**Rehabilitation Workers’ Professional Network**

**Constitution**

1. NAME

The name of the organisation is the Rehabilitation Workers’ Professional Network (RWPN). RWPN is a member organisation of Vision UK

2. AIMS OF THE ORGANISATION

The aims of the Rehabilitation Workers’ Professional Network are:

* To maintain a comprehensive list of qualified professionals in the countries of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland
* To bring together the profession and speak with a united voice to promote the concept of rehabilitation and early intervention
* To protect the public from poor practice and promote public confidence in the vision rehabilitation profession
* To provide services to Vision Rehabilitation Workers
* To represent the profession in forums and networks within the visual impairment, health, social care and other sectors
* To work with other bodies to provide evidence of the size and distribution of the profession in the four countries of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland
* To use this evidence to identify strengths and weaknesses in the availability of professional rehabilitation services in these countries
* To develop a sound evidence base to inform and support bodies that provide Vision Rehabilitation Worker qualification training to ensure that standards are maintained and are appropriate to the needs of people using visual impairment rehabilitation services
* To establish a professional register of Vision Rehabilitation Workers to recognise an individual’s commitment to continual professional development and to safeguard the public
* To promote best rehabilitation practice by publicising events and sharing information, documents, statistics and evidence
* To work constructively with membership organisations in the vision sector with similar aims and objectives
* To raise funds by way of contributions, subscriptions, donations or any other lawful method

3. MEMBERSHIP

Membership of The Rehabilitation Workers’ Professional Network is open to workers who hold the following qualifications: Honours Degree in Rehabilitation Studies (visual impairment); Foundation Degree; Diploma in Higher Education in Rehabilitation Studies; BTEC Professional Diploma in Rehabilitation Studies (Visual Impairment) Level 5; Graduate Diploma in Habilitation and Disabilities of Sight (children and young people); Graduate Diploma in Low Vision Rehabilitation; Original Certificate in Rehabilitation Work; Combined Mobility Officer and Technical Officer Certificate.

Membership is also open at associate level to Rehabilitation Worker Assistants who have completed a formally accredited level 4 qualification in Rehabilitation Work. Membership is also open at associate level to workers holding the Diploma in Deafblind Studies. Neither of the qualifications will be recognised by RWPN as qualifications that entitle the holder to call themselves a Rehabilitation Worker/Officer. However RWPN recognises the essential role they play in supporting and developing independence and communication for visually impaired and deafblind people.

Membership as a student member is open to those who are training on a recognised Rehabilitation Worker, Rehabilitation Worker Assistant or Graduate Diploma in Habilitation and Disabilities of Sight qualification.

RWPN reserves the right to seek proof of qualification. It also reserves the right to refuse membership to or remove membership from any individual who is unable to prove that they have qualified with any of the above qualifications.

Membership requires any member to abide by RWPN’s Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

The committee may terminate the membership of any member whose continued membership would, in the reasonable view of the committee, be harmful to RWPN and in the opinion of RWPN, to the general public (but only after notifying the member concerned in writing and considering the matter in the light of any written representations which the member puts forward within 14 days after service of the notice).

If a membership fee is in place, membership will be deemed to have commenced when payment has been received. Membership will be deemed to have lapsed if payment is not received within 90 days of the time when payment is due.

4. MANAGEMENT

The Rehabilitation Workers’ Professional Network will be managed by a committee elected from the membership at an Annual General Meeting.

• The committee will be made up of: a member from each autonomous network of Vision Rehabilitation Workers in England and a member each from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland/Republic of Ireland and any other member deemed appropriate.

• There is no fixed term of office for office holders. However, the committee will nominate a chair, vice chair, secretary and treasurer annually at an Annual General Meeting.

• Committee members will be nominated and elected through the region or country they represent

* Minutes of committee meetings will be taken and posted on RWPN’s website.

• In the event of the resignation, retirement or death of an elected officer the vacancy will be filled until the next A.G.M. by nomination by the Committee.

• The quorum for a Committee meeting will be four of current committee members.

* The committee shall have the power to delegate such function as it sees fit to any sub-committee or board and to annul or vary any such delegation.
* Any board that is established for the governance of a professional register of Vision Rehabilitation Workers shall be able to make decisions that are independent (and seen to be independent) of the committee structure of RWPN. This is to ensure separation of powers between the professional body and such a register.

5. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Annual General Meetings will commence from 2014. A minimum of 21 day's notice of the meeting date and venue will be given.

At each AGM the Committee will:

• Report on the previous year's activities

• Give a financial report (if applicable) for the previous year

• Elect Committee members

• Put forward any proposed amendments to this constitution and/or any other properly notified business.

* At each AGM each member present in person or, from 2015, by proxy shall have one vote. All decisions will be made by a simple majority. In the case of equality of votes the Chair shall have a casting vote. The quorum for an AGM will be a figure of 20 members.
* Any change in the membership fee must be notified in advance (minimum 21 days) and voted on at an AGM.

6. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

The Committee may call a special general meeting at any time. A special general meeting can be called at any time by eight members. 21 days notice will be given to members of date, time and venue of the meeting and business to be discussed.

7. FINANCE

• All funds raised by or on behalf of the Rehabilitation Workers’ Professional Network will be used to further the aims of the group and for no other purpose.

* No member of the committee may receive any payment of money or other benefit from RWPN except for the reimbursement of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses actually incurred in the administration of RWPN.

• The treasurer will keep a proper record of the finances of the group reporting to the A.G.M.

• Any member will have the right to inspect the accounts on request, subject to appropriate notice.

• The Rehabilitation Workers’ Professional Network will hold any funds it holds in an account with a Bank or bank/building society as the Committee shall decide. This account will be in the organisation's name. Payments from the account will require two signatories. The treasurer will be required to authorise expenditure.

• A report of the year's income and expenses up to the end of the organisation’s accounting year will be prepared each year for presentation to members at the subsequent Annual General Meeting.

• No individual member will make any personal financial or material gain from the Rehabilitation Workers’ Professional Network funds. Legitimate expenses only will be met.

8. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

This constitution may only be altered at a properly notified and quorate General Meeting by a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the members present. Notice of the meeting must have been sent out 21 days beforehand and must include details of the proposed changes.

9. DISSOLUTION

If the Committee decides that, on the grounds of finance or otherwise, it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the group, it will call a meeting of all members giving not less than 21 days notice of the resolution to be considered. If such a decision is approved by a simple two-thirds majority of those members present and voting, The Rehabilitation Workers’ Professional Network will be dissolved.

In this event any assets remaining after the payment of proper debts will be transferred to a charity of the members' choice or a voluntary organisation with similar aims.

Signed: Simon Labbett

On behalf of the Rehabilitation Workers’ Professional Network

Date: 28.6.19