

## Preface of Terminologia Anatomica (1998 edition)

This book on anatomical terminology is the joint creation of the Federative Committee on Anatomical Terminology (FCAT) and the 56 Member Associations of the International Federation of Associations of Anatomists (IFMA). The IFMA is the only international body representing all aspects of anatomy and anatomical associations.

At the General Assembly of the Federative World Congress of Anatomy, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in August 1989, the FCAT was elected. Its objectives were defined thus: *“To present the official terminology of the anatomical sciences after consultation with all the members of the International Federation of Associations of Anatomists, thus ensuring a democratic input to the terminology.”*

Anatomical terminology is the foundation of medical terminology and it is important that doctors and scientists throughout the world use the same name for each structure.

The FCAT has met on several occasions since its inception:

- Nancy, France 11 September 1990
- Toronto, Canada 4 July 1991
- Nottingham, England 23 July 1992
- Barcelona, Spain 21 July 1993
- Utrecht, The Netherlands 6 to 8 April 1994
- Lisbon, Portugal 21 to 30 July 1994
- Southampton, England 14 to 17 December 1994
- Thessaloniki, Greece 23 to 27 September 1995
- San Jose, Costa Rica 12 to 16 February 1996
- Jena, Germany 25 to 26 March 1996
- Fribourg, Switzerland 15 to 19 July 1996
- New Orleans, USA 5 to 9 April 1997
- São Paulo, Brazil 25 to 28 August 1997
- Mainz, Germany 14 to 19 February 1998

Early attempts to establish a working relationship with a previous terminology committee (the JANCO) were unsuccessful and the FCAT has worked towards its objectives by reviewing and revising the Latin terminology, with the addition of a list of English terms in common usage. The FCAT has tried to avoid unnecessary change and has adopted many alternatives in common usage in order to encompass the variable way in which the terminology is used in different countries.

During 1996 a final draft of the terminology for macroscopic anatomy was sent to all the Member Associations of the IFM for comment. The present work incorporates changes suggested by these Member Associations.

The FCAT is continuing work on histology, cytology, embryology, dental terminology and anthropology and hopes to present these works in published form soon. Future plans include a dictionary of anatomical terms, an illustrated terminology and electronic forms.

The terms are laid out in three columns, with each Latin term accompanied by a term in current usage in English-speaking countries. Alongside each pair is a unique identification number. The order in which the terms are set out follows the anatomy naturally through each system. Indentation and heading styles are used to indicate the relationship of one term to another. The book is completed by a comprehensive index of Latin and English terms and an index of eponyms that identifies the number of the appropriate non-eponymous term.

Only the Latin list of terms should be used as the basis for creating lists of equivalent terms in other languages. English equivalents are given in this list as English is spoken in many countries. It is not the basis for terminology in other languages.

The committee invites constructive comments from all quarters for consideration for future editions.

Having been adopted by the IFM this terminology supersedes all previous lists.

July 1998

Ian Whitmore, Chairman FCAT