

EUROPEAN COLLEGE OF VETERINARY NEUROLOGY (ECVN)

(Approved by the AGM – 23 September 2011)

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

Location, Name and Structure

Article 1

- 1.1 The name of the organisation shall be the European College of Veterinary Neurology, hereinafter referred to as the "College".
- 1.2 The domicile of the College within Europe shall depend on the location of the officers.
- 1.3 The College shall be a part of the general scheme for veterinary specialisation in the EC, as defined by the Advisory Committee for Veterinary Training (ACVT) of the EC. This scheme involves a Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS) and the Speciality Colleges.

Duration

Article 2

- 2.1 The College shall be established for an unlimited period.
- 2.2 The College year shall run concurrently with the calendar year, subject to the first society year ending on the last day of December of the year in which the College is established.

Objectives

Article 3

The primary objectives of the College shall be to advance veterinary neurology in Europe and increase the competency of those who practice in this field by:

- (a) Establishing guidelines for post-graduate education and experience as a prerequisite to becoming a specialist in the discipline of veterinary neurology;
- (b) Examining and authenticating veterinarians as specialists in veterinary neurology to serve the veterinary patients, their owners and the public in general, by providing expert care for animals with neurological disease;
- (c) Encouraging research and other contributions to knowledge relating to the pathogenesis, diagnosis, therapy, prevention and the control of diseases directly or

indirectly affecting the nervous system of animals, and promoting communication and dissemination of this knowledge.

- (d) Remaining a non profit making organisation that does not pursue commercial interests.
- (e) Ensuring that the funds of the College are only spent according to the constitution. Neither members nor Officers of the College shall receive any payment from the funds of the College, except reimbursements of authorised expenses.
- (f) Ensuring that no individual is favoured by expenditure or excessively high compensation, which are not according to the purposes of the College.

Membership

Article 4

Section 1

The members of the College shall be the following:

- (a) Founder Diplomates
- (b) Diplomates
- (c) Honorary Members
- (d) Associate Members

Section 2

Founder Diplomates shall be specialists appointed "*de facto*" as defined in this general scheme.

The *de facto* appointed Diplomates fulfilled the criteria laid down by the *ad hoc* committee for recognition that included evidence of training and experience in neurology, such as:

- Training and experience: either 10 years practising veterinary neurology, or a three-year, full-time residency programme in neurology, followed by five years practising neurology.
- Actively practising veterinary neurology for the previous two years.
- A further degree or credential, or achievement (e.g. thesis, dissertation) or major contribution in veterinary neurology.
- Three major first author publications in veterinary neurology.
- Twenty contributions (written or verbal) in continuing education and research in veterinary neurology.
- Evidence of an understanding of and access to electrodiagnostic facilities, modern imaging techniques and complete clinicopathological and pathological services.
- Evidence of teaching veterinary neurology at University level.
- The great majority of current clinical involvement in veterinary neurology.

Selection was made on the basis of a submitted CV.

Application for *de facto* recognition was offered on one occasion only, at the inception of the College.

Section 3

To qualify for membership of the College, candidates shall meet the following criteria:

- (a) Have a satisfactory moral and ethical standing in the profession.
- (b) Be eligible to practice veterinary medicine and surgery in Europe or elsewhere, as approved by the Credentials Committee.
- (c) Have successfully passed the certifying/examination procedure of the European College of Veterinary Neurology.

Section 4

Each individual elected to membership of the College shall be designated a Diplomate of the European College of Veterinary Neurology and shall be authorised to use the designation of Diplomate of the European College of Veterinary Neurology (Diplomate, European College of Veterinary Neurology; Diplomate, ECVN; DipECVN; DECVN).

Section 5

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

Each Diplomate of the ECVN shall be required to keep records of his/her patients, surgical procedures, etc.

Section 6

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 vote of the Executive Committee, pending confirmation by the College at the next Annual General Meeting.

Section 7

The College may confer Honorary Member status on persons who have made exceptional contributions to veterinary neurology. Honorary Members shall have all the rights and privileges of Diplomates except the right to vote at the Annual General Meeting or hold office in the College.

Nomination for Honorary Member status necessitates proposal by two Diplomates of good standing. The proposal should be written and forwarded to the Secretary. It must contain such information relating to the activities of the nominee in neurology as required by the Executive Committee.

Election of an Honorary Member shall be accomplished by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee and by a two-thirds vote of the members at the Annual General Meeting of the College.

The college must have less than 5% of its membership composed of honorary members.

Section 8

Scientists who have contributed significantly to research in veterinary neurology can become Associate Members of the College. Admission criteria for Associate Members are defined by the Board of the College. These criteria have to ascertain that only scientists of international repute who are active in the field covered by the college are admitted as Associate Members.

- a) Associate Members are not conferred any diplomas and are not entitled to use the designation of Diplomate.
- b) Associate Members are encouraged to participate in the training of residents together with Diplomates of the College. Associate Members are not entitled to act as resident supervisors without a Diplomate responsible for the training programme,
- c) Associate Members are not allowed to hold office within the College or to vote at the Annual Business Meeting. They can be co-opted to College committees as advisors.
- d) Associate Members are encouraged to participate in scientific meetings and workshops organised by the College.

Section 9

European Specialist in Veterinary Neurology.

Diplomates of the ECVN will be maintained on the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS) list of European Veterinary Specialists in Neurology as long as they are actively practising veterinary neurology, have demonstrated successful reaccreditation as required every 5-years under the college reaccreditation process and are not registered as being a European Specialist in another discipline. Maintenance on this list confers the right to use the title "European Specialist in Veterinary Neurology".

The registration as European Specialist in Veterinary Neurology ceases by default when the specialty is practised insufficiently or when the specialty has not been practised for two continuous years or the equivalent of two years during a period of 5 years. Diplomates of the ECVN should practice the specialty for more than 50% of their time, i.e. more than 20 hours based on a normal working week of 40 hours.

Diplomates may adopt "Non-practising" status, by submission to the Credentials Committee. Similarly, return to "practising" status will be by submission to the Credentials Committee.

Diplomates of the ECVN may only be registered as being a European Specialist in one discipline.

Recognition by the EBVS of Diplomates of the ECVN as European Specialists in Veterinary Neurology and therefore the right of Diplomates of the ECVN to use the title "European Specialist in Veterinary Neurology" requires demonstration of successful reaccreditation at least every 5-years under the ECVN reaccreditation process. Therefore the Diplomate should make the statement that he/she is active in the field of veterinary neurology and the Diplomate should accumulate a minimum of 100 credit points over a period of 5 years according to the ECVN reaccreditation process.

Section 10

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

Section 11

Annual Subscription.

The annual dues of each practising member shall be determined by the General Assembly. It is payable on January 1st of each year. Members shall be adjudged in default if they are one year in arrears, and may be voted for removal by the membership if two years have elapsed without payment.

Organisation and Officers

Article 5

The College shall be composed of all the Diplomates. Every two years the Diplomates will elect the following Officers, by secret ballot:

- President
- Vice-President
- Treasurer
- Secretary

Initially, the terms of office will be staggered.

The Executive Committee of the College comprises the above, and the following members:

- Past-President
- Chairperson - Examination Committee
- Chairperson - Education Committee
- ESVN Representative (non-diplomate member of the ESVN)
- Annual symposium organiser (if not one of above or an officer).

If the Annual symposium organiser is not a Diplomate of the College then they will sit on the Executive Committee of the College as an observer. A representative of the ESVN, elected by the membership of the ESVN, may sit on the Executive Committee of the College as an observer. The term of office for the ESVN Representative will be two years, but the candidate may be re-elected to the same office.

The President may not be re-elected to the same office. Usually, the President is succeeded by the Vice-President.

The Vice-President will act as deputy for the President.

The Past-President and/or President and/or Vice-President will in general act as representatives on the Board of Veterinary Specialisation defined by the Advisory Committee for Veterinary Training of the EC.

Article 6

The Annual General Meeting of the College will be held each year during the Annual Meeting of the European Society of Veterinary Neurology.

An Extraordinary 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 20% 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 three months of receipt of the request. Alternatively, the responsible members are empowered to summon the Extraordinary Meeting themselves.

A quorum shall consist of one-third of the voting members.

It is the duty of the Secretary of the College to keep the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting. The Minutes of the previous AGM must be approved by the members and signed by the President and the Secretary.

Article 7

Proposed amendments to this Constitution shall be submitted to the President prior to the 31st of December. Any proposed amendment shall be distributed to the membership with a recommendation by the Officers, 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 three-fourths of the Diplomates voting shall be required for adoption.

Dissolution of the College

Article 8

In the event of dissolution of the College, or the College losing its status as a non profit making organisation, all assets shall be given to a suitable charity.

EUROPEAN COLLEGE OF VETERINARY NEUROLOGY (ECVN)

BYE-LAWS

General Assembly (Annual General Meeting)

Article 1

- 1.1. It is the duty of every member to attend the Annual General Meeting.
- 1.2. The General Assembly is the senior legislative body of the College and has the following duties:
 - (a) To determine and update the Constitution and Bye-laws.
 - (b) To elect the Officers and Auditors.

Elections of Officers shall be by written ballot at the Annual General Meeting.

Written nominations must be received by the Executive Secretary at least two months prior to the Annual General Meeting. Alternatively, nominations may be made from the floor.
 - (c) To receive and discuss the Treasurer's report.
 - (d) Formal approval of the business conducted by the Executive Committee during the preceding year.
 - (e) Action on business, presented by the Executive Committee, or as required by the Constitution.
 - (f) Establish membership dues for the forthcoming year.
 - (g) Expulsion of Diplomates.
- 1.3. A quorum shall consist of one-third of the voting Members.
- 1.4. Each Diplomate has the right to vote (except Honorary Members). He/she has to be present at the Meeting to do so. Each Diplomate has one (1) vote. Postal votes may be arranged at the discretion of the Board under special circumstances.
- 1.5. All questions before the College, except as designated elsewhere, shall be determined by the absolute majority vote.
- 1.6. The language of Laws, Bye-laws, correspondence, negotiations and examinations shall be English (GB).

Officers

Article 2

- 2.1. The Officers of the College shall be: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Past-President. Each term of office is two years.
- 2.2. Election of Officers shall be held at the Annual General Assembly of the College.

Duties of Officers

Article 3

3.1. **President**

The PRESIDENT shall preside at the meetings of the College, preserve order, regulate debates, appoint Committees not otherwise provided for, announce results of elections and perform all other duties legitimately appertaining to his/her office.

3.2. **Vice President**

The VICE-PRESIDENT shall perform the duties of the President in his/her absence or inability to serve.

The Vice-President shall, in general, succeed to the Presidency at the end of the normal 2-year term or should the office fall vacant.

3.3. **Secretary**

The SECRETARY shall attend to the correspondence of the College, keep and publish lists annually of Diplomates, keep minutes of the College meetings in records which shall be the property of the College and accessible at all reasonable times and places and perform the other usual duties of a secretary.

3.4. **Treasurer**

The TREASURER shall advise the College on all financial matters. He/she shall arrange for the safekeeping of all funds, draw vouchers, pay bills and expenses and submit a written financial statement to all members annually. He/she shall keep full and accurate books of accounts, containing a record of all monies received and expended, which books shall be the property of the College and open to the inspection of the authorised officials at all reasonable times and places.

3.5. **Past-President**

The PAST-PRESIDENT shall advise the President.

3.6. **Vacancies in the offices**

Vacancies occurring on the Executive Committee shall be filled by election of a member at the next Annual General Meeting. Any member elected to fill a vacancy shall hold the office until expiration of the term in which the vacancy occurred.

Committees

Article 4

4.1. Executive Committee of the College:

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the College shall consist of the Officers and the following:

- Chairperson - Examination Committee
- Chairperson - Education Committee
- ESVN Representative (non-Diplomate member of the ESVN)
- Annual symposium organiser (if not one of the above or an Officer).

If the Annual symposium organiser is not a Diplomate of the College then they will sit on the Executive Committee of the College as an observer. A representative of the ESVN, elected by the membership of the ESVN, may sit on the Executive Committee of the College as an observer. The term of office for the ESVN Representative will be two years, but the candidate may be re-elected to the same office.

The Executive Committee shall consider all the business and policies pertaining to the affairs of the College. It, or its designated Committees, shall receive all applications, conduct examinations and certify recommendations for Diplomate status in the College. It shall consider and act upon charges against Diplomates for alleged offences against the Constitution and Bye-laws of the College or charges of unprofessional conduct and shall have the authority to recommend the expulsion of a Diplomate for grievous offences. It shall appoint standing Committees, select the time and place of meetings and determine the fees for applications, examinations, registrations and other fees. It shall direct the management of funds held by the College.

4.2. Education Committee:

The EDUCATION COMMITTEE shall be composed of members appointed by the Executive Committee for a term of two or three years. The Chairperson shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.

The duties of the Education Committee will be as follows:

1. To establish guidelines to assist applicants applying to sit the Diploma examination.
2. To receive, review and approve the candidacy of applicants.
3. To forward credentials of approved applicants to the Examination Committee.
4. To receive the required periodic reports from Directors of Resident Training on:
 - (a) The annual progress of each candidate in every residency.
 - (b) Details of each standard residency programme, in the form of an initial report with update and re-examination every five years (due at the Annual General Meeting). The Education Committee, acting for the College, will attest the adequacy of each programme when considering the report.

The Education Committee is also responsible for setting criteria for the residency programmes, for approving the programmes and their sponsors and for monitoring each resident's progress through the receipt of regular reports. The Education Committee will maintain lists of approved residency programmes, approved

supervisors and current residents. It will document detailed requirements for residency programmes that are necessary for approval by the European College of Veterinary Neurology.

4.3. Examination Committee:

The EXAMINATION COMMITTEE shall consist of members appointed by the Executive Committee for a term of two or three years. The President shall be an ex officio member of this Committee. A senior member of the Committee in terms of service shall serve as Chairperson.

The Examination Committee is responsible for the preparation and administration of diploma examinations. Results of examinations shall be forwarded by the Chairperson of the Examination Committee to the Officers of the College with recommendations regarding the awarding of Diplomas.

Auditors

4.4. Two auditors are elected by the General Assembly at the Annual General Meeting for a one year term. The two auditors evaluate the report of the Treasurer and report their findings to the General Assembly. Only after their report can the General Assembly approve the Treasurer's annual statement.

4.5. Members of Committees will receive no emoluments.

Regulations for the Award of the Diploma of the European College of Veterinary Neurology

Article 5

5.1. Eligibility to sit the Diploma examination:

Two categories of candidates will be allowed to sit the examination:

1. Those giving evidence of satisfactory completion of an approved period of training (conforming programme) by the application deadline, (1) in general veterinary education, training and practice and (2) in special education, training and practice of veterinary neurology, both after the date of graduation from veterinary school. The following sequence of training is to be used:
 - a. A first period of at least one year must be a rotating internship, or its equivalent, as defined by the ECVN Education Committee.
 - b. A residency period shall comprise a three-year postgraduate training programme under supervision of Diplomate(s) of the College or its equivalent,

as defined by the Education Committee. This period is designed to educate the resident primarily in neurology. There shall be additional instruction in the related disciplines of imaging, surgery, anaesthesia, clinical pathology and the basic sciences of anatomy, physiology and pathology.

There shall be no restriction of residency training institutions as long as they meet the established requirements for approval.

2. Those with an alternative programme (non-conforming residency) at the discretion of the Education Committee.

Non-conforming residency programmes should be approved in advance, before the start of the residency programme.

Each supervisor shall prepare a statement that the candidate has satisfactorily completed the approved time of training. There shall be no restriction on such alternative training institutions as long as they meet the established requirements for approval.

The College specifically promotes both multi-centre residency and non-conforming programmes to assist in providing the highest quality exposure and training of candidates.

In addition candidates in both categories shall meet the requirement for written reports which are:

- Submission of a case log, as described by the Education Committee.
- At least 2 original papers in refereed international scientific journals, number as determined by the Education Committee.

5.2. Examination:

The examination will include:

- written sections
- a practical section
- an oral examination.

In principle, the examination shall be conducted in English. However, language shall not be an impediment to a candidate taking the examination and the College will endeavour to provide support.

The candidate shall submit the credential fee and examination fee, which shall be determined at the appropriate time.

Candidates must sit the examination within five years of being notified that they have satisfied the credentials process. Candidates must pass the examination within eight years of being notified that they have satisfied the credentials process. The candidate may sit the examination on four (4) occasions only. Failure to satisfy either of these requirements necessitates that the candidate undertakes the credentials process again and additional periods of training and/or experience may be required by the Committee.

Further details of the requirements for the training programme, admission, application procedure and the qualifying examination may be given in a separate Information Brochure deposited on the website of the College.

Finances

Article 6

The College is a nonprofit making organisation. The expenses of the College shall be met through various sources of income.

- (a) Annual subscriptions from members.
- (b) Donations from companies and international organisations.
- (c) Income from educational meetings organised by the College.
- (d) Investment income.

The financial year begins on the first of January and ends on the thirty-first of December of each year. As an exception the first financial year shall begin on the registration date of the College and end on the thirty-first of December 1994.

The accounts of the last financial year and the budget of the following fiscal year shall be submitted annually for the approval to the Annual General Meeting not later than the thirtieth of April.

Meetings

Article 7

The Executive Committee and the Chairpersons of the Education and Examination Committees shall meet between consecutive Annual General Meetings, when judged appropriate by the President.

Amendments

Article 8

These BYE-LAWS may be amended at any Annual General Meeting by two-thirds of the votes cast. Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the Secretary a minimum of 60 days before the meeting, for appropriate review by the Executive Committee. Proposed amendments shall be distributed to the membership within thirty days of the Annual General Meeting.

Appeal against Adverse Decisions

Article 9

9.1. Adverse decisions by the College include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Non-approval of a training (residency) programme.
- (b) Rejection of an individual's credentials.
- (c) Non-award of Diplomate status to an individual.
- (d) Temporary or permanent suspension of a Diplomate.

In the event of an adverse decision by the College, the Secretary shall advise the affected person or the Dean of a College or official of an institution or practice organisation in which the affected training programme is located, and of the procedure for appealing against the adverse decision.

9.2. Any candidate who wishes to appeal against the decision on their application for eligibility to sit the examination must do so within 60 days of the postmarked date of their notification. The requests for appeal must be made in writing to the Secretary and shall include a statement of the grounds for reconsideration and documentation in support of the petition.

The Secretary shall notify the President of the College and the Chairperson of the Education Committee. The President shall appoint a committee of three Diplomates, who are neither Officers nor members of the Education Committee, to serve as an Appeals Committee, indicating the reason(s) for rejecting the candidate. The complete dossier of the candidate will be provided for the Appeals Committee to review.

The Appeals Committee shall meet and make a decision within 60 days of its appointment.

9.3. Any candidate who wishes to appeal against the decision on failure in the examination must do so within 60 days of the postmarked date of his/her notification. The request for appeal must be made in writing to the Secretary and shall include a statement of the grounds for reconsideration and documentation in support of the petition.

The Secretary shall notify the President of the College and the Chairperson of the appropriate Examination Committee. The President shall appoint a committee of three Diplomates, who are neither Officers nor members of the Examination Committee, to serve as an Appeals Committee within 30 days of notice of an appeal. The Chairperson of the Examination Committee shall submit the examination papers and scores of the candidate, the complete list of scores of all candidates on that examination and a statement of the criteria used for the Committee's recommendation for pass and fail to the Appeals Committee indicating the reason(s) for rejecting the candidate.

The Appeals Committee shall meet and make a decision within 60 days of its appointment.

- 9.4. Any Dean of a college, or official of an institution or practice organisation, who wishes to appeal against the decision on the denial of approval or withdrawal of approval of a training programme must do so within 60 days of the postmarked date of the adverse notification. The request for appeal must be made in writing to the Secretary and shall include a statement of the grounds for reconsideration and documentation in support of the petition.

The Secretary shall notify the President of the College and the Chairperson of the Education Committee. The President shall appoint a committee of three Diplomates, who are neither Officers nor members of the Education Committee, to serve as an Appeals Committee. The Chairperson of the Education Committee shall submit a written statement to the Appeals Committee indicating the reason(s) for denial of approval of the training programme.

The Appeals Committee shall meet and make a decision within 60 days of its appointment.

- 9.5. After completion of the appropriate procedure as described above, the affected party, if not satisfied with the final decision of the College's Appeals Committee, may request mediation by the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation.