

# **Veterinary Laboratory Antimicrobial Diagnostics (VLAD) CONSTITUTION**

## **Name:**

The name of the organisation shall be Veterinary Laboratory Antimicrobial Diagnostics which may be abbreviated to VLAD.

## **Aims and Objectives:**

- a) To provide a forum for the exchange of knowledge and understanding of antimicrobial stewardship focusing on the interface between veterinary diagnostic laboratories and clinicians in practice.
- b) To promote harmonisation of diagnostic techniques and reporting of molecular, culture and antimicrobial susceptibility (AST) results.
- c) To encourage collaboration in the clinical research of infectious disease in animals.
- d) To provide continuing professional development in veterinary microbiology, antimicrobial stewardship and interpretation of culture and AST results appropriate to those working at an advanced level in veterinary diagnostic laboratories and clinical practice, but open to any veterinary healthcare professional or scientist with an interest in antimicrobial stewardship.

## **Membership:**

- a) Full membership will be open to all veterinary healthcare professionals (veterinary surgeons, veterinary nurses and other practice team members) and those working in veterinary diagnostic laboratories, universities and institutes who are interested in the above aims.
- b) Associate membership shall be open to other parties including veterinary students and veterinary nursing students who are interested in the above aims.
- c) Honorary life membership may be conferred to individuals on the approval of the committee and ratified at an AGM, for individuals deemed to have made an outstanding contribution to the area.
- d) Only full members shall have the power to vote at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) or other general meetings.
- e) Only full members may be members of the management committee.
- f) Applications for membership of the Association must be submitted on the official application form obtainable from the Membership Secretary.

## Membership fees:

- a) The amount of the annual subscription for the succeeding year shall be reviewed annually by the Honorary Treasurer and approved at the AGM. For the first (next year) the subscription cost will be set at £0.
- b) Subscriptions shall be due on the first day of January each year, or in the case of new members, upon election.
- c) Members whose subscriptions are more than two years in arrears shall cease to be members.
- d) The onus is with the individual member to maintain their subscription.

## Termination of membership:

Members wishing to resign from VLAD are required to submit their resignation to the Secretary, in writing, at least one month prior to the AGM.

## Committee of Management:

- a) VLAD will have a committee of management who will be responsible for the day to day running of the society.
- b) The committee will comprise:
  - i.) The Chairperson, who shall be elected for a three-year period and shall be eligible for re-election for a further three-year period.
  - ii.) The Honorary Treasurer, who shall be elected for a three-year period and shall be eligible for re-election for a further three-year period.
  - iii.) In addition to the two Officers, there shall be between three and five ordinary members of the Committee, who may have designated roles and titles, who shall be elected for a three-year period and shall be eligible for re-election for a further three-year period.
- c) The Committee shall have the responsibility of managing and controlling the affairs and property of VLAD. The Committee shall promote and implement the objectives of VLAD and carry out all activities with broad powers for the ordinary and extraordinary management of VLAD which may be delegated by resolution to the Chairperson.
- d) The Committee shall have the power to co-opt to the Committee additional members, or to set up sub-committees for special purposes. If co-opted members or created sub-committees are to continue to serve in the following year passing an Annual General Meeting, they shall be submitted to the Annual General Meeting for approval and election by the Association.
- e) Any Committee Member may at any time in person or by proxy inspect the accounting records, files, documents and other vouchers of VLAD at any reasonable venue and time and may make copies and extracts thereof. Any Committee Member may inspect such documents during any Committee Meeting.

f) Should the office of one or more members of the Committee terminate for any reason before the appointed term, the remaining Members of the Committee may appoint the requisite number of Committee Members to serve until the next Annual General meeting by a simple majority of votes cast.

g) The quorum of the Committee shall be five elected members, with a minimum of two Officers of the Committee.

h) The Committee will meet at least twice per annum. However, the Committee may meet at any time for the dispatch of business, adjourn and otherwise regulate their meetings as they may think fit. A quorum of Members of the Committee or the Chairperson may at any time, and the Secretary shall, upon the request in writing of the same, summon a meeting of the Committee. Due notice shall be given to all Committee Members.

i) All questions shall be decided by the votes of the majority of the Members of the Committee present and voting thereon at a meeting of the Committee except as otherwise provided.

j) On the equality of votes the Chairperson shall have a second or casting vote.

k) The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the Committee and of the Annual General Meeting.

l) Resolutions may be adopted without a meeting if they are in writing and are signed by all Committee Members.

m) The committee shall meet at least once per year.

n) The financial liability of committee members in the event of failure of the society will be a maximum of £1 Sterling.

## General Meetings:

a) There will be an Annual General Meeting of the organisation which will normally be held not less than nine months and not more than fifteen months after the previous Annual General Meeting.

b) The composition of the management committee and all financial affairs will be set at the AGM.

c) Members of VLAD should be given 1 month's notice in writing of the date, time and place of the AGM, together with an agenda.

d) The business of the AGM shall include:

i. Apologies for absence

ii. Amendment and approval of the minutes of the previous A.G.M.

iii. The Chairperson's report

iv. The Honorary Treasurer's report

v. Reports from any sub-committee

vi. Election of new members vii. appointment of Honorary Auditor

viii. Election of Officers and Committee Members

ix. Confirmation of the date and place of the next A.G.M. x. any other business

e) A Special General Meeting may be called by the Chairperson whenever they think fit, or convened by the Honorary Secretary on the instruction of the Committee or on receipt of a request made and signed by at least six members, stating the subject intended for discussion. The SGM shall be held not later than twenty-one days after receipt of such instructions or request. No business shall be transacted at a Special General Meeting other than that for which the meeting has been called.

f) At any Special General Meeting the necessary quorum shall be twenty members or 20% of the Association's membership, whichever is the greater.

g) Voting is by show of hands unless one third of the members attending request a secret ballot.

h) Resolutions shall be passed by a simple majority of votes cast except as otherwise provided herein or by law.

i) Abstentions shall be deemed null and void votes. On the equality of votes the Chairperson shall have the second or casting vote.

## Visitors

Members may normally introduce visitors to any meeting, but one of the Officers of the Association should be notified. Visitors shall leave the room if any business of the Association is to be transacted.

## Constitution

a) A copy of the constitution shall be available to any member on request to the Honorary Secretary.

b) No alteration shall be made to this Constitution except by a two-thirds majority of those members present at the AGM (or any EGM duly convened for the purpose) of the Association, and then only if notice to alter the rule or rules concerned has been notified two months in advance to all fully paid-up members individually.

## Elections

Nominations for the election of Officers and Committee members must be proposed and seconded and have the consent of the nominees. Any necessary elections shall be held at the Annual General Meeting.

## Financial Powers:

a) In VLAD's aim of promoting knowledge and understanding of veterinary microbiology diagnostic techniques and antimicrobial stewardship, the organization will have the power to seek funds from government, commercial companies and other individuals of standing.

b) Additional funds will be obtained from an annual membership fee approved at the AGM.

c) The society will be empowered to raise moneys from holding meetings, events and CPD courses as approved by the committee.

d) All funds raised shall only be used for the aims and objectives given in this constitution.

e) The Treasurer shall receive all money payable to the Association and from such money pay all the sums payable by the Association. The Treasurer shall not pay money on account of the Association, except current expenses, without the approval of the Committee.

f) The Honorary Treasurer shall submit a statement of the Association's accounts for the preceding twelve months at the Annual General Meeting, for approval by the meeting. The accounts shall be inspected by a member of the Association who is not a member, elected or co-opted, of the Committee.

g) No member of the organisation will receive remuneration for their activities or duties other than receipted and approved expenses in carrying out their duties.

i. At the discretion of the Chairperson and Treasurer subsidised attendance at the meeting can be offered to one of the organising committee members or to nominated VLAD members. This would cover free registration at the conference and travel at standard rates.

h) The organization will open and operate a bank account in the name of the society which will be administered by the Treasurer, but may in their absence be operated by the Chairperson or Secretary.

i) All cheques issued from the bank account will be signed by either the Chairperson, Secretary or Treasurer only. Only one signature being required on each cheque.

## Affiliation with other Societies

The Association may elect to enter into affiliation with or enter any other suitable relationship with other Societies having aims and objectives related to those of the Association.

## Winding up the society:

Should a majority of 75% of those present and eligible to vote as full members of the society decide to wind up the society, any unspent funds held by the society at that time shall be donated to a charity of the members' choice, approved at the time of dissolution.