

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UK & IRELAND ASSOCIATION OF FORENSIC TOXICOLOGISTS

1. The name of the Association is the United Kingdom & Ireland Association of Forensic Toxicologists (abbreviated to UKIAFT).

2. The primary objective of the Association, where agreed by the membership and administered by the Council, is to promote high standards in Forensic Toxicology in the United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland through co-operation between organisations and individuals. This includes education, research and professional development as well as maintaining and developing guidelines on best practice in toxicology where it is to be utilised in the judicial system together with the promotion of the profession.

3. Membership of the Association will be open to all practising and qualified individuals within Forensic Toxicology and associated job roles. The Council retains the right to refuse membership, if such interest cannot be legitimised in professional terms. For the purpose of membership of the Association, Forensic Toxicology is defined as toxicology analysis and/or interpretation undertaken as part of the UK, Channel Islands and Republic of Ireland judicial systems (e.g. Crown, Prosecution and Defence, HM Coroners and Procurators Fiscal).

4. The Secretary of the Association will administer applications for membership. Membership will operate on three levels: Professional Member, Associate Member and Affiliate Member. Professional Membership is open to those individuals with an appropriate science degree who are practicing forensic toxicologists with at least 4 years experience in a role pertaining to Forensic Toxicology. Associate Membership is open to those individuals with an appropriate science degree who are practicing forensic toxicologists with less than 4 years experience of Forensic Toxicology, or a Professional Member who is no longer a practicing forensic toxicologist but is still active in the field of forensic toxicology. An Affiliate member is open to those individuals who are professionally linked to the field of forensic toxicology (for example, pathologists/medical examiners) or are post-graduate students in the field of forensic toxicology. A summary statement of the nature of qualifications and experience shall accompany all applications.

5. Membership status will be reviewed by the Secretary on an annual basis and members must confirm when paying their membership dues that their status has not changed. Members must alert the Secretary to any changes in their membership status and/or contact details.

6. At least three meetings will be held each year and one will usually be combined with the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The procedural items of the AGM will be administered by the Council. All other meetings shall be administered by a Host Chair and Host Secretary with support from Council members as required. The content of the meetings must pertain to the objectives of the Association and allow an open forum for discussion and hearing of any business matters pertaining to the Association where necessary. This includes hearing of new applications for membership which will be reviewed at a scheduled meeting of the Council prior to a local meeting or AGM.

7. The Officers of the Association are the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary and shall be elected from the Professional Membership.

8. The posts of Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary will be held for two years with no barrier to re-election as a Council member or post-holder. A retiring Chair will be offered the non-voting role of Past-Chair for a further period of one-year with no barrier to re-election as a Council member.

9. The Council, consisting of the Officers, and at least three, but no more than ten Council Members, will manage the affairs of the Association. A representative from organisations and institutions deemed appropriate by the Council may be invited to attend in a non-voting capacity. Five members of the Council shall form a quorum. Council members shall fill any casual vacancies in office and any persons appointed shall retain that post until the next AGM. Council may elect co-opted members for Council, or any of its associated committees, as and when necessary. One Council Member will also fulfill the role of Webmaster.

10. New Council members will be elected annually at the AGM. Any person wishing to stand for election to Council must submit a written application to the Secretary along with support from two Professional members of the Association, a minimum of four weeks before the AGM. Any applications received after this time will not be accepted by the Secretary.

11. Members of the Council, with the exception of the Officers, will serve for a period of up to three years. At the end of a three-year term of office a Council member may stand for re-election at the AGM. In this circumstance the Council member must submit their written application for re-election a minimum of four weeks before the AGM. Failure to submit a written application within the specified time limit automatically disqualifies that person for re-election.

12. Election to the Council will only be made from fully paid-up Professional Members of the Association and those registered with the Secretary.

13. The Council may approve the appointment of sub-committees for purposes specified by the Council with or without power to add to their number. Unless power to act is given by the Council, the decisions of the sub-committees shall require the approval of the Council.

14. Council members should not miss three consecutive meetings including committees and sub-committees (if on the sub-committee). Any person who does miss three consecutive meetings, without notice to the Chair, will have their term of office terminated with immediate effect. In the case of a Council member finding this difficult to comply with, the Council member in question should inform the Secretary as soon as possible. Where a Council member is unable to fulfil their role over a prolonged period, they will be asked to discuss their position on the Council with the Chair.

15. Each member of the Association will be committed to uphold the professional duties and responsibilities expected of them and detailed in the UKIAFT Code of Conduct for Members. A breach of any of the professional duties and responsibilities

specified therein will result in automatic suspension of membership pending investigation by the Council.

16. At each AGM there will be a report of proceedings, a statement of accounts (duly audited where required) and the election of Officers and Council Members. Whenever possible, the AGM will coincide with the annual conference.

17. Only Professional Members will be eligible to vote and each Professional Member of the Association shall have one vote. Members who are unable to attend may appoint a proxy. A signed statement appointing a proxy must be forwarded to the Secretary no less than three weeks before the date of the AGM to which it applies, and it must be renewed for each and every subsequent meeting.

18. When required in writing by 20 members of the Association, the Secretary shall convene a special general meeting by notice that shall indicate the nature of business to be discussed. No other business shall be considered at that meeting unless as a direct consequence of the items to be discussed. Not less than 21 days notice shall be given of any special general meeting of the Association.

19. The Council shall agree the annual subscription of each member of the Association. This payment will be reviewed in relation to the Association's financial position each year. Payment is due on confirmation of acceptance of membership and on each succeeding January 1st. Any member joining after 30th June shall pay one half of the annual subscription for that year alone. Payment must be made in Pounds Sterling but other currencies may be accepted at the discretion of the Treasurer.

20. The membership of any member whose subscription is not renewed after one month upon receipt of the official reminder will be officially lapsed as a member of the Association and must re-apply through the standard application process. The Council retains the right to refuse re-registration.

21. Expulsion of any member of the Association shall be at the discretion of the Council, with right to appeal at the next members meeting at which a two-thirds majority by ballot of the membership present shall be required for reinstatement. The Council must provide full and clear reasons for expulsion of a member.

22. Membership of the Association and the designatory letters 'MAFT' or 'MUKIAFT' may not be used as a professional qualification, nor may any member make any such inference. However, it is permissible to cite membership of the association and attendance at meetings as evidence of a commitment to continuing professional development.

23. No part of this constitution shall be made, altered or rescinded except by the majority vote of the membership of the Association in a properly constituted general meeting. Proposals for amendments to the constitution must be notified in writing (by at least two members and including via electronic means) to the Secretary at least 3 weeks prior to the meeting or AGM. Notification of any such proposal will be given in the notice convening the meeting.

24. The Association shall not be dissolved except at a special general meeting called for that purpose. The motion for dissolution must be agreed by at least two-thirds of the members present and by at least half of the total membership.

25. In the event of dissolution, the funds and other properties of the Association, after payment of all proper debts and liabilities, shall not be distributed among the members of the Association, but shall be transferred to a charitable institution appointed by a majority vote of those present at the special general meeting.

26. Business meetings and the AGM are open to Members only.