

STATUTES  
OF  
THE ROYAL VETERINARY COLLEGE

*Interpretation*

1. These Statutes shall be read with the Charter of the College and words and expressions used in the Charter shall, if not inconsistent with the subject or context, bear the same meaning herein.
  
2. Unless the contrary appears from the context:
  - (a) Words importing the singular number only shall include the plural number and *vice versa* and words importing the masculine gender only shall include the feminine and *vice versa* and words importing persons shall include corporations.
  
  - (b) Headings are inserted for convenience only and shall not affect the meaning or construction of these Statutes.
  
  - (c) References to a particular law shall be construed as references to that law as it is in force at the relevant time taking account of any amendment, re-enactment or extension and shall include any subordinate legislation for the time being in force made under it.

*Membership of the Council*

3. The Council shall consist of the following members subject to there being a maximum number of eighteen members of whom independent members (being members who are neither staff nor students of the College and are otherwise independent of the College) shall form the majority:

- (a) up to eleven independent members, appointed by the Council;
  - (b) the Principal, *ex officio*;
  - (c) up to three senior academics of Vice-Principal status or equivalent, appointed by the Council, *ex officio*;
  - (d) two members of the Academic Board of the College, appointed by the Academic Board;
  - (e) One student, appointed by the Council, normally the President of the Students' Union, who shall normally hold office for a term of one year.
4. (a) All independent members of the Council and all Academic Board members shall hold office for four years or for such shorter period as the Council may determine at the time of the appointment.
- (b) Retiring members, apart from the student member, shall be eligible for reappointment up to a maximum of two terms of four years in total following which after one year a member may be re-appointed for one further term of four years.
5. A Member of the Council who is adjudicated bankrupt or who is or may be suffering from mental disorder and either (a) is admitted to hospital for treatment under the Mental Health Act 1983 or (b) is the subject of an order made by any competent court for his or her detention or for the appointment of a receiver or other person to exercise powers with respect to his or her property or affairs or who refuses or is unfit or incapacitated to act, or who communicates in writing to the Council his wish to resign or who is absent from all Meetings during a period of one year without good cause shall thereupon cease to be a Member of the Council.

6. If any Member of the Council shall cease to hold office because of his death or for any of the reasons specified in paragraph 5 hereof, the person appointed to take his place shall hold office only for the remaining period during which his predecessor would have held office had he not ceased to be a Member, but shall be eligible for re-appointment in accordance with Statute 4(b).

*Meetings of the Council and Committees thereof*

7. There shall be held in every academic year of the College not fewer than three meetings of the Council to be called Ordinary Meetings.
8. Upon the written requisition of the Chairman of the Council or of not less than five members of the Council the Secretary to the Council shall convene a Special Meeting of the Council. Such requisition shall specify the object of the desired Meeting and the Secretary shall within 28 days after receipt of such requisition convene a Special Meeting to be held within 28 days of the date of the notice convening the meeting for the purpose specified in the requisition.
9.
  - (a) The Council shall, no later than at its last Meeting in each academic year appoint a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman for the ensuing academic year. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman may not be either employees or students of the College. They shall hold office until the corresponding meeting in the following year or until they or either of them ceases to be a member of the Council whichever shall be the earlier. In the absence of the Chairman, the chair shall be taken at any Meeting by the Vice-Chairman, and in the absence of both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman, shall be taken by such one of the members present as those members may appoint.
  - (b) If any casual vacancy shall occur in the Office of Chairman the Council shall so soon as conveniently may be after the occurrence of such vacancy choose another member to fill such vacancy, such other member to continue in office so long only as the person in whose place he may be

appointed would have been entitled to continue in office; and pending the choice of such other member the Office of Chairman shall be filled by the Vice-Chairman.

10. Seven or such larger number as the Council may from time to time by Regulation prescribe shall be a quorum of a Meeting of the Council, provided that the majority of members present shall be neither employees nor students of the College. All questions arising at any Meeting of the Council shall be decided by a majority of votes, save as herein specifically provided to the contrary. In the case of an equality of votes the Chairman of the Meeting shall have as well as his own vote a second or casting vote. No voting by proxy shall be permitted.
11. Subject to the provisions of the Charter and the Statutes the Council shall have power to make and when made to vary regulations governing the procedure at its Meetings and the mode of convening the same.
12.
  - (a) The Council may appoint such Committees (including Special and Standing Committees) as it shall deem necessary from time to time consisting of such persons as the Council shall think fit whether or not being members of the Council for such purposes as the Council shall consider necessary. The Council shall have power to dissolve any such Committees at its discretion and may delegate its powers as provided by Article 7 of the Charter.
  - (b) There shall be a Committee of the Council with responsibility for audit.
  - (c) The Chairman of the Council and the Principal of the College shall be *ex-officio* members of every Committee, with the exception of the Audit Committee.
13. Minutes shall be kept of all decisions and proceedings of Meetings of the Council and of Committees and a Minute therein signed by the Chairman of the Meeting whereof it is a record or by the Chairman of the next Meeting shall be receivable as *prima facie* evidence of the matters recorded therein.

14. The Council may act at any time notwithstanding any vacancy therein.
15. All acts *bona fide* done by any Meeting of the Council or of a Committee of the Council or by any person acting as a Member of the Council or of any such Committee shall, notwithstanding that it be afterwards discovered that there was some defect in the appointment of any such Member or person acting as aforesaid or that they or any of them were not eligible as Members or a Member of the Council or of any such Committee, be as valid as if every such person had been duly appointed and was qualified to be a Member of the Council or of any such Committee as the case may be.

#### *Powers of the Council*

16. The Council shall, either itself or through delegated authority where appropriate, conduct the general business of the College consistently with the provisions of the Charter and the Statutes, and shall approve the annual budget and monitor expenditure on account of the ordinary business of the College, and shall have power to make regulations imposing the conditions of entry, fixing the fees, governing the discipline, and providing the courses of study for students, and to appoint and admit Fellows and Honorary Fellows of the College, and to do all such other acts and things as are necessary for the transaction of the business of the College or the furtherance of its object, provided always that the Council shall not make any decision on any question of educational policy until after the Academic Board shall have had an opportunity of expressing an opinion thereon and the Council shall have considered any opinion so expressed.
17. The Council shall appoint the Principal (which is the title to be borne by the Head of the College), the Secretary to the Council, and other officers of the College, all members of the teaching staff and all the other members of staff of the College upon such conditions as the Council may think fit and shall have power to remove the same. The Council may not delegate the appointment of the Principal or the Secretary to the Council.

18. (1) For the purposes of this Statute 18:
  - (a) “Academic Staff” means
    - (i) Professors, Readers, Senior Lecturers, Lecturers and Assistant Lecturers;
    - (ii) the Secretary to the College;
    - (iii) senior staff holding academic related posts, being posts recognised by the Council for the purposes of this Statute;  
and
    - (iv) the Principal; and
  - (b) “Academic Freedom” shall have the meaning ascribed to it by UNESCO from time to time.
- (2) The Council shall adopt from time to time procedures for the disciplining and dismissal of the staff of the College and for the handling of grievances raised by the staff of the College. Such procedures shall be set out in Regulations.
- (3) In determining the procedures to be adopted under paragraph 2 of this Statute, the Council shall apply the following guiding principles:
  - (a) to ensure that Academic Staff have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, and otherwise to conduct themselves in accordance with the principles of Academic Freedom without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges;
  - (b) to enable the College to provide education, promote learning and engage in research efficiently and economically; and
  - (c) to apply the principles of justice and fairness.

- (4) Any Regulations made under this section shall be construed in every case to give effect to the guiding principles in paragraph 3 of this Statute and to the following principles:
- (a) Academic Staff shall not be required to sit as a member of any Committee, Tribunal or body appointed under the Regulations against their wishes;
  - (b) any appeal against dismissal or a decision in respect of a grievance shall be heard in accordance with the appeals section of the relevant Regulations, subject always to the fact that the appeal shall be heard and determined by the Principal (or his/her nominee) and a person appointed by the Council, such person being a person not employed by the College and holding, or having held judicial office or being a barrister or solicitor of at least 10 years' standing;
  - (c) with regard to any proposed dismissals of Academic Staff on the grounds of redundancy, the Council will be asked to ratify any proposals to enter into redundancy consultation. The Council shall appoint a Redundancy Committee comprising a Chairman, 2 members of the Council (not being persons employed by the College) and 2 members of Academic Staff nominated by the Academic Board. The Redundancy Committee shall delegate to the College's Human Resources Department and the relevant managers of the affected Academic Staff the management of the redundancy consultation process in accordance with the redundancy procedure set out in the Regulations, subject always to the fact that the Redundancy Committee shall:
    - (i) ratify the redundancy selection process and criteria; and
    - (ii) approve the dismissal of those Academic Staff subsequently selected for redundancy prior to notice of dismissal being given to those Academic Staff; and

(d) in relation to any proposed dismissal of a member of Academic Staff by reason of incapacity on medical grounds, in the event that the member of Academic Staff does not consent to a medical report being obtained, the Principal (or his/her nominee) shall refer the case in confidence to a Board comprising one person nominated by the Council, one person nominated by the member of Academic Staff (or, in default of the latter nomination, by the Academic Board) and a medically qualified chairman jointly agreed by the Council and the member of Academic Staff (or in default of agreement, to be nominated by the President of the Royal College of Physicians) which shall make a recommendation as to whether or not to dismiss the member of Academic Staff to the person with authority to dismiss under the Regulations.

(5) For the avoidance of doubt, any procedure adopted by the Council for the dismissal of staff by reason of redundancy shall not apply to a member of Academic Staff whose appointment was made, or whose contract of employment was entered into, on or before 19 November 1987, and who has not been promoted after that date.

19. The Principal shall be responsible for the conduct of the College and shall have such other powers and duties as may be entrusted to him by the Council. If he shall be unable through absence (other than temporary absence) or illness to carry out such powers and duties the Chairman shall appoint a substitute pending a decision of the Council.

20. Any property which may be given to the College in specific investments may be retained in the same form of investment real and personal as that in which it is received. Subject as aforesaid any funds of or connected with the College which require investment may be invested in any of the following investments:-



- (a) in the acquisition by the purchase or otherwise of or at interest upon the security of such stocks, funds, shares, securities or other investments or property of whatsoever nature and situated in any part of the world (including property of any nature for occupation or use) and whether involving liability or not and whether producing income or not or by lending the same with or without security upon such terms as the Council shall in its absolute discretion think fit to the intent that the Council shall have the same full and unrestricted powers of investing and transposing investments and laying out moneys in all respects as if it were an absolute beneficial owner thereof;
  - (b) any investment authorised by the Trustee Act 2000 for the trustees of a trust to be made in the same manner and subject to the same conditions; and
  - (c) in or upon any other investments whatsoever if such investments are not inconsistent with the charitable status of the College and are in the opinion of the Council conducive to the furtherance of the purposes of the College.
21. Subject to the Charter and the Statutes the Council may from time to time at any Meeting make alter or revoke regulations for the conduct of the business or affairs of the College, provided however that notice of an intention to propose any amendment to or annulment of the existing regulations or the making of any new regulations shall have been given in the notice calling such Meeting.
22. The Seal of the College shall be under the control of the Council and shall be kept and used as the Council may direct.

*The Academic Board*

23. There shall be a body known as the Academic Board, whose membership shall include representation from a range of levels of the College's academic staff and also from the College's students.

24. The Principal shall be the Chairman of the Academic Board at its meetings, and he shall in the case of an equality of votes have a second or casting vote. In the absence of the Principal the Academic Board shall elect one of their members to be Chairman, and he shall have during the meeting at which he presides a second or casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
  
25. The duties of the Academic Board shall include:-
  - (a) To consider and advise the Council upon all academic matters and questions affecting the educational policy of the College, the organisation of teaching and research and courses of study, including the discharge of such other duties and functions connected with the College as the Council may from time to time assign to them.
  
  - (b) To inform the Council as and when necessary on the appointment of members from among themselves to the Council.
  
26. Subject to the provisions of the Charter and the Statutes the constitution and powers of the Academic Board shall be governed by regulations.