



# **European College of Veterinary Clinical Pathology CONSTITUTION Nov 2001**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The European College of Veterinary Clinical Pathology (ECVCP) will be established according to the general scheme for veterinary specialization in Europe which has been encouraged by the Advisory Committee for Veterinary Training (ACVT report document III/F/5285/3/91) and described in the "Policies and Procedures of the European Board of Veterinary Specialization [EBVS] (1995)".

The ECVCP was initiated by the European Society of Veterinary Clinical Pathology (ESVCP) at its first meeting in Vienna on September 26th 1998. Subsequent studies, reviews, and surveys by the ESVCP documented a need for an independent ECVCP and that EBVS criteria had been met for establishing an ECVCP (Veterinary Clinical Pathology 2001; 30:155,167). This College resulted from a growing desire to harmonize postgraduate training and provide certification in veterinary clinical pathology in Europe and a need for well-educated veterinary clinical pathologists with certified experience for leading positions in veterinary schools, commercial and government laboratories, and the pharmaceutical industry.

Veterinary clinical pathology is a discipline-oriented specialisation, which focuses on the development, application and interpretation of diagnostic laboratory procedures for monitoring animal health and the diagnosis, prognosis, treatment and the monitoring of animal disease. It is applied primarily to companion, agricultural, and laboratory animals, but also to aquatic and zoo animals and wildlife.

The primary objectives of the College are to advance veterinary clinical pathology, promote a high standard of veterinary clinical pathology and veterinary clinical pathologists practising in Europe, and to promote research in the area of veterinary clinical pathology in Europe.

This publication provides the Constitution and By-laws of the ECVCP as accepted by the EBVS (Dec 2002, Utrecht), and an Information Brochure with further information about the ECVCP, including a description of the science, a description of the requirements for admission to the College, a profile of the speciality, and application and examination procedures.

# **Constitution of THE EUROPEAN COLLEGE OF VETERINARY CLINICAL PATHOLOGY**

## **Article 1: Name and Structure**

1.1 The name of the College shall be: the European College of Veterinary Clinical Pathology - hereafter referred to as the "ECVCP", hereinafter referred to as "the College"

1.2 The College shall be registered and domiciled in London, England.

1.3 The College shall be a part of the transnational structure for veterinary specialization in the European Community (E.C.), as recommended by the Advisory Committee for Veterinary Training (ACVT) of the E.C., set up by the Board Decision 78/1028/EEC of 18 December 1978 and OJ No L 302 of 22 December 1978, in its report document III/F/5285/3/91. The structure includes the Coordinating Committee for Veterinary Specialization (CCVS), the European Board of Veterinary Specialization (EBVS), the Supervisory Committees for the speciality, and the Colleges of Specialists.

1.4 The College shall be incorporated under the laws of England as a non-profit educational organisation. The term for which it is organised shall be indefinite. However, in the event of dissolution of the Corporation, its property shall be distributed for educational purposes as determined by the Board.

1.5 The College shall run concurrently with the calendar year, subject to the first society year ending on the last day of December of the year in which the college is established.

## **Article 2: OBJECTIVES**

The College shall have the following objectives:

2.1 To establish standards of training, experience, and examination for qualification as a specialist in veterinary clinical pathology in Europe.

2.2 To further the recognition of such qualified specialists by suitable certification and other means in Europe.

2.3 To develop and supervise continuing education programmes in veterinary clinical pathology in Europe.

2.4 To encourage and promote the establishment of standards for the performance of laboratory procedures in veterinary clinical pathology in Europe.

2.5 To further research and scientific progress in veterinary clinical pathology in Europe.

### **Article 3: MEMBERSHIP**

3.1 The types of membership in this organization shall be:

(a) Founder Diplomat

(b) Diplomat

(c) Honorary Member

(d) Non-practising Diplomat

3.2 Qualifications for membership:

In accordance with the policies of the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation only veterinarians may become diplomates of European veterinary speciality colleges. Veterinarians elected to membership of the College shall be designated a diplomate of the European College of Veterinary Clinical Pathology and shall be authorised to use the designation of diplomate of the European College of Veterinary Clinical Pathology (Diplomat, European College of Veterinary Clinical Pathology; DipECVCP).

3.3 Founding diplomates shall be specialists selected according to the following criteria in order to establish the College and to enable it to function during the initial period. There are two types of founding diplomates who are not required to submit to examination, diplomates appointed at initiation of college and de facto recognised specialists.

(a) Diplomat appointed at initiation of college: These founding diplomates are distinguished and experienced members in the field. There shall be no more than 2 per

European country and the number shall be limited to those essential to conduct the business of the speciality and to achieve provisional recognition. They must:

- (i) be a member of the organising committee established to achieve provisional recognition of the ECVCP;
- (ii) have achieved distinction in the field and have qualifications far exceeding those proposed as necessary for candidates to take the certifying examination of the College;
- (iii) have at least ten years experience in the speciality, having spent at least 70% their time (28 hours per week) practicing veterinary clinical pathology;
- (iv) have a PhD or equivalent degree;
- (v) have contributed significantly to the field by research, publication and lectures;
- (vi) be recognised by their peers as leaders in their field and be uncontroversial to the majority of members;
- (vii) be practising in Europe; and
- (viii) be an active member of the ESVCP

(b) De facto-recognised Specialist:

These are founding diplomates appointed by the Charter Diplomates. The de-facto recognition is possible upon application no later than 36 months after provisional recognition of ECVCP by the EBVS. To be appointed one must:

- (i) have at least seven years of experience in the speciality, having spent at least 60 per cent of their time ( 24 hours per week) in the speciality;
- (ii) have published at least three original articles in refereed journals relevant to veterinary clinical pathology as first author and at least three additional articles as co-author excluding non-peer reviewed articles, review articles, and proceedings abstracts;
- (iii) normally resident in Europe or, significantly active (at the discretion of the Council Board) in veterinary clinical pathology in Europe; and
- (iv) be an active member of the ESVCP or other European society of veterinary clinical pathology.

3.4 Diplomat: A veterinarian who satisfies the ECVCP requirements as to training, experience, and competence in veterinary clinical pathology hereinafter described in Article 4 shall be eligible. Alternatively, veterinarians who satisfy these ECVCP requirements, but

have passed board examinations by comparable colleges outside Europe, or established prior to the ECVCP being established, may be eligible. Election of such candidates shall be accomplished by majority vote of the Board after review of their application.

3.5 Honorary Member: A veterinarian who is not a Diplomate of the ECVCP but who has contributed in an extraordinary manner to the advancement of veterinary clinical pathology may be elected by majority vote as an Honorary Diplomate. Nomination for Honorary Diplomate Status shall be made through the sponsorship of two Diplomates. The sponsors shall furnish the Executive Secretary with such information concerning the nominee, as is required by the Board, e.g. curriculum vitae. Election of an Honorary Member shall be accomplished by a two-thirds vote of the Board and by a two-thirds vote of the Business Meeting of the College. Honorary Member status does not confer the right to act as a specialist in veterinary clinical pathology

. Honorary Members may not use the title of diplomate but shall have all the privileges of membership except the right to vote or hold office and shall pay reduced dues. Less than 5% of college membership can have this title. An Associate Member shall have fulfilled the same requirements and have the same privileges as an honorary member, except that they will not be a veterinarian.

3.6 Non-practising Diplomate: A diplomate who has not practised the speciality for two continuous years or the equivalent of two years during a period of 5 years, or has not attended an annual general meeting of the ECVCP for three years without previous dispensation from the ECVCP will be designated as a non-practising diplomate in the register. A member seeking to revert to full Diplomate status needs to satisfy the Board that they again meet the criteria for full Diplomate status, such as through practice of veterinary clinical pathology, and evidence of continuing educational activities. Any ECVCP diplomate who has retired from the practice or teaching of veterinary clinical pathology may be designated a Non-practising Diplomate by the Council Board, at the diplomate's request. Non-practising Diplomates will be requested to pay a reduced fee in order to maintain all the privileges of diplomates, except the right to vote or hold office.

3.7 Only diplomates of good standing with no dues in arrears shall be eligible to vote or hold office.

3.8 All diplomates are required to maintain activity in veterinary clinical pathology, maintain certification by continuing education in a form determined by the Education Committee, and maintain activity in the affairs of the College, particularly by regular attendance at meetings.

3.9 In order to evaluate the requirements laid down in section 5 and 8 of this article the diplomats are required to send in each 5 years a summary of their professional activities in which evidence of fulfilling these requirements and evidence of continuous education must be included. The format of this summary has to be approved of by the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation and will be evaluated by members of the Credential Committee.

## **Article 4: GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR BOARD EXAMINATION**

4.1 The following prerequisites must be met to the satisfaction of the Board before any candidate is eligible to undertake any Board Examination in veterinary clinical pathology. An eligible candidate must:

- (a) have a satisfactory moral and ethical standing in relation to the practice of veterinary medicine;
- (b) be qualified to practice veterinary medicine in Europe, unless relieved from this requirement in exceptional cases by the Council Board;
- (c) normally resident in Europe or, at the discretion of the Board, significantly active in veterinary clinical pathology in Europe
- (c) complete a 1-year rotating internship, or 2 years in clinical practice, or an equivalent training acceptable to the Credentials Committee as a prerequisite to entering the clinical pathology training programme
- (e) normally complete at least 3 years of post-graduate training and experience in veterinary clinical pathology that is acceptable to the Board. Acceptable means a training programme of at least three years that is directed by a Diplomate of the ECVCP and is approved by the ECVCP Credentials Committee at an institute with a clinical pathology laboratory approved by the ECVCP Laboratory Standards Committee;
- (f) if either the supervisor is not a Diplomate or the programme does not provide training in veterinary clinical pathology as one of its primary functions, then 4 years of training in veterinary clinical pathology are required. One of these 4 years must be spent in training under the supervision of a Diplomate and in a programme that trains veterinary clinical pathologists as one of its primary functions. At least one month per year for each of the other 3 years must be spent attending courses or at another institution for training in veterinary clinical pathology;
- (g) have been the first author of at least two original articles which demonstrates application of scientific methods on subjects that are relevant to veterinary clinical pathology. The articles must have been published or accepted for publication in an internationally peer-reviewed journal. An article may be a case report with literature review, an evaluation or validation of diagnostic methodology or technology in clinical pathology, a retrospective or prospective study of clinical pathology changes in a disease or toxic state, or a pathophysiological study of clinical pathology change.
- (h) normally be active in veterinary clinical pathology for at least 60% of their normal working week (24 hours per week).

4.2 Application will be made to the Secretary in a prescribed form and will be accompanied by an examination fee fixed by the Council Board. Letters of reference from supervisors and others are to be sent directly to the Secretary:

4.3 Eligible candidates will be examined by an Examination Committee appointed by the Board at the time and place fixed by the Board and in accordance with the policy established by the Board.

## **Article 5: OFFICERS AND BOARD**

5.1 The following Officers shall form the Board of the College: Past-President, President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and two Councillors.

5.2 The election of these officers and the duties of the officers and the Board shall be as provided in the by-laws.

## **Article 6 - AMENDMENTS**

6.1 Any proposed amendment to this Constitution and to the by-laws, signed by at least three members in good standing, shall be submitted to the Board for its recommendation. The proposed amendment with the recommendations of the Board will be announced at least thirty (30) days in advance of any regular or special meeting of the College at which time the proposed amendment may be discussed. An affirmative vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of members voting by secret ballot shall be required for the adoption of any amendment.

## **By-laws of THE OF VETERINARY CLINICAL PATHOLOGY**

### **Article 1: DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

1.1 The President and Vice-President shall be members elected by a majority of members voting, using secret written or electronic ballots, and shall serve for three years. The President and Vice-President may be re-elected for an additional term.

1.2 The Secretary and the Treasurer, similarly elected from the membership, shall serve for 3 years. The secretary and treasurer may be re-elected for an additional term.

1.3 The Councillors, two in number, shall be members elected in the same manner as the other officers by a majority of members voting, each to serve a term of 3 years. Councillors may be re-elected for an additional term.

1.4 Duties of the President, Past-President and Vice-President.

(a) The President shall preside over all meetings of the College and meetings of the Board, shall be a member, ex officio, of all committees, and shall perform the usual duties of such

office.

(b) The Past-President shall advise the President

(c) The Vice-President shall be the President-Elect, shall be an ex officio member of all committees, shall preside at the meeting in the absence of the President, and shall succeed to the office of the President should that office be vacated.

1.5 Duties of the Secretary and the Treasurer. The Secretary shall serve as executive officer of the College. He or she shall keep minutes of all meetings and shall perform the usual duties of a secretary and such other duties as assigned by the Board. The Treasurer shall conduct the business affairs of the College, collect dues and fees, draw vouchers, pay bills and expenses, arrange for the safekeeping of College funds, keep records of all transactions and submit a yearly statement of financial affairs to the Board. Records shall be the property of the ECVCP and be available for inspection and audit. The Past Secretary and Past Treasurer shall advise the current Secretary and current Treasurer during the first year of their term.

## **Article 2: DUTIES OF THE BOARD**

2.1 The Board shall have the duties and powers ordinarily delegated to the governing body of the corporation, those responsibilities given by the Constitution are as follows:

(a) Shall organise and operate a certifying agency for diplomates of the European College of Veterinary Clinical Pathology as provided in the constitution. The Board shall judge compliance of candidates with the general requirements of the Constitution, appoint an examination committee to operate under its supervision, and certify candidates who qualify. The Board shall make available to candidates and the interested public a detailed account of the experience and training prerequisites to all Board examinations.

(b) Shall create and appoint members of all committees, supervise their activities, and receive their reports.

(c) Shall report to the College annually its work and activities, including a full financial statement, and shall make such interim reports as are necessary and advisable.

(d) Shall exercise its constitutional authority in promoting and attaining the objectives of the College especially those pertaining to professional, institutional and public relations.

(e) Shall hold a meeting at least once a year.

(f) Shall ensure all the results of each examination are announced at the same time.

## **Article 3: COMMITTEES**

3.1 The Board shall appoint a Nominating Committee of three members for a term of one year before elections. The committee shall widely seek and carefully consider input from the membership across Europe. Nominations to all vacancies may be made by the Nominating Committee or to the Nominating Committee by any member in good standing. Nominations shall be made in writing and shall include a brief statement of qualifications of the nominee.

Nominations are to be submitted between January 1 and June 30 of the election year. The Nominating Committee shall prepare a secret ballot listing of all nominees. In the event that no nominee receives a majority of votes cast, the two nominees receiving the most votes shall be placed on a second secret ballot. Should a vacancy in any office occur, the Council Board may at its discretion initiate nomination and election procedures to fill the vacancy until the next general meeting of the College.

3.2 The Board shall appoint for a term of three years an Education Committee of three members. The committee shall elect its Chairperson annually. The committee shall widely seek and carefully consider input from the membership across Europe. The duties of this committee are:

- (a) to set and approve criteria for training programmes, training institutions, and supervisors.
- (b) to maintain lists of approved training programmes, training institutions, supervisors, and current candidates.
- (c) to establish guidelines for minimum requirements for the continuing education of diplomates
- (d) to develop and supervise continuing education programmes in veterinary clinical pathology in Europe.

3.3 The Board shall appoint for a term of three years a Credentials Committee of three members. The committee shall elect its Chairperson annually. The committee shall widely seek and carefully consider input from the membership across Europe. The duties of this committee are:

- (a) to establish guidelines to assist applicants applying to sit the examination
- (b) to receive, review, and approve the candidacy of applicants for examination by the College
- (c) to forward to the Examination Committee the credentials of approved applicants.

(d) to receive the required reports from supervisors of candidate training on

(i) the annual progress of each candidate in training. The trainee must maintain a log that records the nature and timing of their training activities and that is approved by the supervisor every 6 months. This log should include (i) relevant courses or tutorials taken, (ii) identification of, and diagnosis (tentative or differential and / or etiologic) for, cases (at least an average of 25 per 6 month in each of the three areas) examined and interpreted in each of the three area of biochemistry, hematology, and cytology; (iii) rotations or externships in other relevant disciplines or to other training sites, (iv) relevant seminars, workshops or conferences attended, and (v) any relevant presentations or publications.

(ii) details of each training programme in the form of an initial report with update and re-examination every 5 years (due at the annual meeting). The Credentials Committee, acting for the College, will attest the adequacy of each programme when they approve the report

(iii) to receive, review, and approve the candidacy of applicants for diplomate status who satisfy ECVCP requirements but have passed board examinations by comparable colleges outside Europe, or colleges established prior to the ECVCP being established.

3.4 The Board shall appoint for a term of three years an Examination Committee of four members. The committee shall elect its Chairperson annually. The committee shall widely seek and carefully consider input from the membership across Europe. The duties of this committee are:

(a) to prepare, administer and grant all examinations of the College.

(b) to receive examination questions from diplomates. All diplomates must submit five questions, along with their fully-referenced answers, each year to the examination committee. A deadline of June 30th will be needed for adequate review time. Failure to submit questions for two consecutive years would cause suspension of approval of training programmes

(c) to forward to the Council Board all examination results and recommendations regarding the granting of diplomate status

3.5 The Council Board shall appoint for a term of three years a Laboratory Standards Committee of three members. The committee shall elect its Chairperson annually. The duties of this committee are:

(a) to set and approve criteria for the performance of laboratory procedures in veterinary clinical pathology in Europe.

(b) to approve clinical pathology laboratories for training programmes and training institutions in Europe. Maintaining lists of approved clinical pathology laboratories, of training programmes, and of training institutions. Clinical Pathology Laboratory standards

that must be met include adequate facilities, compliance with health and safety standards, written operational procedures and policies, current methodologies and technologies, a programme for quality management including internal quality control and participation in an external quality assurance scheme for proficiency testing, a laboratory information management system, documentation of personnel training and development, and a duty clinical pathologist, who has guided all aspects of laboratory management.

3.6 The Board shall appoint for a term of three years a Science Committee of three members for a term of three years. The committee shall elect its Chairperson annually. The committee shall widely seek and carefully consider input from the membership across Europe. The duties of this committee are:

- (a) to further scientific progress in veterinary clinical pathology in Europe
- (b) to organise an annual European scientific meeting of veterinary clinical pathology
- (c) to maintain an official journal of the ECVCP and active membership of the editorial board of that journal
- (d) to maintain electronic media for dissemination of scientific information and for a forum to address issues in veterinary clinical pathology
- (e) to maintain a newsletter to disseminate ECVCP information to diplomates.

## **Article 4: DUES**

4.1 The dues shall be as follows:

- (a) Diplomates and founding diplomates: The dues shall be recommended by the Council Board and approved by a majority of the membership present and voting at an ordinary or extraordinary meeting of the College or voting by mail.
- (b) Honorary members and non-practising diplomates will be required to pay reduced dues.

4.2 Dues shall be payable on January 1st of each year and shall be remitted to the Treasurer.

4.3 Fees connected with examination and certification of candidates shall be determined by the Board.

## **Article 5: MEMBERSHIP AND REGISTRATION**

5.1 Each individual elected to membership in the College shall be registered as a Diplomate of the European College of Veterinary Clinical Pathology, and shall be authorised to use the designation of Diplomate of the European College of Veterinary Clinical Pathology.

5.2 Each diplomate is required to keep records of their professional and scientific activities. The Board may from time to time require any diplomate to submit their record for inspection.

5.3 Diplomates are required to regularly (at least once every third year) attend annual general meetings and to participate in continuing education as determined by the Education Committee.

5.4 Voluntary cessation of registration requires notice in writing to be received by the Executive Secretary before June 30 and will be published at the next annual general meeting.

## **Article 6: DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND APPEALS PROCEDURE**

6.1 In case of improper conduct, the Board shall have the authority to recommend censure, suspension, or cancellation of membership. All deliberations shall be guided by highest standards to ensure fair and objective review. The accused member shall therefore have the opportunity to appear before the Board in person.

6.2 In the event of an adverse decision by the Board including denial of certification, denial of adequacy of credentials prior to examination for certification or to reregistration as a full Diplomate, and censure, suspension, or cancellation of membership, the affected person may submit a written appeal to Board for consideration within 30 days of the adverse decision. Board will reconsider on the grounds that the decision may have been made erroneously by (1) disregarding or failing to follow stated College procedures, and/or (2) failing to consider relevant documentation presented. Board will deliver in writing its final decision within 90 days after the appeal. If the affected person is not satisfied with the final decision, he or she may request mediation with representatives of the EBVS.

## **Article 7: CONDUCT OF BUSINESS**

### **7.1 Quorum**

(a) A Quorum of the College shall consist of 25 percent of the members of the College eligible to vote. The quorum shall apply to all meetings of the College.

(b) A Quorum of the Board shall consist of a simple majority of that Board.

(c) Meetings of the College shall be called by the President, subsequent to the approval of the Board. Should the President fail to set a date and place for an ordinary or for extraordinary meetings, the Board or the membership may, by majority action, set a date and place for such meetings.

## 7.2 Frequency of meetings

- (a) Meetings of the College shall be held at least once a year.
- (b) Meetings of the Board of the College shall be held at least once a year.
- (c) Meetings of the Committees of the College shall be held at least once a year.
- (d) An extraordinary meeting of the College shall be held at any time at the written request, containing the explanation for such a meeting, of not less than 10% of the members. This meeting must be held within 3 months of the request.

## 7.3 Finances

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

- (a) annual dues (payable by January 1). The annual dues (ECU) of each active member shall be determined by the general assembly. Members shall be adjudged delinquent if they are one year in arrears, and may be voted for removal by the membership if two years have elapsed without payment. A Non-practicing Diplomat of the College shall also be required to pay reduced dues.
- (b) Donations from companies and international organizations.
- (c) Income from educational meetings organized by the College.
- (d) Any monies accumulated shall be safely invested and serve as a reserve for possible use at a later time.

## **ECVCP interim arrangements**

1. An organising committee consisting of the executive of the ESVCP and of the prospective Charter Diplomates shall prepare an application to the EBVS for provisional recognition of the College. Input from the membership of the ESVCP and from the EBVS liaisons shall be sought in the preparation of the application.
2. This organising committee shall widely publicise its activities.
3. The application for provisional recognition shall include a review by the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation of the curriculum vitae of the members of the organising committee.
4. After provisional recognition of the College by the European Board of Veterinary

Specialisation the members of the organising committee shall become Charter Diplomates. These will immediately appoint defacto diplomates according to the criteria identified in the constitution section 3.3 who will assist in the formation of committees.

5. The Charter Diplomates shall immediately establish an Interim Board of the College and solicit applications for defacto diplomate status.

6. Applicants for defacto diplomate status should submit material to the secretary to enable assessment of the application using the Constitution Article 3 section 3 (b) as the criteria for review.

7. Applications shall be considered by at least three Charter Diplomates, and all applications shall be either approved by the current Board, or deferred to the Board elected in the second year.

8. Within one year of provisional recognition, an election by Charter and defacto diplomates will take place to establish a Board for the second year of the College's existence with provisional recognition.

9. The procedure to consider applications for De-facto recognised Diplomate status shall continue for three years after the date of provisional recognition of the College by the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation.

10. After this time in 9. above entry to the College will be by examination by the ECVCP or diplomate status of comparable colleges from outside Europe or established prior to the establishment of the ECVCP according to the constitution Article 3 section 4.