

VSPA Standing Regulations



Version: 8 December 2020

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Introduction

Where necessary, the Charter has been elaborated in the Standing Regulations. Furthermore, the house rules of the VSPA Association are described therein.

1. Members

1.1. Criteria

The degree programmes described in Article 5(1) of the Charter are the following three degree programmes at the University of Amsterdam:

- Psychology Bachelor's programme;
- Psychology Master's programme;
- Psychology Research Master's programme.

1.2. Members' rights

In addition to the rights specified in the Charter, members shall be entitled to:

- buy textbooks, syllabi and summaries offered by the VSPA;
- participate in committees (see Article 4);
- participate in and receive certain discounts on activities.

1.3. Suspension and Disqualification from Membership

1.3.1. Suspension

In case of suspension as mentioned in article 6, paragraph 6, the suspended member may not use services provided by VSPA, for a period to be determined by the board which may not exceed six months. The suspended member is also not welcome at events that are open to non-members

1.3.2. Disqualification from Membership

In the event of disqualification from membership as mentioned in article 6, paragraph 7, the relevant member will be permanently expelled from their membership with the VSPA. The person concerned may not use services provided by VSPA and is not welcome at events, even if those are also open to non-members.

2. Membership

Membership is valid during the academic year in which the person applied for membership. Membership costs €15 a year. The membership fee is collected by direct debit.

3. Administrative bodies

3.1. Board

The maximum number of full-time Board members of the VSPA has been set at seven. There are full-time and part-time positions. A full-time Board member shall be regarded as someone spending

40 hours per week (not including holidays) on the VSPA. A part-time Board member shall be regarded as someone spending a minimum of 20 hours a week (not including holidays) on the VSPA.

3.1.1. Positions and responsibilities

The roles mentioned in Appendix A shall be distributed among Board members. One person may perform several roles, although the roles of chair and treasurer may never be combined. It is also strongly recommended that the role of Committee Affairs Officer is divided between two people. The roles and allocation of duties among the Board members should be appended to the policy plan every year. The guidelines in Annex A may be adhered to when preparing the allocation of duties.

3.1.2. Board meetings

An agenda must be prepared for every Board meeting. That agenda must be presented to the Board members and Supervisory Board members for inspection at least one working day before the start of the Board meeting. If desired, it shall also be presented to the members for inspection.

All voting by the Board shall be orally, unless at least one Board member considers a sealed ballot desirable.

In case of a tied vote at a Board meeting, the motion shall be rejected.

Board meetings shall be held in the municipality of Amsterdam. The Board may make an exception on a one-off basis, but the Supervisory Board should be notified of this fact at least five working days in advance.

3.2. Supervisory Board

The Supervisory Board (Raad van Toezicht, RvT) shall comprise a maximum of five members and shall be elected by the General Members Assembly (Algemene Ledenvergadering, ALV). The Supervisory Board shall elect a chair and a secretary from among its members. The responsibilities, rights and duties of the Supervisory Board are laid down in Article 12 of the Association's Charter.

3.3. Cash Audit Committee

The Cash Audit Committee (Kascommissie, KC) shall consist of a minimum of two members and shall be elected by the General Members Assembly. The responsibilities, rights and duties of the Cash Audit Committee are laid down in Article 13 of the Association Charter.

3.4. Application Committee

The Application Committee shall be elected by the General Members Assembly and shall consist of five members.

The composition of those five members must meet the following requirements:

- there shall be one current Board member on the Application Committee – no more and no less;
- one person without an active role within the association shall sit on the Application Committee;
- at least two people from the following three categories shall sit on the Application Committee – a former Board member, a Supervisory Board member and an active member.

It is not possible to combine a role on both the Application Committee and the Application Guidance Committee. The Board is charged with recruiting candidates for those categories. It shall aim to form an Application Committee with a person from each of the above categories (i.e. a Board member, a former Board member, a Supervisory Board member, an active member and someone without an active role within the association). Where that aim is not achieved, the Board shall be obliged to render account for this fact to the General Members Assembly. The Application Committee shall elect a chair and a secretary from among its members. The task of the Application Committee is to recommend a Board to the General Members Assembly after having followed the application procedure.

3.5. Application Guidance Committee

The Application Guidance Committee is elected by the General Members Assembly and shall comprise a minimum of three members, preferably three and at least two of whom will have administrative experience within the VSPA. Members of the present Board may also apply to join this Committee, but this process is not preferred. The Committee shall elect a chair and a secretary from among its members. The Application Guidance Committee shall recruit potential Board candidates and provide them with guidance as well as information.

3.6. General Members Assembly Committee

The General Members Assembly Committee is charged with announcing and taking charge of General Members Assemblies. This task shall include chairing the General Members Assemblies, taking minutes of the meetings and publicising them. The Committee must also ensure that General Members Assemblies do not conflict with the Charter. The General Members Assembly Committee shall consist of a chair, a secretary and a maximum of three general members, who shall be elected during a General Members Assembly. In the event of the absence of the chair or secretary, one of the general members shall take care of the duties. In the event of the absence of general members, a one-off General Members Assembly chair or General Members Assembly secretary may be appointed with the approval of the General Members Assembly.

3.7. First-year Coordination Committee

The First-year Coordination Committee (Eerstejaarscoördinatiecommissie, ECC) is elected by the General Members Assembly and shall comprise a minimum of two members. The Committee shall elect a chair and a treasurer from among its members. Where more than two members are sitting on the ECC, a secretary shall also be elected. The ECC's duties shall include organising the first-year weekend.

3.8. Lustrum Coordination Committee

The Lustrum Coordination Committee (Lustrumcoördinatiecommissie, LCC) is elected by the General Members Assembly and shall consist of at least two members. The Committee shall elect a chair and a treasurer from among its members. Where more than two members are sitting on the LCC, a secretary shall also be elected. The LCC's duties shall include organising the Lustrum Celebration. The LCC shall preferably be elected by the General Members Assembly in the academic year preceding the anniversary year.

4. Committees

In addition to the administrative bodies, various committees make up the organisational structure of the VSPA. Only members of the VSPA may join a committee. A VSPA committee comprises a minimum of two people. A committee shall have a chair at all times. A committee shall have an objective which is in line with the objects as stated in the Charter. The names and objectives of committees are included in the committee policy, which is part of the policy plan.

4.1. Formation

A new committee can be formed by submitting a written proposal to the Board. That proposal must in any event state the objects of the committee, its prospective members and its prospective chair. Where a majority of the Board approves the proposal, the committee will be added to the committee policy.

4.2. Dissolution

Committees may be dissolved in two situations: (1) if the Board decides by a majority vote when preparing the committee policy not to restart the committee in the next academic year; or (2) if a committee is inactive during the academic year and its members have no interest in reforming it.

5. Electoral procedure

Various bodies are elected during a General Members Assembly every year. Unless otherwise specified, the general procedure will be followed. Where there are vacancies for a position for which the electoral procedure must be followed, members may put themselves forward as candidates. They can do so by registering as such with the General Members Assembly Committee.

5.1. General electoral regulations

Candidates must make known their candidature and motivation by means of a letter to the General Members Assembly. Any such letter is part of the General Members Assembly documents and must be available to members five working days before the General Members Assembly.

All candidates will give a brief presentation and answer any questions put during the General Members Assembly. Any other candidates must leave the General Members Assembly during that presentation and round of questions.

Voting shall take by roll call and by sealed ballot using the voting procedure as described in Appendix B.

5.2. Election of the Board

Two ancillary committees shall be created for the election of the Board, to wit the Application Guidance Committee and the Application Committee.

Interested members may apply for a Board position by sending the necessary application documents (where applicable, through the Application Guidance Committee) to the Application Committee.

The application procedure is determined by the Application Committee. In the procedure the Application Committee must test the candidates on both general capability for the board and his capability for a specific duty.

The nomination of a candidate and the information supplied by the applicant during the application procedure are confidential unless the candidate indicates otherwise.

Based on the job profile established, the Application Committee shall form a Board and allocate duties. The Application Committee shall present the result as a proposal to the General Members Assembly. That proposal shall be presented to the members five working days before the General Members Assembly. The Application Committee shall explain how it made its selection at the General Members Assembly. Time shall be allowed for putting questions to the Application Committee on the procedure followed and the candidates selected. All candidates will give a presentation and answer any questions put during the General Members Assembly. Candidates are expressly requested not to repeat what they said during their applications. Any other candidates must leave the General Members Assembly during that presentation and round of questions.

The General Members Assembly shall vote on the full list of candidates for the Board.

6. General Members Assembly

6.1. Announcement

Any General Members Assembly (ALV) of the VSPA shall be announced by the General Members Assembly Committee. The documents and agenda must be made available to the members no later than five working days before the General Members Assembly.

The chair of the General Members Assembly Committee shall chair the General Members Assembly. In their absence, the General Members Assembly shall elect a chair from among its members. The minutes of the General Members Assembly shall be kept by the secretary of the General Membership Committee. The draft minutes shall be presented for inspection at least five working days before the next General Members Assembly.

6.2. Voting procedure

Members of the General Members Assembly may vote on motions put forward for a vote in four different ways. Members vote for a motion put forward for a vote where they agree with it. They vote against it where they disagree with the motion. Abstaining from voting means that the member is leaving the decision to the other members of the General Members Assembly; those votes will be included in the total number of votes cast. A blank vote will not be included in the total number of votes cast; such a vote will be cast by a member where that person disagrees with the procedure followed during the General Members Assembly.

7. Funding

7.1. Financial year

The association's financial year shall run from 1 August up to and including 31 July of the following year.

7.2. Annual budget

The Board shall present supporting financial information in the form of an annual budget together with its policy plan. In addition, the wording of that annual budget must be explained. Expenditure

not specified in the budget shall be possible to a limited extent only. A budgeted expenditure item may be exceeded by a maximum of €500 without this fact having to be submitted to the General Members Assembly. Further departures from the budget must be submitted to the General Members Assembly.

7.3. Financial agreements

The Board is authorised to enter into financial agreements with a maximum term of one year, provided that the outgoing amount remains below €3,000 and no loss is expected.

7.4. Accountability

7.4.1. Half-year result

The Board must draw up a half-year result halfway through the financial year. It shall consist of a profit and loss account as well as an interim balance sheet. This document must be audited by the Cash Audit Committee and submitted to the General Members Assembly for information purposes.

7.4.2. Annual accounts

The Board must prepare the annual accounts at the end of the financial year. They shall consist of a profit and loss account as well as a final balance sheet. This document must be audited by the Cash Audit Committee and presented to the General Members Assembly for decision-making purposes. In this annual account also the following must be mentioned: (1) the equity capital of the association and (2) what the minimal amount of the equity capital needs to be, substantiated by a calculation.

7.4.3. Inventory

An investment in goods entails expenditure on an item the costs of which are spread over several years. All investments must be approved by the General Members Assembly. The cost price and the depreciation period must be stated for each investment. An overview of the inventory must be appended to the balance sheet.

7.4.4. Months awarded as compensation for Board activities

The number of months awarded to the Board for Board activities by the University of Amsterdam shall be distributed equally among the Board members up to a maximum of 12 months per Board member.

8. Facilities

8.1. VSPA room

Regulations on the various workspaces and storage spaces are further elaborated in the policy plan. Those regulations may be amended by the VSPA Board. If the Board wishes to amend those regulations, it must put such change on the agenda for a Board meeting five working days in advance and append the proposed amendment to the agenda for that meeting in writing. The motion must also include a start date. If the regulations are amended, those amendments shall be communicated to the members of the VSPA committees in an appropriate manner.

9. Book sales

The VSPA sells books to its members at a discount. The prices of the books shall be determined in accordance with the book supplier, in a manner such that the association receives sufficient sponsor income and the members generally pay the lowest prices on their books bought through the VSPA.

9.1. Summaries

The VSPA shall aim to sell summaries. Those summaries may be supplied by an external party and resold to members. To this end, the VSPA will receive a sponsor amount from the external party. Another option could be to have students prepare the summaries. When it receives a summary, the Board may move to offer the author a reasonable payment.

10. Drug policy

10.1. Liability and prohibition

The VSPA cannot be held liable for the use or the consequences of illegal substances. The use or possession of substances during activities shall be prohibited if such is illegal at the location concerned.

10.2. Druglist

The names of members who have infringed the prohibition as set out in Article 10(1) at least once shall appear on the Druglist. These members' names shall remain on the Druglist until their membership has expired. The Board shall be responsible for passing on the Druglist to its successors.

10.3. Sanction

The following provisions shall be in force unless stated otherwise in agreements on a specific activity, such as a participants' contract.

The VSPA shall apply the following sanction policy in relation to its drug policy. When a person infringes the prohibition as set out in Article 10(1) for the first time, (1) the illegal substances shall be confiscated from them; (2) their name shall be placed on the Druglist as described in Article 10(2).

Where a member infringes the prohibition as set out in Article 10(1) and their name is already on the Druglist, (1) the illegal substances shall be confiscated from them; (2) they shall be removed from the activity; (3) they shall be suspended as set out in Article 6(6) of the Charter.

11. English version

The Charter and the Standing Regulations both have an English version. These versions only remain translations and are therefore not legally valid. An amendment to the English version of the Charter or the Standing Regulations can only be made by decision of the General Members Assembly. An amendment to the English version of the Charter or of the Standing Regulations is done by a simple majority of the votes cast. An amendment to the original Dutch Charter and Standing Regulations can only be submitted in combination with a proposed translation of the English version.

Appendix A: Job profiles

A.1. General Board duties

Making and implementing policy, assessing the budgets and plans of all the committees, holding weekly meetings on general association matters, aiming for a daily presence at the VSPA.

A.2. Specific Board duties

General member Setting up new projects and supporting other Board members.

Committee Affairs Officer (CAO) Coordinating the Committee, recruiting and generating enthusiasm in new members, acting as a point of contact for active members, attending meetings of committees, and providing support and advice where necessary within the committee.

Officer of Sales and Acquisition Is responsible for the sales of the association in the broadest sense of the word. This can be: (1) goods, (2) services. Is also responsible for the acquisition of the association in the broadest sense of the word.

Treasurer Drawing up the annual budget, helping with the preparation of budgets for the committees, drawing up the annual or half-year result, keeping the association's financial records, drawing up invoices and sending them to debtors, keeping the inventory list up to date, managing the association's safe, dealing with claim forms and maintaining contact with the Cash Audit Committee.

Secretary Managing the membership files, the office and the archives, and acting as the contact person for the facilities service. In addition, they shall be responsible for system administration, website management, and incoming and outgoing post. The secretary shall also take the minutes of Board meetings.

Vice-Chair Taking over the chair's duties in their absence.

Chair Coordinating and supervising the general policy in the long and short term with regard to the Board and other VSPA matters, planning and chairing Board meetings, acting as a point of contact for members and external parties, checking to ensure that fellow Board members are doing their jobs properly and acting as mediator in conflicts where necessary.

Appendix B: Voting procedures

B.1. Simple yes/no votes

For example, motions, including motions put forward by the Board, Board elections, approvals, and so on.

In cases where voting 'for' or 'against' are the only options, voting shall take place using ballot papers on which there are four possibilities:

For: You agree with the motion.

Against: You disagree with the motion.

Abstain: You are neither for nor against the motion, have no opinion on the subject matter of the vote (e.g. because of lack of knowledge about the facts) or wish to avoid an apparent or actual conflict of interest, and leave the voting to the other members.

Blank: You disagree with the voting procedure itself, the way in which votes are cast, or the fact that voting is taking place at all. This vote signals protest.

A motion put forward for a vote is passed if the number of votes 'for' it is greater than the number of votes 'against' it. The vote is valid if at least half of the voting members present have voted for or against the motion.

B.2. Elections for groups where the number of candidates and positions is the same

There are occasions where a group must be elected when there are as many available positions as there are candidates. One such example might be an election of the First-year Coordination Committee (ECC) where there are three available positions and three applicants. To avoid all candidates automatically being accepted in such a case, a vote shall be cast for all candidates on a single ballot paper, with the following four options on it:

For: You approve a particular candidate as a member of the committee.

Against: You reject a particular candidate as a member of the committee.

In this case, 'For' and 'Against' will be indicated separately for each candidate.

You will also have the option of abstaining or casting a blank vote on the entire voting procedure as described above.

A member shall be elected as a member of the group if at least half of the voting candidates agrees with the appointment. The election shall be declared invalid if less than half of the members present at the General Members Assembly has cast a vote for or against the candidate.

Should a member be rejected for participation in a group, the Board shall find a new candidate before the next General Members Assembly.

B.3. Elections for groups with more candidates than positions

In the event that the number of candidates standing for election (N) is greater than the number of positions available (x), the election shall take place as follows.

First, the number of positions available and the number of candidates that will therefore have to be dropped need to be established, where applicable by voting.

Subsequently, each voting member will indicate - on a single ballot paper - one of the following two options for each candidate: (1) for; (2) against. These two options can be indicated as often as the voting member wishes. In case a voting member does not vote 'for' or 'against', there are also the

possibilities of abstaining or casting a blank vote. However, these are only possible for the entire voting procedure, not for individual candidates.

Candidates will then be ranked based on the number of "for" votes. An election of a candidate will be valid if the candidate meets the following two conditions: (1) at least half of all the voting members present at the General Members Assembly have voted "for" or "against" the candidate; (2) there are more votes 'for' than 'against' and (3) the candidate is one of the x candidates with the most "for" votes. In other words, if there are six candidates and four positions, the candidate will be one of the four candidates to have received the most "for" votes.

Should two or more candidates have obtained exactly the same number of preference scores, leaving the outcome of the election unresolved, a second election shall be held only for the candidates with the same scores.

Appendix C: Damage caused to the association

C.1. Article 1

1. Where theft is suspected, the Board shall notify the Supervisory Board of that suspicion and provide all available relevant information.
2. Any other person may also notify the Supervisory Board or the Board of a suspicion and provide all available relevant information.
3. If the Supervisory Board or the Board considers there to be sufficient proof of theft as referred to in Article 2(1), the Supervisory Board shall advise the Board of the sanction to be imposed, having due regard for the provisions of Article 2. If the member concerned occupies a position within the association, the Supervisory Board and/or the Board shall also ask the General Members Assembly to dismiss that member from their position.
4. If a suspicion is voiced concerning a member of an administrative body as described in the Charter, a decision as referred to in Article 2(2) must always be approved by a General Members Assembly.
5. If the Board and the Supervisory Board are not in agreement on the procedure or the judgement, the Supervisory Board or the Board may inform the General Members Assembly.
6. A member occupying a specific position within the association shall be temporarily suspended from their position until the judgement has been made.

C.2. Article 2

1. Theft from the association shall be understood to mean: the taking of one or more items of property belonging to the association by a member without the consent of an authorised body or person.
2. In case of a theft as referred to in Article 2(1), having obtained the advice of the Supervisory Board as referred to in Article 1(4), the Board shall decide to :
 - a. disqualify the person concerned from membership;

- b. report the matter to the police in so far as the Board considers such necessary, but in any event if the current market value of the stolen property exceeds €250 (two hundred and fifty euros);
- c. initiate civil proceedings if two written demands for restitution sent by registered letter have not been obeyed.