

SINGAPORE OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION

CONSTITUTION

1. NAME

The name of the Association shall be The Singapore Optometric Association (hereinafter referred to as “the Association”).

2. PLACE OF BUSINESS

Its place of business shall at 1 Park Road #03-61, People's Park Complex, Singapore 059108

3. OBJECTS

The objects of the Association are:-

- (a) To join together in a body corporate all persons of good character engaged in the practice of the art and science of Optometry.
- (b) To maintain, promote and protect the visual welfare of the people of Singapore.
- (c) To support, uphold and protect the character and status and advance the interest of the profession of Optometry.
- (d) To foster the growth and diffusion of optometric knowledge generally and particularly to improve the practical and theoretical knowledge of persons engaged or about to become engaged in the profession of Optometry.
- (e) To promote, encourage and advance higher levels of education and training of optometrists, and to that end, to seek the establishment of a course for the training and education of Optometrists in a University in Singapore.
- (f) To represent generally the views and interests of the profession of Optometry and to establish its professional status and integrity by promoting just and honourable practice.
- (g) To assist in developing an informed public opinion on matters relating to optometric vision care.
- (h) To hold educational and professional meetings and conferences between members of the Association and between optometrists from neighbouring countries.
- (i) To promote friendly intercourse among members of the optometric and other health professions.
- (j) To in any way cooperate with, or affiliate with, any other national or international organisation of optometrists or optometric associations.

4. DEFINITION - Optometrist

For the purposes of this constitution and the objects of the Association, the practice of Optometry means consultation on vision problems, and includes the taking of the patients

case history, the examination of the eyes and related structures to determine the presence of vision problems, eye manifestations of disease and other abnormalities. The practice of Optometry also includes the fitting of ophthalmic prescriptions and the fabrication, dispensing and supply of optical visual aids.

5. MEMBERSHIP

- (a) (i) Membership of the Association shall be open to all persons engaged in the practice of Optometry, and who are of good character and repute, and those who possess a recognizable qualification in the practice of Optometry.
 - (ii) At such time, and in the event that, legislation is passed and comes into effect to regulate the educational or other qualifications required for the practice of Optometry, or for the use of the designation as an Optometrist, fresh membership to the Association shall thereafter only be on the basis of such qualifications as legislated.
 - (iii) Ordinary members shall have all rights and privileges of membership, including the right to attend meetings and participate in their proceedings, the right to vote or to hold office.
- (b) Once a period of six months has lapsed since the establishment of the Association, only persons of good character and repute either:-
- (i) With recognizable qualifications in the practice of Optometry, or providing evidence that they have completed or are undertaking a course of training and education in Singapore acceptable to or provided by the Education Committee of the Association, shall be eligible for membership.
 - (ii) Be in continuous practice for Two years and above. Will be admitted as associate members and will be considered as full members after fulfilling five years of continuous practice.
 - (iii) Be in continuous practice for less than two years. Will be admitted as associate members and after fulfilling five years of continuous practice, but must also satisfy the council, of his proficiency before being admitted as a full member.

6. There shall be three grades of membership - Ordinary Member, Associate Member and Honorary Member.

(a) Ordinary Member

Ordinary Members shall be:

- (i) Members are described in Clause 5(a).
- (ii) New members who provide evidence of having obtained a qualification, recognized by the Council.

- (iii) When applicable, new and existing members who provide evidence of such qualifications as legislated.

(b) Associate Member

- (i) Any person who is undertaking a course of training and education acceptable to or provided by the Education Committee of the Association.
- (ii) When applicable, any person who is undertaking a course of training and education to obtain such qualifications as legislated.
- (iii) Any ordinary member who, when applicable, does not possess the qualification referred to at clause 5 (ii) of this Constitution.
- (iv) Associate members shall have limited rights and privileges of membership including the right to attend meetings and participate in their proceedings, but not the right to vote or to hold office.

(c) Honorary Member

- (i) Any person of the Optometry profession, of the Medical profession, scientific worker and prominent lay citizens, who take a special interest in the furtherance of the objects of the Association and in the advancement of Optometry practice; and
- (ii) Who is recommended by the Managing Council and approved in an Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting to be admitted as an Honorary Member.
- (iii) Honorary Members may attend meetings and participate in their proceeding, but do not have the right to vote or hold office.

7. Every application for membership shall be made in writing, proposed and seconded by ordinary members, and shall contain evidence of recognizable qualifications, if any, and a description of experience in practice in Singapore, if any. Any person found to have made false applications will be barred from future membership.

8. All applications for Ordinary and Associate Membership shall be accompanied by the relevant membership fee.

9. The rights and privileges of each member shall be personal to himself; they shall not be transferable by his own action or by the operation of law and no member shall be entitled to exercise any of his rights and privileges of a member unless all moneys due by him to the Association have been paid.

10. FEES

- (a) Entrance Fee
 - (i) Ordinary Member ... \$100.00

- (ii) Associate Member ... \$100.00
 - (iii) Honorary Member ... Nil
 - (iv) Student Associate Member ... Nil
- (b) Subscription
- (i) Ordinary Member ... \$120.00 annually
 - (ii) Associate Member ... \$60.00 annually
 - (iii) Student Associate Member ... \$60.00 annually
 - (iv) Any member joining during the course of a year shall pay the full subscription for that year.
 - (iv) The rate of yearly subscription may only be changed by a general meeting of the members. Any special subscriptions for particular purposes may be raised from members with the consent of members at the general meeting.

11. CESSATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- (a) **By Resignation:** Any member may, at any time, by notice in writing to the Secretary, resign his membership and shall forthwith, or at a later date specified by the member in such notice cease to be a member, but if there is liability for subscription or other arrears, such liabilities shall remain until discharged. There shall be no refund or partial refund if subscription or other fees upon a member's resignation, subject to Council's power to grant such refund if the Council's opinion circumstances make such refund desirable.
- (b) **By Default:**
 - (i) **Subscription:** Any member whose subscription remains unpaid for three calendar months after due date shall automatically be deemed to have ceased to be a member by default. If however upon notice of cessation of membership being sent to the member at that date, he or she indicates a wish to continue membership and tenders at the same time a remittance to cover the current subscription and all arrears and any other outstanding dues, membership shall continue, subject to a levy of \$25.00. Provided always, that the Managing Council shall have the power to consider on a case by case basis and to waive all, or any part of, arrears and other outstanding dues, and at its discretion, reinstate such members as it sees fit.
 - (ii) **False Declaration:** Any member who acts as proposer or seconder to any membership application that has proven to contain false information, shall be defaulted for a minimum of one year of his membership rights and privileges at the discretion of the Council.

- (c) **By Withdrawal of Membership:** If, in the opinion of the Council, any member is guilty of such conduct which makes it undesirable that he or she shall continue to be a member of the Association, or if any circumstances arise which, in the opinion of the Council, make it undesirable that any member shall continue to be a member, then the Council, either at one of its regular meetings, when the matter shall be shown on the Agenda, or at special Council meeting convened for the purpose, may resolve that any such member shall cease forthwith to be a member of the Association.

Always provided that:

- (i) Not Less than 2/3 of the members of the Association present at the Extraordinary General Meeting vote in favour of the resolution, and
 - (ii) Not Less than 21 days before the meeting of the Extraordinary General Meeting of the Association, notice in writing has been given to the members specifying the conduct or circumstances alleged, and
 - (iii) An opportunity has been given to the member to attend the said Extraordinary General Meeting to be heard.
- (d) Any member whose membership has been withdrawn as the result of the foregoing proceedings shall not be entitled to attend, in any capacity, any further meetings of the Association, unless subsequently reinstated.

12. REINSTATEMENT OF MEMBER

- (a) Any member who has given proper notice of resignation, and has resigned, may upon written application be reinstated at the discretion of the Council.
- (b) Any person whose membership has been withdrawn may be reinstated only after a period of one year following such withdrawal, and must apply for membership in the ordinary way. Such application shall be placed before an Extraordinary Meeting for the decision on the reinstatement and not less than 2/3 of the members of the Association present at the Extraordinary Meeting must vote in favour of the reinstatement to membership of the Association and not otherwise.

13. MANAGEMENT, GENERAL MEETINGS

The management of the Association is vested in a general meeting of the members presided over by the President or in his absence, the Vice-President. At least one quarter of the total ordinary membership of the Association must be present at a general meeting for its proceedings to be valid.

14. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- (a) The Annual General Meeting shall be held in the month of July every year.
- (b) Notice of the meeting and the Agenda together with the Annual Report and audited Statement of Account shall be circulated to all members at least two weeks before the date of the Annual General Meeting.
- (c) The Agenda shall include:

- (i) Election of Office Bearers.
- (ii) Annual Report.
- (iii) Statement of Account.
- (iv) Any resolutions submitted by members, notice of which has been given to the Secretary at least one week before the date of the Annual General Meeting.

15. EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be convened by the Council or at the written request of at least 2/3 of the ordinary members. Two weeks' notice of the meeting must be given.

16. QUORUM

In the event of there being no quorum, the meeting shall be adjourned to the same day of the following week at a place and time to be appointed, and should the number present be insufficient to form a quorum, those present should be considered a quorum, but they shall have no power to alter, amend or make additions to any of the existing rules.

17. VOTING

Every Ordinary member personally present is entitled to vote at General Meetings, and in a case of an equality of votes, the Chairman shall have a casting vote in addition to the vote to which he is entitled as an Ordinary Member. Every question submitted to the meeting shall be ordinary decided by a show of hands.

18. UNFINANCIAL MEMBERS

No member shall have a right to be present or to vote personally at any General Meeting or be reckoned in a quorum whilst any subscription due and payable by him shall remain unpaid.

COUNCIL

19. The affairs of the Association shall be governed by a Council which shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Honorary Secretary and Treasurer, who together shall form the Executive Council, in addition to four (4) members who shall be known as Councillors.

20. The Executive Committee shall have power to consider and act upon matters of urgency or of routine, but all of their considerations and actions must be ratified by the full Council at the first possible opportunity.

21. For a period of five years following the establishment of the Association, three members of the Executive Committee and at least three other Councillors must be members who possess recognizable qualifications. In the event that insufficient members who possess recognizable qualifications are available for election, or decline nomination for office, then this provision shall lapse, and any Ordinary Member who would otherwise have been ineligible may be elected in their stead.

22. At the fifth Annual General Meeting held after establishment of the Association,

Clause 21 shall lapse, and all Ordinary Members shall be eligible for election to an office on the Executive Committee or to Councillor.

23. All members of the Council shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. Names for the above offices shall be proposed and seconded at the Annual General Meeting and election will follow on a simple majority vote of the members. All officers except the Honorary Treasurer may be re-elected year after year.

24. The Council may meet for the despatch of business, adjourn and otherwise regulate their meetings as the members thereof think fit.

25. The President of the Association shall be Chairman of all meetings of the Executive Council at which he is present, and in the event of his absence, the Vice-President will chair that meeting.

26. President or in his absence the Vice-President or in case of refusal by such officer by any other three members of the Council and for these meetings a notice by way of a telephone message, facsimile transmission or electronic mail shall be considered due notice of the special Meeting.

27. The procedure at Council Meetings shall be similar to that laid down in this Constitution for the conduct of General Meetings.

28. The Council may act notwithstanding any vacancy in their body and any business so transacted shall be valid and binding upon Members of the Association.

29. QUORUM OF COUNCIL

Two members of the Executive Council and three members of the Council shall form a quorum of the Council.

30. The office of a member of the Council shall be ipso facto vacated:-

- (a) If for any reason he ceases to be a member of the Association.
- (b) If in the opinion of the Council he becomes from any cause incapable of attending to his duties.
- (c) If he fails to attend three successive Meetings of the Council without reasonable excuse.
- (d) If he commits any act in breach of this Constitution or any By-Laws to it.

POWERS OF THE COUNCIL

31. The Management of the affairs and undertakings of the Association shall be vested in the Council who may in addition to the particular powers conferred herein upon them, exercise all such powers of the Association and do all such acts and things as may be exercised or done by the Association and are not by the regulations for the time being of the Association expressly required to be exercised or done by the Association in general meeting

subject nevertheless to the regulations of the Association for the time being but no new regulations of the Association shall invalidate any prior act of the Council which would have been valid if such regulation had not been made.

32. Without prejudice to the general powers conferred by the preceding Article and the other powers conferred by these present, it is hereby expressly declared that the Council shall have the following powers, that is to say :-

- (a) To form such Committees in addition to those prescribed to be formed by this Constitution for the achievement of any or all of the Objects for which the Association exists.
- (b) To appoint and dismiss any officers and servants.
- (c) To give receipts and to decide who is to sign cheques and securities.

33. DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY

The Secretary shall be responsible for the supervision and control of all persons employed by the Association. The Secretary shall be responsible for the management of the Association and to keep the register of all members. The Secretary shall also keep the Register of the Minutes of the proceedings of the Association in general meetings and meetings of the Council and any Committee and such other records as the Council may from time to time require. The Secretary shall prepare the Annual Report.

34. DUTIES OF THE TREASURER

The Treasurer shall collect all subscriptions and moneys. He is authorised to expend up to \$50/= per month for petty expenses on behalf of the Association. He will not keep more than \$100/= in the form of cash and money. In excess of this will be deposited in a bank to be named by the Council. His report to the Annual General Meeting shall include prepared accounts and a balance sheet of all receipts and expenditures of the Association and all assets and liabilities. The Accounts and balance sheet shall have been duly audited.

35. Advisor

(i) Association may from time to time appoint, for terms of 1 year at a time, an Advisor to the Association.

(ii) The Advisor shall be a person who supports the profession of optometry and its role as primary eye care practitioners, and whom is prominent in his/her present or past profession whether in private or public office.

(iii) The Advisor shall be appointed on the recommendation of the Council subject to the approval of the members at a general meeting.

(iv) The role of the Advisor shall be to, where request by the Council, provide advice, guidance and counsel;

a) as to the general direction, present and future policy of the association; and

b) on legislation and government matters

v) The Advisor shall not be required to attend meetings of the council or of the members

except at the invitation of the Managing Council.

vi) The Advisor shall have no voting rights.

36. AUDITORS

Two persons not members of the Council will be elected as Honorary Auditors at each Annual General Meeting and will hold office for one year only and may not be re-elected. They will be required to audit each year's account and prepare a report upon them to the Annual General Meeting. They may be required by the President to audit the Association's accounts for any period within their tenure of office at any date and make a report to the Council.

37. TRUSTEES

Trustees shall be Singapore Citizens. If the Association at any time acquires any immovable property, such property shall be vested in Trustees subject to a declaration of trust. Any trustee may at time resign his trusteeship. If a trustee dies or becomes a lunatic or of unsound mind or moves permanently or is absent from the Republic of Singapore for a period of one year, he shall be deemed to have resigned his trusteeship. If a trustee is guilty of misconduct of such a kind as to render it undesirable that he continue as a trustee, a General Meeting may remove him from his trusteeship. Vacancies in the trusteeship may be filled at a General Meeting, but the number shall not be greater than five or less than two. Notice of any proposal to remove a trustee from his trusteeship or to appoint a new trustee to fill a vacancy must be given by affixing in the premises of the Association, a document containing such proposal at least two weeks before the meeting at which the proposal is to be discussed. The result of such meeting shall then be notified to the Registrar of Societies.

38. BY-LAWS

The Council shall also have the power from time to time to make and alter and amend and repeal all such By-Laws as they may deem necessary for the proper conduct and management of the Association and the regulation of its affairs.

EDUCATION

39. An Education Committee shall be established for the purpose of developing a course of education and training in Optometry in Singapore, and advancing the clinical standards of the members of the Association.

40. The Education Committee shall comprise up to 8 persons, at least 6 of whom must be Ordinary Members of the Association.

41. The Education Committee shall be responsible for establishing a course in Optometry detailing a curriculum of study, providing lecturers and clinical teaching of an acceptable level and conducting examination.

42. The Education Committee shall have the responsibility of fostering the establishment of a course in Optometry at an approved educational institution.

43. The Education Committee shall from time to time consider and review all aspects of the academic standards they have set for membership to the Association, and the Optometry course that has been established.

44. Until such time as an Ethics Committee has been established, it shall be the responsibility

of the Education Committee to investigate any report of complaint received by the Council alleging that a member has been guilty of any unprofessional or unethical conduct or other misconduct.

45. INDEMNITY

Every member of the Council or other officer or person employed by the Association as auditor shall be indemnified out of the funds of the Association against all liability incurred by him in defending any proceedings whether civil or criminal in which judgement is given in his favour or in which he is acquitted.

46. CERTIFICATION

Every Ordinary Member of the Association shall be issued with a Membership Certificate and shall then be entitled to use the following phrase in his or her business cards, letter head etc., "Member of the Singapore Optometric Association" (not in suffix form). This certificate is the property of the Association and any defaultist under Clause 11 shall consider his or her certificate forfeited.

47. ADVERTISING

All advertising in the press and other media of advertisement must consist only of the member's name, practice address and telephone numbers and can include "Member of the Singapore Optometric Association". Only suffixes approved by the Council may be used.

48. CANVASSING

The council condemns canvassing in any form, either direct or indirect.

49. RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS

All members should exercise the greatest care in their contacts with the press and should adopt truly professional attitude in relation to interview or the supply of information that could lead to publicity for a practice or business. When members write articles in the general press, they should be described either by name without references to their qualification as opticians, or some other anonymous description of their professional qualifications. A communication on professional matters by the President or Secretary could be an exception to this ruling.

50. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

This Constitution may altered added to or removed and new Articles made to the exclusion of or in addition to all or any of the Articles of the Association by means of special resolutions passed by a two-thirds majority of those entitled to vote at a General Meeting specially convened to consider those resolutions. No alterations or additions to the Constitution shall come into force without prior sanction of the Registrar of Societies.

51. VISITORS AND GUESTS

Residents in Singapore may be admitted into the premises of the Association but they shall neither be admitted to the privileges of the Association, nor shall they be admitted into the premises more than six times in one year. These visits are to be confined to not more than once in 14 days.

A visitors book shall be kept, in which shall be entered the names of all visitors and guests, together with signatures of the members nominating them and dates of their visits. No person shall be a visitor or guest till his name had been entered in this book.

52. PROHIBITIONS

- (a) Gambling of any kind, excluding the promotion or conduct of a private lottery which has been permitted under the private lotteries Act Cap 250, is forbidden on the Association's premises. The introduction of materials for gambling or drug-taking and of bad characters into the premises is prohibited.
- (b) The Funds of the Association shall not be used to pay the fines of members who have been convicted in Court.
- (c) The society shall not attempt to restrict or in any other manner interfere with trade or prices or engage in any Trade Union activity as defined in any written law relating to trade unions for the time being in force in Singapore.
- (d) The Society shall not hold any lottery, whether confined to members or not, in the name of the Association or its office-bearers, Council or members.
- (e) The Association shall not indulge in any political activity or allow its funds and/ or premises to be used for political purposes.
- (f) The Association shall not raise funds from the public for whatever purposes without the prior approval in writing of the Head, Licensing Division, Singapore Police Force and other relevant authorities.
- (g) The Association shall not attempt to restrict or interfere with trade or make directly or indirectly any recommendation to, any arrangement with its members which has the purpose or is likely to have the effect of fixing or controlling the price or any discount, allowance or rebate relating to any goods or service which adversely affect consumer interests.

53. DISSOLUTION

- (a) The Association shall not be dissolved, except with the consent of not less than 3/5 of the members of the Association for the time being resident in Singapore expressed, either in person or by proxy at a General Meeting convened for that purposes.
- (b) In the event of the Association being dissolved as provided above, all debts and liabilities legally incurred on behalf of the Association shall be fully discharged, and the remaining funds will be divided equally amongst the members.
- (c) A Certificate of dissolution shall be given within 7 days of the dissolution to the Registrar of Societies.