animal Health.

## Section 4.4

Each Diplomate is expected to actively participate in the affairs of the College. Repeated, unexcused absences from the College-meetings may render a member subject to disciplinary action by the Executive Committee of the College.

## Section 4.5

Each Diplomate shall fulfil the re-certification requirements of the College. No credit points can be granted for education or training in non-scientific or non-evidence-based medicine.

## Section 4.6

Each Diplomate shall be required to keep records of his/her patients and procedures applied<sup>1</sup>.

## Section 4.7

Any Diplomate may be expelled, asked to resign or otherwise disciplined for non-professional or unethical conduct or other action against the best interest of the College by a unanimous vote of the Executive Committee of the College, pending confirmation by the College at the next Annual General Meeting.

---

<sup>1</sup> (obligatory for clinical colleges).

#### Section 4.8

Voluntary cessation of registration requires notice in writing to be received by the Secretary three months prior to the College's Annual General Meeting and will be published at the Annual General Meeting.

#### Section 4.9

The annual dues (in Euro) of each paying member for the following year(s) shall be determined by the Executive Committee on proposal of the Treasurer. The proposed dues will be presented to the members at the Annual General Meeting for approval.

### **Article 5. Organisation and Officers**

#### Section 5.1

The College shall be composed of all the Diplomates.

#### Section 5.2

The Diplomates of the College will elect, by secret ballot, the following officers:

- President
- Vice-President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- (If needed) one (or more) member(s)

Those officers, including the immediate Past-President, will compose the Executive Committee of the College. The President may not be re-elected to the same office. Usually, the President is succeeded by the Vice-President. The other officers may be elected to only one additional term.

The total number of voting persons within the Executive Committee must be uneven. Additional Diplomates, without a right to vote, may be co-opted as observers or advisors to the Executive Committee if its members agree unanimously.

#### Section 5.3

The President, or any other member of the Executive Committee designated by the President or, in the absence or inability of the President, by the Executive Committee, will act as representative of the College.

### **Article 6. Annual General Meeting, Quorum and voting rights**

Section 6.1 The Annual General Meeting of the College will be held each year.

Section 6.2 An Extraordinary General Meeting of the College can be called at any time by the Executive Committee, or shall be called by the Executive Committee at the written request of not less than 10% of the membership. The request should contain the explanation for such a meeting, and the subsequent Extraordinary Meeting should take place within a period of two months of receipt of the request. If not, the responsible members are empowered to summon the Extraordinary Meeting themselves.

Section 6.3 The quorum required for holding a meeting is more than 25% of the total number of the members of the College who have the right to vote.<sup>2, 3</sup> Voting must be in person. The Executive Committee decides if the vote is to be taken orally, by a show of hands, or in writing. Votes can be: in favour, against or one can abstain. For all decisions, except as designated elsewhere, a simple majority of the members participating in the vote is sufficient.

Section 6.4 Each paying Diplomat has the right to vote. He/she has to be present at the Annual or Extraordinary General Meetings to do so, except in case of postal or electronic ballot (section 6.5). Each paying Diplomat has one (1) vote. Honorary Members who are not Diplomates of the College, and Associate Members are not allowed to vote.

Section 6.5 The Executive Committee can hold an electronic or postal ballot at any time outside the Annual General Meeting and Extraordinary General Meetings. The same rules apply to electronic ballots as to voting during the Annual General Meeting and Extraordinary Meetings. Electronic voting can take place via appropriate secure means that, if necessary, can assure confidentiality of the vote.

Section 6.6 The Secretary/Secretariat of the College has to keep the minutes of every Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting. These records must be signed by the Chairman of the Annual General Meeting and the Secretary.

## Article 7. Amendments to the Constitution

Proposed amendments to this Constitution shall be submitted to the President at least 3 months prior to the AGM. Any proposed amendment shall be distributed (by letter or electronic mail) to the membership with a recommendation by the Executive Committee, at least 30 days prior to the Annual General Meeting and shall be brought to a vote of the Diplomates at the Annual General Meeting. An affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the

---

<sup>2</sup> In *law*, a **quorum** is the minimum number of members of a *deliberative body* necessary to conduct the business of that group. Ordinarily, a quorum in a legislative body is normally a *majority* of the entire membership of the body. Thus, a quorum of a legislative body that has 100 seats would be 51 (more than half of 100), even if some seats are vacant, although many bodies may have a lower or higher quorum.

When the quorum is not met, a legislative body cannot hold a vote, and cannot change the *status quo*.

<sup>3</sup>If the quorum is high the danger is that some (probably many) decisions will not be valid.

*Entire membership*: The total number of Members (Diplomates) who have the right to vote.

**Simple majority** of the voting members present means the majority (>50%) of those participating in the vote (who may not be less than the quorum) minus any abstentions. **Absolute majority** of the *voting members present* means the majority (>50%) of those participating in the vote including those abstained. **Absolute majority** of the *entire membership* means the majority (>50%) of the total number of the members who have the right to vote, irrespective of the number of those participating in the vote or abstaining.

**Example**: 100 voting members present, 30 abstained. The simple majority is 36 (70/2 +1), but the absolute majority is 51 (100/2 + 1). If there are no abstentions, simple=absolute majority. If the members of a College are 150 and those participating in the vote are only 100, the absolute majority of the *entire membership* is 76 (150/2 +1), irrespective of whether there are any abstentions.

Diplomates participating in the vote (including those who abstain) shall be required for adoption.

**Article 8. Dissolution of the College**

In the event of dissolution of the College, or the College losing its status as a non profit-organisation, the distribution of all assets shall be determined by the Annual General Meeting, as far as possible consistent with the objectives of the College.

**Article 9. Bylaws**

The College shall make and can change Bylaws, which regulate subjects not or not sufficiently prescribed in this Constitution. A bylaw shall not contain any provisions, which violate the law, the rules of the EBVS, or this Constitution.

Unit 7b, Oranmore Business Park, Oranmore,  
Co. Galway, Ireland, 18/10/2016