

Optometry Northern Ireland

CONSTITUTION

1 TITLE

The Organisation shall be known as “Optometry Northern Ireland” (ONI).

2 FUNCTIONS OF THE ORGANISATION

To co-ordinate, channel and represent the collective views and interests of optometrists, dispensing opticians and optical bodies corporate as providers of eye care in Northern Ireland in order to develop and promote sustainable and effective eye care for everyone.

3 MEMBERSHIP

Members of ONI shall be registered optometrists, dispensing opticians and optical bodies corporate working in Northern Ireland who pays the levy.

4 COMMITTEES

The ONI shall be managed by a Committee comprising 16 members.

Sub-committees shall be established as required. All sub-committees report to the Committee.

4.1 Composition of the Committee

- (i) one member assigned by the Northern Ireland Optometric Society
- (ii) one member assigned by the Federation of (Ophthalmic and Dispensing) Opticians
- (iii) one member assigned by the Association of Optometrists
- (iv) one member assigned by The College of Optometrists
- (v) one member assigned by The Association of British Dispensing Opticians
- (vi) one member assigned by the University of Ulster
- (vii) the past Chair
- (viii) the Chair of the Ophthalmic Committee
- (ix) eight elected representatives, ideally 4 from independent practice and 4 from the corporate sector who may be either a dispensing optician or optometrist.

Each appointing body will be responsible for the selection and three-year review of assigned Committee members.

If an assigned member is unable to attend a meeting of Optometry Northern Ireland that member should send a substitute on behalf of their appropriate organisation. Each appointing body shall notify ONI of the name and address of its

appointed representative and (if relevant) substitute.

Elected representatives will be appointed at an Annual General Meeting and on appointment will serve a term of three years.

A member can only hold one seat e.g. If the Past Chair was also an assigned member then their organisation should assign a new member to join the committee.

4.2 Disqualification or Retirement of Committee Members

If an assigned member of the Committee ceases to be a member of the appointing body which they represent, they will vacate their seat on the Committee. The appointing body will be notified and it will be their responsibility to select a replacement.

If any member of Committee makes the decision to vacate their seat at any time then:

- if an assigned position, then an individual will be selected by the appointed body;
- if an elected position, then the position will remain vacant until the next Annual General Meeting.

If any member of the Committee is absent from three consecutive ordinary meetings of the Committee, ONI shall declare their seat to have been vacated, unless satisfied that their absence was due to illness or other reasonable cause. The procedure for filling this vacancy is as outlined above.

4.3 Officers of the Committee

The Officers of the Committee shall be the Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer and these will be appointed on an annual basis by the Committee at their meeting subsequent to the Annual General Meeting.

The maximum limit on term of office for the Chair of the Committee and the Chairs of the sub committees is 2 terms of 3 years.

It is not assumed that the Vice-Chair will take on the Chair role.

5 **MEETINGS**

5.1 Meetings – general

The Committee shall meet as required but at least four times a year including the Annual General Meeting.

The number of members on ONI that form a quorum shall be 8 Committee members.

Procedures for meeting should be adhered to.

Members of ONI shall be given not less than two weeks' notice of meetings.

The sub-committees shall meet as required.

5.2 Annual General Meetings

An Annual General Meeting shall be held prior to 30th May, when the accounts shall be presented.

6 weeks' notice of the date of the AGM shall be given along with candidate biographies in the case of elections.

The procedure for electing the 8 representatives is outlined in Appendix 1.

5.3 Voting

At all meetings a resolution put to the vote of the meeting shall be decided by a show of hands by a majority of members present, in person and entitled to vote, unless a poll in writing be demanded by the Chair or by at least 3 members present, in person and entitled to vote.

Every Committee member entitled to vote shall have one vote.

In the case of an equal number of votes for and against the motion, the Chair of the meeting shall be entitled to a casting vote.

The Chair will declare the motion passed or failed and an entry to that effect in the minute book shall be conclusive evidence.

5.4 Observers

ONI may, at its absolute discretion, invite observers to attend all or part of its meetings.

6. **STAFFING**

The ONI may appoint salaried staff. Any such appointments shall be made by the Committee and shall be remunerated at a rate agreed annually by the Committee. Paid staff may attend meetings of Optometry Northern Ireland but shall not be a member.

7 **FINANCE**

The Committee shall be empowered to raise funds for its working expenses from among the members by means of a levy.

An honorarium will be paid to the Chair of the Committee. Any employed staff will receive a salary. All such payments will be reviewed annually in March and approved by the Committee before the beginning of the next financial year.

Committee members of ONI will be financially compensated for attendance at meetings at a rate determined at the beginning of every financial year. Members of ONI will be reimbursed for expenses incurred.

The financial year shall be from 1 April to 31 March.

8 **AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION**

The Constitution of ONI shall not be amended except by two-thirds of the levy paying members present, voting in favour of an amendment.

Fourteen days' notice of any proposed amendments to the Constitution shall be given to the bodies appointing the Committee members of ONI.

9 **DISSOLUTION OF OPTOMETRY NORTHERN IRELAND**

Should ONI cease to operate all remaining funds will be passed to Northern Ireland Optometric Society.

Appendix 1

PROCEDURE FOR VOTING

- 1 Nominations for the posts of the 8 elected representatives must be submitted to ONI at least 6 weeks prior to the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- 2 Each nomination shall have a proposer and a seconder, and will allow space for a short candidate statement.
- 3 Details of nominations received shall be advised to all members of ONI at least 6 weeks prior to the AGM.
- 4 If there is more than one nomination for the positions of the 8 elected representatives and/or the Chair, the Administration Officer shall prepare ballot papers for the posts showing the candidates' names plus a voting box.
- 5 In the absence of any nominations, nominations may be made at the Annual General Meeting.
- 6 The Chair shall appoint two scrutineers to conduct the election, to count the votes and announce the result of each ballot before moving on to the next ballot.
- 7 All candidates who are voted into a position at the Annual General Meeting shall assume that position immediately.