EUROPEAN COLLEGE OF VETERINARY NEUROLOGY (ECVN)

(Approved by the Annual General Meeting – 16th October 2026)

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

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

1.1 The name of the organisation shall be the European College of Veterinary Neurology, hereinafter referred to as the "College"

1.2 The College shall have its registered office as a non-profit organization at Amtsgericht Hildesheim, Germany with registration number VR 120213. The office address may be changed at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

1.3 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 in Europe (FVE), the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE), and the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS). Specialty Colleges are members of the EBVS.

1.4 The language of the College, including all oral and written exchanges, shall be English (British).

Article 2. Duration

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.

Article 3. Mission, Objectives and Resources

3.1 Mission

The mission of the College is to contribute significantly to the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of EBVS® European in Veterinary Neurology across all European countries at the highest possible level, so as to ensure that improved veterinary medical services will be provided to the public.

3.2 Objectives

The primary objectives of the College shall be the promotion of study, research and the practise of veterinary neurology in Europe, and to increase the competency of those who practise 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 certifying veterinarians as specialists in veterinary neurology to serve 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 all aspects of veterinary neurology such as the pathogenesis, diagnosis, therapy, prevention and the control of diseases directly or indirectly affecting the nervous system of animals, and promoting the communication and dissemination of this knowledge.

(d) The development, supervision and assessment of continuing education programmes in veterinary neurology.

(e) Committing itself to the development of a culture which recognises the importance of quality and quality assurance; the College should develop and implement a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality.

(f) Guaranteeing and maintaining the highest level of specialisation in veterinary neurology in line with the European Qualification Framework (EQF) level 8.

3.3 Resources

(a) The College is a non-profit organisation and does not pursue any commercial interests.

(b) College funds may only be spent as directed by the constitution and byelaws of the College. With the exception of reimbursement of expenses, neither members nor officers of the College shall receive any payment from the funds of the College~~.~~

(c) No member or officer of the College may claim excessive expenses or compensation from 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 the College.

Article 4. Membership

Section 4.1

The members of the College shall be the following:

(a) Founding Diplomates
(b) Certified Diplomates
(c) Non-certified 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 the ability to practise the specialty 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 standings in the profession.
iii. Practise scientific, evidence-based veterinary medicine which conforms with animal welfare legislation.
iv. Have gained their veterinary degree at least 48 months prior to admission.

(b) The Credentials and Executive Committees may allow veterinarians they consider to be internationally recognised in the field of veterinary neurology to sit the College examinations, and on passaging they may then be certified by the College.

(c) The criteria for certifying members shall be specified in the byelaws of the College in line with the policies and procedures of the EBVS.

Section 4.3

An individual who has successfully passed the qualification procedure of the College shall be designated as a Diplomate of the European College of Veterinary Neurology (Dip. or Dipl. ECVN) and, if certain criteria are met (as specified in the byelaws), is entitled to be awarded the title of EBVS® European Specialist in Veterinary Neurology by the EBVS.

Section 4.4

Each Diplomate is expected to actively participate in the affairs of the College. Repeated, unexcused absences from College meetings and general assemblies 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 every 5 years. No credit points can be granted for education or training in non-scientific or non-evidence-based medicine.

Section 4.6

Each Diplomate of the ECVN shall be required to keep medical records of his/her patients.

Section 4.7

Pending confirmation by the College at the next Annual General Meeting, 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.

Section 4.8

Voluntary cessation of registration requires written notice to be received by the Secretary three months prior to the College's Annual General Meeting in order to be noted 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 the recommendation by 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 the following officers by secret ballot:

President
Vice-President
Treasurer
Secretary

Those officers, including the immediate Past-President, will compose the Executive Committee of the College. The total number of voters within the Executive Committee must be uneven.

Additional members may be co-opted as observers or advisors to the Executive Committee if its members agree unanimously:

The chairperson of the Examination Committee
The chairperson of the Education Committee
The chairperson of the Credentials Committee
The annual symposium organiser
The ESVN representative

An ESVN representative elected by the membership of the ESVN will 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 same 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 and the Vice-President by the Secretary. The other officers may be elected to only one additional term.

The Past-President and/or President and/or Vice-President will generally represent the College on the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS).

Article 6. Annual General Meeting, Quorum and voting rights

Section 6.1

The Annual General Meeting of the College will normally be held each year during a joint online meeting of the European College of Veterinary Neurology (ECVN) and the European Society of Veterinary Neurology (ESVN). The date and the time of the meeting will be communicated to all the ECVN Diplomates and ESVN members at least three months in advance.

Section 6.2

An Extraordinary Meeting of the College may be called by the Executive Committee, or may be called by the Executive Committee at the written request of not less than 10% of the membership. The request should contain the reason 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.

Section 6.3

The quorum required to hold a meeting is greater than 25% of College members who have the right to vote. The vote is to be taken with an electronic voting system. The Executive Committee decides if the vote is to be taken orally by a show of hands, in writing, or with an electronic voting system. Postal votes may be arranged at the discretion of the Executive Committee under special circumstances. Votes may be in favour, against or abstained. For all decisions except as designated elsewhere, a simple majority of the members participating in the vote is sufficient.

Section 6.4

Each paid-up Diplomate has the right to vote at the Annual or Extraordinary General Meetings. They must be present either in person or virtually depending on the nature of the meeting. Each paid-up Diplomate has one (1) vote. Associate Members and Honorary Members who are not Diplomates of the College do not have a vote.

Section 6.5

The Executive Committee can hold an electronic or postal ballot at any time out with the Annual General Meeting and Extraordinary General Meetings. The rules governing electronic ballots are the same as voting during the Annual General Meeting and Extraordinary Meetings. An electronic ballot is only valid if a vote is registered on a secure website using unique passwords.

Section 6.6

The Secretary/Secretariat of the College must keep the minutes of the Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting. These minutes must be approved by the members and signed by the Chairman of the meeting (usually the President) and the Secretary.

Article 7. Amendments to the Constitution

Proposed amendments to this constitution shall be submitted to the President at least three months prior to the Annual General Meeting. Any proposed amendment shall be distributed 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 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, and shall, as far as possible, be consistent with the objectives of the College.

Article 9. Byelaws

The College may make or change byelaws which regulate subjects not or not sufficiently prescribed in this constitution. A byelaw shall not contain any provisions which violate the law, the rules of the EBVS or this constitution.

EUROPEAN COLLEGE OF VETERINARY NEUROLOGY (ECVN)

BYELAWS

Article 1. General Assembly (Annual General Meeting)

Section 1.1.

It is the duty of a certified Diplomate to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) online or face-to-face at least twice every five years. If the Diplomate has not attended the AGM four times within five years without prior dispensation from the Executive Committee, then their registration as certified Diplomate ceases by default.

Section 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 byelaws.

(b) To elect the Officers and Auditors. Elections of Officers shall be by written or electronic ballot at the AGM as in section 6.3 of the constitution. Written nominations must be received by the Executive Secretary at least two months prior to the AGM. Alternatively, if no nominations have been made, nominations may be made from the floor.

(c) To receive and discuss the Treasurer's report and action on the auditor'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(s).

(g) Expulsion of Diplomates.

Article 2. Membership

Section 2.1. Standards for admission to membership

1. The College must only certify veterinarians who:
    a. Meet the educational, training and experience requirements established by the College.

b. Have attained acceptable scores in comprehensive examinations administered by the College except as defined in 2.2 below, and in the EBVS Policies and Procedures on non-EBVS diplomates.

c. Are licensed to practise or are eligible to be licensed to practise in a European country except as defined in sections 2.2 below. Applicants may be relieved of this requirement in exceptional case.

d. Have demonstrated fitness and ability to practise the specialty.

e. Have demonstrated satisfactory moral and ethical standing in the profession.

f. Have met the minimal publication requirements as defined by the College (at least two peer-reviewed publications in international refereed journals).

g. Practise scientific, evidence-based veterinary medicine, which complies with animal welfare legislation.

h. Received their veterinary qualification from an EAEVE-approved establishment unless relieved of this obligation by the Education Committee, the Credentials Committee or Executive Committee of the College.

i. Have gained their veterinary degree at least 48 months previously.

2. The College may also certify veterinarias who have passed the College's examinations, which they were allowed to sit on the basis of being judged to be Internationally recognised specialists: Application to take the ECVN examination without having previously undertaken an approved residency. The applicant has to provide evidence that they are equivalent to, or exceed, the standard of a candidate that has been approved to sit the College's examination after undergoing an approved residency. In order to demonstrate this the following must be submitted:

a) Curriculum vitae CV - to cover entire professional career (university onwards)

b) Published papers: a complete list should be in the CV.

i. The quality of the papers shall be evaluated by members of the ECVN Credentials Committee.
ii. At least 10 papers should relate to the veterinary neurology and have been published within the preceding 7 years.
iii. There should be evidence of current activity in veterinary neurology demonstrated through recent publication in peer reviewed international journals.
iv. If these 10 papers are in a language other than English, an English translation, performed by the applicant, should be provided (if at least 10 papers are in English, any additional papers in another language do not need to be translated).
v. Where papers are multi-author papers and the applicant is not first author, the applicant's role in the study should be explained.

c) 2 Case reports - required as an assessment of complex case management. These must describe cases managed by the applicant in the last 5 years. Published case reports are acceptable.

d) Case log (100 cases): Cases must be of a complexity and type similar to that which would be expected of a resident to gain satisfactory approval by the credentials committee. They must be cases managed by the applicant during the last 5 years.

e) Evidence of any relevant postgraduate qualification in the field of veterinary neurology should be submitted.

f) A covering letter should be provided (3-5 pages) in support of their application. This should include the following:
    i. career highlights,
    ii. relevant experience (scholarly, clinical, legal, political),
    iii. contributions to veterinary neurology (education, research) - applicant to select 5 most significant contributions to the veterinary neurology with a brief statement of impact (< 250 words each) supporting each contribution. Contributions may be research (single paper or group of related papers, or a systematic review), teaching (at national or international level) or service (e.g. contribution to a national or international organization which could be governmental, or multinational).
    iv. applicants should explain what they will bring to the membership of the college and how they intend to contribute to the development of the specialty, for instance through resident training.

g) Applicants should not have followed an approved residency programme.

h) Applicants must demonstrate that they have spent a minimum of 60% of their time working in veterinary neurology during the last 10 years.

i) The applicant should be working in a setting that provides access to facilities of a sufficient standard to allow the practice of the specialty at an appropriate level.

j) Applicant must submit a list of suggested up to five referees, from which a minimum of three references will be sought. Where possible at least two of these referees should be existing diplomates of the ECVN. Referees will be requested to comment specifically on the applicant's
    i. professional, ethical and legal conduct,
    ii. clinical abilities, and
    iii. contribution to the veterinary neurology.

k) Letters of Good standing from all licensing bodies with which applicant is licensed to practice.

l) Applicants from outside Europe (as defined by the Council of Europe) will be considered (with the above requirement that 2 EU ECVN Diplomates are required to provide letters of support).

m) In addition to the previous requirements, the College establishes and updates guidelines that the applicants must follow.

3. The ECVN may temporarily grant Diplomate status, provided that the applicant can meet the following minimum conditions:

a. has credentials, in relation to education, training, and publications in the discipline equal to those required to sit the examination of an ECVN candidate;

b. has passed an examination of equal rigor, and covering the same content to that of the equivalent Diplomate of the ECVN (e.g., ABVS/VSOC recognized colleges);

c. passes the ECVN re-certification process.

d. is practising in a European country, as this is defined by the Council of Europe, and intends to remain so for the foreseeable future. Applicants may be relieved of this requirement as deemed appropriate by the ECVN Executive Committee.

A Diploma which is awarded to a Diplomate of a non-EBVS recognized College without sitting the ECVN examination is not valid when the conditions under which the Diploma was awarded do not exist anymore.

Section 2.2. Founding Diplomates

Founding Diplomates shall be specialists appointed "*de facto*" by the *ad hoc* committee. Founding Diplomates have to fulfil the criteria for recognition that included evidence of training and experience in neurology such as:

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

Application for *de facto* recognition was offered on one occasion only, at the inception of the College and is no longer applicable.

Section 2.3. Diplomate title

A Diplomate of the European College of Veterinary Neurology is a veterinarian who has passed the standards for admission to membership (Section 2.1 Byelaws) of the College and, if active in the field, is entitled to be awarded the title of EBVS® European Specialist in Veterinary Neurology by the EBVS. Diplomate status in more than one College is allowed; however, registration as a European Veterinary Specialist is limited to one specialty by the EBVS.

Section 2.4. Non-certified Diplomate

A non-certified Diplomate is a Diplomate who (i) has not practised the speciality for two continuous years or the equivalent of two years during the previous five years, or (ii) has not

fulfilled the requirements for the re-certification procedure or (iii) has not attended an AGM four times in the last 5 years unless previous dispensation from the ECVN Executive Committee has been granted.

A non-certified Diplomate is not allowed to use the title EBVS® European Specialist in Veterinary Neurology and is therefore removed from the EBVS specialist register.

A non-certified diplomate is not allowed to act as programme director or supervisor.

A non-certified Diplomate seeking to revert to full Diplomate status needs to satisfy the Credentials Committee of the College. Additionally, a fee may be required by the College for re-certification.

Section 2.5. Retired Diplomate

A Diplomate who voluntarily stops practising permanently and irrevocably is entitled to use Retired Diplomate status. Retired Diplomates maintain all privileges of Diplomates including advisory tasks, except the right to vote or hold office. They are excluded from article 4, sections 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the constitution of the College. A Retired Diplomate is not allowed to use the title European Veterinary Specialist nor Diplomate, but may use the title Diplomate (Retired). The Retired Diplomate is removed from the EBVS specialist register.

Section 2.6. Honorary Members

The College may confer Honorary Member status on persons who have made exceptional contributions to the European College of Veterinary Neurology or veterinary neurology. Honorary Members who are an ECVN-Diplomate shall have all the rights and privileges of Diplomates. Honorary Members who are not an ECVN-Diplomate shall have all the rights and privileges of Diplomates except the right to vote at the AGM, or to 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 veterinary neurology as required by the Executive Committee.

Election of an Honorary Member shall be voted in by a majority of at least two-thirds of the Executive Committee, and by a majority of at least two-thirds of votes (including abstentions) at the AGM of the College.

The number of Honorary Members shall not be more than 5% of the total number of the College Diplomates.

Section 2.7. Associate Members

The College may confer Associate Member status on scientists who have contributed significantly to research in veterinary neurology. Only scientists of international repute who are active in veterinary neurology are admitted as Associate Members.

(a) Associate Members are not conferred 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 but are not entitled to act as resident supervisors.

(c) Associate Members are not allowed to hold office within the College or to vote at any college 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.
(e) Associate Members are not allowed to advertise their title.
(f) Associate Members must satisfy an annual membership fee established by the Executive Committee.
(g) Associate members must satisfy the criteria for re-certification established by the Re-certification Committee applicable to Diplomates status in order to train residents and retain their status.

Section 2.8. Re-certification

Diplomates of the ECVN must be evaluated every 5 years for re-certification by the ECVN Re-certification committee unless an extension has been granted under the College Extenuating Personal Circumstances (EPC) procedure. The College is responsible for establishing a standard procedure in which the prerequisites for re-certification of the diplomates are described. After re-evaluation, the successful diplomates may be registered for another five years in the EBVS Directory, but only in one speciality.
The requirements to remain certified are:

1. Practice: to practise their speciality for 60% of their time, with a minimum of 24 hours per week (based on a normal working week of 40 hours) over the past five years.
2. Activity: to show a satisfying degree of activity during the last 5 years to keep level of competences at a specialist level.
3. AGM: to have attended the Annual General Meeting of the College, at least twice in 5 years, unless previous dispensation from the College has been granted.
4. Extensions: Extensions of the 5-year period must be granted for maternity or paternity leave, serious health issues and exceptional circumstances.
5. Failure to recertify*:* If they do not succeed to meet the requirements above, or if for any other reason a diplomate does not re-certify, they will be removed from the EBVS specialist register, and may use the title of 'Diplomate', but not the title of "EBVS® European Specialist in Veterinary Neurology". A non-certified diplomate is not allowed to act as programme director or supervisor.
6. Reverting to certified: A non-certified diplomate seeking to revert to certified diplomate status needs to satisfy the requirements for certification outlined by the Credentials committee. Additionally, a fee can be required by the College for re-certification.

The format of the summary, as well as of the reference letter, shall follow the guidelines of EBVS Policies and Procedures. Self-certification of the members of the committee responsible for re-certification is not permitted.

If a Diplomate does not achieve the required number of points, they can be given one additional year in which to achieve the number of missing points. If they succeed, they will then be re-evaluated four years from the end of the extra year. If the Diplomate does not succeed or if a Diplomate does not submit re-certification documents, she/he will be made a non-certified Diplomate, removed from the EBVS specialist register, will not be allowed to be named EBVS® European Specialist in Veterinary Neurology and may only use the title of "Diplomate of the European College of Veterinary Neurology". A non-certified Diplomate seeking to revert to full Diplomate status needs to satisfy the ECVN Credentials Committee.

Section 2.9. Directory Listings and Advertising

Certified Diplomates may use the title “Dip. ECVN” or “Dipl. ECVN” or “Diplomate of the European College of Veterinary Neurology”. The Diplomates of the ECVN will be maintained in the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS) register of European Veterinary Specialists as long as they are actively practising veterinary neurology, have demonstrated successful re-certification as required every five years under the college re-certification process and are not registered as being a European Specialist in another discipline. Maintenance on this list confers the right to use the title “EBVS® European Specialist in Veterinary Neurology”.

The registration as EBVS® 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 five years. Diplomates of the ECVN should practise the specialty for more than 60% of their time, i.e. more than 24 hours based on a normal working week of 40 hours.

The use of the European Veterinary Specialist Trademark is granted to Diplomates who are registered as a European Veterinary Specialist by the EBVS only after reading and acknowledging by signature the content of the Regulations for the EBVS European Veterinary Specialist Logo.

Non-certified or Retired Diplomates, Associate Members, and Honorary Members are not allowed to use the title or trade-mark of European Veterinary Specialist.

Section 2.10. Cessation of registration of Diplomates

Registration as a certified Diplomate ceases by default when the specialty is practised insufficiently (see section 2.8). Diplomates may adopt “Non-certified” status, by application to the ECVN Credentials Committee. Similarly, return to “certified” status will be by application to the ECVN Credentials Committee.

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 AGM.

Article 3. Officers

The Officers of the College shall be: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Past-President.

Vacancies occurring on the Executive Committee shall be filled by election of a member at the next AGM of the College or by postal ballot. Any member elected to fill a vacancy shall hold the office until expiration of the term in which the vacancy occurred. The duties of a vacant position will be performed by other members of the Executive Committee until the position has been filled again.

Section 3.1. Duties of the Officers

3.1.1. **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.

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

The Vice-President shall normally succeed to the President at the end the two year term, or sooner if the office falls vacant.

3.1.3. **Secretary**
The SECRETARY shall attend to the correspondence of the College, keep and annually publish lists of Diplomates of all categories, Honorary and Associate members, keep minutes of the College meetings in records which shall be the property of the College and be accessible at all reasonable times and places, and perform the other usual duties of a Secretary. The Secretary shall submit the Annual Report of the College to the EBVS by the 15th January of the following year. The minimum term of office of the Secretary shall be two years and the maximum six years.

3.1.4. **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; these books shall be the property of the College and open to the inspection of the authorised officials at all reasonable times and places. The minimum term of office of the Treasurer shall be two years and the maximum six years.

3.1.5. **Past-President**
The PAST-PRESIDENT shall advise the President.

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

Article 4. Committees

4.1. Executive Committee of the College

The EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the College shall consist of the Officers.

The following persons may sit as an observer on the Executive Committee:
- Chairperson – Examination Committee
- Chairperson – Education Committee
- Chairperson - Credentials Committee
- ESVN Representative (non-Diplomate, member of the ESVN)

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 byelaws 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 comprised of at least four members appointed by the Executive Committee for a term of three years. The senior member of the Committee in terms of service shall serve as Chairperson unless the Executive Committee decides otherwise.

The Education Committee is 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.

The Education Committee will receive the required periodic reports from directors of resident training on:

1. The annual progress of each Resident.

2. Details of each standard residency programme in the form of an initial report with update and re-evaluation every five years. The Education Committee, acting for the College, will attest the adequacy of each programme when they approve the report.

4.3. Credentials Committee

The CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE shall be comprised of at least three members appointed by the Executive Committee for a term of three years. The Chairperson of the Credentials Committee does report directly to the Executive Committee.

The duties of the Credentials 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 receive, review and approve the documentation of “internationally recognised specialists” applying to become ECVN diplomate.

4. To forward credentials of approved applicants to the Examination Committee.

4.4. Examination Committee

The EXAMINATION COMMITTEE shall consist of at least four members appointed by the Executive Committee for a term of three years. A senior member of the Committee

in terms of service shall serve as Chairperson unless the Executive Committee decides otherwise.

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 Executive Committee of the College with recommendations regarding the awarding of Diplomas.

Normally no member of the Executive Committee or member of the Credentials and Education Committee shall act as an 'examiner'.

4.5. Nomination Committee

The NOMINATION COMMITTEE shall be comprised of three members appointed by the Executive Committee for a term of two years at least six months before the elections. The Committee shall prepare a list of nominees for election to the Executive Committee of the College after a written call for candidates to all the Diplomates at least five months before the elections and will report to the Executive Committee at least three months before the elections. The Nomination Committee shall select at least one nominated candidate for each position and communicate the names to the Executive Committee. Diplomates must be informed of the list of nominees at least 30 days before the elections. The Committee will report their considerations to the College at the AGM. If no nominations have been made, nominations may be made from the floor (see Article 1, section 1.2.b).

4.6. Re-certification Committee

The RE-CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE shall consist of a minimum of three members appointed by the Executive Committee for a term of three years. The committee chair will be appointed by the Executive Committee. It is usually the chairperson of the Credentials Committee. The members of the Re-certification Committee evaluate the Diplomate status of every Diplomate and the re-certification forms submitted by members every five years according to the re-certification requirements accredited by the EBVS. The Re-certification Committee contacts Diplomates who do not succeed and Diplomates who do not submit re-certification documents.

The Re-certification Committee reports to the Secretary of the College.

4.7. Auditors

Two auditors are elected by the General Assembly at the AGM for a two-year term. The two auditors evaluate the report of the Treasurer. The Auditor's report and the Treasurer's report regarding the financial status of the College will be presented for approval at the AGM. Only after the Auditor's report can the General Assembly approve the Treasurer's annual statement. The College may appoint external professional auditors.

4.8. Indemnification

Members of Committees will receive no indemnification.

Article 5. Regulations for the Award of the Diploma of the European College of Veterinary Neurology

Section 5.1. Qualifications to sit the Diploma examination:

1. To be allowed to sit the examination an applicant must provide evidence of satisfactory completion of an approved period of training of at least 4 years in general veterinary education and veterinary neurology following graduation from veterinary school. The following sequence of training is to be used:

    a. A first period of at least one year must be in a rotating internship, or its equivalent, as defined by the ECVN Education Committee.

    b. The second part shall consist of a residency period comprising a minimum of three years postgraduate training programme under the supervision of Diplomate(s) of the European College of Veterinary Neurology 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 diagnostic imaging, surgery, anaesthesia, clinical pathology and the basic sciences of anatomy, physiology and pathology.

    This residency period may constitute:

    i. A **standard residency programme**, which is the minimum and most time efficient education and/or training under appropriate supervision that will qualify a candidate for examination.

    ii. In exceptional cases, a candidate whose circumstances do not permit enrolment in a standard programme may submit an equivalent, **alternative residency programme** in cooperation with his/her supervisor, the College, and the resources available to the individual.

2. The College may also certify veterinarians who have passed the College's examinations, which they were allowed to sit on the basis of having been judged to be internationally recognised in veterinary neurology by the ECVN Credentials Committee and the Executive Committee (Section 2.1.2 Bylaws). Applicants must be licensed to practise or eligible to be licensed to practise in a European country, although they may be relieved of this requirement in exceptional cases.

Section 5.2. Residency training programmes

1. Introduction

a) A residency is a programme of advanced training in veterinary neurology, which may or may not lead to certification by the College. An approved residency programme must be conducted under the direct supervision of a certified Diplomate of the College or equivalent (as defined in Section 5.1.1.b Bylaws).

b) The goal of a residency programme must be to develop Diplomates who have the self-confidence, self-criticism and sense of responsibility essential for the practise of the specialty.

c) Residency programmes should strive to train candidates who have demonstrated to have the proper intellectual qualities, professional and technical skills. Moreover, residency programmes must aim to develop a culture which recognises the importance of continuous professional development.

d) Approval of veterinary residency programmes is the responsibility of the College, and all residency programmes should be approved by the Education Committee in advance of the start of the residency programme.

e) All training and/or experience requirements and all prerequisites for examination eligibility must be relevant to the assessment of the applicant's qualification.

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

g) Residents must spend at least 60 per cent of their time practising the speciality, based on a normal working week of 40 hours.

h) A supervisor shall have no more than two residents following standard residency programmes at one time; in exceptional cases three such residents can be allowed, for a restricted time period which will be determined by the Education Committee.

i) The College only accepts Residents that received their veterinary qualification from an EAEVE-approved establishment unless relieved of this obligation by the Education Committee.

2. Standard Residency Training Programm

a) A standard residency training programme takes place in an institution ("approved centre") that provides satisfactory evidence that it has the facilities, services and a programme that fulfils the necessary criteria to be approved as a training centre for a standard residency training programme. Approval is granted for a five-year period, and re-approval is necessary every five years thereafter.

b) The minimal length of a standard residency programme is three years.

c) The period should be taken consecutively. The Credentials/Education Committee can allow the training to take place on a part time basis as long as the total time is equivalent to at least three years, and the total time does not exceed six years. In case of maternity leave, illness or exceptional circumstances an extension is possible. The duration of the extension will be agreed with the Credentials/Education committee.

3. Alternative Residency Training Programme

A veterinarian whose circumstances do not permit enrolment in a standard residency programme may submit an alternative programme to the College in conjunction with his/her supervisor, outlining the resources available to allow a training programme equivalent to a standard residency programme. The alternative programme does not constitute approval for a training centre or for anyone other than the Resident in question. The alternative programme must be approved by the College before the

Resident embarks on it, and the total length of this programme cannot be shorter than a standard residency programme. The total time of an alternative programme must not exceed six years. A resident on an alternative training programme must spend the equivalent of at least 60% of three years working in the practise of veterinary neurology, under direct supervision of a Diplomate of the European College of Veterinary Neurology or equivalent.

The precise form of each individual programme is at the discretion of the Education Committee of the College.

4. Criteria for and approval of Residency Training Programmes

The College will establish guidelines upon which training programmes are approved. Detailed description of these guidelines, including the requirements and the procedures for approval of and admission to the residency programmes, shall be published. All these guidelines must be in line with the latest version of the EBVS Policies and Procedures.

Each supervisor shall prepare a statement that the candidate has satisfactorily completed the approved period of training.

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

Candidates in both categories shall additionally meet the requirement for written reports which are:

(a) Submission of a case log as described by the Education Committee.
(b) At least two original papers in refereed international scientific journals.

Section 5.3. Examination

5.3.1. Before sitting an examination, the applicant's credentials must be evaluated by the Credentials Committee and found to meet all the stated requirements. Failure to satisfy either of these requirements necessitates that the candidate undertakes the credentials process again and undergoes additional periods of training and/or experience as may be required by the Education Committee.

5.3.2. The examination may consist of written, oral and/or practical parts. The candidate is allowed to sit all parts of the examination in one session.

5.3.3. The examination should determine the candidate's knowledge of the subject and their ability to integrate and apply this knowledge.

5.3.4. It must be made clear to the candidates in advance how the different parts of the examination will be evaluated.

5.3.5. All parts of the examination must at all times be held under the direct supervision and physical presence of members of the Examination Committee or trained invigilators. In line with modern best practice, an invigilator must not be otherwise occupied during the examination and must not leave the room during the examination without another invigilator replacing him/her.

5.3.6. Candidates should be informed of the pass mark, or the method of setting the pass-mark, prior to the examination.

5.3.7. Applicants or candidates shall be given details concerning any deficiencies in credentials or preliminary examination results that prevent them from sitting the examination or being certified by the College as soon as possible:

(a) a time limit for such communications must be established and published by the College

(b) the results of the examination must be announced to all candidates on the same date

(c) the time between final credentials decisions and the examination date must be sufficient to permit consideration of possible appeals against a decision of denying acceptance of credentials

5.3.8. Confidentiality must be maintained throughout the entire examination. Examination questions must be kept confidential by all Colleges, with the exceptions of the publication of model questions as a guideline to candidates, and during an appeal procedure as outlined in a College's byelaws.

5.3.9. Personal conflict, or the appearance of conflict, that could affect results of examinations is to be avoided.

5.3.10. The examination shall be taken in English only; the use of non-medical dictionaries during examinations or a non-medical interpreter during oral examination is permitted.

5.3.11. The candidate shall submit a non-refundable credential fee and examination fee which shall be determined at the appropriate time.

5.3.12. 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 completing their residency.
Those of fail to do so and believe they have mitigating circumstances for their failure to meet the targets, can appeal by email to the Chairperson of the Credentials Committee for an extension of the period between the end of the residency and examination. This application should be accompanied by:

- Updated curriculum vitae, showing ongoing activity and continued experience within the field of veterinary neurology
- A written summary of the mitigating circumstances proposed and plans to remedy these issues
- At least 2 letters of reference (written within the previous 6 months) supporting the appeal and discussing steps taken by the resident to correct any ongoing deficiencies

5.3.13. If a candidate fails one or more parts of the examination, the Examination Committee should contact each unsuccessful candidate and provide specific feedback in a format deemed appropriate by the College. If a candidate fails one or more parts of the examination twice, a mentorship and educational plan should be discussed with each unsuccessful candidate. Candidates that, despite the corrective track, failed 4 times the examination or did not obtain the Board diploma within 8 years after the end of their residency will be refused for further training and examination, unless exceptional circumstances have been approved by the college.

5.3.14. Further details of the requirements for the training programme, admission, application procedure and the administration and conduct of the qualifying examination should be provided in a separate information brochure accessible on the website of the College.

5.3.15. Any change in the procedure of the examination should be notified to the EBVS.

Article 6. Finances

Section 6.1. Status of a non-profit organisation

(a) The College is a non-profit organisation and avoids contracts or agreements leading to activities outside the scope of the stated objectives of the College.

(b) College funds may only be spent as described in the constitution. Members or Officers of the College receive no payment from the funds of the College except for reimbursement of expenses paid while on College business.

(c) The expenses of the College shall be met through various sources of income such as

i. Annual subscriptions from members.

ii. (ii) Donations from companies and international organisations.

iii. (iii) Income from educational meetings organised by the College.

iv. (iv) Income related to resident training and examination.

v. (v) Investment income.

Section 6.2. Financial year and accounts

(a) 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 began on the registration date of the College and end on the thirty-first of December 1994.

(b) The accounts of the last financial year and the budget of the following fiscal year shall be submitted annually for the approval to the AGM at least 30 days prior to the AGM.

Section 6.3. Annual subscription

The annual dues (in Euro) of each paying member shall be determined annually by the General Assembly. Dues are payable on January 1st of each year. Members shall be judged to be delinquent if they are one year in arrears and may be voted for removal by the membership if two years have elapsed without payment.

Retired Diplomates and Honorary Members of the College are not required to pay fees.

Associate Members pay the ESVN member fee.

Section 6.4 Insurance

The College is required to maintain insurance.

Article 7. Meetings

The Executive Committee and the Chairpersons of the Education and Examination Committees shall meet at least once annually between consecutive Annual General Meetings, on a date judged appropriate by the President.

Article 8. Amendments

These BYELAWS may be amended at any AGM (or via an electronic vote) 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 to allow appropriate review by the Executive Committee. Proposed amendments shall be distributed to the membership by letter or electronic mail within 30 days of the AGM.

The EBVS shall be notified of all changes in the constitution, Bylaws, and Policies and Procedures at the time of the next annual report.

Article 9. Appeal against Adverse Decisions

9.1 Definitions

9.1.1. Adverse Decisions include but are not limited to:

9.1.1.1. Denial of approval of a residency programme.

9.1.1.2. Rejection of an individual's credentials to sit the ECVN Diploma examination.

9.1.1.3. Failure of an examination or a part of an examination.

9.1.1.4. Denial of certification and Diplomate status of an individual.

9.1.1.5. Temporary or permanent suspension of a Diplomate.

9.1.1.6. Decisions taken under the College EPC Procedure may be appealed in accordance with the College Appeals Procedure.

9.1.2. Candidate – a Resident who has completed his/her residency and his/her credentials have been approved by the Credentials Committee, therefore he/she may sit for the certifying examination.

9.2 Introduction

9.2.1. This document sets out the procedures for consideration of an appeal made by a resident in an approved ECVN residency programme, a Candidate, the Dean of a College, an official of an institution or practise organisation or a Diplomate (the "Appellant") against an Adverse Decision by the College. Anonymous complaints will not be considered.

9.2.2. The timescales set out in this procedure are indicative targets only and are subject to change depending on the particular circumstances and requirements of a case.

9.3. Commencing an Appeal Process

9.3.1. An appeal against an Adverse Decision must be made to the Secretary in writing by the Appellant within 90 days of the postmarked date of the relevant Adverse Decision (or if sent by email, on the date on which the email was sent). In particular, an appeal against a decision of denying acceptance of the credentials may be submitted after a minimum of one week and a maximum of three weeks following the official communication of the decision of denying acceptance of the Credentials of a resident to sit the examination. Oral requests for an appeal will not be accepted.

9.3.2. The appeal must include a statement of the grounds of the appeal and any documentation and reasons in support thereof. An appeal may be made on one or more of the following grounds:

9.3.2.1. Procedural impropriety/unfairness.

(i) The relevant committee failed to comply with the relevant College procedures, or

(ii) exceeded its powers, or

(iii) acted in breach of the requirements of natural justice, or

(iv) acted in such way that the legitimacy of the decisions reached are called into question.

9.3.2.2. Unreasonableness.

(i) The relevant committee's conclusions were unreasonable or disproportionate in the light of the available evidence. This may be because irrelevant matters were taken into account or relevant matters were not taken into account.

9.3.2.3. New evidence.

(i) There is material that was in existence at the time the relevant committee made its decision which, had it been made available before to the committee, would have influenced the judgements of the committee and there is a good reason for it not having been provided to the committee.

9.3.2.4. Disproportionate sanction.

(i) The sanction was disproportionate to the gravity of the finding against the Appellant in the light of all the relevant facts and circumstances of the case.

9.3.3. Submission of an appeal to the College must be accompanied by a deposit of *500 €* to ensure that the expenses of the Appeal will be covered. If the Appellant does not pay his/her deposit within four weeks of receiving an invoice then this will be deemed an admission of liability. The deposit is re-paid in full, in case the appeal is accepted. In case of the appeal's rejection, all the costs relating to the appeal shall be made by the appellant. Any remaining deposit will be re-paid to the appellant together with an itemisation of the costs retained.

9.3.4. The College (usually the Secretary) will acknowledge receipt of an appeal and notify the President of the College and the chairperson of the relevant committee of the appeal within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal.

- Within 20 working days of its receipt by the College, the Appeal must be considered by a nominated Executive Officer of the College, who shall have had no prior involvement with the case, and who has no potential conflict of interest with the Appellant or the Committee whose decision is being questioned. This Officer will decide whether a proper Ground for Appeal has been identified.

- If a proper Ground for Appeal has been identified, the College will convene an Appeals Committee to consider the Appeal.

- Where a College makes a decision that no proper Ground of Appeal has been identified by the Notice of Appeal, the College may inform the Appellant within 15 working days that either:

    - It will take no further action (and explain the justification for this), or

    - It will consider the Notice instead as a request for an informal review of an adverse decision by the College Board on non-appealable grounds (e.g., extenuating circumstances of personal difficulty etc.).

9.3.5. The Secretary will invite the chairperson of the relevant committee to submit any further information which he/she may choose to submit by way of rebuttal of points raised in the Appellant's appeal to the named Officer within 15 working days.

9.3.6. The Secretary will ensure that a copy of any further information is provided to the Appellant who will be invited to comment on the further information.

9.4. Composition of the Appeals Committee

9.4.1. The Appeals Committee shall be made up of a minimum of three Diplomates of the College appointed by the Executive Committee. Any member of the Executive Committee who has a potential conflict of interest should not be involved in appointing the Appeals Committee. Members of the Appeals Committee shall not serve as members of the Executive Committee of the College or be members of the Committee whose decision is being questioned, and shall have had no prior involvement with the case or a potential conflict of interest with the Appellant or the Committee whose decision is being questioned. The President will appoint the Appeal Committee within 30 days of notice of an appeal.

9.4.2. The Appellant will be informed of the proposed membership of the Appeals Committee and will be given an opportunity to raise any concerns with the Secretary within 15 working days of the Executive Committee decision to upheld the Appeal and before the Appeal Committee's membership is confirmed.

9.4.3. Any concerns must be submitted in writing to the Secretary within seven working days of receipt of the proposed Appeals Committee membership, together with the reasons for any concerns/objections.

9.4.4. The President (the "relevant person") will consider any objections to the composition of the Appeals Committee. The relevant person may seek legal advice in considering any such objections.

9.4.5. The relevant person will make a decision as to whether the member in question should be recused from the Appeals Committee. The decision will be communicated to the appellant and the proposed members of the Appeal Committee by the Secretary in writing. The decision of the relevant person will be final.

9.4.6. If a proposed member of the Appeals Committee is recused, the President will seek to appoint another Diplomate to the Appeals Committee as soon as possible. The Appellant will be notified of any further individual who is proposed as a member of the Appeals Committee and the process set out above will apply.

9.5. The Appeals Committee's consideration

9.5.1. The appeals committee will convene and consider all the relevant documents in the case including:

9.5.1.1. the Appellant's appeal and any supporting documents

9.5.1.2. the decision under appeal

9.5.1.3. any response from the committee whose decision is under appeal

9.5.1.4. any comments from the Appellant on the Committee's response; and

9.5.1.5. any relevant College policies or procedures and those of EBVS.

9.5.2. The Appeals Committee will not usually hold an oral hearing. However, it may choose to do so in its absolute discretion where it considers it appropriate to do so. Hearings will be conducted in English. Minutes and recordings: A transcript or detailed minutes of the meeting will be kept. An electronic recording may be made with the prior consent of all parties. The minutes and, if applicable, the electronic recording, shall be made available to the meeting's participants on request.

9.5.3. If an oral hearing is held, the Appeals Committee may adopt such procedures as it considers in its absolute discretion to be appropriate, provided that:

9.5.3.1. An Appellant may be accompanied to the meeting by a friend (who may be anyone of the appellant's choosing, for example, but not limited to, a fellow Candidate or Diplomate or a person unaffiliated to the College). The friend may assist the Appellant to answer questions and present the appeal, however the friend will not normally be allowed to address the Appeals Committee.

9.5.3.2. Legal representation will not normally be permitted. However, the Appeals Committee may choose to allow legal representation where it considers it appropriate to do so.

9.5.3.3. If legal representation is permitted for an Appellant,

(i) the legal representative must provide the Appeals Committee and the relevant committee with advance notice of any legal points which he/she proposes to make; and

(ii) the relevant committee and the Appeals Committee will also be permitted to seek legal counsel if they so desire.

9.5.3.4. The Appellant and the relevant committee may call witnesses and cross examine any other witnesses.

9.5.4. The Appeals Committee may request further information from the Appellant or the committee against whose decision is being appealed or such other persons as they see fit.

9.5.5. Where information is requested from persons other than the Appellant, a copy of such information will be provided to the Appellant and his/her comments will be invited.

9.5.6. The Appeals Committee must base its decision solely on:

9.5.6.1. the material placed before it; and

9.5.6.2. any further information/documents provided to it following a request; and

9.5.6.3. relevant College and EBVS documents

9.5.7. The Appeals Committee may:

9.5.7.1. Uphold the relevant committee's decision and dismiss the appeal

9.5.7.2. Uphold the appeal, quash the relevant committee's decision and direct the matter to be reviewed afresh by a differently constituted panel of the relevant committee

9.5.7.3. Uphold or dismiss the appeal and substitute a different sanction for that imposed by the relevant committee. This may be a more severe sanction.

9.5.8. The Appeals Committee will give reasons for its decision.

9.5.9. The Secretary will communicate the outcome of the Appeals Committee's consideration of the appeal to the Appellant and the relevant committee and the Executive Committee in writing, normally within three months of receipt of the Appeal decision.

9.5.10. Upon completion of steps above, if the Appellant is not satisfied with the decision of the Appeals Committee, the Appellant may request resolution by the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS P&P).

Article 10. Complaints

Complaints shall be handled in accordance with the most recent version of the Complaints Procedures published on the ECVN College website. These procedures outline the process for submitting, reviewing, and resolving complaints, and ensure that all complaints are addressed fairly, transparently, and in a timely manner. Anonymous complaints will not be considered. This article does not cover appeals as defined under Article 9.

Article 11: Extenuating Personal Circumstances

The College shall maintain a procedure for the consideration of Extenuating Personal Circumstances (EPC) affecting residents and Diplomates. This procedure, and any subsequent amendments, shall be approved by vote of the Executive Committee. Any adjustments granted under this procedure shall not lower the standards required for certification as a Diplomate of the European College of Veterinary Neurology. Decisions taken under the Extenuating Personal Circumstances procedure shall be subject to appeal in accordance with the College Appeals Procedure.