

# The American Society of Questioned Document Examiners, Inc.

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## **BYLAWS**

The Society, by a Special Resolution at its Annual General Meeting held in Ottawa, Canada, on the 21st day of September, 1993, did enact new Bylaws, thereby repealing its existing Bylaws and enacting, effective as of that date, the following Bylaws.

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## ARTICLE I GENERAL

- I.1 This organization shall be known as “**The American Society of Questioned Document Examiners, Inc.**,” hereinafter referred to as the “Society.”
- I.2.1 The objectives and purposes of the Society and of its Members are:
- a) to foster education,
  - b) to sponsor scientific research,
  - c) to establish standards,
  - d) to exchange experiences, and
  - e) to provide instruction in the field of questioned document examination, and to promote justice in matters that involve questions about documents.
- I.2.2 To accomplish these objectives, the Society and its Members subscribe to the following pursuits:
- a) to establish and maintain high professional standards in ethics, in education, in training, and in work performance;
  - b) to engage in and to encourage scientific research and development in document examination and related matters, and to disseminate the results by presentations at Annual General Meetings and by publication;
  - c) to record, preserve and correlate significant experience in solving questioned document problems;
  - d) to improve knowledge and understanding of the work of the document examiner by the public, the bar, the judiciary, and among the forensic sciences; and
  - e) to discover prospective document examiners of good character and potential for development, and to assist in their training.
- I.3 In these Bylaws:
- a) “General Meeting” means an Annual General Meeting or a Special Meeting of the Society.

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- b) "Voting Member" means an individual Regular Member or Life Member entitled to vote at a General Meeting, whose voting privileges have not been suspended, but does not include an Associate Member, Corresponding Member, Life Corresponding Member, Provisional Member, Affiliate Member, or Honorary Member.
- c) "Member" includes a Regular Member, Associate Member, Provisional Member, Corresponding Member, Life Member, Life Corresponding Member, Honorary Member, and Affiliate Member.
- d) "Ordinary Resolution" means a resolution that has been approved by a majority of the votes cast by Voting Members at a General Meeting.
- e) "Practicing Document Examiner" means one who is actively engaged in the forensic examination of documents for the purposes of:
  - i) establishing their physical origin or authorship;
  - ii) determining the sequence of events in their physical history;
  - iii) confirming their validity;
  - iv) revealing or deciphering their texts;
  - v) and testifying thereto as an Expert Witness.
- f) "Society" means The American Society of Questioned Document Examiners, Inc.
- g) "Special Resolution" means a resolution that has been approved by 2/3 of the votes cast by Voting Members at a General Meeting."
- h) "Associate" means one who is either actively engaged in the forensic examination of documents as described in Paragraph 1.3 (e), which may be limited in scope to those of a Forensic Document Examiner as defined by the ASTM E2388 training standard, or is actively engaged in work closely related to the field. The Associate Membership category is generally divided into two categories: (a) those who conduct handwriting examinations to primarily determine authorship and (b) those who conduct solely non-handwriting examinations.
- i) The singular includes the plural and the plural includes the singular.
- j) Notification by email will be considered the same as notification in writing or correspondence throughout these Bylaws.

I.4 The Society shall have an official logo. Current members of the Society are entitled to use the logo on letterhead and advertising materials.

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## ARTICLE II MEMBERSHIP

- II.1 The Society shall consist of eight classes of membership:
- a) Regular Members
  - b) Associate Members
  - c) Provisional Members
  - d) Corresponding Members
  - e) Life Members
  - f) Life Corresponding Members
  - g) Affiliate Members
  - h) Honorary Members
- II.2 Only Regular Members and Life Members are entitled to hold office in the Society and to vote at General Meetings; but other classes of Members shall be entitled to attend General Meetings and to participate therein.
- II.3.1 Provisional membership and Corresponding Membership in the Society shall be open to all persons who are Practicing Document Examiners and Associates who meet the following minimum requirements:
- a) to possess at least an earned baccalaureate degree from an accredited academic institution or from an institution or higher education program whose degrees would be considered the equivalent of an earned baccalaureate degree;
  - b) to have a minimum two years training or apprenticeship under the supervision of recognized Practicing Document Examiner or Associate; and,
  - c) to have two years post-training or post-apprenticeship experience as a Practicing Document Examiner or Associate, or, in the absence of b) or c);
  - d) to have training or qualifications that have been reviewed and received the unanimous endorsement of the Membership and Credentials Committee; and, in any case;

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- e) to have submitted or presented at least one technical paper, acceptable to the Membership and Credentials Committee at an Annual General Meeting of the Society within the previous three years. This technical paper must reflect original work conducted by the applicant and must be in a format suitable for publication in the ***Journal of the American Society of Questioned Document Examiners***;
- f) The Society recognizes the current version of the SWGDOC Training Standard as containing the basic requirements for its Provisional and Corresponding Members when considering their membership application.
- g) Corresponding Membership applicants shall have attended at least one ASQDE AGM, within three years prior to being voted on by the Membership for approval of their request to become a Corresponding Member.

II.3.2 Provisional Members will be dual-tracked as Practicing Document Examiners and Associates.

II.3.3 An applicant for Corresponding Membership must be a Practicing Document Examiner or Associate residing in a country other than the United States of America and Canada.

II.4 Applications for Affiliate Membership in the Society may be considered for a person who:

- a) holds a baccalaureate and/or post-graduate degree from a recognized institute of higher learning;
- b) is presently in, or has completed, a two-year training or apprenticeship program under the supervision of a recognized Practicing Document Examiner or Associate; and/or
- c) is presently in the process of gaining two years post-training or post-apprenticeship experience as a Practicing Document Examiner or Associate.

At such time when two years of post-training apprenticeship is complete, that person shall apply for Provisional Member status.

II.5 Application for membership shall be made on forms furnished by the Society, and:

- a) Shall be endorsed by the candidate's primary trainer and two voting Members of the Society, or

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- b) The candidate's primary trainer and two non-members of the Society who are acceptable to the Membership and Credentials Committee and to the Executive Committee as persons qualified to attest to the competence, qualifications, and ethical character of the applicant;
- c) The requirement for a primary trainer endorsement may be waived if the primary trainer has died or is otherwise incapacitated;
- d) The application and testing for membership shall be kept confidential;
- e) Upon successful completion of the testing, the applicants will be voted on at the General Meeting for membership.

**II.6** An applicant meeting the qualifications outlined (i) in **Article II.3.1**, or (ii) in **Article II.3.1** and **Article II.3.2**, or (iii) in **Article II.4**, as shall be appropriate and recommended by the Membership and Credentials Committee, may be elected a Provisional, Corresponding, or Affiliate Member by Special Resolution.

**II.7.1** A Practicing Document Examiner who has been a Provisional Member for a minimum of two years; who has successfully passed written, practical, and oral examinations conducted by the Evaluation and Examinations Committee; and who has been recommended by that Committee, may be elected a Regular Member by Special Resolution. An Associate who has been a Provisional Member for a minimum of one year; who has met attendance and participation requirements; and who has been recommended by the Membership and Credentials Committee, may be elected an Associate Member by Special Resolution.

**II.7.2** A Provisional Member who has successfully passed written and practical examinations comparable in scope and degree of difficulty to those administered by the Evaluation and Examinations Committee, that were administered by the American Board of Forensic Document Examiners (ABFDE), affirmation of which is the responsibility of the candidate to procure and provide, may, in lieu of further written and practical examinations, submit a technical research report review article or project for consideration. The report or article must be:

- a) the candidate's own written generation;
- b) prepared in accordance with the guidelines prescribed by the Evaluation and Examinations Committee;
- c) presented at a scientific session of a Society Annual General Meeting while a Provisional Member; and
- d) an acceptable alternative to written and practical examinations, as decided by the Evaluation and Examinations Committee.

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- II.7.3 A Provisional Member whose technical research report, review article or project has been considered and approved by the Evaluation and Examinations Committee, who has successfully passed that Committee's oral examination, may be elected a Regular Member by Special Resolution.
- II.8 The membership of a Provisional Member who has not been elected a Regular Member within three years, for which there is no reasonable explanation nor applicable extenuating circumstances, shall have their membership terminated by the Executive Committee, but such termination will not become effective until ratified by Ordinary Resolution at the next General Meeting.
- II.9 A person who has been a Regular Member for at least 20 years and is over 65 years of age, or a person who has been a Regular Member for at least 30 years may be elected a Life Member by Special Resolution. A person who has been a Corresponding Member for at least 20 years and is over 65 years of age, or a person who has been a Corresponding Member for at least 30 years may be elected a Life Corresponding Member by Special Resolution. The members voting may choose to waive the age requirement of this by-law, should they deem the circumstances (e.g., serious illness) make a waiver appropriate.
- II.10 A person, other than a Member, who has made a significant contribution to the profession of document examination may be elected an Honorary Member of the Society by Special Resolution.
- II.11.1 Regular Members, Associate Members, Provisional Members, and Affiliate Members are required to attend a General Meeting of the Society at least once every three years. Corresponding members are required to attend a General Meeting of the Society at least once every six years, in addition to complying with the participation requirement of II.11.2.
- Attendance at the entire annual general meeting is expected. However, occasional personal or work circumstances may prevent a member from doing so. To receive attendance credit, members must be present for a minimum of six half-days at the annual conference. Credit is earned when the member is present at normal conference activities including technical sessions, workshops and the business meeting. Attendance at workshops sponsored by other organizations, receptions, banquet, etc., are not eligible for credit.

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- II.11.2 Regular Members, Associate Members, Provisional Members, Affiliate Members, and Corresponding Members are required to contribute to the program of an Annual General Meeting at least once every three years by:
- a) the submission or presentation of an acceptable paper, workshop, or poster; or
  - b) being an active member of a panel during a scientific session; or
  - c) making contributions to the Annual General Meeting deemed equivalent by the Executive Committee; or
  - d) to give meeting participation credit for non-E&E Committee ASQDE Regular and Life Members who validate new tests submitted for use in E&E practical problem testing of new member applicants.
  - e) so as to continue to give participation credit as an option to Regular and Life Members submitting new tests, and also add the option of an AGM registration waiver for the Regular and Life Member submitting a new test.
- II.11.3 Members may be excused from the provisions of **Articles II.11.1** and/or **II.11.2** by the Executive Committee under extenuating circumstances, if such request is made in writing to the President.
- II.12.1 The amount of the annual dues of the Society shall be determined from time to time by Special Resolution and shall be payable on or before January 1st of each year by all Members, with the exception of nonpracticing Life Members, nonpracticing Life Corresponding Members, and Honorary Members, who shall not be required to pay dues.
- II.12.2 Dues payable by Provisional and Corresponding Members for the year of their election shall be prorated on the basis of the number of months of the calendar year following election.
- II.12.3 A Member who is in default of payment of dues for more than three months will be assessed a \$50.00 late fee. The Member shall be notified in writing and advised of the late fee and of the provisions of Article II.12.4 by the Treasurer. Such notice shall be addressed to the defaulting Member's last address, as shown on the membership records.
- II.12.4 A Member who is in default of such payment (including late fee) and who fails to pay the arrears within 60 days of the mailing of the above notice, shall have his/her membership terminated by the Executive Committee, but such termination will not become effective until ratified by Ordinary Resolution at the next General Meeting.

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- II.13.1 Membership in the Society shall be terminated:
- a) upon resignation;
  - b) upon expulsion for cause, as described in **Article II.13.3**;
  - c) upon failure to pay annual dues, as described in **Article II.12.4**;
  - d) in accordance with **Article II.8**.
- II.13.2 All the rights, claims, and privileges of a Member cease to exist on the date of termination, as provided in **Article II.13.1**, or death.
- II.13.3 Membership in the Society is subject to suspension or termination for any cause deemed justifiable by the Executive Committee, including the recommendation of the Ethics Committee or the provisions of **Article II.11.1** and **Article II.11.2**; but such suspension or termination will not become effective until ratified by Ordinary Resolution at the next General Meeting.
- II.13.4 Prior to termination, as described in **Article II.13.3**, the Member in question shall be notified at least 30 days in advance of the time and place of the General Meeting at which the question of termination is to be considered.
- II.13.5 The Member being considered for termination of his/her membership, as provided in **Article II.13.3**, is entitled to a fair hearing at the General Meeting at which termination is to be considered, if such request is made in writing to the President.
- II.13.6 A person whose membership has been terminated pursuant to **Article II.13.1(a), (c),** or **(d)** may apply for reinstatement in writing to the President and, depending on circumstances, may be elected a Member in his/her previous class by Special Resolution at an Annual General Meeting.

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## ARTICLE III OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- III.1 The affairs and activities of the Society shall be managed by an Executive Committee comprised of the Officers of the Society, which shall be:
- a) the President,
  - b) the Vice President,
  - c) the Secretary,
  - d) the Treasurer,
  - e) a minimum of two Directors.
- who shall be elected to office by Ordinary Resolution at a General Meeting to serve, commencing 60 days following their election, for a period of two years or until their successors have been elected, provided that no office shall be filled by the same person for a period in excess of four years.
- III.2 When a vacancy occurs in the office of President, the Vice President shall immediately succeed to the office of President to serve for the balance of the term, and shall there upon be eligible for re-election to that office.
- III.3 When a vacancy occurs in the office of Vice President, the office will be filled by the immediate Past President, who will serve in that capacity for the balance of the term.
- III.4 When a vacancy occurs in either of the offices of Secretary or Treasurer, the office will be filled by one of the Directors, as the Executive Committee may decide.
- III.5 When a vacancy occurs in the office of Director, the Executive Committee may appoint a Voting Member to serve in that capacity until a member can be nominated in accordance with Article IV.10(g) and elected in accordance with Article III.1. A Director appointed under the provisions of this Article shall have all the rights and privileges of an elected Director and will serve until his or her successor takes office.
- III.6.1 The President, or in his absence the Vice President, shall:
- a) preside at all General Meetings
  - b) be the chief spokesman for the Society and shall be responsible for all public statements made on behalf of the Society;
  - c) ex-officio, a member of any Committee of the Society, with the exception of the Nominating Committee;

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- d) appoint the chairpersons of the Site Committee and the Program Committee for the Annual General Meetings;
- e) call and preside over at least two meetings of the Executive Committee in each calendar year at such times and places as he/she may decide; and when necessary, appoint the chairpersons and other members of Standing and Ad Hoc Committees.

## III.6.2 The Secretary shall:

- a) maintain custody of all general correspondence and records of the Society, excepting those records relating exclusively to finance, and shall retain them for a period of two years, after which they may be destroyed, unless otherwise directed by these Bylaws, or by Executive Committee decision;
- b) prepare and retain, for a period of one year, minutes of the meetings of the Society and of the Executive Committee, together with reports filed by committees and presented at either meetings, after which they shall be retained in the Society Library;
- c) notify all Members of all General Meetings at least 90 days in advance;
- d) notify all Members of all resolutions, votes, or other transactions of the Society affecting their membership or dues;
- e) maintain, indefinitely, a continuing register of all members;
- f) perform such other duties as may be required by the Executive Committee.

## III.6.3 The Treasurer shall:

- a) collect and keep on deposit the funds and securities of the Society;
- b) maintain a full, clear and correct record of all financial transactions of the Society and support all disbursements with proper vouchers or documentation, for a period of five years unless otherwise required by law, after which, unless they respect an on-going financial commitment, the records may be destroyed. Records of ongoing commitments shall be retained for the duration of the obligation plus two years.
- c) ensure that the funds of the Society are disbursed as directed by the Executive Committee or by resolution of a General Meeting;
- d) notify Members in default of payment of dues pursuant to **Article II.12.2** and advise the Executive Committee of the names of each person whose membership has been terminated thereunder;

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- e) prepare a financial statement once yearly that shall be submitted to the Executive Committee and to Voting Members at least 30 days in advance of the Annual General Meeting;
- f) perform such other duties as may be required by the Executive Committee.

III.6.4 Directors shall perform such duties as may be required by the Executive Committee.

III.7 Every Officer shall be indemnified and saved harmless out of the funds of the Society against liability, costs, charges and expenses sustained or incurred in relation to that person's performance as an Officer of the Society, in accordance with these Bylaws, except as to any act of negligence or personal misconduct in the judgment of the majority of the Voting Members or of a court.

III.8.1 An Officer of the Society may resign, receive a leave of absence, or be suspended for cause from the Executive Committee upon approval, by majority vote, of the Executive Committee. Upon approval of any of these actions, a vacancy will have occurred and the provisions of Articles III.2 through III.4 will apply as appropriate.

III.8.2 Upon approval, a resignation from the Executive Committee is irrevocable.

III.8.3 An Officer requesting a leave of absence or suspended will be removed from all duties associated with that office and the Executive Committee and will return all properties of the Society within 30 days. An officer on leave of absence or under suspension may resume the duties of their office upon approval, by majority vote, of the Executive Committee.

III.8.4 The President will notify the Voting Members within 30 days of the resignation, leave of absence, or suspension of the officer, and will provide a full report to the Voting Members at the next Annual General Meeting.

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## ARTICLE IV

### COMMITTEES

- IV.1** The Society may, by Special Resolution, constitute a Standing Committee to act in any capacity for the Society. Without restricting the generality of the foregoing, there shall be the following Standing Committees:
- a) the Ethics Committee;
  - b) the Evaluation and Examination Committee;
  - c) the Finance Committee;
  - d) the Journal Committee;
  - e) the Resource Center Committee;
  - f) the Membership and Credentials Committee;
  - g) the Nominating Committee;
  - h) the Program Committee;
  - i) the Site Committee;
  - j) the Strategic Planning Committee.
- IV.2** With the exception of the Ethics Committee, whose composition is provided for in **Article IV.5**; the Finance Committee, whose composition is provided for in **Article IV.6**; the Nominating Committee, whose composition is provided for in **Article IV.7**; the Program and Site Committees, whose composition is provided for in **Article IV.8**, and the Strategic Planning Committee, whose composition is provided for in **Article IV.9**, each Standing Committee shall have a Chairperson, who is a Voting Member, and any number of additional members, as appointed by the President.
- IV.3** The chairperson of a Standing Committee shall attend Executive Committee Meetings as requested by the President and shall report on the activities of his/her Committee at the Annual General Meeting.
- IV.4** With the exception of the Program Committee and the Site Committee, the term of office of all members of Standing Committees shall coincide with the term of office of the President; and each shall be eligible for reappointment. The term of office for members of the Program Committee and Site Committee shall expire immediately following the Annual General Meeting to which the committee is assigned.
- IV.5** The Ethics Committee shall consist of the President as Chairperson, the Vice President, the Secretary, and the two most recent Past Presidents able and willing to serve.
- IV.6** The Finance Committee shall consist of the Treasurer, as Chairperson, a Director, and a Past President able and willing to serve.

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- IV.7 The Nominating Committee shall consist of the Immediate Past President as Chairperson and, in addition, the two most recent Past Presidents able and willing to serve.
- IV.8 The Program and Site Committees shall consist of a Member as Chairperson, and any number of additional Members appointed by the President.
- IV.9 The Strategic Planning Committee shall consist of the Vice President as Chairperson and any number of additional Members appointed by the President.
- IV.10 The following are the duties of the Standing Committees:
- a) The Ethics Committee shall review and consider any complaints, allegations, or charges received in writing that a Member has misused the name of the Society or has violated the tenets of its Code of Ethics. The Committee may orally reprimand a member, or reprimand a member in writing, provided such action is a consequence of a Resolution supported by at least four members of the Committee, and provided further that such action may be appealed to the membership at large at a General Meeting. The Committee may also recommend suspension or termination of membership to the Executive Committee, in which case the provisions of Article II.13.3 apply.
  - b) The Evaluation and Examination Committee shall prepare and conduct a written and practical examination of each Provisional member, or if appropriate and in accordance with section II.7.2, shall assign, monitor and evaluate a research project to be conducted and completed by the Provisional Member, and in either case shall conduct an oral examination, and report on the results and on their eligibility for election as a Regular Member at the second or third Annual General Meeting following their election as Provisional Member. The process will be confidential until the applicant has successfully passed and is brought up in front of the membership for promotion to Regular Member.
  - c) The Finance Committee shall advise and make recommendations to the Executive Committee on matters pertaining to financial policy.
  - d) The Journal Committee shall peer review original work presented at an annual meeting or submitted directly to the Journal Editor that may be considered for possible publication in the ***Journal of the American Society of Questioned Document Examiners.***

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- e) The Resource Center Committee shall be responsible for maintaining the Society's library, reference collections, and historical documents, whether hard copy or digital format, in good order. The Committee will devise and maintain a plan for lending or distributing of library materials to Society members or other authorized individuals. The Committee shall be responsible for the acquisition of new holdings and the disposal of unnecessary items. The Committee shall advise the Executive Committee on any funding necessary to perform their duties. The Committee shall ensure that the Society does not violate copyright laws during the reproduction or distribution of library materials.
- f) The Membership and Credentials Committee shall review and consider all applications for membership to ascertain that the candidates possess the minimum qualifications required by **Article II.3** and/or **Article II.4** and to report at the next Annual General Meeting on their eligibility for election as Provisional, Corresponding, or Affiliate Members. Voting Members shall be advised of the names of the applicants at least 30 days in advance of their being proposed for election.
- g) The Nominating Committee shall nominate at least one Voting Member for each of the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and two Directors, constituting the Executive Committee. They shall ensure that each Voting Member is advised of the proposed nominations at least 10 days in advance of the General Meeting at which elections are to be held. Other nominations may be made by any Voting Member at that General Meeting.
- h) The Program Committee for each Annual General Meeting shall be responsible for the solicitation of papers, the organization of workshops, the invitation of special speakers, and the arrangement of their presentations in conjunction with the business meeting and other activities of The Society at the Annual General Meeting. The Program Committee will also be responsible for the distribution of the program and proceedings of the General Meeting in a manner and format approved by the Executive Committee.
- i) The Site Committee for each Annual General Meeting shall be responsible for arranging the accommodations, equipment, meeting rooms, social activities, and other local requirements for the Annual General Meeting.
- j) The Strategic Planning Committee shall inform the Executive Committee of potential problems, make recommendations for possible responses, complete special projects assigned by the Executive Committee, and report to the Executive Committee on a regular basis.

**IV.11** The Society may, by the Executive Committee, constitute an Ad Hoc Committee to act in any capacity for the Society, other than that of a Standing Committee, for such period of time as is necessary to carry out its function. The Chairperson of an Ad Hoc Committee shall be appointed by the President.

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## ARTICLE V

### MEETINGS

- V.1.1 The Annual General Meeting of the Society shall be held at such time and place as may be determined by the Executive Committee or by Ordinary Resolution at a preceding General Meeting, but not later than 18 months after the last preceding Annual General Meeting. The Annual General Meeting may be accompanied by Scientific Sessions at which technical presentations may be made or technical matters discussed.
- V.1.2 Admission of non-members to the Scientific Sessions accompanying an Annual General Meeting shall be by invitation of the Secretary only, extended at the request of a Voting Member or a Corresponding Member of the Society. Such invitations shall be subject to the approval of the Executive Committee.
- V.1.3 Previously invited non-members who are practicing document examiners or practice a related specialty will be eligible to receive a guest invitation to an upcoming AGM provided they have been duly notified in writing of the participation requirements of these Bylaws and have:
- a) made a technical presentation, poster, or other contribution deemed satisfactory by the Executive Committee, to at least one of the last three ASQDE meetings he or she attended as an invited guest; OR
  - b) submitted an abstract for a poster or presentation (and subsequent paper, as appropriate) by the designated deadlines as a condition of receiving an invitation to the fourth meeting when no prior technical contribution has been made.
- V.1.4 Former members of the ASQDE are eligible for guest invitations in accordance with sections V.1.2 and V.1.3. The Executive Committee may consider the circumstances of the former member's resignation or expulsion when determining whether a guest invitation should be issued. The former member's participation requirement is determined by their status at the time their membership was terminated. For example, if the member did not make a presentation the last two years of their membership, they will be required to do so upon their first attendance as a guest.
- V.2 The business of the Annual General Meeting shall include:
- a) the adoption of the minutes of the last preceding Annual General Meeting and of any subsequent Special General Meetings;
  - b) the reception of the President's report;

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- c) the reception of the Treasurer's (or auditor's) report;
- d) the reception of Committee reports;
- e) the election of Members;
- f) the biennial election of officers;
- g) the adoption of resolutions;
- h) the ratification of Executive Committee action, when necessary;
- i) the discussion of new business.

**V.3** Special General Meetings may be convened at any time and place by order of the Executive Committee with the concurrence of 50% of the Voting Members, for which a vote may be taken by mail at least 90 days in advance. The business transacted at a Special General Meeting shall be limited to that related to the matters which necessitated the calling of the meeting.

**V.4** Notice of the date, time, and location of the Annual General Meeting shall be furnished in writing to all Society Members via email (or via U.S. Mail to those who have not provided an email address for the Society's member database and/or roster), and posted on the Society's website, at least 90 days in advance. The non-receipt of any notice by any Member, or any error in any notice not affecting the substance thereof, shall not invalidate the proceedings of any General Meeting held pursuant to such notice.

**V.5** Registration fees and other incidental charges for an Annual General Meeting shall be set by the Executive Committee for payment by all Members and non-members in attendance.

Regular or Life Members who provide a new practical test for membership applicants, which has been validated and accepted for use by the E&E Committee and Chair, are eligible to receive a waiver of registration fees per Article II.11.2 at the next AGM they attend. Registration waivers will expire if not used within three years after acceptance unless said waiver is extended by the EC.

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- V.6** Thirty percent (30%) of the Regular Members of the Society shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any Annual or Special General Meeting.
- V.7** If a quorum is not present at the opening of any General Meeting, or is not maintained during that meeting, the Voting Members present may adjourn the meeting to a fixed time and place, but shall not transact any other business.
- V.8** Voting at any General Meeting shall be only by Voting Members present in person, each of whom shall be entitled to one vote. The presiding officer at any such meeting shall abstain from voting; but whenever his/her vote will affect the result in the voting on any Ordinary Resolution, he/she may cast the deciding vote.
- V.9** Voting at any General Meeting shall be by a show of hands except where a secret ballot is requested by a voting Member. Such a request may be made either before a proposed vote by a show of hands, or immediately thereafter.
- V.10** The voting privileges of a member whose membership has been suspended or terminated in accordance with Articles II.12.4 or II.13.3, will be automatically suspended pending ratification of the suspension or termination at a General Meeting.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE**

- VI.** The rules contained in the most recent edition of Democratic Rules of Order<sup>1</sup> shall govern the conduct of the Society at all meetings to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws. In cases of conflict, the decision of the Executive Committee shall be final.

<sup>1</sup>*Francis, Fred and Peg; "Democratic Rules of Order, Easy-to-use rules for meetings of any size, 9<sup>th</sup> Edition," Cool Heads Publishing, Canada, 2010."*

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## **ARTICLE VII AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS**

- VII.1** These Bylaws may be amended by Special Resolution at any General Meeting of the Society provided that notice of the proposed amendments shall be furnished to each Voting Member at least 60 days in advance of the Annual General meeting at which they are to be considered.
- VII.2** Bylaw edits with no substantive changes may be made by 2/3 vote of the Executive Committee. All such actions will be published to the membership within 30 days of the vote. By petition of eight or more Voting Members of the Society, any edits shall be suspended pending an Ordinary Resolution at the next Annual General Meeting of the Society. The right to petition will be published with each notification of edit vote. Any petition listing the names of each member-petitioner is to be made to the President within 30 days of vote publication.

## **ARTICLE VIII LIMITATIONS AND TERMINATION**

- VIII.1** The Society shall be operated as a not-for-profit organization. None of the assets of the Society or funds over which the Society has control shall inure to the benefit of any individual Member, but all such assets or funds shall be applied to the purposes set forth in these Bylaws or to purposes fully consonant with the purposes stated herein. In the event the Society terminates its activity, any remaining assets or funds are to be transferred by the last elected officers to a scientific and/ or educational institution or organization having similar objectives, which organization has been qualified by the Internal Revenue Service as being non-profit and tax exempt.
- VIII.2** Notwithstanding any other provision of these Bylaws, the Society shall not carry on activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or by a corporation contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)2 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, or their equivalent sections, if amended.

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## ARTICLE IX CODE OF ETHICS

- IX.** In accordance with the objective and purposes of the Society outlined in **Article I.1**, each Member, as a condition of membership, pledges him/herself to abide by the following rules of conduct:
- a) to apply the principles of science and logic to the solution of all document examination problems and to follow the truth courageously wherever it may lead;
  - b) to keep informed on all new developments and processes in document examination by constant study and research;
  - c) to treat information received from a client as confidential; and when a matter has already been undertaken, to refuse to perform any services for any person whose interests are opposed to those of the original client, except by express consent of that client or his/ her solicitor, or where required by established administrative procedure or by law;
  - d) to render an opinion or conclusion strictly in accordance with the physical evidence in the document, and only to the extent justified by the facts. To admit frankly that certain questions cannot be answered because of the nature of the problem, the lack of material, or insufficient opportunity for examination;
  - e) to act at all times, both in and out of court, in an absolutely impartial manner and to do nothing that would imply partisanship or any interest in the case except to report the findings of an examination and their proper interpretation;
  - f) to give the best possible service in all cases, irrespective of the importance of the matter;
  - g) to charge for services, when serving as a consultant, in accordance with a mutually agreed contract for services rendered. Remuneration shall be fair and equitable considering all the elements in the case. No engagement shall be undertaken on a contingent fee basis. Members employed by public agencies under an annual salary or contract shall be controlled in respect of monetary matters by policies within their organizations;
  - h) to make technically correct and conservative statements in all written or oral reports, testimony, public addresses, or publications, and to avoid any misleading or inaccurate claims;
  - i) to maintain a constant spirit of fairness, combined with high ethical, educational, and technical standards, thereby promoting justice and creating increased confidence in the profession of document examination; and, by exemplary conduct and scientific thoroughness, carry out the aims and ideals of this Society.

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## ARTICLE X AWARDS

- X.1** The Society will bestow upon deserving individuals the Albert S. Osborn Award of Excellence. This Award was created to recognize those individuals who have contributed above and beyond what is expected of a Society member. This award may be made to no more than one individual each year. The nominee for the award will be decided by the Executive Committee. The criteria for the award are as follows:
- a) The recipient must be a living member in good standing of the ASQDE and may be a Regular, Associate, Corresponding, Life Member, or Life Corresponding Member at the time of the nomination.
  - b) The recipient must have been active in the field of questioned document examination for a period of at least 25 years and must have been a member of the ASQDE for a period of at least 20 years.
  - c) The award shall only be bestowed on persons who have attained exceptional distinction in terms of cumulative activities, such as professional research or literary accomplishments which advance the field of questioned document examination, and outstanding service to the ASQDE over a long period of time, such service resulting in generally recognized and beneficial improvements in the Society.
  - d) Nominations for the Albert S. Osborn Award shall be forwarded to the President by March 31st of the year consideration is to be given.
- X.2** The Linton Godown Award for Research was created to recognize those individuals who have contributed above and beyond what is expected of a Society member. This award may be made to more than one individual each year. The nominee(s) for the award will be decided by the Executive Committee. The criteria for the award are as follows:
- a) The recipient must be a living member in good standing of the ASQDE and may be a Regular, Associate, Corresponding, Life Member, or Life Corresponding Member at the time of the nomination.
  - b) The award shall only be bestowed on persons who have attained exceptional distinction in terms of producing a body of research which has been of benefit to the profession or demonstrating innovation which has created valid techniques or instrumentation.
  - c) Nominations for the Linton Godown Award shall be forwarded to the President by March 31st of the year consideration is to be given.

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## ARTICLE X AWARDS (continued)

- X.3** The Peter V. Tytell Award was established to reward the best paper or poster presented at the Annual General Meeting of the Society. This award will be granted annually. The decision for the award will be entrusted to a panel of judges, recused from consideration for this award, and named annually by the Executive Committee. The criteria for the award are as follows:
- a) The recipient must have delivered the most-well rounded presentation of the AGM in terms of education value, energetic presentation, and audience engagement.
  - b) The award shall consist of a book that is pertinent to the profession of forensic document examination. Within the book will be a bookplate bearing the Society's seal, the name of the award, and the handwritten or typewritten name of the winner with meeting location and date. If possible, the bookplate should be made by a traditional printing process such as letterpress printing or an engraving.
  - c) The panel of judges will inform the President of the recipient of the Peter V. Tytell Award at the end of the conference scientific presentations. The Membership and the recipient will be notified during the closing remarks of the meeting and the notification posted on the Society's website.