

# **European College of Zoological Medicine**

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

(as amended August 2018)

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

- 1.1. The name of the association shall be the European College of Zoological Medicine, hereafter referred to as the "College".
- 1.2. The College shall have its registered office in Utrecht, Netherlands. The office address may be changed at the discretion of the Executive Committee. A Dutch translation of this Constitution has been made for legal registration.
- 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 of Europe (FVE), the European Association of establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE), and the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS). Specialist Colleges are members of the EBVS.
- 1.4. The language of the College, including all oral and written exchanges, shall be English (British).
- 1.5. The College will hold "board liability insurance" annually to protect the board members, and by extension the College.

### **Article 2. Duration**

- 2.1. The College has been set up as a veterinary specialty organisation for an unlimited period.
- 2.2. The College year, for financial and audit purposes, shall run from the start of January to the end of December of each calendar year.

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

- 3.1. The mission of the College is to contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of the quality of Veterinary Specialists in Zoological Medicine, specifically in European countries but also with a global reach, at the highest possible level so as to ensure that improved veterinary medical services will be provided to the public.
- 3.2. The overall specialty of Zoological Medicine comprises both clinical taxon oriented specialties, as well as discipline oriented specialties. Zoological medicine involves a

broad range of disciplines and body systems within the various zoological taxa. The different specialties are defined in the Bylaws.

- 3.3. A registered specialist shall spend at least 60% of their time (based on a 40 hour working week) working at the specialist level in their chosen specialty, with a minimum time spent of 24 hours per week.
- 3.4. A registered specialist shall practice with adequate facilities for their specialty. When the specialty is practised at more than one location, there shall be at least one location with adequate facilities.
- 3.5. **Objectives:** The primary objectives of the College shall be the promotion of study, research advancement and practice of zoological medicine in Europe and increasing the competency of those who practise in this field by:
  - i) Establishing guidelines for post-graduate education, training and experience as a prerequisite to become a Specialist in one of the specialties of zoological medicine.
  - ii) Examining and authenticating veterinarians as specialists in zoological medicine to serve the zoological patient, its owner and the public in general, by providing expert care.
  - iii) Encouraging research and other contributions to knowledge in all aspects of zoological medicine and promoting communication and dissemination of this knowledge.
  - iv) The development, supervision and assessment of continuing education programmes in zoological medicine.
  - v) Committing itself to the development of a culture, which recognises the importance of quality, and quality assurance, in its activities, and to this end, the College should develop and implement a strategy for the continuous enhancement of quality.
  - vi) Guaranteeing and maintaining the highest level of specialisation in zoological medicine according to European Qualifications Framework (EQF) level 8 (see appendix 5 of the Policies and Procedures, Part 1: General Information).
- 3.6 Further objectives of the College are:
  - i) Encouraging the public, zoological institutions and wildlife agencies to use veterinarians who are qualified to fill a unique and specific role in the delivery of modern comprehensive zoological medicine at the specialty level.
  - ii) Positioning the zoological specialist as a common source for referrals in the veterinary community.

- iii) Improving and promoting the structure of health care for animals, thereby improving its perception and understanding by owners, veterinarians and those interested in introducing animal health insurance and supplying zoological health products.
  - iv) Providing an incentive and reward for achieving postgraduate education and experience in Zoological Medicine at the specialist level. The title Diplomate of the European College of Zoological Medicine shall be restricted to those persons working in the field who have reached the highest level of achievement in the respective specialty
  - v) Encouraging veterinary schools to establish in-depth instruction and high standards for training in zoological medicine and develop specific funding for areas of research.
  - vi) Promoting continued improvement of practice standards and knowledge in zoological medicine through continuing education and self-assessment.
  - vii) Supporting the preservation of zoological species and their habitats by promulgating the concept of wise use of animal resources and the breeding of endangered species in captivity.
  - viii) Encouraging responsible management, husbandry and breeding of zoological species.
  - ix) Preventing the occurrence of zoonotic and allergic diseases in man originating from zoological species.
- 3.7. The College is a non-profit association and does not pursue commercial interests.
- 3.8. Financial means of the College may only be spent according to the Constitution and Bylaws of the College. Members of the College receive no payment from the funds of the College, except reimbursements of justifiable expenses.
- 3.9. No member or officer of the College may be favoured by expenditures or excessively high compensations, which are not according to the purposes of the College.
- 3.10. The College may enlist the services of a secretariat/administrative assistant who will be responsible for the operational management of the Executive Committee and support of the College.

#### **Article 4. Membership**

- 4.1. The College shall have the following members:
- a. Founding Diplomates ECAMS (1993)

- b. Founding Diplomates ECZM (*name of speciality*) (2009 and 2012)
- c. Certified Diplomates
- d. Honorary Members
- e. Non-certified Diplomates
- f. Retired Diplomates
- (g. Resigned Diplomates)

4.2. Standards for admission to membership

a. The College must only certify veterinarians who:

- i. Have demonstrated fitness and ability to practise the specialty by meeting the established training and experience requirements as assessed by the Credential Committee and the Education and Residency Committee. They will also have attained acceptable scores on comprehensive examinations administered by the College, unless exempted from this obligation by the Credentials Committee and the Executive Committee and accepted as de facto Diplomates within the initial 5 years of approval of their specialty.
- ii. Have demonstrated satisfactory moral and ethical standing in the profession.
- iii. Practise scientific, evidence-based veterinary medicine, which complies with animal welfare legislation.
- iv. Obtained their veterinary degree at least 48 months prior to certification.

b. The College may also certify veterinarians who have passed the College's examinations, which they were allowed to sit as judged to be internationally recognised in the College's field, by the Credentials Committee and the Executive Committee.

c. The criteria for certifying members shall be specified in the Bylaws of the College, in line with the Policies and Procedures of the EBVS.

4.3. Each individual who has successfully passed the qualification procedure of the College shall be designated Diplomat of the European College of Zoological Medicine. They shall be authorized to use the designation of Diplomat of the European College of Zoological Medicine (*name of specialty*) in the specialties which have been approved by ECZM and EBVS. The official abbreviation is DipECZM (*name of specialty*).

4.3.1. If certain criteria are met and maintained (as specified in the Bylaws and/or the Policies and Procedures), the individual is entitled to be awarded, by the EBVS, one of the titles listed in section 2.11.3 of the Bylaws.

4.4. Each Diplomat is expected to actively participate in the scientific and business affairs of the College. Repeated, unexcused absences from the College meetings may

render a member subject to disciplinary action by the ECZM Executive Committee.

- 4.5. Each Diplomate must be guided by scientific methods and evidence based medicine, which complies with animal welfare legislation. Each Diplomate shall also fulfil the re-evaluation requirements of the ECZM. No re-certification points can be granted for education or training in non-scientific or non-evidence-based medicine.
- 4.6. Each Diplomate shall be required to keep records of his/her patients and/or veterinary work relating to their specialty.
- 4.7. Any Diplomate may be expelled, asked to resign or otherwise disciplined for non-professional or unethical conduct or other action against the best interest of the College by unanimous vote of the Executive Committee of the ECZM, pending confirmation by the College at the next Annual General Meeting.
- 4.8. Certified Diplomate status and Specialist status ceases by default when the specialty is practised at a level of less than 60% based on a 40 hour working week (i.e < 24 hours/week), or when the specialty has not been practised, for two continuous years (or equivalent) during a period of 5 years. These Diplomates will become non-certified Diplomates.
- 4.9. The College has established a standard re-certification procedure by which the requirements for membership are re-evaluated on a 5-year basis. This procedure meets the requirements as established by the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS).
- 4.10. Voluntary cessation of registration requires notice in writing to be received by the Secretary three months prior to the College's Annual General Meeting and will be published at the Annual General Meeting
- 4.11. The annual dues (in Euros) of each paying member for the following year(s) shall be determined by the Executive Committee on proposal by the Treasurer. The proposed dues are presented to the members at the Annual General Meeting for approval.
- 4.12. Annual dues (membership fees) are payable by January 1<sup>st</sup> every year and provide membership for that coming year. It is the responsibility of members to pay the appropriate fee by the deadline. Non-payment of annual dues may lead to removal of the individual from the College by the Executive Committee.

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

- 5.1 The College shall be composed of all the Diplomates.
- 5.2 Specialties
  - a) The College is composed of a group of specialties, representing recognised disciplines of the European College of Zoological Medicine.
  - b) Each specialty has a Chairperson who will represent its specialty within the

Executive Committee. The Chairperson should serve a term of up to 3 years and may be re-elected to one additional term of up to 3 years.

- c) Specific Policies and Procedures documents for each specialty shall conform to the Constitution and Bylaws of the College.
- d) The administration of each specialty is responsible to the Executive Committee of the ECZM.
- e) Additional specialties shall be established by the following process:
  - 1. Recognition as a separate specialty during the Annual General Meeting
  - 2. Approval by the Executive Committee of the ECZM of a separate Policies and Procedures document for the specialty.
  - 3. Approval by the EBVS, as specified in the EBVS Policies and Procedures.
- f) The college shall have responsibility for organizing, approving and administering all scientific and business matters, including approval of actions of specialties.
- g) Future developments may necessitate the adoption of further specialties and/or specialisation concerning other species.

- 5.3 The Diplomates will elect every three years, by secret ballot, the following officers:
- President
  - Vice-President
  - Treasurer
  - Secretary
- (If needed) one additional member so the total number of voting persons within the Executive Committee is uneven.

These officers, as well as the immediate Past-President and the specialty Chairpersons, will compose the Executive Committee of the College. The President may be elected for one term and after that may not be re-elected to the same office within a six year period. Other officers may be elected to only one additional term of 3 years.

Additional Diplomates, without a right to vote, may be co-opted as observers or advisors to the Executive Committee if the officers agree unanimously.

- 5.4 The College will normally be represented by the President, or any member of the Executive Committee designated by the President. In the absence or inability of the President, the Executive Committee will designate a representative.
- 5.5 One member of the Executive Committee will act as (senior) representative on the European Board of Veterinary Specialization and another Diplomate will act as the (junior) representative.

## **Article 6. Annual General Meeting, Quorum and Voting Rights**

- 6.1. The **Annual General Meeting** of the College will be held each year. The location will be determined by the Executive Board, in consultation with the Diplomates.

- 6.2. 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 10% of the membership. The request should contain the explanation for such a meeting, and the subsequent Extraordinary Meeting should take place within a period of two months of receipt of the request. If not, the responsible members are empowered to summon the Extraordinary Meeting themselves.
- 6.3. Each paying Diplomate is entitled to vote. He/she has to be present at the Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting to do so, except in case of a postal or electronic ballot (section 6.5). Each paying Diplomate has one (1) vote. Honorary Members who are not Diplomates of the College, retired Diplomates and resigned Diplomates are not entitled to vote.
- 6.4. The quorum<sup>1</sup> required for holding a meeting is one third of the voting members of the ECZM. The method of voting must be stated prior to the vote and will **either** be in person at meetings, **or** online via a secure, password protected site (but not a mixture of both). When this quorum is not present at a meeting no decisions can be made. The Executive Committee decides if the vote is to be taken orally, by a show of hands or in writing. Votes can be: in favour, against, or one can abstain. For all decisions, except as designated elsewhere, a **simple majority**<sup>2</sup> of the voting members is sufficient.
- 6.5. The Executive Committee can hold an electronic or postal ballot at any time outside the Annual General Meeting and Extraordinary General Meetings. The same rules apply to electronic or postal ballots as to voting during the Annual General Meeting and Extraordinary General Meetings. An electronic ballot is only valid if a vote is registered on the secure section of the ECZM website or forum, using unique passwords. A quorum shall consist of one third of the voting members. In the event that a quorum is not achieved within four weeks of initiating the vote no legal decisions can be made and the duration of the voting may be extended.
- 6.6. The Secretary or administrative assistant of the College has to keep the minutes of every Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting. These minutes must be signed by the Chairman of the meeting and the Secretary.

---

<sup>1</sup> In [law](#), a **quorum** is the minimum number of members of a [deliberative body](#) necessary to conduct the business of that group. Ordinarily, a quorum in a legislative body is a [majority](#) of the entire membership of the body. Thus, a quorum of a legislative body that has 100 seats would be 51 (more than half of 100), even if some seats are vacant, although many bodies may have a lower or higher quorum. When the quorum is not met, a legislative body cannot hold a vote, and cannot change the [status quo](#).

<sup>2</sup> **Simple majority** of the voting members present means the majority (>50%) of those participating in the vote (who may not be less than the quorum) minus any abstentions. **Example:** 100 voting members present, 30 abstained. The simple majority is 36 (70/2 +1).

## **Article 7. Amendments**

- 7.1. Proposed amendments to this Constitution shall be submitted to the President at least 3 months prior to the AGM. Any proposed amendment shall be distributed by website forum posting or electronic mail to the membership with a recommendation by the Executive Committee, at least 30 days prior to the Annual General Meeting and shall be brought to a vote by the Diplomates at the Annual General Meeting. A **majority** of at least two-thirds of the Diplomates participating in the vote (including abstentions) shall be required for adoption of proposed amendments.

Amendments to the Policies and Procedures can be made by a simple majority vote by all members for the general Policies and Procedures and by a simple majority vote of specialty members for the speciality Policies and Procedures. Any changes made to the Policies and Procedures must not conflict with the Constitution or Bylaws of ECZM and EBVS and the Executive Committee reserve the right to guide Diplomates on what changes are permitted.

- 7.2. 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 8. Dissolution of the College**

- 8.1. A decision to dissolve the European College of Zoological Medicine will require the same procedure as mentioned in Article 7.
- 8.2. In the event of dissolution of the College, or the College losing its status as a non profit-making organisation, all assets shall be divided among the Association of Avian Veterinarians, the Association of Exotic Mammal Veterinarians, the Association of Reptilian and Amphibian Veterinarians, the European Wildlife Disease Association and the European Association of Zoo and Wildlife Veterinarians for educational purposes.

## **Article 9. Bylaws**

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