European College of Aquatic Animal



Health Policies and Procedures

Version 2025

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Preface

These Policies and Procedures are intended to enhance communication and ensure a clear understanding among the members of the European College of Aquatic Animal Health.

The Policies section outlines the fundamental principles, rules, and guidelines established by the administration of the college and formally adopted by its members. These policies are designed to ensure full alignment with the standards and requirements set by the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS).

The Procedures section details the specific processes used to implement these policies in the daily operations of the college. This section is reviewed and updated as needed throughout the year to reflect the evolving requirements of the college while maintaining compliance with EBVS standards. All updates to procedures are verified by the membership during the Annual General Meeting and reviewed to ensure consistency with EBVS regulations.

POLICIES OF THE EUROPEAN COLLEGE OF AQUATIC ANIMAL HEALTH (ECAAH)

The European College of Aquatic Animal Health (ECAAH) is a recognized veterinary specialist college under the European Board for Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS). According to its 2019 Constitution, the college is officially registered at Unit 7b, Oranmore Business Park, Oranmore, Co. Galway, Ireland.

1. MEMBERSHIP IN THE EUROPEAN COLLEGE OF AQUATIC ANIMAL HEALTH

1.1 Membership Policies

1.1.1 Definition and Policies for Diplomates and Membership

The ECAAH consists of diplomates who are in good standing with the college and meet all professional and financial obligations as outlined in Article 4 of the ECAAH Constitution.

All specialists affiliated with the college must uphold the highest professional standards and must not have had any formal complaints or appeals upheld against them by a court of law or professional regulatory body.

The college is committed to promoting gender balance and diversity among its members and representatives.

All diplomates of the ECAAH are members of the General Assembly, which serves as their representative body. The roles and responsibilities of the General Assembly are outlined in Article 1 of the ECAAH Bylaws.

1.2 Standards for Admission to Membership

The ECAAH certifies only veterinarians who meet the educational, training, and experience requirements set forth in the college's bylaws.

Members are categorized as follows, in accordance with the Constitutions and Bylaws of both the EBVS and the ECAAH:

- **Practicing Diplomates** – Actively engaged in aquatic animal health and eligible to hold the title of *European Veterinary Specialist in Aquatic Animal Health*, as recognized by EBVS. To maintain this

status, they must remain active in the specialty, undergo recertification every five years, and be up to date with college fees.

- **Non-Practicing Diplomates** – Diplomates no longer actively working in the specialty. While they retain their diplomate status, they are not entitled to use the *European Veterinary Specialist* title. Those who wish to return to practice must complete a recertification. Diplomates who have been inactive for over two years must notify the college.
- **Retired Diplomates** – Diplomates who have permanently retired from professional practice. While they may contribute in an advisory or educational capacity, they cannot use the *European Veterinary Specialist* or *Diplomate* titles and do not hold voting rights in the General Assembly. Retired Diplomates must inform the college of their status change.
- **Honorary Members** – Individuals who have contributed outstandingly to aquatic animal health. Honorary members who are not diplomates do not have voting rights within the General Assembly. Their number cannot exceed 5% of the total membership.
- **Associate Members** – Non-veterinary professionals who have significantly contributed to the field. They cannot hold diplomate status or use misleading titles such as *Associate Diplomate*. Membership is granted for five years, after which the Credentials Committee reevaluates their contributions, also taking into account ECAAH needs. Associate Members may co-supervise residents alongside an ECAAH Diplomate but are not eligible to hold office or vote in the General Assembly. Their number cannot exceed 10% of the diplomates.

2. ECAAH DIPLOMATES

2.1 Use of Titles and Directory Listings

- Practicing Diplomates may use the title *Diplomate of the European College of Aquatic Animal Health (Dipl. ECAAH)* or abbreviations *Dip. ECAAH* / *Dipl. ECAAH* or *European Veterinary Specialist in Aquatic Animal Health*, as recognized by EBVS

2.2 Categories of Diplomates

2.2.1 Practicing Diplomates

- Diplomates who actively practice veterinary medicine in aquatic animal health speciality
- They are entitled to the EBVS title of the European Veterinary Specialist in Aquatic Animal Health
- They are members of the ECAAH General Assembly (GA) and they are represented by this GA.
- To keep this status, they should be periodically re-certified and should be up to date with payment of the College fees.

2.2.2 Non-Practicing Diplomates

- Diplomates who are not actively practicing and/or have not been recertified for more than 2 years.
- They cannot vote in the General Assembly or use the *European Specialist* or *Diplomate* titles.
- Diplomates who have been inactive for more than two years must notify the ECAAH.
- Reinstatement requires a recertification process.

2.2.3 Retired Diplomates

- Diplomates who have permanently retired from practice.
- They cannot vote in the General Assembly or use the *European Specialist* or *Diplomate* titles.
- They may contribute in advisory or educational roles.
- Retired Diplomates must inform the ECAAH of their status change.

2.2.4 Honorary Members

- Individuals who have made exceptional contributions to aquatic animal health.
- Honorary Members who were ECAAH Diplomates retain full rights, while non-Diplomate Honorary Members do not have voting rights.
- The nomination process includes:
    - A proposal from two Diplomates in good standing.
    - A document outlining the nominee's contributions.
    - Approval by the Executive Committee (two-thirds majority vote).
    - Final validation by the General Assembly (two-thirds majority vote).
- The number of Honorary Members cannot exceed 5% of the total membership.

2.2.5 Associate Members

- Non-veterinarians who have significantly contributed to aquatic animal health.
- They cannot use the *Diplomate* title or misleading alternatives like *Associate Diplomate*.
- Membership lasts five years, after which the Credentials Committee re-evaluates eligibility.
- Associate Members are not entitled to act as resident supervisors without a Diplomate responsible for the training program, but are encouraged to participate in scientific meetings and workshops organized by the College, as well as to contribute to resident training.
- They cannot hold office or vote in the General Assembly but may serve as committee advisors.
- The total number of Associate Members cannot exceed 10% of diplomates.

Nomination Process for Associate Membership

- Any Diplomate may propose a candidate.
- The proposal is submitted to the ECAAH Secretary, who informs the Executive Committee.
- Admission criteria require significant international scientific or professional contributions to aquatic animal health (same as *de facto* diplomates, see previous P&Ps version for further information).
- The Credentials Committee reviews applications and submits recommendations to the Executive Committee.
- A final decision is made within one month of submission.

2.3 ECAAH Diplomate Certification Tracks

There are several pathways to becoming an ECAAH Diplomate:

1. **Standard Residency Training Programme + Examination** – A structured, supervised training program that follows EBVS guidelines and leads to eligibility for the certifying examination. It must be done in an approved Standard Training centre.
2. **Alternative Residency Training Programme + Examination** – A customized training pathway for veterinarians who cannot follow a standard residency but must still meet equivalent competency requirements. Does not need to be run in a Standard Training centre.
3. **Modular Training Programme + Examination** – An EBVS-approved, credit-based certification route, although not yet implemented by ECAAH.
4. **Internationally Recognized Specialists + Examination** – A special and transitional track that allows internationally recognized experts in aquatic animal health, as evaluated by the Credentials Committee, to sit for the examination.

Note: *Founding Diplomates* and *De Facto Diplomates* are no longer certification tracks, as these categories were used only during the college's initial establishment. Their details can be found in previous versions of the ECAAH Policies and Procedures.

3. ECAAH ORGANIZATIONAL BODIES

The governance of the European College of Aquatic Animal Health (ECAAH) consists of:

- **The Executive Committee (ExeC)**
- **Advisory Committees**

3.1 Executive Committee (ExeC)

Also referred to as the *ECAAH Board* or *ECAAH Council*, the Executive Committee is responsible for the overall administration of the college.

3.1.1 Composition of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is composed of:

- **President**
- **Past-President** (advisory role)
- **Vice-President**
- **Secretary**
- **Treasurer**
- **Other Elected Board Members** (even-numbered positions)

To avoid a deadlock during voting, the Executive Committee must be composed of an even number of voting members.

3.1.2 Duties of Executive Committee Officers

- **President**: Presides over meetings, regulates debates, appoints committees, announces election results, and oversees college operations. Elected for a three-year term, renewable once (maximum six years). A former president may stand for re-election after completing one full term outside of office.
- **Vice-President**: Assumes the duties of the President in case of absence or incapacity and may be elected as the next President.
- **Secretary**: Manages college correspondence, maintains records of diplomates and members, keeps official meeting minutes, and submits the ECAAH Annual Report to the EBVS by January 15th. Secretary's term length is a minimum of 2 years and a maximum of 6 years.
- **Treasurer**: Manages the financial affairs of the college, ensures accurate bookkeeping, prepares an annual financial report, and maintains transparency in financial transactions. Treasurer's term length is a minimum of 2 years and a maximum of 6 years.
- **Past-President**: Provides advisory support to the newly elected President for a three-year term.
- **Other Elected Executive Committee Members**: Assist in specific administrative or operational tasks as requested.

Term Limits:
The cumulative total service time for an individual holding different ExeC positions must not exceed 12 years.

3.1.3 Responsibilities of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee oversees all college activities, including:

- Ensuring compliance with the ECAAH Constitution, Bylaws, and EBVS regulations.
- Appoint other Committees.
- Reviewing disciplinary cases and handling alleged breaches of professional conduct.
- Approving new diplomates and training programmes.
- Managing college finances, fees, and expenditures.
- Coordinating with EBVS and other professional bodies.

3.2 ECAAH Advisory Committees

ECAAH has **six permanent internal committees** and **one external auditing committee** to support governance. The Executive Committee may establish additional committees as needed.

- Permanent Internal Committees

A. **Education Committee**

B. **Examinations Committee**

C. **Credentials Committee**

D. **Re-Certification Committee**

E. **Nomination Committee**

F. **Appeals Committee**

- **External Committee**

G. **External Auditors** – Responsible for auditing financial records and ensuring fiscal compliance.

All committees serve in an advisory capacity to the Executive Committee. Their decisions require final validation by the ExeC. The Appeals Committee is activated only in response to a formal appeal.

3.2.1 Committee Membership and Appointment

- Committee members serve a minimum two-year term.
- The Executive Committee determines committee roles, composition, and leadership.

3.2.2 Committee Roles and Responsibilities

A) Education Committee (EduC)

- Consists of at least three members appointed for a four-year term. The member with the longest service serves as Chairperson, unless otherwise decided by the Executive Committee.
- Defines the criteria for residency programmes and establishes the procedures for their approval, along with the approval of their sponsors.
- Maintains an updated list of approved residency programmes, supervisors, and active residents.

- Oversees residents' progress through annual reports and carries out a five-year re-evaluation of residency programmes.

B) Credentials Committee (CreC)

- Composed of at least three members appointed by ExeC. The member with the longest service serves as Chairperson, unless otherwise decided by the Executive Committee.
- Can co-opt Diplomates for reviewing applications (1-year appointment, approved by ExeC, renewable).
- Develops guidelines for certification eligibility.
- Evaluates applicant credentials for the ECAAH examination.
- Forwards approved candidates to the Examinations Committee.

C) Examinations Committee (ExaC)

- Composed of at least three members appointed by ExeC. The member with the longest service serves as Chairperson, unless otherwise decided by the Executive Committee.
- Annual rotation of one member.
- Can appoint Diplomates as temporary examiners (1-year appointment, approved by ExeC, renewable).
- Prepares and administers the ECAAH certifying examination.
- Ensures confidentiality and integrity in exam administration.
- The Chairperson of the ExamC shall forward the results of examinations to the ExeC with recommendations regarding the awarding of diplomas.
- No Executive, Credentials, and Education Committee members may serve as examiners.

D) Re-Certification Committee (RecC)

- Composed of at least three members, appointed for a three-year term by ExeC. The member with the longest service serves as Chairperson, unless otherwise decided by the Executive Committee.
- Evaluates every Diplomate's status every five years for recertification, ensuring compliance with ECAAH and EBVS standards.

E) Nomination Committee (NomC)

- Composed of three members, appointed six months prior to the elections.
- Organizes the election process, including candidate selection.
- Prepares a list of candidates for election to the ExeC following a written call for candidates sent to all Diplomates at least five months before the elections, and reports to the ExeC at least three months prior to the elections.
- Prepares the final list of nominees, ensuring transparency and compliance. Shares the list with all diplomates at least 30 days prior to the election.
- Reports the election results at the General Assembly.

- If no nominations have been received, nominations may be made from the floor.

F) Appeals Committee

- Handles formal appeals related to certification, residency programme decisions, examinations and disciplinary actions.
- Activated only when an appeal is submitted.

G) Auditors

- Two internal auditors are elected by the General Assembly for a one-year term.
- They review and validate the Treasurer's financial report at the Annual General Meeting.
- If necessary, the college may appoint external professional auditors.

4. ECAAH MEETINGS

4.1 General Assembly (Annual General Meeting, AGM)

Definition and Responsibilities

The General Assembly (GA) is the highest legislative body of ECAAH and is responsible for:

a) Reviewing and approving the ECAAH Constitution, Bylaws, and Policies & Procedures, including any updates. As specified in these documents, changes to the Constitution and Bylaws require a simple or two-thirds majority vote of the ECAAH membership. Recommendations by the Executive Committee (ExeC) for updates to Policies & Procedures require a simple majority vote of present members (in person or online).
b) Electing the Executive Committee Officers and Auditors.
c) Reviewing and taking action on the Auditor's report.
d) Formally approving the business conducted by the Executive Committee in the preceding year.
e) Addressing matters presented by the Executive Committee or required by the ECAAH Constitution.
f) Approving membership fees for the upcoming year(s).

4.2 General Assembly Policies

Membership and Attendance

- All ECAAH Diplomates are members of the General Assembly.
- Each Practicing Diplomate is required to attend at least one AGM every three years or 2 every 5 years.
- Diplomates who fail to attend three consecutive AGMs without prior exemption from the Executive Committee will lose their status as Practicing Diplomates by default.
- The ECAAH Secretary maintains attendance records and informs Diplomates about their attendance status.

Meeting Format and Procedures

- The **General Assembly is held once per year** and may be conducted:
    - In person (face-to-face).
    - Online.
    - As a hybrid meeting (physical presence + online broadcast).
- The Executive Committee determines the date and location of the next GA and announces it in advance.
- The preliminary agenda and supporting documents are prepared by the Executive Committee and distributed to Diplomates in advance.
- Diplomates may submit topics for inclusion in the agenda.

Expenses

- Diplomates are responsible for their own travel expenses related to the GA.
- Expenses such as meeting rooms and administrative costs are covered by ECAAH.
- ExeC members' travel and accommodation costs may be reimbursed upon prior justification and approval by the Executive Committee.

Meeting Minutes

- Draft minutes of the GA will be electronically distributed to all members after the meeting.
- Diplomates may submit comments to the Secretary for revision.
- The final approval of the minutes will take place at the next GA.

5. MEMBERSHIP FEES

5.1 Policies and Procedures for Fees

ECAAH collects fees to maintain the financial stability of the College, covering:

- EBVS membership costs.
- Administrative expenses (banking, website, examination costs, document processing, third-party audits).
- Membership services (AGM expenses, educational programme development).
- Any other costs determined by the Executive Committee.

All fees must be paid exclusively via bank transfer (SEPA or similar), and any transaction charges must be covered by the payer.

ECAAH Bank Details

- **Account Name:** ECAAH
- **Bank:** Bank of Ireland, Oranmore, Co. Galway, Ireland
- **IBAN:** IE65 BOFI 904034 93273605
- **BIC:** BOFIIE2D
- **Branch Code:** 90-40-42
- **Account Number:** 93273605
- **Payment Reference:** As applicable

5.2 Fee Categories

Fees are included in "ANNEX A."

6. ECAAH & EBVS RELATIONSHIP

6.1 Harmonization of ECAAH and EBVS Regulations

The ECAAH Constitution, Bylaws, and Policies & Procedures must comply with EBVS regulations.

- Any modifications to EBVS policies must be reflected in ECAAH regulations within 24 months of their official adoption by EBVS.
- Updates are subject to Executive Committee review and General Assembly approval.

6.2 ECAAH Reporting to EBVS

ECAAH submits two types of reports to EBVS:

Annual Reports

- These reports provide updated statistics on the college's current status.
- They highlight any emerging issues or concerns within ECAAH.
- Follows EBVS Policies & Procedures (Section B.1.1: Procedures for Annual Reports).

Five-Year Detailed Reports

- Every five years, ECAAH submits a comprehensive report to EBVS detailing its status and activities.
- Follows EBVS Policies & Procedures (Section B.1.2: Procedures for Five-Year Detailed Reports).

7. Re-CERTIFICATION OF DIPLOMATES

7.1 Policies on Re-Certification

ECAAH Diplomates must undergo recertification every five years. The College is responsible for maintaining a standardized procedure that defines the requirements for recertification.

According to EBVS regulations, each College must develop a 100-credit point system for re-certification, which must be submitted for approval by the EBVS Board. Credits can be earned through activities in at least two of the following three categories:

1. Research
2. Education
3. Service Activities

The EBVS only recognizes evidence-based veterinary medicine that complies with animal welfare legislation. Specialists or Colleges that promote unproven, implausible, or non-evidence-based treatment modalities risk having their specialist status revoked. No credit points can be awarded for activities related to complementary, supplementary, or alternative medicine.

7.2 Requirements for Maintaining Certification

To remain certified, Diplomates must (see the recertification form in ANNEX B):

1. **Professional Proficiency** – Engage in aquatic animal health practice for at least 60% of their professional time over the past five years.
2. **AGM Attendance** – Attend the ECAAH Annual General Meeting (AGM) at least twice within five years, unless formally exempted by the College.
3. **Continuing education** – demonstrate their participation in scientific conferences, workshops, seminars, and approved online learning/training/continuous education modules or activities.

Points 1 to 3 contain mandatory tasks.

4. **Scholarly Activity**
5. **Organizational and Editorial Contributions** – Demonstrate continuous engagement in the specialty at a level consistent with ECAAH and EBVS standards.
6. **ECAAH Continuing Education Contributions (Lecturer Role) -** To be implemented

A minimum score is required for at least one of points 4 to 6 (see the recertification form in ANNEX B)

Credit-Based Assessment – Earn at least 100 credit points in the EBVS-approved re-certification system.

Extensions – Extensions to the five-year re-certification period may be granted for:

- Maternity or paternity leave
- Serious health conditions
- Exceptional personal or professional circumstances (subject to approval)

Failure to Re-Certify – Diplomates who fail to meet re-certification requirements will be removed from the EBVS Specialist Register and may only use the title *Diplomate of ECAAH*, without the EBVS® European Specialist title. Non-certified Diplomates cannot act as residency programme directors or supervisors.

Reinstatement – Diplomates who wish to regain certified status must fulfill the standard re-certification requirements. A recertification fee may be required.

7.3 Procedures for Recertification

1. **Notification Process**
    - The ECAAH Secretary will notify Diplomates due for recertification 6 to 12 months before the expiration of their five-year certification period.
2. **Submission of Recertification Application**
    - Diplomates must complete the Re-Certification Form, available on the ECAAH website or upon request from the ECAAH Secretary.
    - The form follows EBVS re-certification categories and the 100-credit point system to streamline evaluation.
    - The completed and signed form must be submitted to the ECAAH Secretary, who will forward it to the Re-Certification Committee.
3. **Evaluation and Approval**
    - The Re-Certification Committee will review applications and make a decision within two months.
    - Application's results will be submitted to the Executive Committee (ExeC) for final approval.
    - The final decision will be communicated directly to the Diplomate.
4. **Registration with EBVS**
    - Diplomates who successfully complete recertification will remain listed in the EBVS Directory for another five years.

8. PATHWAYS TO ACCESS THE ECAAH EXAMINATION

The ECAAH and EBVS Bylaws (Policies & Procedures) outline the various routes to qualify for the ECAAH certifying examination, including:

- **Residency Training Programme** (Standard or Alternative)
- **Internationally Recognised Specialists Track** – A route reserved for special cases (*detailed in other sections of this document*).
- **Modular Route to Specialisation** – A training model recognised by EBVS but not yet implemented by ECAAH (*additional details are provided elsewhere in this document*).

9. AAH RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAMMES

9.1 Objectives of Residency Programmes

ECAAH Residency Training Programmes aim to:

- Train specialists with the knowledge, skills, and competencies required to practice at the highest professional level.
- Foster a culture that supports continuous professional development and lifelong learning.

A Standard Residency Training Programme must include:

- An ECAAH-approved Residency Training Centre.
- An approved Residency Training Plan, including designated Supervisors.
- An approved Programme Director, who must be an ECAAH Diplomate working within the training centre.

The same ECAAH Diplomate may act as both Programme Director and Supervisor.

The Education Committee must review and approve all Residency Training Programmes before resident training begins. Once approved, Residencies can start as soon as the Programme Director provides confirmation.

9.2 Approval of Residency Programmes

ECAAH is responsible for assessing and accrediting Residency Programmes, including:

- **Standard Residency Programmes**
- **Alternative Residency Programmes**

Residency applications are evaluated by the Credentials Committee, which submits recommendations to the Executive Committee (ExeC) for final approval.

Extensions to Residency Programmes

- Extensions are granted for parental leave or medical conditions in accordance with national/EU regulations.
- Additional extensions may be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Credentials/Education Committee.

9.3 Types of Residency Training Programmes

A) Standard Residency Training Programme

- **Duration:** 3 years (*shortest route to ECAAH certification*).
- **Work Commitment:** Residents must spend at least 60% of their time in specialty practice, under the direct supervision of an ECAAH Diplomate Supervisor.

Programme Director Responsibilities:

- Must be a practicing ECAAH Diplomate working within the training centre.
- Responsible for training centre approval and overall Residency Programme administration.
- Serves as the official representative of the training centre to ECAAH.
- Can also act as the Resident Supervisor.
- Oversees research projects, case logs, and case reports.
- Responsible for official communication with ECAAH regarding residents and programme status.
- Submits an annual residency review.

Upon completion of the programme and approval from the Supervisor, the Programme Director issues a formal certification confirming that the resident has successfully completed the training.

Resident Capacity per Supervisor:

- Each Diplomate can supervise up to two residents (*three after additional approval; see Section 12*).

Notification of Changes:

- Any modification to the residency structure, including changes to the Supervisor, Programme Director, or Diplomate staff, must be immediately reported to the ECAAH Secretary.

B) Alternative Residency Training Programme

A veterinarian who is unable to enrol in a standard residency programme may, together with their supervisor, submit an alternate training programme to ECAAH. This route is not mandatorily associated with a training centre; the approval will be case-by-case. This submission must outline the available resources for advanced study and practical experience. The Education Committee (EduC) can approve part-time training (an alternate programme) provided that the total supervised training time is equivalent to at least three full years, and that the entire programme is completed within a maximum of six years.

Alternate programmes are tailored specifically for the individual (aspiring) resident and are not transferable to any other candidate. The programme must be designed by a supervisor (an ECAAH Diplomate) specifically for that resident. Approval must be obtained from the Education Committee prior to the resident commencing the training.

The total duration of an alternate programme must not be shorter than that of a standard residency.

Upon successful completion of the alternate training, the Supervisor will provide a formal statement certifying that the resident has satisfactorily fulfilled all approved training requirements.

10. APPROVED ECAAH TRAINING CENTRES FOR RESIDENCY PROGRAMMES

10.1 Definition and Classification

An ECAAH-Approved Centre is an institution, centre, or facility authorised to host an ECAAH Standard Residency Programme.

Two types of approved centres exist:

1. **Standard Training Centres** – Facilities capable of running complete standard residency programmes.
2. **Satellite Training Centres** – Facilities that provide specialised training in specific areas (e.g., only molluscs or diagnostic imaging).

Satellite Training Centres may host part of a residency programme but cannot offer full standard residency training.

- Residents from Standard Residency Programmes can train at Satellite Centres without prior approval, upon recommendation of their Supervisor or Programme Director.
- Residents from Alternative Residency Programmes must obtain prior approval from the Education Committee before training at a Satellite Centre.

10.2 Training Centre Leadership

Each approved centre must appoint a:

- **Programme Director** (**Standard Training Centres**).
- **Centre Representative** (**Satellite Training Centres**).

Both must be practicing ECAAH Diplomates and are responsible for:

- Ensuring smooth programme operations.
- Submitting required documentation for centre approval/re-approval.
- Communicating any programme modifications to the Credentials and Education Committees.

10.3 Procedures for application to register as an approved ECAAH Training Centre

Diplomates applying for approval as an ECAAH Standard Training Centre (or Satellite Centre) must submit a completed *Training Centre Acceptance Form* (Appendix 1) and a self-evaluation report, signed by the residency Programme Director or Centre Representative, to the ECAAH Secretary. The submission must demonstrate that the centre meets the required standards for facilities, certified supervisors, and programme structure, including relevant certifications and supporting documentation.

Upon receipt, the Secretary will forward the documents to the Education Committee and Credentials Committee for evaluation. The EduC will review the self-evaluation report and may request clarifications or additional information from the Programme Director or the hosting institution. Both committees will provide their assessments to the Executive Committee, which makes the final decision on approval.

The full review process is expected to be completed within three months of submission. Approved centres are granted recognition for a five-year period, after which re-approval is required to maintain status.

11. RE-APPROVAL OF ECAAH TRAINING CENTRES

11.1 Re-Approval Policies

- Training centres must be re-approved every five years.
- Approval applies only to the Residency Programme at the named institution.
- Any changes in structure, Diplomate staff, or facilities must be reported immediately to the ECAAH Secretary and relevant committees.

11.2 Re-Approval Process

- The Centre Supervisor/Programme Director must submit a formal request for re-approval, including:
    - Updates on programme structure.
    - Changes in Diplomate staff.
    - Relevant facility modifications.
- The Credentials and Education Committees review the submission and provide recommendations to the Executive Committee.
- The final decision is communicated within one month of submission.

12. AAH PROGRAMME DIRECTORS AND AAH RESIDENCY SUPERVISORS

12.1 Eligibility and Responsibilities

- The Programme Director and Supervisor(s) must be ECAAH Diplomates.
- The Programme Director may also serve as a supervisor.

12.2 Programme Director Responsibilities

- Oversees all clinical and educational aspects of the Standard Residency Programme.
- Ensures timely completion of administrative tasks.
- Provides regular feedback to residents and supports their progress toward certification.
- Evaluates training benchmarks and supervises case management.

12.3 Supervisor Responsibilities

- Provides daily supervision and mentorship.
- Conducts case discussions and clinical training.
- Ensures residents meet specialty training benchmarks.
- A single Supervisor may train up to two residents (*or three with ECAAH approval*).

12.4 Supervision by Non-EBVS/ABVS Recognised Specialists

- In circumstances where European Specialists are insufficient, ECAAH may allow non-EBVS/ABVS specialists (ECAAH associate members) to co-supervise residents (but always together with a ECAAH Diplomate, who is the responsible for the training program)
- Conditions for approval:
    1. Equivalent training and expertise to an EBVS-recognised specialist.
    2. Proven scientific contributions (publications, presentations, etc.).
    3. Approved by the Education Committee.
    4. An EBVS or ABVS Diplomate must be the Programme Director.
    5. They must be recertified every 5 years (like ECAAH diplomates).

13. RESIDENTS AND RESIDENCIES

13.1 Policies and Requirements for Entry into an ECAAH Residency Programme

To be accepted as a Resident in an ECAAH-accredited programme, applicants must meet the following requirements:

1. Hold a veterinary degree from an EAEVE-approved School and be legally eligible to practice veterinary medicine and surgery in a European country (*unless granted an exemption by the ECAAH Executive Committee*).
2. Have completed at least one (1) year of postgraduate training, which can include:
    - An internship in a veterinary discipline related to aquatic animal health.
    - A general veterinary practice internship.
    - A postgraduate academic programme (Master's degree, PhD, or equivalent).
    - The ECAAH Credential Committee may assess applicants' eligibility and recognize equivalent experience.
3. Apply directly to an approved Standard Residency Training Programme (*see Section 9*). If accepted by a Programme Director, the resident must formally register with ECAAH.
4. Applicants for an Alternative Residency Programme must collaborate with a Supervisor to develop a customized Alternative Residency Training Plan. The Education Committee must validate this plan before registration.

A Residency Training Programme must include:

- An approved Residency Training Plan.
- An approved Programme Director/Supervisor who must be an ECAAH Diplomate.

The same ECAAH Diplomate may act as both Programme Director and Supervisor.

13.2 Residency Training Programme Supervision

Resident Supervision Policies

- At least one Diplomate Supervisor must supervise each resident.
- A single Diplomate Supervisor can oversee up to two residents. In exceptional cases, and with ECAAH approval, a supervisor may train up to three residents simultaneously.
- Supervision includes daily consultations, case discussions, and case management reviews.
- Short absences of the supervising Diplomate (e.g., for vacation, meetings, or conferences) are permitted, but residents must continue their training under structured guidance.

Completion of the Residency Programme

Upon successful completion of training, the Programme Director/Supervisor issues a certification confirming that the resident has satisfactorily completed the approved training. This document is then submitted to the Certification Committee for approval before the resident can sit the final certification exam.

Responsibility of Residents and Supervisors

- Residents and their Supervisors must take the publication requirements into account when planning residency activities.
- Supervisors should ensure that residents are actively engaged in research and case report preparation throughout their training.

13.3 Registration and Admission to an ECAAH Residency Programme

13.3.1 Standard Residency Programme

1. The applicant contacts a Programme Director and requests admission.
2. The Programme Director evaluates the applicant based on residency admission criteria.
3. If accepted, the applicant completes the "Resident Registration Form" (Appendix 2a) and submits it to the ECAAH Secretary, along with the required Registration Fee.
4. The ECAAH Secretary verifies payment with the Treasurer and forwards the registration to the Education Committee.
5. Within 30 days, the Credential Committee:
    - Approves the application (*and acknowledges the resident's official start date*).
    - Requests additional information.
    - Declines the application (*with justification*).
6. The Credential Committee notifies the Executive and Educational Committees of the approved resident.
7. The Executive Committee gives final approval, and the resident is officially registered.
8. Applicants who are not accepted may appeal to the Executive Committee in accordance with the ECAAH Appeal Procedures.

13.3.1 Alternative Residency Programme

1. The applicant must collaborate with a Supervisor to develop a customized Alternative Residency Training Plan.
2. The applicant completes the "Resident Registration Form for Alternative Residency" (Appendix 2b) with the Training Plan and submits it to the ECAAH Secretary.
3. The ECAAH Secretary forwards the application to the Education Committee. The Education Committee must validate this plan before registration.
4. Within 30 days, the Education Committee:
    - Approves the application.
    - Requests additional information.
    - Declines the application (*with justification*).
5. The Educational Committee notifies the Executive Committee of the approved resident.

6. The Executive Committee gives final approval and communicates to the applicant.
7. The applicant pays the registration fee and submits it to the ECAAH Secretary.
8. ECAAH Secretary verifies payment with the Treasurer and forwards the registration to the Education Committee, and the resident is officially registered.
9. Applicants who are not accepted may appeal to the Executive Committee in accordance with the ECAAH Appeal Procedures.

13.4 Inactive Resident Status & Reactivation

A resident may be placed on inactive status if they:

- Fail to meet training progress expectations.
- Do not comply with reporting deadlines.
- Request voluntary inactive status (*subject to Credential Committee approval*).

The maximum allowed duration for residency completion is six (6) years from the start date.

To revert to active status, a resident must:

1. Submit a written request to the Credentials Committee.
2. Meet any requirements set by the Credentials Committee to ensure they can resume and complete their training.

14 ANNUAL RESIDENCY TRAINING PLANS EVALUATION

14.1 Annual Resident Reports

- Residents must submit an Annual Report (*by November each year*) to the Education Committee (see Appendix 3)
- The report must be signed by the Supervisor(s) and Programme Director (for standard residencies).
- Within 90 days, the Education Committee provides feedback on training progress.

14.2 Annual Programme Evaluation

- Programme Director/Supervisor(s) must submit an Annual Update to the Education Committee.
- The update must include:
    - Any deficiencies in the residency programme.
    - Changes from the original approved training plan.
    - Significant changes requiring immediate notification.
- The Education Committee provides an assessment within 90 days.
- If no major issues are identified, formal Executive Committee approval is not required.

14.3 Changes to Residency Training Programmes

The Programme Director/Supervisor must immediately report:

- Loss or change of a Programme Director/Supervisor.
- Major modifications to the Residency Training Plan.
- Relocation of the training facility.
- Significant facility changes affecting training quality.
- Resident interruptions or programme disruptions.

The Education Committee must be notified immediately of any changes.

- Major modifications may require a residency programme to be placed on probation.
- If changes affect compliance with ECAAH standards, the Education Committee may require re-application for approval.

15. OTHER ROUTES TO QUALIFY FOR THE ECAAH EXAMINATION

15.1 Internationally Recognized Specialists Track

Eligibility to Sit the ECAAH Examination Without an Approved Residency

Applicants who have not undertaken an ECAAH-approved residency may apply for the Internationally Recognized Specialists Track, provided they can demonstrate equivalent or superior qualifications compared to candidates who have completed a standard residency.

To be considered, applicants must submit the following:

1. **Curriculum Vitae (CV):**
    - Must cover the applicant's entire professional career from university onwards.
    - Must include a detailed list of publications (see next point).
2. **Published Papers:**
    - At least 10 peer-reviewed publications in international journals related to aquatic animal health, published within the last 7 years.
    - If these papers are not in English, the applicant must provide an English translation (*if at least 10 papers are in English, additional papers do not require translation*).
    - If the applicant is not the first or corresponding author, they must describe their role in the study.
3. **Case Reports (2):**
    - Two complex case reports managed by the applicant in the last 5 years (*published case reports are acceptable*).
4. **Case Log (100 cases):**
    - A list of 100 cases demonstrating case complexity similar to that expected from an ECAAH resident.
    - Cases must have been personally managed by the applicant within the last 5 years.
5. **Postgraduate Qualifications:**
    - Any relevant postgraduate degree (e.g., MSc, PhD) in a related field should be documented.
6. **Cover Letter (3-5 pages):**
    - Must include:
        - Career highlights.
        - Relevant experience (*scholarly, clinical, legal, policy-making*).
        - Contributions to the specialty (*education, research, professional service*).
        - Five most significant contributions to aquatic animal health, each supported by a brief impact statement (*max 250 words per contribution*).
        - A statement explaining how the applicant will contribute to ECAAH (e.g., training residents, advancing the specialty).

7. **Professional Experience in Aquatic Animal Health:**
    - Applicants must not have completed an approved residency programme.
    - They must demonstrate that they have spent at least 60% of their professional time working in aquatic animal health over the last 10 years.
8. **Access to Appropriate Facilities:**
    - The applicant must work in an environment with adequate facilities to practice aquatic animal health at a specialist level.
9. **Referees (5 suggested, 3 required):**
    - The applicant must submit a list of up to five referees, from whom at least three will be contacted.
    - Where possible, at least two referees should be Diplomates of an EBVS or equivalent specialty college.
    - Referees must comment on the applicant's:
        - Professional, ethical, and legal conduct.
        - Clinical skills.
        - Contributions to the veterinary specialty.
10. **Letters of Good Standing:**
    - The applicant must submit letters of good standing from all licensing bodies with which they are registered to practice.
11. **Applicants Outside Europe:**
    - Applications from non-European countries will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Application Process for Internationally Recognized Specialists

1. The applicant must submit a formal request to the ECAAH Secretary, along with all required documents.
2. The applicant must pay the application fee for the Internationally Recognized Specialist Evaluation.
3. The ECAAH Secretary will:
    - Inform the Executive Committee (ExeC).
    - Forward the application to the Credentials Committee (CreC) for review.
4. The Credentials Committee will:
    - Review all submitted documents.
    - Request additional information if necessary.
    - Evaluate whether the applicant meets the equivalency requirements.
5. The Credentials Committee submits its recommendation to the Executive Committee.
6. The Executive Committee makes the final decision and notifies the applicant.

7. If approved, the applicant may sit the next available ECAAH examination.
8. If denied, the applicant may:
    - Request details on the reason for rejection.
    - Appeal the decision through the standard ECAAH appeal procedures.

15.2 Modular Route to Specialization

In accordance with EBVS Policies & Procedures, ECAAH may develop a modular, credit-based training system for specialty certification. This system would allow applicants to accumulate credits over time as an alternative to a traditional residency.

General Requirements for the Modular Route

1. Credit-Based System:
    - Applicants must earn 180 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credits.
    - 1 academic year = 60 ECTS credits.
    - Further details: European Credit Transfer System.
2. Credit Distribution:
    - The College must define the exact breakdown of credits.
    - At least one-third of the credits must be theoretical.
    - At least one-third of the credits must be practical.
3. Theoretical Credits:
    - May include:
        - Participation in journal clubs, seminars, and lectures (*remote or in-person*).
        - Completion of approved academic courses.
        - Prior postgraduate education (MSc, PhD).
4. Practical Credits:
    - Must include time working in the specialty.
    - A portion of the credits must come from work under direct supervision of an ECAAH Diplomate (*or an equivalent specialist*).
    - The supervision requirements must be equivalent to those for standard residency programmes.
5. Time Limitations:
    - Credits must be accumulated within 8 years.
    - Applicants may pause credit accumulation for up to 4 years, in blocks of at least 6 months each.
    - The starting date of credit accumulation cannot be changed once set.

6. Minimum Experience Requirement:
    - Applicants cannot begin earning credits until at least 1 year after graduating from an EAEVE-approved veterinary school.
7. Recognition of Prior Education:
    - Some postgraduate degrees may be recognized for credit accumulation.
    - The College must specify which programmes qualify and the number of credits awarded.
8. Publication & Teaching Requirements:
    - Applicants must meet the same research, teaching, and case log requirements as standard residency candidates.
9. Final Examination:
    - All modular candidates must pass the same final examination as candidates from standard and alternative residency tracks.

16. EXAMINATIONS AND DIPLOMAS

16.1 Policies on Examinations and Diplomas

Eligibility Criteria to sit the ECAAH Diploma Examination

Before sitting for the ECAAH diploma examination, candidates must undergo a credential validation process to ensure they meet all eligibility requirements.

To qualify, candidates must provide evidence of satisfactory completion of one of the following training pathways:

- **Standard Residency Programme** (approved by ECAAH).
- **Alternative Residency Programme** (approved by ECAAH).
- **Internationally Recognized Specialists Track** (*see Section 15.1*).
- **Modular Track** (if implemented in the future).

Additionally, all candidates—regardless of the route taken—must fulfill specific publication requirements before sitting the exam.

Publication Requirements

Candidates must have:

1. **One original research paper** in **aquatic animal health**, published in an internationally peer-reviewed scientific journal, where the candidate is the principal author.
2. **One additional aquatic animal health-related publication**, which can be:
    - A case report published in an internationally peer-reviewed journal.
    - A peer-reviewed original research paper, where the candidate is an author or co-author.

Exceptional Cases: Dissociation of Publication Requirements from Examination

- In exceptional cases, a candidate may be temporarily exempted from fulfilling the publication requirements before taking the examination.
- This exemption must be:
    - Recommended by the Credentials Committee (CreC).
    - Approved by the ECAAH ExeC.
- If granted, the candidate must meet the publication requirements within two years after passing the examination. Until all publication requirements are fulfilled, the candidate cannot use the title of Diplomate or Specialist.

16.2 Examination and Diploma Procedures (via Residency Track)

Application for Credential Validation

- Candidates must submit their credential validation application to ECAAH within 18 months of completing their residency.
- Applications must be submitted at least 4 months before the scheduled examination date.

- The application must include:
    1. A completed Residency Credential Form.
    2. A portfolio of evidence, documenting all activities undertaken during the residency.
    3. A signed confirmation letter from both:
        - The Resident.
        - The Programme Director and/or Supervisor(s).

Credential Validation Process

1. Initial Review by the ECAAH Secretary:
    - The Secretary checks the application for formatting errors, missing documents, or deficiencies.
    - The candidate receives feedback within one month if corrections are needed.
2. Evaluation by the Credentials Committee (CreC):
    - After the Secretary's initial review, the application is forwarded to the Credentials Committee for in-depth evaluation.
    - The CreC assesses whether the candidate meets all training and publication requirements.
3. Final Approval by the Executive Committee (ExeC):
    - The CreC submits recommendations to the ExeC for final validation.
    - If approved, the candidate is granted permission to sit the diploma examination.
    - The final decision must be made within three months of the final credential submission.
    - The candidate will be formally notified of their approval or rejection.

Appeals Process

- If a candidate's credentials are denied, they have the right to appeal.
- The appeal procedures are outlined in the final section of this document.

17. EXAMINATIONS

17.1 Examination Scheduling and Notification

- The Executive Committee (ExeC) will determine the dates of the Certifying Examination based on the availability of candidates and ECAAH's operational needs.
- Examinations will typically be held in September, but the ExeC will make the final decision in consultation with the Examinations Committee (ExaC) after assessing all relevant factors.
- The official exam dates will be announced at least six (6) months in advance along with:
    - Detailed examination procedures.
    - Examination fees and payment instructions.
- Candidates with validated credentials will be informed at least three (3) months before the examination of any changes to the exam format.

17.2 Structure of the Certifying Examination

The Certifying Examination consists of three (3) sections:

1. General Knowledge

- Covers fundamental and advanced concepts in aquatic animal health.
- Includes questions from basic textbooks and recent scientific literature.
- Format: Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ).

2. Species-Specific Knowledge

- Focuses on aquatic animal medicine, with questions related to:
    - Specific aquatic species.
    - Production systems and management practices.
    - Facility-specific conditions.
- Format: Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ).

3. Clinical Cases

- Case-based problem-solving section, where candidates analyze clinical scenarios.
- Cases may include histopathology slides, radiographs, laboratory results, videos, and other diagnostic materials.
- Format: A mix of multiple-choice, short-answer, and short-essay questions to assess clinical reasoning and decision-making skills. Oral discussion can be also

Taking into account these sections, the examination consists of three main parts:

- 45-90 multiple choice questions related to the 9 main topics proposed in the ECAAH guidelines. Only 1 answer is correct. (weight 45%)
- 2 open question (weight 15% each)
- 1 case study (Clinical case) to be developed and solved (weight 25%)

The 12 main topics proposed in the ECAAH guidelines are detailed in Annex C (**Specific Knowledge and Skills Regarding the Practice of AAH and Knowledge Requirements).**

With the open questions and the case study the candidates will need to demonstrate the Knowledge, Skills and Experience (KSE) that include, but are not limited to theory, clinical significance, and practical experience in the areas related to aquatic animals (excluding aquatic mammals and reptiles, as other other specialities cover them). Candidates are required to be familiar with, and be able to, describe the normal and abnormal aspects of each specific subject that are encountered in specialist aquatic animal health practice. In addition, in the case of the case study, after a time to think and write, the results from the residents were also discussed in real time and individually with the ExaC to assess the discussion and oratory skills of the candidates.

The questions are done by the members of the Ex Com, and all of them are reviewed and accepted by all members of this Committee.

The Examinations Committee (ExaC) is responsible for designing and administering the exam.
Any significant changes to the exam format will be communicated to candidates well in advance.

17.3 Examination Policies

1. Eligibility and Acceptance

- Before sitting the examination, a candidate's credentials must be validated by the Credentials Committee (CreC).

2. Examination Procedures

- Examinations will be conducted in accordance with EBVS guidelines.
- EBVS will supervise and support the examination process when needed.
- Examinations may be held:
    - In-person (preffered).
    - Virtually (online examination software).
    - Hybrid format (combining in-person and online components).

3. Section Retakes and Exam Limits

- Candidates may sit all three sections at once, or choose to take one or two sections at a time.
- If a candidate fails one section, they need to re-sit only that section.
- If a candidate fails two or more sections, they must re-sit the entire examination.
- Candidates must pass all sections within 8 years of completing their residency.
- Candidates may attempt the examination a maximum of four (4) times per section.

4. Language and Examination Integrity

- The examination will be conducted in English.
- Non-medical dictionaries and/or interpreters may be permitted upon request.
- Confidentiality and integrity must be maintained throughout the entire examination process.

5. Pass Mark and Assessment Criteria

- Candidates will be informed before the examination about:
    - How each section is evaluated.
    - The minimum pass mark or the method used to determine it.
- To pass the Certifying Examination, candidates must meet the minimum passing score for each section.
- The Examinations Committee (ExaC) will propose the scoring method, which must be approved by the Executive Committee (ExeC).
- The assessment process is designed to evaluate not only knowledge but also the candidate's ability to apply it in practice.

17.4 Examination Supervision and Results

1. Examination Supervision (Invigilation)

- Trained invigilators must be present during examinations to ensure fairness and integrity.
- Remote oral (viva voce) examinations may be conducted via video conferencing, provided there are:
    - Remotely attending examiners.
    - Physical invigilators ensuring the security of the examination process.
- Invigilators must be certified ECAAH Diplomates or Diplomates from other EBVS-recognized colleges.

2. Examination Results

- Candidates will receive their exam results within 45 days of the examination date.
- Results will be announced to all candidates on the same day.
- Candidates who fail any section have 30 days to request written clarification of their results.
- ECAAH will provide feedback on candidate deficiencies within 60 days of the request.

17.5 Retaking the Examination

1. Reapplication for the Certifying Examination

- Candidates who fail must:
    - Submit a new application to retake the exam.
    - Pay the re-examination fee.
- Candidates are encouraged to remain engaged in their specialty by:
    - Continuing to work with a Programme Director/Supervisor.
    - Maintaining knowledge requirements.
    - Fulfilling any new training benchmarks or experience requirements.

2. Failing Multiple Attempts

- If a candidate fails the same section twice, the ECAAH Examination Committee (ExaC) will:
    - Contact the candidate to discuss their performance deficiencies.
    - Develop a mentorship and education plan to improve their knowledge.
- If a candidate fails four (4) times, or does not pass within 8 years, they will:
    - Be denied further training and examination attempts.
    - Exceptions may be granted only under extraordinary circumstances approved by ECAAH.

3. Mock Examinations

- To prevent repeated failures, mock exams will be developed for residents throughout their training.
- Supervisors and Programme Directors are responsible for:
    - Identifying struggling candidates early.
    - Taking appropriate actions to ensure they are adequately prepared for specialization.

17.6 Examination Procedures

1. Candidate Registration

- Candidates must inform the ECAAH Secretary of their intention to sit the examination.
- The Secretary will verify the candidate's credential validation status and notify:
    - The Executive Committee (ExeC).
    - The Examinations Committee (ExaC).

2. Payment and Official Announcements

- Exam dates, locations, and details will be:
    - Communicated to all residents and diplomates.
    - Published on the ECAAH website.
- Candidates must pay the examination fee by the deadline specified in the official announcement.
- The Treasurer will confirm all payments with the Secretary.

3. Examination Administration

- The Examinations Committee (ExaC) will:
    - Oversee all arrangements (location, exam format, invigilators).
    - Provide clear guidelines detailing the workflow before, during, and after the examination.
- Any changes in the examination procedures must be clearly communicated to:
    - Candidates.
    - ECAAH Board and Committees.
    - The EBVS.

18. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

18.1 Complaints Against an ECAAH Diplomate

A complaint against an ECAAH Diplomate may be lodged by:

- ECAAH itself,
- Another EBVS-recognized College,
- Another ECAAH Diplomate,
- A resident,
- Another veterinarian,
- A member of the public.

Grounds for Complaints

Complaints may be related to:

- Unprofessional or unethical conduct,
- Actions that compromise the integrity of veterinary specialization,
- Any conduct that violates the best interests of ECAAH.

Complaint Submission and Review Process

1. Initial Complaint Submission
    - Complaints must be submitted directly to ECAAH.
    - The Executive Committee (ExeC) will assess the complaint.
2. Decision and Response
    - The ECAAH Board will review the case and respond directly to the complainant.
    - A copy of the response will be sent to the EBVS Secretariat.
    - If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they may escalate the complaint to the EBVS.
3. Annual Reporting
    - A record of the number of complaints received and resolved must be included in ECAAH's annual report.

18.2 Appeals Policies

The ECAAH appeals process follows the EBVS guidelines and ensures fair and transparent procedures.

Grounds for Appeal

A candidate, resident, or Diplomate may appeal against an adverse decision made by ECAAH. Grounds for appeal include, but are not limited to:

A. Appeals Related to ECAAH Internal Decisions

- Denial of certification for an individual.

- Temporary or permanent suspension of certification.
- Failure of an examination or a specific section of an examination.
- Denial of adequacy of credentials for examination eligibility.
- Denial of approval for a residency programme.

B. Appeals Related to Procedural Irregularities

- Failure by ECAAH to correctly apply its own or EBVS's published rules, procedures, or criteria relevant to the decision in question.
- Conflict between ECAAH's published rules and EBVS regulations.
- Sanctions that are disproportionate to the gravity of the case.

18.3 Procedure for Filing an Appeal

Step 1: Appeal Submission

- The appeal must be submitted in writing and must include:
    - A detailed statement outlining the grounds for appeal.
    - Any supporting documents.

Step 2: Appeal Submission Deadline

- Appeals must be submitted within 90 days of the official notification of the adverse decision.
- For denial of credential validation, appeals must be submitted between one (1) and three (3) weeks after the official announcement.

Step 3: Appeal Fees

- A deposit of €300 must accompany the appeal to cover administrative expenses.
- If the appeal is upheld, the full deposit is refunded.
- If the appeal is denied, the appellant is responsible for all costs, with a minimum fee of €300.
- Additional costs may apply based on the complexity of the appeal, as determined by the Appeals Committee and ExeC.

18.4 Appeals Committee

Formation of the Appeals Committee

- The ExeC will appoint an Appeals Committee when an appeal is submitted.
- The committee will consist of three (3) Diplomates, who:
    - Are not members of the Executive Committee (ExeC).
    - Were not involved in the original decision.
    - Have no conflicts of interest with the appellant.
- If necessary, an EBVS Diplomate from another College may be appointed to ensure fairness.

Review Process

1. Receipt and Acknowledgment
    - ECAAH must acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 10 working days.
2. Preliminary Review (Within 20 Working Days)
    - A designated Executive Officer (not involved in the case) will determine whether a valid ground for appeal exists.
    - If no valid ground is found, ECAAH may:
        - Reject the appeal with an explanation, or
        - Offer an informal review for extenuating personal circumstances.
3. Formation of the Appeals Committee (Within 15 Working Days)
    - If a valid appeal is identified, the Appeals Committee is appointed.
    - The appellant will be notified of the committee members.
4. Objections to Committee Composition (Within 5 Working Days)
    - The appellant may object to committee members if a conflict of interest is suspected.
    - The ECAAH Board will review and address objections.
5. Committee Review and Deliberation
    - The committee reviews all submitted materials and relevant case documents.
    - The process must be completed within 30 days after the Appeals Committee is appointed.

18.5 Appeals Hearing

1. Hearing Process

- The Appeals Committee decides whether a formal hearing is required.
- If a hearing is held:
    - The appellant must be given sufficient notice and multiple date/time options.
    - At least three (3) members of the Appeals Committee must be present.
    - The appellant may bring a representative (but legal counsel is not permitted).
    - The hearing will be conducted in English.

2. Documentation and Record Keeping

- A transcript or detailed minutes of the hearing will be recorded.
- An electronic recording may be made with the consent of all parties.
- Records will be made available upon request.

18.6 Appeal Decision and Outcome

1. Decision Timeline

- The Appeals Committee will issue a final decision within 30 days after reviewing all case materials.
- The decision will be sent in writing to the appellant and the ECAAH Board.

2. Possible Outcomes

- Appeal Upheld:
    - The appellant's original adverse decision is overturned.
    - The €300 appeal deposit is refunded.
- Appeal Denied:
    - The original decision remains in effect.
    - The appellant is responsible for all appeal costs (minimum €300, potentially more depending on case complexity).
    - A detailed justification for denial will be provided.

18.7 Reporting and Updates

- Any changes to the appeal process must be reported to the EBVS in ECAAH's Annual Report.

19. ECAAH QUALITY ASSURANCE

19.1 Introduction

The mission of the European College of Aquatic Animal Health (ECAAH) is to ensure the highest quality of veterinary specialization in Aquatic Animal Health across Europe. Through rigorous training, certification, and continuous education, ECAAH aims to enhance veterinary medical services and contribute to public and animal health.

Commitment to Quality Standards

To uphold its mission, ECAAH is dedicated to:

- Establishing and maintaining high-quality training beyond the standard veterinary degree.
- Developing standards and guidelines for quality assurance in Aquatic Animal Health.
- Collaborating with European and international stakeholders, including:
    - EBVS-recognized Colleges,
    - Professional associations in Europe,
    - Specialist veterinary Colleges worldwide.

19.2 Quality Assurance Policies

To ensure the highest standards, ECAAH implements the following quality assurance policies:

1. Training and Certification Standards

- All training programmes undergo formal approval, periodic review, and quality monitoring.
- Certification requirements ensure that Diplomates maintain updated knowledge and skills.

2. Data Collection and Management

- ECAAH collects, analyzes, and utilizes impartial, objective, and relevant data to improve training programmes.
- Quality assurance reports are regularly submitted to EBVS.

3. Diplomate Re-Certification

- A structured re-evaluation process is in place to certify Diplomates every five years.
- Diplomates must demonstrate continued competence in research, education, or service activities.

4. Conflict of Interest Prevention

- ECAAH enforces strict conflict of interest policies at all levels, including:
    - Residency applications,
    - Residency programme approvals,
    - Credential evaluations,
    - Examinations,
    - Appeals and disciplinary procedures.

5. Complaints and Appeals Procedures

- ECAAH has transparent and structured policies for handling complaints and appeals, ensuring fair and impartial decision-making.

6. Contribution to EBVS Goals

- As part of the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS), ECAAH supports its broader mission by:
    - Developing a strong quality culture within the College.
    - Safeguarding veterinary education standards and professional integrity.
    - Ensuring residency programmes align with the highest international benchmarks.

19.3 Key Quality Assurance Principles

1. Continuous Improvement Strategy

- ECAAH commits to continuous enhancement of quality through:
    - Regular updates to training programmes,
    - Ongoing professional development initiatives,
    - Periodic internal and external quality assessments.

2. Public Accountability and Transparency

- ECAAH ensures that its:
    - Strategic plan is reviewed and updated every ten (10) years.
    - Bylaws, policies, and major documents are publicly accessible.

3. Resident Training Standards

- Residency programmes must:
    - Use published criteria, regulations, and consistent evaluation procedures.
    - Be led by qualified and competent supervisors.
    - Provide adequate resources to support resident learning and specialization.

19.4 Accountability and Compliance

ECAAH maintains robust accountability procedures, including:

1. Public Quality Assurance Policy

- ECAAH publishes its quality assurance policy on its official website.

2. Quality Monitoring Mechanisms

- ECAAH ensures that its processes and outcomes align with its mission and goals.
- Regular internal audits confirm the effectiveness of quality assurance strategies.

3. No Conflict-of-Interest Policy

- ECAAH enforces strict conflict-of-interest prevention mechanisms at all levels.
- These measures apply to all Diplomates, Residents, Candidates, and College Committees.

4. Reliability and Consistency

- ECAAH implements systems to ensure that:
    - All activities meet the highest quality standards.
    - Materials and documents produced by the College are accurate, relevant, and up to date.

GLOSSARY

Applicant

An Applicant is an individual seeking admission into a Residency Training Programme (Standard or Alternative). To be accepted, an Applicant must meet all eligibility criteria.

- An Applicant retains this status until:
    - Their training programme has been approved by the Education Committee (EduC).
    - Their individual application has been accepted by both the Programme Director/Supervisor and the College.

Resident

A Resident is an individual who has been officially accepted into an approved Residency Training Programme (Standard or Alternative).

- To maintain active Resident status, individuals must demonstrate adequate progress and submit annual progress reports.
- ECAAH reserves the right to withdraw Resident privileges from those who, after review and a request for corrective action, continue to fail to meet programme requirements.

Candidate

A Candidate is a Resident who has successfully completed their Residency Training Programme and whose Credentials (including the Final Progress Report) have been approved by the Credentials Committee (CreC).

- The status of Candidate is retained until the successful completion of the Certifying Examination, which grants Diplomate status within ECAAH.

Programme Director

A Programme Director is an ECAAH Diplomate who serves as the official College representative within a Standard Residency Training Program.

- Key Responsibilities:
    - Overseeing and managing the residency programme.
    - Ensuring compliance with ECAAH standards for both Residents and Supervisors.
    - Communicating with ECAAH and submitting progress reports.

Resident Supervisor

A Resident Supervisor is an ECAAH Diplomate assigned to a Resident before the start of their training programme.

- The Programme Director may also serve as the Supervisor.
- Supervisor Requirements:
    - Must be a Diplomate in good standing with ECAAH throughout the residency period.
    - Must be legally authorized to practice at the residency training facility (if associated to a training centre) or to practice the profession.

- Must be continuously available to support and mentor the Resident.
- Supervision limit: A Supervisor may oversee a maximum of three (3) Residents simultaneously.
- A Candidate who has completed their training but has not yet attained Diplomate status may continue working with their Supervisor until they sit the Certifying Examination.

ANNEXES:

ANNEX A: FEES

The Executive Committee may modify or introduce new fee categories, subject to approval at the Annual General Meeting.

Annual Membership Fees

- All ECAAH Diplomates and Residents (Diplomates-in-Training) must pay an annual membership fee.
- Fees are based on the calendar year and are due by March 1st of each year.
- Newly accepted members must pay their first-year fee within two weeks of receiving their official acceptance letter from the Executive Committee.
- Residents who become Diplomates within the same calendar year are not required to pay an additional membership fee.
- Current Membership Fee for Diplomate (2024-2025): €150.
- Current Membership Fee for Retired and Non-practicing Diplomate (2024-2025): €50
- Current Membership Fee for Associated member (2024-2025): €150

Residency Application Fees

- Applicants for an ECAAH Residency Programme must pay a Residency Application Fee as part of their application.
- Proof of payment is required in the application package.
- Current Residency Application Fee (2024-2025): €300.

Examination Fees

- Candidates eligible for the ECAAH Diplomate Qualifying Examination must pay an Examination Fee upon registration.
- Proof of payment is required during the registration process.
- Current Examination Fee (2024-2025): €300.

Re-Examination Fees

- Candidates who need to retake the examination must pay a Re-Examination Fee before re-sitting the exam.
- Current Re-Examination Fee (2024-2025): €150.

Appeal Fees

- Diplomates submitting an appeal to ECAAH must pay an initial administrative fee.
- If additional costs arise, ECAAH reserves the right to impose extra fees, subject to case-by-case review by the Appeals Committee and final approval by the Executive Committee.
- Current Initial Appeal Fee (2024-2025): €300.

International Recognition Fees

- Veterinarians requesting recognition by ECAAH based on international qualifications must pay an administrative fee as part of their application.
- Proof of payment is required in the application package.
- Current International Recognition Fee (2024-2025): €500.

Other Fees

- ECAAH may impose additional fees for administrative services or special cases.
- Such fees will be determined by the respective committees, approved by the Executive Committee, and communicated to the involved party at least two weeks before any formal action.

ANNEX B: ECAAH Recertification Matrix

Double-click on tables to modify them!

Gatekeepers:

1) Professional proficiency: at least 60% of the diplomate's activity in the last 5 years must have been on topics associated with AAH (self-declaration). Doesn't give any points for recertification.

	% of the year	%/5
Year 1		0
Year 2		0
Year 3		0
Year 4		0
Year 5		0
if <60 candidate failed recertification=		0

2) Mandatory attendance at a minimum of 2 ECAAH Annual General Meetings over a 5-year period, with proof of participation required. Points valid for recertification: 2 per meeting. 1 extra point if the claimant acts as auditor. Attendance will be confirmed by the attendance lists of each conference.

Minimum Requirement: 4 credits per five-year cycle.

	Credits (insert 2 each attended)
Year 1	0
Year 2	0
Year 3	0
Year 4	0
Year 5	0
if <4 candidate failed recertification=	0

3) Mandatory continuing education. Diplomates must demonstrate their participation in scientific conferences, workshops, seminars, and approved online learning/training/continuous education modules or activities.

Examples of activities that are not eligible for credit include:

1. Routine internal meetings or institutional activities such as case discussions, rounds, departmental seminars that are not open, documented, or externally validated.
2. General teaching duties or training activities conducted as part of one's employment responsibilities.
3. Informal or ad hoc discussions (e.g., roundtables or Q&A sessions) where content, objectives, and structure are not clearly defined in advance.
4. Attendance in exhibit halls or commercial vendor spaces, including those held in conjunction with professional meetings.
5. Participation in unmoderated online forums, listservs, or social media discussions not associated with a recognized educational program.

Credits: 2 credits per half day (4 hours) of in-person learning; 1 credit per completed online module. Proof of participation required.

Minimum Requirement: 20 credits per five-year cycle. No max cap. Points valid for recertification.

	Continuing education (2 P/4H)	Online Mod.	Tot.
Year 1	2	0	2
Year 2	4	0	4
Year 3	0	6	6
Year 4	6	0	6
Year 5	0	2	2
if <20 candidate failed recertification=			20

List of the participation of the activities (please include name of the activity and dates)

Other Sources:

You must score at least 10 points in any of the following to be recertified (you can't be recertified with 100% of your credits coming from gatekeeping activities).

Scholarly Activity.

Examples: Peer-reviewed publications in journals ranked **at least Q2 according to Scimago Journal Rank (SJR)**, book chapters, research grant applications, case reports, and scientific presentations.
Credits:
Senior/First Author of peer-reviewed manuscript or chapter on a topic associated with AAH: 12credits, Co-author: 5 credits, Reviews: 10 (any authorship)
First author of case report on a topic associated with AAH: 6 credits; Co-author: 3 credits
Principal Investigator of grant submission on a topic associated with AAH: 5 credits; Co-Investigator: 2 credits
First author of public scientific presentation (e.g., abstract, case report, keynote address, guest lecturer, poster) on a topic associated with AAH: 1st author/presenter: 4 credits; Co-author: 1 credit
. No maximum.

Activities	Points	N.	Tot.
1st/last author peer reviewed manuscript/textbook chapter	15	0	0
Coauthor peer reviewed manuscript	5	0	0
Author review manuscript (any authorship)	15		0
1st/last author case report	6	0	0
Coauthor case report	3	0	0
P.I. grant in AAH	5	0	0
Co-investigator grant AAH	2	0	0
1st author/presenter public scientific presentation	4	0	0
Coauthor public scientific presentation	1	0	0
Total points scholary activities:			0

List of the activities:

Organizational and Editorial Contributions

Examples: Service on ECAAH committees, manuscript peer-review, editorial duties, meeting organization.

Credits:
Chair of standing ECAAH committee and members of the executive committee: 10 credits/year
ECAAH Committee member: 3 credits/year
Member of AAH-relevant boards and commmitee: 3 credits/year
Supervisor/Contributor to laws and official legislative guidelines in the AAH field: 3 credits/year
Manuscript reviewer (needs proof): 2 credits/review
Supervisor (per resident): 8 credits/year
Programme director of an active training centre: 5 credits/year
Centre representative of an active satellite training centre: 3 credits/year
Editor of scientific journal in AAH: 10 credits/year; Associate Editor: 7 credits/year
Member of professional AAH associacions: 2 credits/year

Maximum: 30 credits per 5-year cycle.

Activities	Points	N.	Tot.
Chair of standing ECAAH committee and members of the Executive committee	10	0	0
ECAAH Committee member	3	0	0
Manuscript reviewer	2		0
Supervisor (per resident)	8	0	0
Programme Director	5	0	0
Centre Representative	3	0	0
Editor of scientific journal AAH	10	0	0
Associate Editor of scientific journal AAH	7	0	0
Total points for organizational and editorial activities (Max 30):			0

List of the activities

ECAAH Continuing Education Contributions (Lecturer Role)

To be implemented:
Presentation of a 60-minute session in the ECAAH-recognized continuing education program.
Credits: 7 credits per lecture delivered.
Maximum in a 5-year cycle: 20 credits

Presentation of a 60-minute session in the ECAAH-recognized continuing education program.	7	0	0
Total points for ECAAH Continuing Education Contributions (Max 20):			0

List of the activities

In the event that the required 100 credits for the current cycle are exceeded, and the surplus includes points accrued from this activity category, the surplus points—up to a maximum equal to the total credits earned from these activities (e.g., 10 or 20)—may be carried over to the following cycle. These carry-over points will be recorded under the designation "**Excess Educational Contributions**" and shall accumulate as a sixth, separate category in the subsequent cycle.

Activities	Points	N.	Tot.
Contribution	10	0	0
Total points for Excess Educational Contribution (Max 20):			0

III. DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

All credit-earning activities must be substantiated with appropriate information about the event, activity, which must be submitted in English, when possible.
In some cases, under request from the Recertification Committee, specific documentation /certification about these activities could be required. Acceptable forms include certificates of attendance, DOI or PubMed ID for publications, formal confirmation emails, or program agendas. Please, be aware to ask and keep this documentation. Failure to provide adequate documentation may result in forfeiture of claimed credits.

IV. NON-COMPLIANCE AND REINSTATEMENT

Non-compliance is defined as failure to:

a. Achieve minimum gatekeeping requirements;
b. Earn 100 credits within the five-year cycle;
c. Accumulate credits in at least three separate calendar years;
d. Earn credits from at least two categories;
e. Submit adequate documentation for claimed credits.

Reinstatement Policy:

a. Diplomates may apply for reinstatement within one year following lapse of certification.
b. Reinstatement requires the submission and approval of 120 credits earned by the end of year six, with adherence to all standard categories and distribution requirements.
c. After this one-year grace period, reinstatement is only possible by successful completion of the ECAAH certification examination.

Additional credit-earning activities may be considered, pending evaluation and approval by the Reaccreditation Committee.

ANNEX C: Topics ECAAH

1. European and Global Legislation on Fish and Aquatic Animal Diseases

A diplomate in Aquatic Animal Health (AAH) must have an in-depth understanding of international and European regulations governing aquatic animal health and welfare.

This includes:

- WOAH (formerly OIE) Aquatic Animal Health Code and Manual, which defines international disease control strategies, biosecurity measures, and trade regulations.
- EU 2016/429 (Animal Health Law - AHL) and its delegated acts, which establish the framework for aquatic animal disease surveillance, prevention, and control within the European Union.
- Main National adaptations of EU and international regulations, including country-specific biosecurity, monitoring, and response protocols.
- EU Reference laboratories (EURL) for fish and crustaceans (https://www.eurl-fish-crustacean.eu/nrl-network) and mollusks (https://www.eurl-mollusc.eu/) and aquatic animal welfare (EURCAW-aqua) (https://www.eurcaw-aqua.eu/) and the network of national reference laboratories in the different countries (EU and non-EU).

The candidate must:

- Be proficient in the classification, control measures, and movement restrictions for WOAH- and EU-listed diseases.
- Identify and suspect the presence of notifiable diseases outside their normal geographic range and implement appropriate diagnostic and management protocols.
- Understand the legal and trade implications of disease outbreaks in aquaculture and wild populations, particularly in the context of international movement and trade restrictions.

Key Legislative References:

- WOAH Aquatic Animal Health Code (disease management, biosecurity, and trade standards): WOAH Aquatic Code
- WOAH Aquatic Manual (diagnostic procedures and surveillance): WOAH Aquatic Manual
- EU 2016/429 (Animal Health Law - AHL) and implementing regulations (specific rules for aquatic animal disease control and trade).

2. List of Notifiable Aquatic Diseases

Diseases Listed in EU 2016/429 (AHL) and Delegated Acts

Fish

- Epizootic Haematopoietic Necrosis (EHN)
- Viral Haemorrhagic Septicaemia (VHS)

- Infectious Haematopoietic Necrosis (IHN)
- Infection with HPR-deleted Infectious Salmon Anaemia virus (HPR-Δ ISAv)
- Koi Herpes Virus disease (KHV)

Mollusks

- Infection with *Mikrocytos mackini*
- Infection with *Perkinsus marinus*
- Infection with *Bonamia exitiosa*
- Infection with *Bonamia ostreae*
- Infection with *Marteilia refringens*

Crustaceans

- Infection with Taura Syndrome Virus
- Infection with Yellow Head Virus
- Infection with White Spot Syndrome Virus

(Note: The specific disease listing may be updated periodically under the AHL delegated acts, and candidates should refer to the latest EU disease categorization.)

3. Additional WHO-Listed Notifiable Aquatic Diseases (2022)

These diseases are recognized as significant transboundary aquatic animal diseases, with major trade and ecological implications.

Fish

- Infection with *Aphanomyces invadans* (Epizootic Ulcerative Syndrome - EUS)
- Infection with *Epizootic Haematopoietic Necrosis virus* (EHN)
- Infection with *Gyrodactylus salaris*
- Infection with *HPR-deleted or HPR0 Infectious Salmon Anaemia virus* (HPR-0 & HPR-Δ ISAv)
- Infection with *Infectious Haematopoietic Necrosis virus* (IHN)
- Infection with *Koi Herpes Virus* (KHV)
- Infection with *Red Sea Bream Iridovirus*
- Infection with *Salmonid Alphavirus*
- Infection with *Spring Viraemia of Carp virus* (SVC)
- Infection with *Tilapia Lake Virus* (TiLV)
- Infection with *Viral Haemorrhagic Septicaemia virus* (VHS)

Mollusks

- Infection with *Abalone Herpes Virus*
- Infection with *Bonamia ostreae*
- Infection with *Bonamia exitiosa*
- Infection with *Marteilia refringens*
- Infection with *Perkinsus marinus*
- Infection with *Perkinsus olseni*
- Infection with *Xenohaliotis californiensis*

Crustaceans

- Acute Hepatopancreatic Necrosis Disease
- Infection with *Aphanomyces astaci* (Crayfish Plague)
- Infection with *Decapod Iridescent Virus 1*
- Infection with *Hepatobacter penaei* (Necrotizing Hepatopancreatitis)
- Infection with *Infectious Hypodermal and Haematopoietic Necrosis Virus*
- Infection with *Infectious Myonecrosis Virus*
- Infection with *Macrobrachium rosenbergii Nodavirus* (White Tail Disease)
- Infection with Taura Syndrome Virus
- Infection with White Spot Syndrome Virus
- Infection with Yellow Head Virus Genotype 1

Amphibians

- Infection with *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*
- Infection with *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans*
- Infection with *Ranavirus* species

4. Relevant (not listed) aquatic animal Diseases

Usually, the diseases listed by WOAH and other international regulations are those with significant relevance in terms of impact and potential for transnational or international spread. These are diseases of concern for international governance, primarily due to their implications for the trade of live animals and/or their products.

However, there are many other diseases that, while not officially included under international or national surveillance and governance frameworks, have a major impact on industry and other sectors. These diseases are also highly relevant, and a thorough understanding of them is expected from ECAAH experts.

Such diseases are listed in Section 8, and their impacts — including economic, logistical, and societal burdens — should be well understood, alongside other key aspects such as pathogen characterisation, pathogenesis, epidemiology, management, treatment, and control.

5. Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and Stewardship

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a critical challenge in aquatic veterinary medicine, with direct implications for disease management, public health, and sustainability. The responsible use of antimicrobials in aquaculture is essential to mitigate the risk of resistance development and preserve the effectiveness of available treatments.

Key topics covered in this section:

- Mechanisms of AMR development in aquatic environments, including:
    - Horizontal gene transfer among bacterial populations.
    - Environmental reservoirs of resistance genes.
    - The role of subtherapeutic antibiotic use in accelerating AMR selection.
- Surveillance programs and monitoring of AMR in aquaculture, in alignment with WHO, FAO, and WOAH recommendations:
    - Familiarity with WOAH's guidance on antimicrobial use surveillance in aquatic species (https://www.woah.org/en/what-we-do/standards/codes-and-manuals/aquatic-code-online-access/ Ch.6).
- Regulatory frameworks governing antimicrobial use, including:
    - EMA guidelines on veterinary antimicrobial products and their restrictions in aquatic species.
    - EU 2019/6 regulations, which ban preventive group treatments and restrict certain critically important antimicrobials.
- Strategies for antimicrobial stewardship, with a focus on:

- Reducing antibiotic reliance through biosecurity, vaccination, and improved husbandry.
- Alternatives to antibiotics.

6. Public Health and Food Safety and Food quality.

Aquatic veterinarians play a crucial role in ensuring the safety of seafood and mitigating zoonotic risks associated with aquaculture products. With the increasing global demand for farmed fish and seafood, monitoring microbiological contamination, biotoxins, and chemical residues is essential.

Topics covered:

- Key zoonotic diseases linked to aquatic animals, including:
  - *Mycobacterium marinum*, some *Vibrio spp.*
  - Parasitic infections (*Anisakidae*, *Diphyllobothrium spp. (now Dibothriocephalus), trematode infections*).
  - Risk factors, transmission pathways, and mitigation strategies.
- Seafood safety risk assessments, based on WHO, FAO, and EFSA methodologies, covering:
  - Risk-based inspection and hazard analysis (HACCP) in aquaculture.
  - Emerging risks in foodborne pathogen surveillance.
- Chemical and microbiological hazards in aquaculture, focusing on:
  - Biotoxins, heavy metals, and persistent organic pollutants (POPs).
  - Antimicrobial residues and their implications for public health.
  - EU regulations on Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for veterinary drugs in aquaculture.
- Regulatory frameworks and certification systems, including:
  - Familiarity with EU 2017/625 (Official Controls Regulation), which governs seafood safety in Europe.
  - Familiarity with Codex Alimentarius guidelines on seafood safety.
  - Familiarity with international seafood certification standards (ASC, BAP, GlobalG.A.P.), and their role in sustainable aquaculture.

7. Aquatic Environment and Life Support Systems

A diplomate in Aquatic Animal Health (AAH) must possess an in-depth understanding of the different aquatic environments where aquatic animals live, sources, management, treatment, suitability for the different species and deep knowledge on water quality parameters and their direct impact on aquatic animal physiology, health, and disease susceptibility. Given the intimate relationship between aquatic organisms and their environment, the candidate must be proficient in water quality assessment, management, and remediation strategies for both aquaculture and aquarium systems.

7.1 Water Quality and Life Support Systems

The candidate must be able to:

- Assess and regulate key water quality parameters, including:
    - Temperature, pH, dissolved gases (O_2, CO_2, nitrogen), ammonia, nitrites, nitrates.
    - Salinity, ion balance, carbonate hardness (KH), and general hardness (GH).
    - The effects of these parameters on aquatic physiology and the consequences of imbalances.
    - Microbiological quality. Principles of microbiological ecology and dynamics in aquatic systems.
    - Factors that can affect these parameters (water dynamics, biomass, presence of other aquatic organisms, microalgae and plants, etc)
- Identify and mitigate the impact of harmful physical and chemical stressors, including:
    - Toxic ammonia/nitrite spikes and their role in mass mortality events in aquaculture.
    - Heavy metal and other xenobiotic contamination in aquatic bodies and aquaculture systems.
    - The interactions between water quality and disease susceptibility.
- Operate and optimize water quality monitoring equipment, including:
    - Spectrophotometers, dissolved oxygen meters, and automated water quality sensors.
    - Water filtration and recirculation systems, with a focus on Recirculating Aquaculture Systems (RAS).
    - Microbiological quality assessment,
- Evaluate the impact of medications, therapeutics, and feed additives on water chemistry and microbiology, considering:
    - Effects of antibiotics on microbial biofilters in RAS systems.
    - The influence of therapeutic compounds on pH and dissolved oxygen and aquatic microbiota.

7.2 Fish Husbandry , Environmental Stressors and other factors related to the pathogenesis of diseases.

The candidate must understand how husbandry practices and environmental stressors affect aquatic animal health, including:

- Stocking density, water flow dynamics, and system design flaws that contribute to disease susceptibility.
- Inter- and intraspecies aggression, behavioral stress.
- Handling and transport protocols to minimize physiological stress and disease transmission.
- .
- Ecosystem interactions and disease transmission risks, including potential pathogen reservoirs, carriers, and parasites.

8 Taxonomy, Anatomy, Physiology, and Farming

A diplomate must demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of aquatic animal taxonomy, anatomy, and physiology, and farming techniques focusing on species of economic and ecological importance. This includes the ability to distinguish between fish, mollusk, and crustacean taxa and understand their anatomical and physiological adaptations.

8.1 Anatomy and Physiology

Candidates must be proficient in the following systems, organs and tissues, including morphology (macroscopic and microscopic), functions and in the differences and particularities amongst fish, crustacea and mollusks and also between relevant species:

- Musculoskeletal and integumentary systems (skin, scales, fins and muscle structure) and their role in swimming in locomotion in the specific aquatic context (drag, thrust, vertical movements and depth)
- Behaviour and cognition in the different species. Schooling. Intraspecific and interspecific relationships.
- Digestive organs (digestive tract, liver, pancreas), digestive physiology, food and feeding, nutrition and specific characteristics related to nutrition, including nutritional requirements and role in osmoregulation.
- Circulatory and respiratory systems, including adaptations in gill function and gas exchange in different groups and species.
- Osmoregulation and ion balance
- Excretory systems, with emphasis on:
    - Kidney function in osmoregulation (marine vs. freshwater adaptations).
    - Nitrogenous waste excretion and acid-base balance.

- Reproductive anatomy and physiology related to life histories.
- Endocrine organs and hormones.
- Static lift and buoyancy: swimbladder and other structures with similar implications (lipids)
- Immune system. Molecules, cells, tissues and organs: Immune and hematopoietic organs, including specialized lympho-haematopoietic structures in the different aquatic taxa.
- Basic knowledge of the Nervous system and sensory and communication adaptations, covering:
    - CNS and similar structures (neuronal ganglia)
    - Perception in aquatic environments: eyes, narines, taste, equilibrium organs.
    - Electroreception in some fish species.
    - Lateral line system and hydrodynamic perception.

8.2 Economically Important Species

Candidates must possess in-depth knowledge of the major farmed aquatic species in Europe, including their husbandry, health challenges, and production systems.

Primary Farmed Species:

- Finfish:
    - *Atlantic salmon* (*Salmo salar*)
    - *Rainbow trout* (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*)
    - *Common carp* (*Cyprinus carpio*)
    - *European seabass* (*Dicentrarchus labrax*)
    - *Gilthead seabream* (*Sparus aurata*)
    - *Sturgeon species* (*Acipenser spp.*)
    - *Turbot (Scophthalmus maximus)*
    - *Sole (Solea solea)*
    - *Meagre (Argyrosomus regius)*
- Mollusks:
    - *Clams* (*Veneridae spp.*)
    - *Oysters* (*Crassostrea gigas, Ostrea edulis*)
    - *Mussels* (*Mytilus spp.*)
    - *Abalone* (*Haliotis spp.*)
- Crustaceans:

- *Shrimp and prawns* (*Penaeus spp.*)

Additional Species of Interest (European and relevant worldwide species):

- Freshwater species: Pikeperch, Eel, Perch, Tench, Burbot, Pangasius, Tilapia, Salvelinus, Grass carp.
- Marine species: Amberjack, Tuna, Mullets, Pacific salmon, Marine breams, etc.
- Mollusks: Scallops, Cockles, Pinna nobilis.
- Wild, ornamental, and aquarium species:
  - Ornamental fish (e.g., koi, discus, marine species).
  - Public aquaria species and large pelagic fish (sharks, rays).

9. Pathobiology and Epidemiology of Aquatic Animal Diseases

A diplomate in Aquatic Animal Health (AAH) must possess a thorough understanding of the environmental conditions and pathogens responsible for diseases in farmed, ornamental, and wild aquatic populations of fish, crustaceans, and mollusks. Additionally, the candidate must be familiar with emerging diseases outside Europe that could pose future risks to the industry.

The candidate must demonstrate the ability to:

- Recognize and describe the pathological changes and clinical signs of aquatic animal diseases.
- Apply field and laboratory diagnostic protocols, including differential diagnoses.
- Implement disease management strategies, including treatment, risk assessment, and preventive measures.

Below is a comprehensive list of relevant aquatic animal diseases, categorized by host species.

9.1 Diseases of Salmonids

Bacterial Diseases:

- Aeromonas: Furunculosis (*Aeromonas salmonicida* subsp. *salmonicida*), A. hydrophila
- Vibriosis (*Vibrio anguillarum*, *Aliivibrio salmonicida*)
- Lactococcosis (*Lactococcus garvieae, Lactococcus petauri*), Enteric Red Mouth Disease (*Yersinia ruckeri*)
- Bacterial Cold-Water Disease / Rainbow Trout Fry Syndrome (*Flavobacterium psychrophilum*)
- Columnaris Disease (*Flavobacterium columnare*, *F. covae*, *F. davisii*, *F. oreochromis*)
- Tenacibaculosis / Yellow Mouth Disease (*Tenacibaculum spp.*)
- Bacterial Kidney Disease (BKD) (*Renibacterium salmoninarum*)

- Moritella viscosa Infection (*Moritella viscosa*)
- *Pasteurella skyensis*
- *Francisella sp.*
- Mycobacteria and Nocardia
- Piscirickettsia (P.salmonis)
- Chlamydia-like organisms

Viral Diseases:

- Infectious Salmonid Anemia (ISA) (*HPR-deleted ISAv*)
- Pancreas Disease / Sleeping Disease (*Salmonid alphavirus*)
- Infectious Hematopoietic Necrosis (IHN)
- Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS)
- Infectious Pancreatic Necrosis (IPN)
- Piscine Orthoreovirus (PRV) Infection
- Piscine Myocarditis Virus (PMCV) Infection

Parasitic Diseases:

- Diseases by flagellates: Cryptobia, Hexamita
- Disease by amoeba: AGD, NGD
- Disease by water moulds: Saprolegniosis (*Saprolegnia spp.*)
- Monogeneans: gill and skin diseases by Gyrodactylus and Dactylogyrus spp.
- Diseases by myxposporean: Whirling Disease (*Myxobolus cerebralis*), Proliferative Kidney Disease (PKD) (*Tetracapsuloides bryosalmonae*), and other relevant myxosporidia
- Flukes and other parasites
- Diseases by parasitic copepods: Salmon Louse Infestation (*Lepeophtheirus salmonis, Caligus spp., and other copepoda*)
- Diseases by microsporidia
- Diseases by other fungi: Exophiala, etc.

Gill & Skin Diseases and syndromes :

- Gill Diseases and complex gill diseases
- Ciliate and Flagellate Ectoparasites
- Monogeneans, Microsporidia, and Myxozoans
- Red Mark Syndrome (RMS), Puffy skin

9.2 Diseases of Carp

- Cyprinid Herpes Virus Infections (*KHV, Hematopoietic Necrosis of Carassius*)
- Carp Edema Virus Infection
- Spring Viremia of Carp (SVC)
- Parasitic Infections (*monogeneans, protozoans*)
- Aeromonas Infections
- Myxozoan Parasites

9.3 Diseases of European Seabass and Gilthead Seabream

Bacterial diseases:

- Aeromonas veroni
- Vibriosis (*Vibrio anguillarum, Vibrio alginolyticus, Vibrio harveyi*)
- Photobacteriosis (*Photobacterium damselae* subsp. *piscicida*)
- Lactococcosis
- Tenacibaculosis (*Tenacibaculum spp.*)

Viral diseases:

- Viral Nervous Necrosis / Viral Encephalopathy and Retinopathy (VER/VNN) (*Betanodavirus*)

Parasitic diseases:

- Protozoan: coccidia, cryptosporidium
- Monogenean: Sparicotyle chrysophrii Infection (*Gilthead seabream*)
- Microsporidia: Enterospora nucleophila Infection
- Crustaceans: Lernanthropus kroyeri Infection (parasitic copepod) and Isopod Infestations (*Cerathotoa spp.*)

9.4 Diseases of Sturgeon

- Iridovirosis (*Iridovirus*)

9.5 Worldwide relevant diseases in other fish species

- Tilapia Lake virus (TiLV) infection
- Megalocytivirus (ISKNV, RSIV) infection
- Streptococcosis
- Edwardsiella spp.
- Lymphocystis (LCDV)

- Betanodavirus infection
- Other reovirus infection
- Amoebic diseases (gills and systemic amoebic diseases)
- Gill diseases by Amyloodinium / Oodinium
- Gill diseases by protozoan ciliates
- Diseases by DRIP (Ichthyophonus, Rosette agent, Dermocystium)
- Photobacterium (P. damselae, P. damselae subs piscicida)

Diseases by parasitic isopodes

9.6 Important Diseases in Wild Fish Populations

- European Eel Parasitosis (*Anguillicoloides crassus*)
- Multispecies Parasitic Infections:
  - Hemoparasites
  - Ichthyophthirius multifiliis (Ich or White Spot Disease)
  - Ichthyobodo necator
  - Amyloodinium ocellatum
  - Cryptocaryon irritans
  - Enteromyxum leei
  - Argulus foliaceus (Fish Louse)
  - Cerathotoa spp. (Isopod Parasites)
  - Aphanomyces invadans (EUS - Epizootic Ulcerative Syndrome)
  - Rosette agent (Sphaerothecum destruens)

9.7 Zoonotic Fish Parasites

- Anisakiasis (*Anisakis spp., contracaecum, Ppseudoterranova*)
- Diphyllobothriasis (*Diphyllobothrium latum*,now *Dibothriocephalus*)
- Opisthorchiasis (*Opisthorchis felineus and others*)

9.8 Diseases of Mollusks

- Abalone Herpes Virus Infection
- Mikrocytos mackini Infection
- Bonamiosis (*Bonamia ostreae, Bonamia exitiosa*)
- Marteiliosis (*Marteilia refringens*)

- Perkinsosis (*Perkinsus marinus, Perkinsus olseni*)
- Xenohaliotis californiensis Infection

9.9 Diseases of Crustaceans

- Acute Hepatopancreatic Necrosis Disease (AHPND)
- Crayfish Plague (*Aphanomyces astaci*)
- Taura Syndrome Virus (TSV) Infection
- White Spot Syndrome Virus (WSSV) Infection
- Yellow Head Virus Genotype 1 Infection

9.10 Non-Infectious Diseases, Technopathies, and Diseases Without Clear Aetiology

While infectious diseases caused by bacterial, viral, and parasitic agents are a major concern in aquatic animal health, non-infectious diseases and technopathies (diseases associated with husbandry, environmental stressors, or farming technologies) also significantly impact fish welfare and production performance. Additionally, some conditions observed in aquaculture have no clearly defined etiology, making diagnosis and prevention challenging. These conditions arise from environmental factors, nutrition, farming practices, physiological stress, or unknown multifactorial causes.

Common Non-Infectious Conditions in Aquaculture

- Melanized Focal Changes in Atlantic salmon.
- Spinal Deformities and other malformations.
- Nephrocalcinosis.
- Nutritional diseasesEye Cataracts.
- Idiopathic Skin Conditions.
- Water quality-related diseases: gas bubble disease

10. Standard and Advanced Diagnostic and Therapeutic Techniques

A diplomate in Aquatic Animal Health (AAH) must possess expertise in standard and advanced diagnostic methods and cutting-edge therapeutic approaches specifically tailored for aquatic pathogens. In addition to standard/conventional diagnostic techniques also used in veterinary diagnostics (morphological techniques: observation under the microscope of scrapings, gill mounts, squashes, imprints), basic histopathology, conventional microbiological techniques (isolation & identification, antibiograms), virology by cell culture, serology, etc, specialists should demonstrate proficiency in state-of-the-art methodologies for pathogen detection, disease monitoring, and treatment development.

10.1 Advanced Diagnostic Methods

Molecular Diagnostics

- Real-time PCR, qPCR, and multiplex PCR for pathogen detection and quantification.
- Digital droplet PCR (ddPCR) for high-sensitivity pathogen screening, particularly useful for low-biomass infections or latent carriers.
- Whole-genome sequencing (WGS) and metagenomics for pathogen characterization, virulence gene detection, and epidemiological tracking.

Next-Generation Sequencing (NGS) Applications

- 16S/18S rRNA sequencing for microbiome analysis and disease association studies.
- Shotgun metagenomics for pathogen discovery, strain differentiation, and antimicrobial resistance screening.
- Transcriptomics (RNA-seq) for host-pathogen interaction studies, immune response profiling, and disease biomarker discovery.

• Immunodiagnostic Approaches

- ELISA, Western blot, and lateral flow immunoassays for pathogen and antibody detection.

• Blood Biochemistry Analysis

- Used as a non-lethal diagnostic tool to evaluate stress, immune status, and metabolic imbalances in aquatic species.

10.2 Innovations in Aquatic Medicine on treatments, immunostimulation, immunoprophylaxis and microbiota control

Targeted Antimicrobial Therapy

In addition to the basic knowledge on the main therapeutic tools (bath treatments, oral treatments) and substances used, the specialists should also have a specific knowledge on -fine tune- use of these therapeutics in different scenarios.

- Pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics (PK/PD) of antibiotics in aquatic species, ensuring optimal drug efficacy and minimal resistance development.
- Development of antimicrobial stewardship strategies, including precision dosing, rotation protocols, and environmental impact assessments.

Novel Vaccine Development and Applications

- DNA and RNA-based vaccines for viral disease prevention, with emphasis on recent regulatory developments and field applications.
- Autogenous vaccine production for emerging pathogens in aquaculture, including regulatory frameworks and limitations.

Alternative Treatment Strategies

- Phage therapy as an emerging bacterial infection control tool, with a focus on practical applications and resistance considerations.

- Use of functional feeds, probiotics, and immunostimulants for disease prevention, gut health improvement, and immune modulation.

11. Clinical Decision-Making & Case Management

A diplomate must demonstrate expert-level clinical reasoning and the ability to develop evidence-based management strategies for aquatic animal health challenges.

11.1 Structured Diagnostic Approach

- Development of differential diagnoses based on clinical presentation, environmental factors, and epidemiological history.
- Integration of laboratory results (microbiology, molecular diagnostics, histopathology) with field observations and environmental assessments.
- Application of risk assessment methodologies for disease outbreaks, emerging pathogens, and antimicrobial resistance trends.

11.2 Evidence-Based Case Management

- Cost-benefit analysis of diagnostic and therapeutic interventions in aquaculture, balancing treatment efficacy, regulatory compliance, and economic sustainability.
- Development of standardized treatment protocols for bacterial, viral, and parasitic diseases, ensuring alignment with best practices and antimicrobial stewardship programs.
- Utilization of real-world data to refine treatment protocols based on regional disease prevalence and farm-specific risk factors.

12. Aquatic Animal Welfare Module

Aquatic animal welfare has gained increasing importance in aquaculture, regulatory frameworks, and ethical discussions. Ensuring good welfare conditions is essential for health, productivity, and compliance with national and international standards. Unlike terrestrial species, aquatic animals present unique welfare challenges due to:

- Their direct interaction with the aquatic environment.
- Their diverse physiological needs across species.
- The difficulty in assessing stress responses compared to terrestrial animals.

12.1 Legislative and Ethical Considerations

- WOAH Aquatic Animal Welfare Code, including species-specific welfare requirements (Aquatic Animal Health Code Ch. 7).
- EU animal welfare regulations relevant to aquaculture, focusing on transport, farming, and slaughtering guidelines.
- FAO guidelines on responsible aquaculture practices and international welfare certification programs.

- Ethical considerations in veterinary decision-making, including balancing productivity, sustainability, and welfare principles.

12.2 Species-Specific Welfare Assessment Methodologies

- Animal-based indicators: Physiological and behavioral indicators of stress, including:
    - Biological indicators: Plasma cortisol and lactate levels as biomarkers.
    - Operational indicators (OWI): Aspect and behavioral changes (aspect, lesions, malformations, feeding patterns, aggression, abnormal swimming).
- Management-based indicators: growth, biomass, dispersion and other rearing conditions
- Environmental indicators- Water quality as a critical welfare factor, emphasizing:
    - Oxygen levels, ammonia, pH fluctuations, and salinity stressors.
    - Impact of stocking density and environmental enrichment on welfare.
- Welfare-based farming and transport strategies, including:
    - Minimization of handling stress and optimization of transport conditions.
    - Stocking density recommendations based on behavioral and physiological studies.

12.3 Good practices in handling and Euthanasia Methods

This section involves aquaculture activities and particularly in research with aquatic animals.

- Stunning and slaughter techniques approved under EU and WOAH guidelines, ensuring:
    - Minimized suffering and rapid unconsciousness.
    - Comparison of electrical, percussive, and immersion stunning methods.
- Pain and distress minimization during handling, vaccination, and sampling, incorporating:
    - Anesthesia protocols for different aquatic species.
    - Low-stress handling techniques to improve animal welfare and meat quality.

12.4 The Role of Veterinarians in Welfare Audits and Compliance

- Conducting welfare assessments on farms, using quantitative welfare indicators.
- Ethical considerations in research and production systems, including:
    - The use of refinement, reduction, and replacement (3Rs) principles in aquatic animal research.
    - Assessing welfare risks in intensive vs. extensive production systems.

Recommendations for training and preparation for examination

A. Simulated or Field-Based Training Modules

Practical training is essential for veterinarians specializing in aquatic animal health. While theoretical knowledge (as outlined in Sections 1–10) provides the foundational understanding of diseases, host-pathogen interactions, and health management, the content from Section 11 onwards focuses more on methodological training and professional implementation. Real-world experience in disease diagnosis, biosecurity implementation, and emergency response plays a critical role in shaping a diplomate's ability to apply this knowledge effectively in the field and represent part of the final exam.

A.1 Case-Based Learning and Simulation Exercises

- Scenario-based diagnostics for common aquatic diseases, integrating:
    - Problem-solving under field conditions.
    - Real-time environmental and epidemiological assessments.
- Outbreak response simulations, covering:
    - Field sampling procedures and real-time diagnostics.
    - Epidemiological decision-making in disease containment.
    - Regulatory compliance and risk communication strategies.
- Interactive training sessions on AMR stewardship, including:
    - Simulation-based decision-making on antimicrobial use.
    - Assessing the consequences of different treatment strategies.

A.2 On-Site Biosecurity Audits and Farm Inspections

- Identification of biosecurity gaps in aquaculture facilities, using:
    - Risk-based auditing tools for infection prevention and control.
    - Case studies on farm-level biosecurity failures.
- Hands-on training in risk assessment methodologies, covering:
    - Water quality management as a biosecurity factor.
    - Vector control and disinfection protocols.
- Real-world application of legislative requirements, ensuring:
    - Compliance with WOAH, EU, and national disease control regulations.
    - Training on disease reporting obligations and regulatory procedures.

A.3 Applied Diagnostic and Treatment Techniques

- Hands-on training in necropsy procedures and histopathology interpretation, emphasizing:

    - Identification of infectious and non-infectious pathology.
    - Tissue sampling for molecular and microbiological diagnostics.
- Sample collection and processing techniques, covering:
    - Best practices for pathogen detection in field settings.
    - Transport and storage conditions for accurate diagnostics.
- Anesthesia, surgery, and therapeutic interventions, including:
    - Species-specific sedation and recovery protocols.
    - Minor surgical procedures (e.g., biopsy, gill sampling, abscess drainage).

A.4 Field Exposure to Different Aquaculture Systems

- Site visits to:
    - Marine aquaculture operations (e.g., cage farming, hatcheries).
    - Freshwater aquaculture systems (e.g., ponds, flow-through systems).
    - Recirculating Aquaculture Systems (RAS).
- Direct interaction with industry stakeholders, including:
    - Farmers, feed manufacturers, and veterinary suppliers.
    - Processors and seafood certification bodies.
    - Regulatory authorities overseeing aquaculture health standards.

B. Scientific Literature and Continuing Education

A diplomate is expected to remain up to date with scientific literature and the latest technological advancements in the field of aquatic animal health.

B.1 Recommended Scientific Journals

Diplomates should engage with peer-reviewed journals that provide both theoretical advancements and applied research relevant to aquatic veterinary medicine. Recommended journals include:

- Journal of Fish Diseases (*focus on pathology, diagnostics, and disease management*)
- Aquaculture (*broad coverage of farming systems, health, and sustainability*)
- Reviews in Aquaculture (*systematic reviews and critical discussions on aquaculture science*)

While these are the core reference journals, relevant articles may be selected from other sources as necessary. Individual papers may be designated as particularly relevant for preparation and examination purposes.

B.2 Continuing Education Requirements

- Final certification exams will also assess the candidates knowledge on the most recent advances in the field of aquatic animal health and welfare, so it is highly recommended to keep their knowledge update also by checking papers published in the three years preceding the exam (e.g., an exam in 2030 will cover papers from 2027 to 2029).
- Diplomates are encouraged to participate in international workshops, training programs, and expert panels to enhance their professional development and also to keep them updated about the most recent scientific and technical developments in the different areas and topics covered in the programs.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1: Training Centre Acceptance Form

Approval / Re-Approval as an APPROVED / SATELLITE ECAAH training centre

☐ **APPROVED** ☐ **SATELLITE**

☐ **FIRST APPLICATION**

☐ **APPLICATION FOR RE-APPROVAL**

Address and Location of the Training Centre:

I HEREBY CERTIFY that this Centre can (tick the relevant box):

APPROVED TRAINING CENTRE

☐ provide a Standard Residency Training Programme (min 3 years) in Aquatic Animal Health complying with the requirements formulated by ECAAH. (See: Policies and Procedures)

SATELLITE TRAINING CENTRE

☐ contribute to residency training for the following species / subjects (please specify):

A detailed description of the Training programme accompanies my application and will be accessible via the ECAAH website after approval.

The Centre Supervisor (Name in block capitals):

Signature

NB: (Re) Approval of a Centre for Standard Residencies is based on the information provided.

ANY CHANGES AFTER APPROVAL MUST BE NOTIFIED TO THE CREDENTIALS AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE. Failure to do so in a timely manner may invalidate the Residency programme.

PART 1:

GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE FACILITY

1. **How long the facility exists (ie Vet School/ Faculty):**
    a. **Is the facility accredited? When? By Whom? Please give summary report**
    b. **Is this a Veterinary School?**

2. **How long the AAH facility exists:**
3. **Existing training levels/degrees offered of the faculty (ie undergraduate degree, MSC, PhD):**
4. **Undergraduate training in AAH (hrs/week/ per year):**
5. **Research projects in specialty (title, source) in the last 5 years**
6. **Scientific papers produced by the Diplomate (in the last 5 years)**
7. **Congresses attended with presentations in the specialty (in the last 5 years)**
8. **Organized seminars/congresses by the AAH Unit (in the last 5 years)**
9. **Citations : CITATION INDEX:**
10. **Case load /week over the last 5 years:**
11. **Existing administration/secretarial help**
12. **Diagnostic services to industry (in the last 5 years)**
13. **In house training (does it exist):**

PART 2:

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAMME

(If this description accompanies an application for re-approval of an existing programme please highlight the differences with the formerly approved version including last approved changes)

1. RESIDENCY PROGRAMME IN AQUATIC ANIMAL HEALTH

How and where is/will be the detailed description of residency programme available to the public?

1.1. OBJECTIVES OF THE AQUATIC ANIMAL HEALTH RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAMME.

1.2. DURATION

Specify. Is the beginning and effective duration of the Residency limited to a specific time frame? (E.g. related to later exam participation?) or flexible?

1.3. DIPLOMATES PARTICIPATING

a. Number and Names of active Diplomates actually presents at the site and participating in the programme. State if supervisors are assigned to particular residents
b. Estimation of % time of clinical activity of each of these Diplomates.
c. Estimation of time (in h/week) dedicated for input to Resident training other than clinical supervision by each of these Diplomates.
d. Number of residents (standard/alternative) effective/foreseen in the next five-year period.

1.4 SUPPORTING NON- DIPLOMATE EXPERTISE

Specify number and expertise level of non-Diplomate staff with >5 years full time AAH experience providing additional support to Residents in training (veterinarians, Certificate / MSc in Aquatic species, Technicians)

1.5. FOR STANDARD APPROVED CENTRE: SPECIFIC PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION
(FOR SATELLITE TRAINING CENTRES, PLEASE GO DIRECTLY TO POINT 3.)

BASED ON:

52 weeks/yr and 60% of the time spent practicing specialty (clinical work, sampling, diagnosis, lab tests, training in lab, rotations and basic training, treatment, follow ups, writing up cases logs) 40% other duties (research, CPD, teaching off clinics - preparation of lectures etc)

1.5.1. **Schedule for the Resident demonstrating how requirements of the Residency will be met during the residency** (SEE ECAAH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES).

1.5.2. **Teaching responsibilities of the Resident (in relation to aquatics).**

1.5.3. **Continuing Professional Development CPD.**

(i) **Internal CPD in AAH**: frequency of resident seminars/ journal clubs, 'rounds' etc. at which the Resident is expected to attend and frequency of expected presentation at such meetings.

(ii) **Internal CPD in other areas – clinical and research**. Include any CPD organized for residents in all areas (e.g., statistics courses). Indicate frequency of such meetings and the input (e.g. presenting) expected from the Resident.

(iii) **External CPD and conferences, including body meetings with their associated training days**. Again indicate the expected attendance of the Resident, and indicate at what stage of their training they will be expected to present to such a meeting.

(iv) **Specify if it is compulsory for residents to enrol in specific discipline related discussion lists**, **cpd providing websites**

1.5.4. **Aquatic health case records and records:** an example of the case-record (or records) which the Resident will use and will present for acceptance of credentials must obligatory accompany this application (at least as pdf document). If a form of supporting electronic case recording is contemplated (full electronic recording will not suffice) provide a detailed description and printed examples

1.5.5. **Any other course work**. State what other 'course work' is expected of the Resident. In particular state if the **Resident is also registered for a higher degree, (e.g. Masters**,) and if so, explain what requirements further to those already part of the Residency this will entail and how these may affect clinical training.

1.5.6. **Provision to compensate for deficiencies in the programme** - e.g. lack of certain species – see facilities below). Demonstrate how these deficiencies are to be met (e.g. external rotations).

1.5.7. **Evaluation of Resident's performance**. Describe the system used for assessment of the Resident's progress and performance; how often it is performed and by who

2. FOR STANDARD APPROVED CENTRE: OTHER SPECIFIC or ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS
(FOR SATELLITE TRAINING CENTRES, PLEASE GO DIRECTLY TO POINT 3.)

3. FACILITIES, SERVICES AND EQUIPMENT OF THE TRAINING CENTRE
(FOR STANDARD APPROVED AND FOR SATELLITE TRAINING CENTRES)

3.1 **Are the following *minimal* requirements met**?

Medical library: a library containing recent textbooks and current journals relating to veterinary and medical anaesthesia and its supporting disciplines must be accessible to the programme participants; there must be full access to internet: ☐ Y ☐ N

Medical records: a complete medical record must be maintained for each individual case and those records must be retrievable. ☐ Y ☐ N

Radiographic services: separate rooms and appropriate equipment for comprehensive diagnostic imaging must be available: ☐ Y ☐ N

A clinical pathology laboratory for hematological and clinical chemistry, Clinical pathology reports must be retained and retrievable: ☐ Y ☐ N

3.2 **Details concerning the facilities, services and equipment:**

3.2.1 **Buildings** –

3.2.2 **Overall Case-load.**

3.3. **Other Services available** with prominent involvement of residents and supervisors?

3.4. **List of Diplomates in other specialties who may contribute directly or indirectly to the Residents' education.**

Surnames of Professors of the DPVM (College)

3.5. FOR SATELLITE CENTRES: **Please state how the centre will contribute to residency training**

3.6. **Collaboration with satellite centres**: **Please state how the centre will contribute to residency training:**

Place and Date : Centre Supervisor: (Name and signature)

APPENDIX 2:

A) Template for Standard Residency Registration Form

Standard Residency

European College of Aquatic Animal Health

Name of the Candidate
Contact information

CV of the Candidate

Education

Experience

Memberships

ECAAH – Training Centre:

Supervisor:

Objectives

Duration

Program description

Signature of the Supervisor

B) Template for Alternative Residency Registration Form

Residency Training Program proposal

Programme type requested: **Alternative Residency Training Programme**

Preamble:

This proposal should be framed following ECAAH bylaws, specifically the articles:

-Section 4.2: Education Committee

-Section 5.2: Residency training programs

and mainly points 1 (Introduction) and 3 (Alternate Residency Training Programme)

and also following ECAAH P&Ps, 2019, specifically Chapter 2:

Point 2.1.5: Alternative Residency Training Program

and Chapter 3: Sections A to F

The proposal is submitted for evaluation to the Alternative Residency Training Programme according to the following sections of the ECAAH bylaws:

Section 4.2 Education Committee

Section 5.2: Residency training programmes: Point 4 (Criteria for and approval of Residency Training Programmes)

and according to the ECAAH P&Ps, section IV: Application and Evaluation of Residencies and particularly IV.1: Application for a new Residency Training Program

Introduction:

The section should include a justification of an alternative residence and the candidate profile

Justification:

Candidate profile:

Name of the Candidate

Contact information

CV

Supervisor:

PRIMARY AND GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF THE AQUATIC ANIMAL HEALTH ALTERNATIVE RESIDENCY TRAINING PROGRAMME (ARTP) ACCORDING ECAAH REGULATIONS

The **primary objectives:**

The **general objectives:**

Detailed objectives:

DURATION

SPECIFIC PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Activities to be carried out during the educational and training program:

The training will consist of:

Supervisor signature

Annexes: The following tables may help to justify and explain the program description.

Table 1: Preliminary assessment of the **current knowledge of the candidate** in the different areas (other rows can be included)

TABLE 1	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced
Aquatic environment			
Water quality basics			
Water quality evaluation			
Water quality management			
Aquatic animal biology (zoological & ecological vision): main groups and species			
Aquatic animal physiology			
General concept on aquatic animal health. Basic management and husbandry principles			
Overview of the diseases of Aquatic animals and health in wild populations and commercial populations related to fisheries			
Overview of the diseases of Aquatic animals in farming systems			
Overview of the diseases of Aquatic animals in ornamental trade and in aquaria			
Diseases and AA health in research facilities: zebrafish			
Introduction of AA maintenance systems: open systems, RAS, aquaria, filtration principles and related engineering and technology			
Aquatic animal transportation			
Diseases by main groups: fish, crustacean, mollusks, others (pathogens, diagnosis, pathogenesis, epidemiology) including viral, bacterial, fungal, DRIP, parasites and			

non- infectious diseases and disorders (neoplasia, nutritional, genetic, reproductive diseases, management, technopathies and toxicology)			
Specific diseases of the most relevant fish, mollusk and crustacean species			
Viral, bacteriological and fungal disease general diagnostics methods used in AA medicine			
Molecular biology and immunological methods used in AA medicine diagnostics			
Other diagnostic methods in AA medicine: fast techniques, haematology, cytology, image medicine			
Pathology integration: gross pathology and histopathological characterization of the main diseases of AA			
Diagnostics integration: selection, sampling methods, diagnostic methods and interpretation and quality control and quality assurance of diagnostic methods			
Prevention, specific AA epidemiology, biosecurity, fish immunoprophylaxis, vaccines and vaccination, disease management principles for the different groups of AA			
Zoonotic diseases and basic concepts on human health related to aquatic animals consumption and management (food hygiene and safety) under OneHealth concept			
Disease treatments: therapeutics (farming and clinical approaches) including therapeutic efficiency, safety, legal and environmental issues			
Clinical approach in fish medicine. Handling, propaedeutics, clinical examination, diagnosis and recommendations			
Sedation, anesthesia in AA			
Image medicine & surgery in fish			
Welfare in aquatic animals			
Euthanasia in AA			
Ethics and legislation related to AA			
AA Health and disease surveillance policies at international, national and regional levels			

Table 2: Training in the different areas and centers that the candidate will follow

Table 2	Centre 1	Centre 2	Centre 3
Aquatic environment			
Water quality basics			
Water quality evaluation			
Water quality management			
Aquatic animal biology (zoological & ecological vision)			
Aquatic animal physiology			
General concept on aquatic animal health. Basic management and husbandry principles			
Overview of the diseases of Aquatic animals and health in wild populations and commercial populations related to fisheries			
Overview of the diseases of Aquatic animals in farming systems			
Overview of the diseases of Aquatic animals in ornamental			
Diseases and AA health in research facilities: zebrafish			
Introduction of AA maintenance systems: open systems, RAS, aquaria, filtration principles and related engineering and technology			
Aquatic animal transportation			
Diseases by main groups: fish, crustacean, mollusks, others (pathogens, diagnosis, pathogenesis, epidemiology) including viral, bacterial, fungal, DRIP, parasites and non-infectious diseases and disorders (neoplasia, nutritional, genetic, reproductive diseases, management, technopathologies and toxicology)			
Specific diseases of the most relevant fish, mollusk and crustacean			
Viral, bacteriological and fungal disease general diagnostics methods used in AA medicine			
Molecular biology and immunological methods used in AA medicine diagnostics			
Other diagnostic methods in AA medicine: fast techniques, haematology, cytology, image medicine			
Pathology integration: gross pathology and histopathological characterization of the main diseases of AA			
Diagnostics integration: selection, sampling methods, diagnostic methods and interpretation and quality control and quality assurance of diagnostic methods			
Prevention, specific AA epidemiology, biosecurity, fish immunoprophylaxis, vaccines and vaccination, disease management principles for the different groups of AA			
Zoonotic diseases and basic concepts on human health related to aquatic animals consumption and management (food hygiene and safety) under OneHealth concept			
Disease treatments: therapeutics (farming and clinical approaches) including therapeutic efficiency, safety, legal and environmental issues			
Clinical approach in fish medicine. Handling, propaedeutics, clinical examination, diagnosis and recommendations			
Sedation, anaesthesia in AA			
Image medicine & surgery in fish			
Welfare in aquatic animals			
Euthanasia in AA			
Ethics and legislation related to AA			
AA Health and disease surveillance policies at international, national and regional levels			

APPENDIX 3: Annual resident report form

Annual Resident Report – ECAAH

All sections must be completed.

General Information

Resident name:

Year:

Training center:

Program Director's name:

Supervisor(s) name (if different from Programme Director):

Residency start year:

Expected completion year:

Program type: ☐ Standard ☐ Alternative

Training year: ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ >4 (specify: _____)

Program Evaluation (to be completed by the Programme Director/Supervisor)

1. Deficiencies or critical issues in the residency programme:
2. Changes from the original approved training plan:
3. Comments

Training Activities

(Functional Area – Activities (brief description) - Weeks)

Diagnostics:

Clinical / Field experience:

Microbiology / Virology / Parasitology:

Pharmacology / Therapy / Vaccinology:

Research:

Teaching:

Other (specify):

Conferences / Workshops attended:

Presentations / Posters:

Reports / Publications:

Membership of scientific societies:

Planned Activities for the Next Year (if applicable):

Clinical Cases Documented

Total cases submitted so far (Previous years): [ ]

Cases remaining to reach 100 (during all the residency, considering also cases presented here): [ ]

Cases documented this year (copy and paste bullet points and add numbering):

1. Date:
   Species:
   Case history (Short anamnesis and case description):
   Methods / Diagnostic workflow:
   Test results / Findings:
   Interpretation / Conclusions (maximum five lines):

Signatures (Printed and scanned are acceptable)

Resident signature
Name:_____
Date: _____
Signature: _____

Program Director signature
Name:_____
Date: _____
Signature: _____

Supervisor(s) signature (if different from program director – if more than one supervisor is present, duplicate this field):
Name:_____
Date: _____
Signature: _____