

# EUROPEAN COLLEGE OF AQUATIC ANIMAL HEALTH (ECAAH®)

## BYLAWS

(amended 09/09/2016)

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### **Article 1. General Assembly (Annual General Meeting)**

#### Section 1.1

It is the duty of every practising Diplomat to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM), either face-to-face or electronic, at least once every three years. If the Diplomat has not attended the AGM for three consecutive years without previous dispensation from the Executive Committee, the registration as practising Diplomat ceases by default.

#### Section 1.2

The AGM is the senior legislative body of the College and has the following duties:

- a) To determine and update the Constitution, Bylaws and Policies and Procedures.
- b) To elect the Officers and Auditors.
- c) Action on the auditors' 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.
- h) Any other business.

### **Article 2. Membership**

#### Section 2.1 Standards for admission to membership

- a. The College must only certify veterinarians who:
  - i. Meet the educational, training and experience requirements established by the College.
  - ii. Have attained acceptable scores on comprehensive examinations administered by the College, except as defined in 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 below, and in the EBVS Policies and Procedures on non-Europeans.
  - iii. Are licensed to practise or are eligible to be licensed to practise in a European country, except as defined in sections 2.2.1.vi and 2.2.2 below. Applicants may be relieved of this requirement in exceptional cases.
  - iv. Have demonstrated fitness and ability to practise the speciality.
  - v. Have demonstrated satisfactory moral and ethical standing in the profession.
  - vi. Have met the minimal publication requirements as defined by the College (at least two peer-reviewed publications in international refereed journals).

- vii. Practise scientific, evidence-based veterinary medicine, which complies with animal welfare legislation.
  - viii. Have gained their veterinary degree at least 48 months previously.
- b. The College may also certify veterinarians who have passed the College's examinations, which they were allowed to sit as judged to be internationally recognised in the College's field, by the Credentials Committee and the Executive Committee. 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 2.2 Founding Diplomates shall be either:

2.2.1 Members of the Interim Executive Committee:

A member of the Interim Executive Committee is a Founding Diplomate that is not required to submit to examination to become a Diplomate. Membership to the Interim Executive Committee status is only granted by the EBVS at the time the College is being established to a small number (7-10) of individuals, whose task is to conduct the business of the College after provisional recognition is achieved.

The Interim Executive Committee of the College should normally exist for a period of up to five years and members must meet the following criteria:

- i. Be initiators in their field;
- ii. have achieved distinction in the field, and have qualifications achieved by training and experience far exceeding those proposed as necessary for candidates to take the certifying examination of the organisation;
- iii. be internationally recognised as a qualified specialist by peers, and
  - a) have at least ten years experience practising the speciality, and by teaching, research, and practice have contributed significantly to the development of the speciality, and
  - b) have advanced training (at European Qualifications Framework, level 8) in the speciality; have demonstrated competency through teaching, research and practice in the speciality to which the individual devotes most of his or her professional time, and
  - c) be author of at least ten significant publications in peer-reviewed journals resulting from the research or practise in the speciality;
- iv. be uncontroversial to the majority of the membership;
- v. spend at least 60 per cent of their time practising the speciality, based on a normal working week of 40 hours, for the last at least 10 years;
- vi. be practising in Europe;
- vii. practise scientific, evidence-based veterinary medicine, which complies with animal welfare legislation;
- viii. display the willingness to contribute to the growth of the College (e.g. by training residents);
- ix. apply high level knowledge and skills at the forefront of his/her specialist area of

(name of specialism) to their own professional work;

- x. perform at a high level of competency through teaching, research and practice in their speciality area;
- xi. promote aptitude and proficiency in the field of (name of specialism);
- xii. demonstrate the ability to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist clients and audiences;

#### 2.2.2 Diplomates recognised “*de facto*”:

A Diplomat recognised “*de facto*” is a Founding Diplomat that is appointed by the Interim Executive Committee. *De facto*-recognised Diplomates are not required to submit to examination to become a Diplomat but they are expected to contribute to the running of the College and the training of residents. Recognition of a small number of *de facto* Diplomates is possible up to five years after the EBVS has granted provisional recognition. To be appointed one must meet the same criteria as the Members of the Interim Executive Committee (Section 2.2.1.i-xii above), including two letters of support (for the procedures to be followed see Interim Rules and Regulations, pages 22-23).

#### Section 2.3 Diplomat:

A Diplomat is a veterinarian who has passed the certifying/examination procedure of the College and, if practising, is entitled to be awarded by the EBVS the title of European Veterinary Specialist in Aquatic Animal Health. Diplomat status at more than one College is allowed; however, registration as a European Veterinary Specialist is limited to one speciality from the EBVS.

#### Section 2.4 Non-Practising Diplomat:

A Diplomat 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 Annual General Meeting for three years without previous dispensation from the College.

A non-practising Diplomat is not allowed to use the title European Specialist nor Diplomat but may use the title Diplomat (non-practising). A non-practising Diplomat seeking to revert to full Diplomat status needs to satisfy the Credentials Committee of the College.

The non-practising Diplomat is removed from the EBVS specialist register.

#### Section 2.5 Retired Diplomat

A Diplomat who voluntarily stops permanently and irrevocably practising is entitled to Retired Diplomat 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 Diplomat is not allowed to use the title European Specialist nor Diplomat but may use the title Diplomat (Retired). The Retired Diplomat 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 Aquatic Animal Health and/or to aquatic animal veterinary medicine.

Honorary Members, who are ECAAH-Diplomate, shall have all the rights and privileges of Diplomates. Honorary Members who are not ECAAH-Diplomate, shall have all the rights and privileges of Diplomates except the right to vote and hold office. The number of Honorary Members shall not be more than 5% of the total number of the College Diplomates.

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 aquatic animal veterinary medicine as required by the Executive Committee.

Election of an Honorary member shall be accomplished by an at least two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee, and by an at least two-thirds majority of the voting members present (including those abstaining) at the Annual General Meeting of the College.

### Section 2.7 Associate Members

The College may confer Associate member status on scientists who have contributed significantly to research in veterinary medicine. Admission criteria for Associate Members are defined by the Executive Committee 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. More over:

- 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 General 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.

### Section 2.8 Re-certification

The Diplomate is required to send in each 5 years a summary of his/her professional activities. The format of this summary has to be approved of by the EBVS. The summaries will be evaluated by the Re-certification Committee. In addition, Diplomates should ask two senior colleagues or authorities to send to the College a letter of reference certifying that the Diplomate in question has been active in practising his/her speciality for the last 5 years at the specialist level (see EBVS Policies & Procedures Appendix 8). The type of the reference letter shall be according to the EBVS Policies and Procedures. Self-certification of the members of the committee responsible for re-certification must be avoided.

### Section 2.9 Cessation of registration of Diplomates

Registration as practising Diplomate ceases by default when the speciality is practised insufficiently, see section 2.4 above.

### Section 2.10 Advertising and Directory Listings

1. Practising Diplomates may use the title "Dip. ECAAH" or 'Dipl. ECAAH" or "Diplomate of ECAAH", and if listed as specialists by the EBVS they may use the title "European Veterinary Specialist in Aquatic Animal Health".

2. The use of the term “board/Executive Committee eligible” or “board/Executive Committee qualified”, as an indication of special qualification, is potentially misleading to the public and therefore must not be used in any public communication or other solicitation.
3. The use of the European Veterinary Specialist Trade Mark is permitted 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.
4. Non-practising or retired Diplomates, associate members, and honorary members are not allowed to use the title or trade mark of European Veterinary Specialist.

### **Article 3. Duties of Officers.**

The phrases “the Board”, the “Executive committee” or the “Council” are all the same and are hereafter to be referred to, in this and other documents of the ECAAH, as the Executive Committee.

#### **Section 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.

#### **Section 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 up to 3- year term or should the office fall vacant.

#### **Section 3.3 Secretary:**

The Secretary shall attend to the correspondence of the College, keep and publish annually lists of Diplomates of all categories, and 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 furthermore usual duties of a Secretary. The Secretary shall submit the Annual Report of the College to the EBVS by the 15<sup>th</sup> January of the following year. The minimum term of office of the Secretary shall be 2 years and the maximum 6 years.

#### **Section 3.4 Treasurer:**

The Treasurer shall advise the College on all financial matters. He/she shall arrange for the safekeeping of all funds, pay bills and expenses, and submit a written financial statement to all members annually. He/she shall keep full and accurate books of account, 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. The minimum term of office of the Treasurer shall be 2 years and the maximum 6 years.

#### **Section 3.5. Past-President:**

The Past-President shall advise the President.

### Section 3.6 Vacancies amongst the officers:

Vacancies occurring on the Executive Committee shall be filled by election of a member via an electronic vote or 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.

## **Article 4. Committees**

### Section 4.1 Executive Committee of the College

The Executive Committee shall consider all the business and policies pertaining to the affairs of the College. It shall consider and act upon charges against Diplomates for alleged offences against the Constitution and Bylaws 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 application, examinations, registrations and other fees. It shall direct the management of funds held by the College.

### Section 4.2 Education Committee

The Education Committee shall be composed of at least three members appointed by the Executive Committee for a term of four 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 EC 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 College. The Education Committee will receive the required periodic reports from directors of resident training on:

- a) the annual progress of each candidate in every aquatic animal veterinary medicine residency;
- b) details of each standard residency programme, in the form of an initial report with update and re-examination every five years. The Education Committee will attest the adequacy of each programme when they approve the report.

### Section 4.3 Credentials Committee

The Credentials Committee shall be composed of at least three members appointed by the Executive Committee for a term of three years. The Credentials Committee may co-opt ECAAH Diplomates to assist in the process of approving the credentials submitted by the candidates wishing to sit the exams. Such appointments are for one year only, although they may be renewed annually. They must be approved by the Executive Committee.

The senior member of the Committee in terms of service shall serve as Chairperson, unless the Executive Committee decides otherwise.

The duties of the Credentials Committee will be as follows:

- a) to establish guidelines to assist applicants applying to sit the diploma examination;
- b) to receive, review, and approve the candidacy of applicants;
- c) to forward credentials of approved applicants to the Examination Committee;

#### Section 4.4 Examination Committee

The Examination Committee shall consist of at least three members appointed by the Executive Committee for a term of three years. Normally, one member will be replaced each year. The senior member of the Committee in terms of service shall serve as Chairperson, unless the Executive Committee decides otherwise. The Examination Committee may co-opt Diplomates as 'examiners' to assist in the examination process. Such appointments are for one year only, although may be renewed annually. They must be approved by the Executive Committee.

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'.

#### Section 4.5 Nomination Committee

The Nomination Committee shall be composed of three members appointed by the Executive Committee at least six months before the elections. The Committee shall prepare a list of candidates for the 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. The list of nominees should be known by the Diplomates 30 days before the elections. The Committee will report their considerations to the College at the Annual General Meeting. If no nominations have been made, nominations may be made from the floor (see Article 1, section 1.2.b).

#### Section 4.6 Auditors

Two auditors are elected by the General Assembly at the Annual General Meeting for an one year term. The two auditors evaluate the report of the Treasurer. The auditors' report, and the Treasurer's report regarding the financial status of the College, will be presented for approval at the AGM. Only after the auditors' report, can the AGM discharge the Treasurer for his/her annual report. The College may appoint external professional auditors.

#### Section 4.7 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 senior member of the Committee in terms of service shall serve as Chairperson, unless the Executive Committee decides otherwise.

The Re-certification Committee shall evaluate the Diplomate status of every Diplomate every five (5) years according to the re-certification requirements accredited by the EBVS.

#### Section 4.8 Indemnification

Members of Committees will receive no indemnification.

### **Article 5. Diploma**

## Section 5.1 Qualifications to sit the diploma examination

1. To be allowed to sit the examination an applicant must give evidence of satisfactory completion of an approved training period of at least 4 years to general veterinary education, training and practise, and to special education, training, and practise of aquatic animal veterinary medicine, both after the date of graduation from a veterinary school. The following sequence of training is to be used:

- a) A first period of a minimum of one year must be a rotating internship, or its equivalent, as defined by the ECAAH Education Committee.
- b) A second residency period shall comprise a minimum of 3 years postgraduate training programme under supervision of Diplomates of the ECAAH.

This residency period may constitute:

- i) a **standard residency training 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, **alternate programme**, in cooperation with his/her supervisor, the College, and the resources available to the individual, for advanced study and experience.

2. Apart from candidates who have successfully completed either a standard or an alternate residency programme, those who are internationally recognised in the field of aquatic animal veterinary medicine may also be allowed to sit the examination with assessment by other means at the discretion of the Credentials Committee and the Executive Committee.

In addition, all categories of candidates shall meet the requirements for publications, which are:

- one (1) original, aquatic animal health related, internationally peer reviewed paper of which the applicant must be the principal author and accepted by a refereed scientific journal.
- one aquatic animal health related, internationally peer reviewed case report or original paper of which the applicant is author or co-author and accepted by a refereed scientific journal.

## Section 5.2 Residency training programmes

### 1. Introduction

- a. A residency shall be advanced training in aquatic animal health, which may or may not lead to certification by the College. An approved Residency Programme must be conducted under the direct supervision of a practising Diplomate of the College.
- b. The goal of a residency programme must be to end up with Diplomates who have developed self-confidence, self-criticism and sense of responsibility that are essential for the practise of the speciality.
- c. Residency programmes should strive to train specialists who have demonstrated to have the proper intellectual qualities, professional and technical skills, as these are described in



Appendix 1 to these Bylaws. Moreover, residency programmes must aim at the development of a culture, which recognizes the importance of continuous professional development.

d. Approval of veterinary residency programmes is the responsibility of the College and all residency programmes must be approved by the relevant committee before they start.

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

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

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 (2) residents following standard residency programmes; in exceptional cases three (3) such residents can be allowed, for a restricted time period.

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 Programme

a. A standard residency training programme takes place in an institution ("approved centre") that provides satisfactory evidence proving that they offer sufficient facilities, services and a programme that fulfils the necessary criteria to be approved as a training centre offering 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 residency programme is three years.

c. The period can 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 under exceptional circumstances a prolongation is possible. The duration of the prolongation is agreed with the Credentials/Education committee.

## 3. Alternate Residency Training Programme

A veterinarian whose circumstances do not permit enrolment in a standard residency programme may submit an **alternate programme** to the College, in conjunction with his/her supervisor, outlining the resources available to them, for advanced study and experience. The alternate programme is not approved for a training centre or for anyone other than the Resident in question. The alternate 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 alternate programme must not exceed six years. A resident on an alternate training programme must spend the equivalent of at least 60% of 3 years working in the practice of aquatic animal veterinary medicine, under direct supervision of a Diplomate of the ECAAH.

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 shall establish guidelines for those residencies that are approved as appropriate training for candidates seeking speciality certification. Detailed description of these guidelines (including the requirements and the procedures for approval of and admission to the residency programmes) shall be published in the Policies and Procedures of the College. All these guidelines must be in line with the latest version of the EBVS Policies and Procedures.

### Section 5.3 Examination

1. Before sitting an examination, the applicant's credentials must be evaluated by the credentials committee.
2. The examination may consist of written, oral and/or practical parts. The candidate having fulfilled all qualifications to sit the examination, at the discretion of the Credentials Committee, is allowed to sit all parts of the examination in one session. However, the parts of the examination may be taken separately and do not need to be taken all at the same time.
3. Judgment must be incorporated into examinations-assessing not just what the candidates know but what they would do with that knowledge.
4. It must be made known to the candidates in advance in what way the different parts and levels will be evaluated.
5. All parts of the examination must be held at all times 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.
6. Candidates should be informed prior to the examination of the passing point, or, if this is not determined in advance, the method of setting the passing point.
7. Promptly report to applicants or candidates details concerning any deficiencies in credentials or preliminary examination results that prevent them from sitting the examination or being certified by the College:
  - 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.
8. Confidentiality must be maintained throughout the entire examination. Examination questions must be kept confidential by all Colleges, with the exceptions being the publication of model questions as a guideline to candidates, and during an appeal procedure, as outlined in a College's Bylaws and/or Policies and Procedures.
9. Personal conflict, or the appearance of conflict, that could affect results of examinations is to be avoided.
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.

11. The candidate shall submit the non-refundable examination fee, which shall be determined annually at the AGM.
12. Candidates must pass the examination within eight years of completion of the residency programme. Candidate must be informed that they may sit the different parts of the examination on four (4) occasions only.
13. Further details for the administration and conduct of the qualifying examination must be provided in the Policies and Procedures of the College.
14. Any change in the procedure of the examination should be notified to the EBVS.

## **Article 6. Finances**

### Section 6.1

- 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 according to the constitution. Members or officers of the College receive no payment from the funds of the College, except of expenses payment.
- c. The expenses of the College shall be met through various sources of income.
  - i) Donations from companies and international organisations.
  - ii) Income from educational meetings organised by the College.
  - iii) Investment income.
  - iv) Annual dues.

### Section 6.2

- 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 shall begin on the registration date of the College and end on the thirty-first of December.
- b) The accounts of the last financial year and the budget of the following financial year shall be submitted annually for the approval to the Annual General Meeting at least 30 days prior to the AGM.

### Section 6.3 Annual dues

The annual dues (150 Euros) of each paying member for the following years shall be determined by the AGM. Dues are payable by January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. Members shall be adjudged delinquent if they are one year in arrears, and may be voted for removal by the membership if two years have elapsed without payment.

The Retired Diplomat of the College shall be required to pay reduced dues to the College (50 Euros) and no EBVS fee.

The Non-Practising Diplomat of the College shall be required to pay reduced dues to the College (50 Euros) and no EBVS fee.

The Honorary Members will not be required to pay dues to the College.

The Associate Members may pay normal dues but no EBVS fee.

### Section 6.4

The College is required to maintain insurance, to indemnify itself against legal costs.

### **Article 7. Meetings**

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

### **Article 8. Amendments**

These Bylaws may be amended at any Annual General Meeting (or via an electronic vote) by two-thirds of the votes cast. Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the Secretary minimum 60 days before the meeting, for appropriate review by the Executive Committee. Proposed amendments shall be distributed (by letter, fax or electronic mail) to the membership within thirty (30) days prior to the Annual General Meeting.

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

### **Article 9. Appeals Procedures**

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

- Denial of certification of an individual.
- Temporary or permanent suspension of certification.
- Failure of an examination or a part of an examination.
- Denial of adequacy of credentials.
- Denial of approval of a residency programme.

The Appeals Procedures must be a part of the Bylaws and/or the Policies and Procedures of the College.

Each College is responsible for the full implementation of its appeals procedures to ensure due process. These procedures and decisions should be fair and reasonable for all parties, in keeping with the objectives of the College and the goals of EBVS.

Changes in appeals procedures should be reported to the EBVS as part of the Annual Report.

#### **I. Appeals Committee**

The College's Procedures will provide for the appointment of an Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee shall be made up of a minimum of three Diplomates of the College who shall not be serving as members of the Executive Committee of the College or members of the relevant committee whose decision is being questioned, who shall have had no prior involvement with the case, and who have no potential conflict of interest with the Appellant or the Committee whose decision is being questioned.

#### **II. Communication of the right of Appeal**

In the event of an adverse decision, the College shall notify the affected party (or parties) of the procedure for appealing against the adverse decision. This notification must be included with the communication that gives notice of the adverse decision itself. The Appeals

Procedures must specify an address and Officer of the College to which an Appeal should be sent in the first place.

For ECAAH, appeals should be sent to the Secretary of ECAAH, Assistant Professor Vasileios Bakopoulos at v.bakopoulos@marine.aegean.gr

**III. Grounds of Appeal:** the College must provide for Appeals to be made on the following grounds:

1. That the College failed correctly to apply its own or EBVS's published rules, procedures or criteria relevant to the decision in question.
  2. That the College's published rules, procedures or criteria were not compliant with the Policies and Procedures of the EBVS.
- or
3. That the College imposed a sanction that was disproportionate to the gravity of the adverse decision against the Appellant.

#### **IV. Commencing an Appeal Process**

1. The College must require an Appeal to be made in writing, including a statement of the grounds of Appeal, together with any supporting reasons and documents.
2. The College must allow Appeals to be made for at least 60 days but no greater than 90 days after the postmarked date of the letter communicating the relevant adverse decision (or if sent by email 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 announcement of the decision of denying acceptance of the Credentials of a resident to sit the examination.

Submission of an appeal to the College must be accompanied by a deposit of € 250 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 itemization of the costs retained.

3. The College must acknowledge receipt of an Appeal within 10 working days.

(i) 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.

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

4. Within 15 working days of step 3(i), the College must inform the Appellant whether or not the Notice of Appeal has been accepted as raising an arguable Ground of Appeal, and, if so, of the proposed membership of the Appeals Committee that will consider the Appeal.

5. The College must:

(i) provide a reasonable opportunity and procedure for the Appellant to raise concerns with or object to the membership of the Appeals Committee, and

(ii) provide a reasonable procedure by which any such concerns or objections are considered and responded to.

6. In any case where an Appeal is to be conducted, the procedure for convening an Appeals Committee to consider the Appeal must be completed no later than 30 days after the date the College has informed the Appellant of the proposed membership of the Appeals Committee, under paragraph 4 above.

7. Within 5 working days of the appointment of the Appeals Committee, all the papers relating to the dispute shall be forwarded by the Officer of the College to whom the Appeal was sent to the members of the Appeals Committee.

8. 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 that either:

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

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

## **V. Conduct of an Appeal Process**

1. A College must within its Appeals Procedures provide a process by which the Appeals Committee will conduct the Appeal. A College must require all Appeals to be conducted in all due confidence.

2. The Appeals Committee must be able to request information relevant to its consideration of the Appeal from any relevant party.

3. The Appeals Committee must be required to consider carefully the need or not for an oral hearing. Where an Appeals Committee decides not to hold an oral hearing in an Appeal against an adverse decision that arises from an allegation of impropriety against a candidate (or in other matters of similar gravity), reasons for that decision must be given. Where an oral hearing is held, a timetable must be devised which allows both parties reasonable opportunity to appear.

4. An Oral hearing must be attended by at least three members of the Appeals Committee. Neither party may be represented by legal counsel, although the provisions of the law in the country where the College is registered must be taken into consideration. Oral hearings will be conducted in English. The Appellant may be accompanied by an individual (“representative”), who may assist them to present the appeal. The “representative” will not be allowed to participate in answering specific questions but, at the discretion of the Chairperson, may be allowed to provide necessary language translations and may, at the end, be allowed to make a statement on behalf of the Appellant.

5. 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 it is made, the electronic recording, shall be made available to the meeting’s participants on request.

6. The Appeals Committee must have the discretion to reject or uphold the appeal according to its independent view of the merits of the Appeal. Where the appeal is upheld, in whole or in part, the Appeals Committee may modify or reverse the previous decision or adjust the sanction.

7. The decision of the Appeals Committee will be reached by a majority vote of the members of the Committee, the Chairperson to have the casting vote if necessary. In communicating the decision of the Appeals Committee, the Chair will give reasons for the decision.

8. The Appeals Committee must deliver its decision on the Appeal to a nominated Executive Officer of the College within 90 days of the date of receiving all the papers relating to the dispute under 'IV.7' above. The Executive Committee of the College will check that the Appeals Committee has followed the procedures and, if these have been followed correctly, accept their recommendation. The Executive Committee of the College shall communicate the decision, via electronic means and in addition, if there is no satisfactory confirmation of receipt, via registered post, to the Appellant, within 30 days of receipt of the Appeal decision.

9. If the Appellant is not satisfied with the outcome, he/she may appeal to the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS) against the decision of the College within 60 days of the date on which the outcome of an Appeal was communicated to the Appellant by the College, and shall include a clear statement of the grounds for Appeal of the decision. The procedure to follow is detailed within the Policies & Procedures of the EBVS, which may be found in the EBVS website ([www.ebvs.eu](http://www.ebvs.eu)).

## **Interim Rules and Regulations**

### Article 1: Interim Executive Committee of the College

#### Section 1:

*The Interim Executive Committee shall elect the President, the Vice President, the Treasurer, and the Secretary of the Committee to serve for a maximum period of five years.*

#### Section 2:

*Within five years after foundation of the College, an Executive Committee of the College will be elected conform to the Constitution and Bylaws of the College.*

#### Section 3:

*The officers and the Members of the IEC shall perform their duties as closely as possible conform to the Constitution and Bylaws of the College.*

#### Section 4:

*The Interim Executive Committee and the Members of the IEC shall prepare the definitive organisation of the College according to the Constitution and Bylaws of the College.*

### Article 2: Founding Diplomates

#### Section 1:

*The Members of the Interim Executive Committee together will act as an interim credentials committee and examination committee for veterinarians who wish to be considered for defacto recognition as Diplomates.*

#### Section 2:

*The Members of the Interim Executive Committee shall only consider veterinarians for defacto recognition as Diplomates if they meet the relevant criteria in the Bylaws of the College (Article 2, section 2.2.1 and 2.2.2).*

### Article 3: Procedure for de facto recognition of Diplomates

#### Section 1:

*Application for defacto recognition is possible for up to five years after the provisional recognition of the College. The Interim Executive Committee (IEC) will invite veterinarians to apply for de facto recognition if they consider that they meet the relevant criteria in the Bylaws of the College (Article 2, section 2.2.1 and 2.2.2).*

#### Section 2:

*Applicants should submit their application to the Secretary of the IEC. The application should include a curriculum vitae, a description of the way training and expertise has been acquired, a description of the way in which the speciality is currently practised, a list of publications, a list of activities that convey the level of his or her*



*professional work, an estimate of how much time is spent in the speciality (hours per week) and a letter of support from two senior colleagues or authorities. From this information it should be clear whether the applicant meets the relevant criteria in the Bylaws of the College (Article 3, section 3.1.1 and 3.1.2).*

*Section 3:*

*Initially each applicant will be considered by a committee consisting of three members of the IEC, of which one should preferably be from the same country as the applicant, and an experienced Diplomee of another College. The members of the committee prepare a proposal for decision on recognition by all Members of the IEC.*

*When the application is highly convincing, the committee can advise the IEC to recognise the applicant as a de facto Diplomee, entitled to become a Founding Diplomee of the College. If their decision is negative or unsure, it is forwarded to the IEC for decision. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the entire IEC membership shall be required for adoption.*

*A newly recognised de facto Diplomee may act as one of the three members of the committee who, along with the external evaluator, will evaluate new applications, as described above.*

*Section 4:*

*When the decision of the IEC for further consideration is positive, the three Members of the IEC may visit the centre of the applicant to observe procedures, equipment, records, etc.. At this stage also the members of the committee can conclude that the applicant's qualifications are sufficient to advise the IEC as a whole to recognize the applicant.*

*Unsuccessful applicants for de facto recognition will have either to sit the ECAAH examination for Diploma or undergo some other test at the discretion of the IEC.*