Constitution

1. Name

The Association shall be known as the Pharmaceutical Information & Pharmacovigilance Association (PIPA).

2. Aims

The aims of the organisation are to support pharmaceutical information and pharmacovigilance professionals by:

- Promoting the highest professional standards.
- Providing a forum for the exchange of experience and the advancement of all aspects of their professional roles.
- Ensuring provision of high-quality training and continued professional development.
- Fostering relations with appropriate external bodies.
- Promoting the profession within the pharmaceutical industry and to other organisations.

3. Membership

3.1 Individual membership of any grade shall be open to residents of any country, applications for membership should be submitted to the Committee via the PIPA Administrator.

Please note: The Committee (see Section 5.1) shall have the authority to refuse any application for membership and also to withdraw membership from any Member whose conduct conflicts with the aims of the Association (see Section 4).

3.2 There are five classes of membership: -

- **Student Member**

  Student Membership is open to full-time undergraduate students. Students of any discipline can become student members of PIPA.
Graduates in the first full year after leaving university and not currently in a Medical Information or Pharmacovigilance job within the pharmaceutical industry can also take advantage of student membership.

For Student Members, there is no minimum education specified, nor any requirement to commit to Continual Professional Development (CPD). Student Members may vote at PIPA’s Annual General Meetings but may not sit on the Committee. They may, however, join a work stream with the approval of the main Committee.

Post nominal - not applicable

- **Associate Member**

  Associate Membership is open to people working in Medical Information, Medical Affairs or Pharmacovigilance within the pharmaceutical industry, who are building relevant work experience. It is also open to persons with relevant interests in associated industries, but who are not eligible for Membership, such as suppliers, database vendors, and recruitment agents. Further examples of Associate Members include, but are not limited to, other professions with an interest in the area such as employees of departments of government and National Health Service (NHS) professionals.

  For Associate Members there is no minimum education specified, nor any requirement to commit to Continual Professional Development (CPD). Associate Members may vote at PIPA’s Annual General Meetings. They may sit on the Committee or join a work stream with the approval of the main Committee.

  Retired Members who are no longer actively collecting CPD points will also be designated Associate members.

  Post nominal - APIPA

- **Member**

  Membership shall be open to persons involved in medical, scientific, technical or business information or pharmacovigilance activities in the pharmaceutical industry who have gained the necessary experience.
Members should have a degree, ideally in a life science, a nursing or pharmacy (e.g. pharmacy technician) qualification plus the equivalent of two years full time work experience in Medical Information/Pharmacovigilance or other related areas and sufficient CPD points acquired over the preceding two-year period. The number of CPD points which are required is defined in the current documents on the PIPA website.

Associate Members must submit an application to become a Member, which consists of a comprehensive curriculum vitae (CV) and a completed CPD Record Card.

Annual membership renewal must include a declaration, explicit or implicit, of a commitment to CPD, specifically, to attain sufficient CPD points per rolling two-year period.

Employees of medical device companies, charities and professional societies who work in Medical Information/Pharmacovigilance or other related areas, are also eligible to be Members.

Members can take part in all the Association's activities namely: vote on the Association's affairs, hold office and become members of the Committee and/or work streams. An exception to this is where there is competing interest between their role within PIPA and their business activities.

**Post nominal - MPIPA**

- **Fellow**

Fellowship of PIPA is designated to recognise those with many years’ work experience in Medical Information/Pharmacovigilance or other related areas. It denotes a minimum of ten years’ full-time work experience in relevant areas. Members must submit an application to become a Fellow, which must be accompanied with evidence of their eligibility, for example, a comprehensive CV plus a CPD Record Card for at least the last two years.

Annual membership renewal must include a declaration, explicit or implicit, of a commitment to CPD, specifically, to attain sufficient CPD points per rolling two-year period.

**Post nominal – FPIPA**
- **Honorary Fellow**

  This is the highest level of membership that can be attained. To be considered for Honorary Member status, the member would normally be expected to have attained fellowship status as well as to have demonstrated significant service to the Association. However, Honorary Fellow status could be conferred upon a member who has not yet attained Fellow status if their service to the Association was exceptional.

  Annual membership renewal must include a declaration, explicit or implicit, of a commitment to CPD, specifically, to attain sufficient CPD points per rolling two-year period.

  **Post nominal - HonFPIPA**

  Upon retirement, Honorary Fellows may adopt the post nominal **HonFPIPA (ret)**.

3.3 The Association reserves the right to levy annual subscriptions from Full and Associate Members (see Section 10.2).

3.4 The Association shall maintain an up-to-date list of the names, status and business addresses of members. The list shall not be released for commercial purposes.

### 4. CONDUCT OF MEMBERS

4.1 The conduct of all members must be compatible with the aims of the Association.

4.2 No individual member shall represent the views of the Association without the express permission of the Committee.

4.3 Individual members may not ask the Association to become involved in contentious matters between individuals and their employers.

4.4 Members shall notify the Association of any changes in their address or status.

4.5 Any issues or concerns about PIPA or its members should be raised with the Vice President and Honorary Secretary.
5. Office Bearers

5.1 The affairs of the Association shall be conducted by a Committee consisting of three Executive Officers and up to fifteen other members. The Executive Officers shall be, in order of seniority: A President, Vice President and Honorary Secretary and Treasurer. The Association will support the use of contractors, as appropriate, to provide either specialist support (e.g. accountancy) or general support to members regarding the running of the Association.

Each member of the Committee shall be elected to serve for two years, after which they will be eligible for re-election. Committee members shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. New Committee members shall serve the period of two years from the end of the Annual General Meeting, onwards. The Committee may include up to four independent consultants who are working in relevant areas - All their activity must be non-promotional, and any concerns are to be raised with the Vice President and Honorary Secretary.

The Committee shall have the right to fill vacancies occurring during the year by co-option from the Full membership, but co-opted members must be formally elected at the next appropriate Annual General Meeting.

Committee members may serve for a maximum of eight consecutive years after which they shall stand down. They will be eligible for re-election to the Committee after a period of one year.

Members who retire whilst serving on the committee may remain in office at the discretion of the remaining committee members.

5.2 The Committee shall then elect the three Executive Officers from within its ranks, or if this is not possible, from people who have previously served a year on the Committee.

In the event of the resignation or retirement of an Executive Officer of the Association during that year of office, the Committee shall have the right to appoint a replacement from within its own Committee membership.

5.3 In the event of retirement of the President, a President-elect shall be elected from the Committee in office prior to the Annual General Meeting to take up his/her post as President from the end of the Annual General Meeting. Nominees for President must have served at least one year on the Committee (not necessarily immediately prior to nomination for President) and must be proposed and seconded by members of the Committee. In the
event of more than one candidate standing for Presidency, the President shall be chosen by secret ballot of the Committee.

The President shall hold office for two years (renewable) but, in exceptional circumstances, may be challenged at the end of his/her first year in office by any member of the Committee if proposed and seconded by other Committee members. In the event of a successful challenge, any member of the Committee fulfilling the criteria outlined above may stand for Presidency if proposed and seconded by other Committee members. The new President-elect shall be chosen by secret ballot of the Committee and will then take up office for two years (renewable) from the end of the Annual General Meeting.

The President will be required, as are all Committee members to stand for re-election to the Committee after two years on the Committee according to section 5.1. In the event of a President or President-elect not being re-elected to the Committee by the membership, a replacement President will be chosen from within the ranks of the Committee by the above procedure. A similar procedure will be adopted to nominate an immediate replacement in the event of a President needing to stand down from his/her post during a term of office.

5.4 Decision making

PIPA activities requiring Committee approval are as follows:

- Major decision – majority agreement from a group of at least 6 committee members (incl agreement of 2+ executive committee)
  - >£5K one-off expenditure
  - All recurring cost commitments
  - Major process changes or change in strategic direction

- Mid decision – majority agreement from a group of at least 4 committee members (incl agreement of 1+ executive committee)
  - £500-£5K one-off expenditure
  - Go-NoGo decision on scheduled training or forums (when borderline registrations)

- Minor decision – 2 or more committee members to be in agreement (or 1 executive committee)
  - <£500 one-off expenditure
  - Communications to a wide audience or of a sensitive nature
5.5 Sub-Committees
The Committee shall appoint, as necessary, sub-committees, work streams or individuals to be responsible for special tasks. The main Committee shall define the composition, the objectives and the terms of reference of any sub-committee, work stream (which may be referred to as a working party) or individual appointed. The sub-committee, work stream or individual shall be obliged to submit a report of its progress and accounts of its finances, as appropriate, to the main Committee at regular intervals or when specifically asked. The sub-committee, work stream or individual so appointed may not act on behalf of the Association except with the prior consent of the main Committee.

Exceptionally, sub-committees or work streams may require expertise that can only be provided by an individual who is not a member of the Association. Such an individual may be invited to join the sub-committee or work stream as an adviser. The appointment of an adviser to a sub-committee or work stream requires the approval of the main Committee. Advisers to sub-committees or work streams cannot vote on the Association's activities.

6. Elections

6.1 The Vice President and Honorary Secretary shall give notice of vacancies for the Committee not less than 30 days before the Annual General Meeting. Members wishing to join the Committee must send an email to the PIPA Vice President and Honorary Secretary expressing their wish to join the committee. They must include full contact details and a comprehensive CV. During the Annual General Meeting, new members can be proposed, seconded and voted in by attending members. In the event of a tie for the last place on the Committee, the senior member of the Committee not standing for re-election shall have the casting vote.

7. Meetings

7.1 The Annual General Meeting shall be held during the Annual Conference and shall include an annual report from the Committee, presentation of the Association's accounts, election of new members and officers to the Committee and the appointment of auditors.

Members shall be notified by the Vice President and Honorary Secretary not less than 30 days beforehand of the date and place of the meeting.

Notice of any motion, including proposals to change constitutional rules, must be submitted to the Vice President and Honorary Secretary, 21 days before the meeting. The Vice President and Honorary Secretary shall notify members of the agenda along with any
proposed changes at least 14 days before the meeting. Changes will be proposed, seconded by the committee and a vote taken at the Annual General Meeting.

7.2 An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called either:

- by the Committee; or
- by a petition signed by at least one fifth of the Full members of the Association; the petition shall be delivered to the Vice President and Honorary Secretary who will then be obliged to call an Extraordinary General Meeting within 56 days.

7.3 In either case, members shall be notified of the date, place and agenda at least 28 days before the Extraordinary General Meeting.

7.4 For voting on most matters, all proposals will be carried by a simple majority of votes cast.

7.5 If, in the opinion of the Committee any matter is regarded as a major issue, such as major Constitutional amendments, that issue may be decided by a ballot of all members, with proposals carried by a simple majority of votes cast.

7.6 The Committee shall meet at sufficiently regular intervals to carry out the work of the Association.

8. Records of Meetings

8.1 Minutes from the Annual General Meetings and Extraordinary General Meetings are documented and made available to members on the PIPA website. Association Committee Meeting Minutes are stored in the secure PIPA Committee document repository. The Minutes of all such meetings shall be subject to confirmation by the Chairman, who shall normally be the President or a deputising Executive Officer.

8.2 Sub-committees, work streams or individuals appointed by the main Committee for special tasks must also produce records of their activities for review at Association Committee meetings.

8.3 Minutes shall be available for inspection by any members of the Association, upon written request to the Vice President and Honorary Secretary.
9. Alteration of Constitutional Rules

9.1 Periods of notice for motions to change the rules are as defined in the section on meetings. No alteration or amendment of these rules shall take place except by ballot of Full Members at the Annual General Meeting or at an Extraordinary General Meeting, called for the specific purpose of such alteration or amendment.

Alternatively, at the discretion of the Committee or at the request of one fifth of Full members by signed petition, the Vice President and Honorary Secretary shall order an electronic ballot on a proposal to change the rules, with results announced at the Annual General Meeting or at an Extraordinary General Meeting.

9.2 To be adopted, any proposed change in the rules must be supported by at least two thirds of all votes cast.

10. Finance

10.1 The financial year shall run from 1st April to 31st March.

10.2 Subscription rates may be increased by up to 10% in any financial year independent of an AGM/EGM vote, by a majority vote of the Committee. The subscription monies collected are intended to cover ordinary administrative expenses, production of the Journal, or other such expenses as directed by the Committee.

10.3 The subscription year will be the 12 months from the date the member joined the Association and all subsequent anniversaries.

10.4 The Treasurer shall keep a record of all income and expenditure and a statement of account shall be prepared by an independent Chartered Accountant prior to presentation for approval at the Annual General Meeting or when requested by the Committee. A 5-year audit of accounts shall be presented at the Annual General Meeting or as and when requested by the Committee.

10.5 The Treasurer may draw cheques or BACs payments upon the Association. Approval levels for payments are as follows:

- Up to and including £1000 excluding VAT and contractor payments - Treasurer alone
- £1001 – £5000 excluding VAT – Treasurer and one other executive committee member
• Amounts above £5000 excluding VAT – Discussion and approval at committee meeting.

10.6 Committee members, or persons appointed on behalf of the Committee, are generally expected to meet all their own attendance expenses in the course of the Association’s work. An exception may be made when a Committee member’s employer is not willing to support their PIPA work. In this case PIPA may fund the travel and subsistence costs of a Committee member engaged in PIPA business. This exception does not cover the cost of paying for leave taken to take part in PIPA activities. The Committee's full expense policy is laid out in the Expenses Policy for Committee members and Working Streams, which is available in the members section of the PIPA website.

11. Indemnity

Members of the Committee shall not be liable (otherwise than as members) for any loss incurred by the Association as a result of the discharge of their respective duties on its behalf, except such loss as arises from their respective willful default.

12. Winding Up

12.1 The Committee may choose to hold a face to face or web conference Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting specifically for sharing the potential wind up status of the Association and for voting relating to winding up the Association. Any proposal to wind up the Association must be supported by at least two thirds of those present and voting at the face-to-face or web conference Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting. If the initial motion to wind up is carried, the Committee will then hold a second postal or electronic ballot not less than 28 days later. The second ballot must ratify the earlier vote, to wind up the Association, by a two-thirds majority of all votes cast.

12.2 If the Association were to wind up, a final audit must take place. If the financial position of the Association when wound up would be one of net debt, the Committee shall be empowered to levy a supplementary subscription from the members, only, for the purpose of recouping such debt.

12.3 After payment of all the Association's debts and liabilities, any moneys remaining after winding up shall be given to the library of the Royal Society of Medicine.

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