



VPA CONSTITUTION

June 2017

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Background

In 1981 the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (RPSGB) initiated a Diploma in Agricultural and Veterinary Pharmacy (DAgVetPharm) for its Members, that was mainly focused on arable crops and livestock. The course was originally organised by Dr Michael Jepson and based at the University of Aston over two residential weeks. Candidates were assessed by coursework, written examinations and a viva. A period of work experience was also required. Towards the end of the 2003 the agricultural element was dropped, the course was modularised with new sections added to cover emerging interest in public health and companion animal healthcare. The teaching location was transferred from Aston to Harper Adams University College (HAUC) where the facilities proved to be very beneficial. At his time there was no input to the Course from HAUC.

Following Shipman, RPSGB was instructed by HM Government to hand over its regulatory functions to a new General Pharmaceutical Council. In 2007, during the long run up to this happening, the Diploma was withdrawn. Administration of the Diploma was then transferred to the College of Pharmacy Practice and delivery taken over by the Veterinary Pharmacy Education Programme (VPEP) originally part of RPSGB but then functioning as a stand-alone Consultancy. After the CPP was subsumed by the RPS in 2010, VPEP opened negotiations with HAUC to transfer all the courses to the College with admission widened to include SQPs, Support staff and Animal Scientists. These negotiations were successfully completed in the following year. In 2012 HAUC was granted University status and HAU subsequently secured accreditation of the courses by both AMTRA and RPS.

Until 2008 the RPSGB actively supported a Veterinary Pharmacy Group, which was run by a Committee of elected members and administered by a staff member. This provided a forum for discussing matters of interest amongst its members, responding to Consultation documents and the VPG also ran a number of events including successful weekend conferences and visits around the UK, Ireland and beyond. Overseeing the Diploma programme was also part of its remit. After the RPS took over from RPSGB in 2010, the VPG was replaced by a Veterinary Pharmacy Forum (VPF) with minimal support. Pharmacists who had formed the VPG Committee assumed similar roles in the VPF but with limited resources almost all activities ceased despite early promises of assistance from the RPS.

As the new courses at HAU flourished, a group of people emerged with Veterinary Pharmacy qualifications for whom no on-going support was available. Following protracted discussion between HAU, RPS and VPF, it was agreed in 2017 that an organisation to provide assistance for all colleagues with an interest in Veterinary Pharmacy should be set up with various levels of membership to reflect individual professional backgrounds. This was only possible because of the generous offer to provide administrative facilities by HAU and initial sponsorship from VPEP.

1. NAME OF THE ASSOCIATION

The name of the Association is the **Veterinary Pharmacy Association** (“the Association”)
The abbreviated name is **VPA**.

2. AIMS

To highlight role of veterinary pharmacy by:

- 2.1 Promoting excellence in the safe, effective and appropriate use of medication in animals, thereby improving animal health and well-being.
- 2.2 Raising awareness of public health implications arising from contact between humans and animals.

3. OBJECTIVES

The Association is a non-profit organisation established with the following objectives:

- 3.1 To promote Veterinary Pharmacy globally as a discipline recognised by the veterinary profession, veterinary medicines industry, fellow health care providers and the public.
- 3.2 To support the professional and commercial activities of Veterinary Pharmacists, Pharmacy support Staff and Suitably Qualified Persons (SQPs) by responding to consultative documents and liaising with relevant Bodies and Government Agencies associated with the veterinary sector.
- 3.3 To facilitate on-going educational support and CPD for Members by providing seminars, courses, online materials and conferences in association with Harper Adams University (HAU), RPS and other bodies, as appropriate.
- 3.4 To support undergraduate pharmacy students as requested by Universities.
- 3.5 To promote and facilitate research in the field of veterinary pharmacy.
- 3.6 To facilitate communication through appropriate media such as forums, newsletters and other publications and symposia and by providing networking opportunities.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 **Categories of Membership.** The Association shall have the following categories of membership, the annual subscriptions of which will be set at the AGM:
Fellows. Fellows shall be proposed and seconded by existing Fellows and have a Masters or Diploma in Veterinary Pharmacy or a Diploma in Agricultural and Veterinary Pharmacy. They shall be entitled to use the post nominal designation FVPA. Founder Fellows shall have a period of three (3) months from adoption of the Constitution to self-nominate.

Members. Members shall be proposed and seconded by an existing Member or Fellow of the Association and have a minimum of 25 hours training in Veterinary Pharmacy. They shall be entitled to use the post-nominal MVPA. Founder Members shall have a period of three (3) months from adoption of the Constitution to self-nominate.

Associate Members. Colleagues with an interest in Veterinary Pharmacy may apply in writing and will be admitted at the discretion of the Governing Committee. Students will normally be admitted as Associate Members.

The subscription for each category will be fixed at the Annual General Meeting.

International Members may be admitted in an appropriate category at the discretion of the Governing Committee.

Honorary Fellowships and Memberships may be awarded at the discretion of the Governing Committee but must not exceed more than a total of two in any one year.

- 4.2 **Founder Fellows and Members.** The Founder Fellows and Members of the Association shall sign schedule A of this Constitution.
- 4.3 **Conditions and Criteria.** The Governing Committee may determine the conditions and criteria for membership. The Governing Committee may refuse applications for membership that do not comply with such conditions and criteria.
- 4.4 **Register of Members.** The Governing Committee must keep a register with the names and postal and email addresses of all categories of Members.
- 4.5 **Termination by Governing Committee.** Membership terminates if a Member is removed by a resolution of the Governing Committee, provided that the Member has been given an opportunity to make written or verbal representations at a meeting of the Governing Committee pertaining to the proposed termination.
- 4.6 **Membership withdrawal.** Membership may be withdrawn:
 - a) For non-payment of fees, thirty (30) days after notice of arrears given
 - b) On the recommendation of a professional standards subcommittee comprising of the Chairman and two other Members, one of whom shall be in the same profession as the Member to be withdrawn and the other to be an appropriate lay person. Grounds for exclusion include, but are not limited to: unprofessional practice or conduct, working outside the scope of their professional practice (in accordance with Governing Bodies).
 - c) Members excluded under (b) have the right of appeal by having their case heard at a Special Meeting of the Governing Committee.

5. INCOME

Income shall be derived from membership fees recommended by the Governing Committee and ratified at the Annual General meeting and from educational and social activities, sponsorship and any other sources deemed appropriate by the Committee.

Charitable status for the VPA can be considered at a later date.

6. PROPERTY OF THE ASSOCIATION

- 6.1 Members and office-bearers have no rights in the property or other assets of the Association solely by virtue of their being Members or office-bearers.
- 6.2 The income and any property of the Association shall be used solely for the promotion of its stated objectives and shall not be paid or distributed directly or indirectly to any person, or to any member of the Association or office-bearers, except as reasonable compensation for services actually rendered to the Association (for example lecturing or examining duties) or reimbursement of actual costs or expenses reasonably incurred on behalf of the Association.

7 THE GOVERNING COMMITTEE

- 7.1 **Powers.** The Governing Committee shall manage the affairs of the Association in accordance with the resolutions of Members in General Meeting.
- 7.2 **Numbers and Portfolios.** A minimum of six Members shall serve on the Governing Committee: the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson, the Secretary & Treasurer, the Education Convener and two Committee Members, each of whom will have responsibilities determined by necessity.
- 7.3 **Election.** All elected members of the Governing Committee shall be Fellows or Members of the Association; up to third of the Committee members may be non pharmacists. The Governing Committee shall be elected by Fellows and Members of the Association at an Annual General Meeting.
- 7.4 **Term of Office.** Initially, each member of the Governing Committee shall be elected for a period of two years. No Committee member may serve on the Committee for more than three consecutive terms without a minimum ineligibility period, whereupon subsequent submissions for election will then be considered by the Membership.
- 7.5 **Vacancies.** The Governing Committee must, as soon as is reasonably possible, appoint someone to fill any vacancy that reduces the number of Committee members to fewer than six. The next Annual General Meeting must confirm the office of any Committee Member so appointed, otherwise it will lapse.
- 7.6 **Co-option.** The Governing Committee may co-opt a maximum of two additional non-voting members (including one Associate Member of the Association). Co-option must be renewed annually for a maximum of three terms.
- 7.7 **Resignation. Disqualification and Removal.** A Governing Committee Member may resign from office in writing. A Governing Committee Member shall be disqualified from office upon termination of Membership to the Association and/or becoming incapable by reason of mental or other chronic illness. A Member may be removed from office after a two-thirds resolution in favour of this action by no fewer than four of the remaining Governing Committee Members.
- 7.8 **Delegation of Powers.** The Governing Committee may delegate any of its powers or functions to a Sub-Committee or Member(s) of the Association provided that: such

delegation and conditions are reflected in the Minutes for that meeting, at least one Committee Member is delegated to serve on the Sub-Committee, the Governing Committee approves in advance all expenditure incurred by the Sub-Committee or delegated Member. The Governing Committee may revoke the delegation or amend the conditions if deemed necessary.

- 7.9 **Procedures at Meetings.** The Governing Committee may regulate its meetings and proceedings as it deems fit, subject to the following:
- a) The Chairperson shall chair all meetings of the Governing Committee.
 - b) Meetings of the Governing Committee may be conducted face-to-face or electronically which would allow Governing Committee Members to be present and participate through electronic means. At least one meeting in each year shall be face-to-face, subject to funds being available.
 - c) If the Chairperson is not present within fifteen minutes of the appointed time of the meeting, the Vice-Chairperson shall chair such meeting. If both are absent, then the Committee Members present at the meeting shall elect a chairperson for that meeting.
 - d) The Chairperson shall convene a minimum of three meetings of the Governing Committee annually, and also after receipt of a written request from any two Members of the Governing Committee.
 - e) The quorum for a meeting of the Governing Committee shall be two-thirds of the serving Governing Committee Members.
 - f) If no quorum is present, the Governing Committee may make no decision, except to preserve the assets of the Association and to call a meeting of the general Members.
 - g) Each Governing Committee member present or represented through written proxy shall have one (1) vote.
 - h) Questions arising shall be decided by a majority of votes. Should there be an equality of votes, the Chairperson shall have a casting or deciding vote.
 - i) Proper Minutes and Attendance Records must be kept, of all meetings of the Governing Committee. The Chairperson for the meeting shall sign the minutes which shall be available at all times for inspection or copying by any Member of the Association on two days' notice to the Secretary & Treasurer.
 - j) A resolution signed by all Members of the Governing Committee shall be as valid as if passed at a duly convened meeting of the Governing Committee.
 - k) The Governing Committee may appoint employees upon such lawful terms and conditions, as it may deem necessary.

8 MEETINGS OF MEMBERSHIP

- 8.1 **Annual General Meetings.** All Annual General Meetings (AGMs) must be held within six months of the Association's financial year-end. At least twenty-one (21) days' written notice must be given to all Members stating the date, time, place and business of the AGM, which business must include:
- a) The Chairperson's report
 - b) The presentation of the Association's Annual Financial Statements
 - c) A budget for the next year, including a recommendation for Membership fees
 - d) The election of Governing Committee Members
 - e) The appointment of auditors and
 - f) Other appropriate matters
- 8.2 **Special General Meetings.** The Governing Committee or not less than one third of the members may call a Special general Meeting of the Association either as a teleconference or as a face to face meeting. At least fourteen (14) days' written notice must be given to all Members stating the date, time, place and business of the Special General Meeting. If the Committee fails to give notice within seven (7) days of the request of one third of the Members, such members shall be entitled themselves to give notice of and to convene the meeting.
- 8.3 **Powers of the General Meeting.** The Members in a properly convened General Meeting of the Association is the highest decision-making structure of the Association as set out in this Constitution. The Members in General meeting may review, approve or amend any decision taken by the Governing Committee but no such resolution of the Association shall nullify any earlier resolution taken by the Governing Committee in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.
- 8.4 **Procedure at General Meetings.** The Membership may regulate their meetings and proceedings as they see fit.

9 NOTICES OF MEETINGS

- 9.1 All notices terms of this Constitution must be given to Members in writing by the Secretary & Treasury (personally, by post or electronic communication) to the address provided by the Members
- 9.2 The accidental omission to address notices to any Member shall not nullify the proceedings of any meeting.
- 9.3 A Member present in person at any meeting shall be deemed to have received notice of such meeting.
- 9.4 If sent via post, notices shall be deemed to have been received seven (7) days after posting.

10 FINANCE AND REPORTS

- 10.1 **Bank Account.** The Governing Committee must open a bank account as soon as is practicable in the name of the Association with a registered Bank.
- 10.2 **Signing.** Cheques and other documents requiring a signature on behalf of the Association shall be signed by at least two persons authorised by the Governing Committee.
- 10.3 **Financial Year-End.** The financial year-end of the Association shall be the last day of July, to run parallel to the HAU financial year 01/08-31/07.
- 10.4 **Financial Report.** The Governing Committee must ensure that proper records and books of account, which fairly reflect the affairs of the Association, are kept, and within six months of its financial year, a report is compiled by the Secretary & Treasurer.

11 AMENDMENTS AND DISSOLUTION.

- 11.1 This Constitution may be amended, the name of the Association may be changed and the Association may be dissolved by resolution of two-thirds of the Members present at an Annual General Meeting or a Special General meeting.
- 11.2 At least twenty-one (21) days' notice of the Special general meeting stating the nature of the resolution to be proposed must be given to all Members of the Association. See comment re postal notices above (9.4)
- 11.3 Upon the dissolution of the Association, after all debts and commitments have been paid, any remaining assets shall not be paid to or distributed amongst Members, but shall be transferred by donation to some other non-profit organisation which the Governing Committee (and failing which, the Members in General Meeting) consider appropriate and which has identical or similar objectives to the objectives of the Association.

V1 - Adopted June 2017

SCHEDULE A

SCHEDULE OF FOUNDER MEMBERS

Nr.	Name	Address	Date	Signature
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