



## Constitution of

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<b>Officer Champion</b>	Danny Humby	
<b>Staff Champion</b>	Philip Kloppenborg	
<b>Version Number</b>	2021 Version 1.0	
<b>Approval bodies and date passed</b>	Head of Student Engagement Student Communities Manager Union Coordinator	
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**Article 1. Society Name**

- a. The name of this Society is the..... Throughout this document it will be referred to as 'the Society'.

**Article 2. Society Description**

- a. XXXX

**Article 3. Aims and Objectives**

- a. The main objectives of the society are XXXX
- b. A motion to amend these objectives can be submitted to the Society's Annual General Meeting.

**Article 4. Governance**

- a. This Constitution establishes the autonomy of the XXX Society under the supportive umbrella of Solent Students' Union, but for the avoidance of doubt, the XXX Society shall not be considered legally separate from Solent Students' Union.
- b. Governance of the Society shall be in accordance with; starting with the highest authority:
  - i) the Articles of Association of Solent Students' Union;
  - ii) the Bye-Laws of Solent Students' Union; and
  - iii) this Constitution.
- c. The Board of Trustees of Solent Students' Union may, from time to time, insert any 'standard clauses' deemed fit and necessary into the constitution of all societies. If this is the case the Society Committee will be notified in advance and will be made aware of when this shall take effect.
- d. The Society shall have a number of key decision-making bodies. Starting with that of highest authority, they are the following,
  - i) The Annual General Meeting and Extraordinary General Meeting consisting of all Members of the Society;
  - ii) The Society General Meeting consisting of all Members of the Society;
  - iii) The Society Committee Meeting consisting of all elected Committee Members; and
  - iv) The Society Executive Committee Meeting consisting of the three (3) compulsory Committee positions.
- e. This constitution should be read alongside the Union's Memorandum and Articles of Association and Bye Laws, Student Handbook and other Union policies. These can be found on the website.

#### Article 5. Recognition of Society

- a. A society may be affiliated to the Students Union, provided that:
  - i) The new societies application form is completed.
  - ii) It has 5 members, which are full members of the union.
  - iii) The aims and objectives do not contravene Union policy.
  - iv) The aims and objectives are not duplicating an existing club or society.
  - v) The Student Communities Manager and Union Coordinator agree to the creation, assisted by the Head of Student Engagement. Following the society constitution/creation process.
- b. As a recognised Solent Students' Union society, there are several benefits in becoming affiliated to the Union:
  - 1) Support in booking rooms in the University. This should be conducted through the Communities department.
  - 2) An email account and a society page on the website.
  - 3) Societies will not have to process their finances. This will be done on their behalf through the Communities department, who will liaise with the Finance department.
  - 4) Support from the Head of Student Engagement and the Communities department.
  - 5) A free stall at Fresher's Fayre and any society fayre throughout the year based on availability. However, these need to be applied for via the correct form.
  - 6) Access to any Student Union opportunities.
  - 7) Potential access to the additional funding.

**Commented [FA1]:** Article 5AV currently all student groups that apply to become affiliated society members send their Application form to the student involvement inbox which is monitored by the whole communities team. The application gets forwarded on to all 4 sabbatical officers where we each read through the applications and ensure that it meets the values of the union and does not contradict the Union policy. We then have to vote to either approve or not approve the society. if the full team approve the society then it will be approved and if one of more member of the sabbs disapprove, the reasoning for this will be investigated and a decision will be made after.

#### Article 6. Amendments to this constitution

- a. A quorate Annual General Meeting of the Society shall be the sole body to amend the non-'standard clauses' of this Constitution.
  - i. It is the communities team responsibility to ensure that any agreed changes are changed, in writing, within the individual constitution.
- b. The Board of Trustees may, from time to time, amend the 'standard clauses' of this Constitution as it sees fit. The Society will be notified of any changes.
- c. Any proposed amendments must be presented to the Student Communities Manager for approval at least twenty eight (28) days before the Annual General Meeting of the Society and may not include amendments to the 'standard clauses' as established by the Board of Trustees.
  - i. The communities team has the right to deny any agreed changes to this constitution, should it not align with any Solent Union policies, procedures or aims.



- d. All amendments to the Constitution shall require a two thirds (67%) majority of Society members.

#### Article 7. Interpretation

- a. In the event of a dispute as to the interpretation of any part of the Constitution a ruling of the Student Communities Manager shall be sought.
- b. In the event of a challenge to the Student Communities Manager's ruling the decision of the Head of Engagement shall be final.
- c. Although the decision is final it can be raised and scrutinised at a society committee meeting.

#### Article 8. Membership

- a. For a Society to be considered active and receive support from Solent Students' Union it must maintain at least five (5) active Members, the majority of whom must be current students of Solent University.
- b. Full Membership is open to all current members of Solent Students' Union.
- c. Associate Membership is available to certain non-members of Solent Students' Union but will be subject to an additional fee proposed by the Student Communities Manager to Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees.
- d. Staff members of the Students' Union cannot vote or hold a committee position in a society and are also classed as Associate Members.
- e. Carers may accompany members to any society meeting or event however cannot benefit nor take part in any democratic process unless they are also full members of that society.
- f. For the avoidance of doubt, persons shall only be considered Members if they have paid their membership for that academic year. This is the same as associate memberships however they must first pay the associate membership fee, as stated in article 8c.

**Commented [FA2]:** Usually set at around £5 this hasn't been discussed with me specifically so I would agree in that this would be a discussion point for you and society committee leaders

#### Article 9. Membership entitlement

- a. All Members of the Society, whether Full or Associate, shall be entitled to:
  - i) Attend, speak and place items on the agenda at all Society Annual General Meetings, Extraordinary General Meetings and General Meetings;
  - ii) Partake in Society events; and
  - iii) Inspect the Society accounts at seven (7) calendar days notice. For clarity this notice period starts after Union staff members are informed, not from when the committee are informed of the request.
- b. All Full Members of the Society are also entitled to:
  - i) Stand and vote in Society Committee Elections; and
  - ii) Vote at all Society Annual General Meetings, Extraordinary General Meetings and General Meetings.

**Commented [FA3]:** Judith - Finance Manager will be in control of this

**Article 10. The Executive Committee**

- a. The Executive Committee shall have a minimum of three (3) members.
  - i) The following committee positions are considered a part of the executive committee: President, Vice President and Treasurer.
- b. The Executive Committee is responsible for:
  - ii) Upholding, and operating within, the stated objectives of the Society;
  - iii) Adhering to this Constitution;
  - iv) Promoting the society and attracting membership;
  - v) The day-to-day running of the Society;
  - vi) Ensuring the Society's compliance with all policy and procedures of Solent Students' Union and Solent University;
  - vii) Preparing and producing the agendas and minutes for any meetings held;
  - viii) Devising, with Solent Students' Union support, an annual budget;
  - ix) Devising, with Solent Students' Union support, an Annual Report;
  - x) The representation of the society at relevant Solent Students' Union and Solent University functions; and
  - xi) Organising Committee handovers.

**Article 11. Executive and committee positions**

- a. The Society will fill the following Executive positions.
  - i) President: The President is the lead of the society and has general oversight of all its activities. This includes the effective management of the society as well as the other committee members.
  - ii) Vice President: The Vice-President provides a key support role to the president, supporting in all areas of the society that are required. This could include, but is not limited to, creating and running events, taking minutes at meetings, social media platform management and various organisational duties.
  - iii) Treasurer: The treasurer takes a lead role in all society funding and finance matters. This includes any sponsorship activity, society spending and asset management.
- b. For detailed role descriptions please reference 'Solent Students' Union Society Committee Job Role Descriptions' document.
- c. The Committee may decide annually which, if any, additional positions are applicable, subject to approval by the Head of Engagement and Student Communities Manager.
- d. An Executive Committee Officer is not permitted to assume any other Executive positions.
- e. A Society member may hold more than one non-executive position

**Commented [FA4]:** Not 100% sure who would usually approve all committee roles but obviously all sabbs get a say in approval of the Society. I would agree and say that the Head of Student Engagement and Student Communities Manager should definitely have a say in this.

**Article 12. Election of committee members**

- a. Every year the Society will hold elections for all the Committee positions. The Society shall be advised of the elections scheduled by the Student Communities Manager and the Union Coordinator by the end of March each year. Those elected will take post from 1st July.
- b. Details of the Election must be sent to the Head of Student Engagement and the Union Coordinator at least 7 days before the nomination period opens, so the election can be set up on the website.
- c. Sabbatical Officers are not eligible to run for committee positions.
- d. Nominations.
  - i) All Full Members shall be entitled to stand for any position; and
  - ii) There is no limit to the number of terms a candidate can serve in any one position.
  - iii) The option to Re-open Nominations (RON) must be available for each position.
- e. Campaigning:
  - i) The society shall give consideration as to how candidates will be able to communicate their objectives to voting members.
- f. Voting
  - i) The vote shall be hosted via Solent Students' Union online platform.
  - ii) The vote shall be by Single non-transferable Vote of Full Members.
  - iii) Voting will be open for a period of 4 days.
  - iv) The quorum for a valid election is at least 10% of Full Members.
  - v) The Union Coordinator, or representative, shall act as the returning officer for the count of votes.
  - vi) Under exceptional circumstances, if your society cannot hold an election through the website, your society may have the option to hold an election via email or show of hands at an AGM. This will be conducted by the Union Coordinator. This will be at the discretion of the Head of Student Engagement.

Commented [FA5]: This year voting was open from Monday 5th April at 9am until Friday 9th April 15:00 so for a total of 4 days

### Article 13. Co-option

- a. If for any reason a Committee Member is temporarily unable to fulfil their position the Society Committee may co-opt another Full Member into that role.
- b. This process should be carried out as an emergency measure only, taking into account the specific circumstances, and must follow a request of the Committee Member to temporarily relinquish their duties.
- c. The process for co-option is:
  - i) The Committee Member must notify the Society President, Head of Engagement and the Student Communities Manager of their intention in writing or via email.
  - ii) The co-opted member can only serve for a maximum of two (2) months until another co-opt vote will be required.
  - iii) The co-opted member must step down either:
    - 1. When the original post holder is able to resume their duties; or

2. When the two (2) month time limit has been reached and a by-election for that position must be held.

#### Article 14. Resignation

- a. When a Committee Member wants to resign from their post they must notify the President of the society, Head of Engagement and the Student communities Manager of their intention via email.
  - i) If the President, of the society, wishes to resign they must first inform the Vice President of the Society before notifying the Head of Student Engagement and the Student Communities Manager.
- b. Resignations will, up until the end of February, trigger a by-election for that position.
- c. Vacancies from March onwards will remain vacant, or co-opted according to Article 13, until such a time when the Committee-position elect is able to assume the role.

#### Article 15. Committee handover

- a. The President, with the assistance of the Committee, Head of Engagement and the Union coordinator is responsible for arranging, facilitating and cooperating in the handover from one year to the next.
- b. Handover shall include all knowledge, documentation (physical and electronic), social media accounts, equipment and assets and any other property.

#### Article 16. Society Annual General Meeting (AGM)

- a. The purpose of an AGM is to:
  - i) Approve the Annual Report of the previous year;
  - ii) Approve the Financial Report of the previous year; and
  - iii) Prepare plans for the following academic year.
- b. The Society's AGM will be held near the end of the academic year, always before the end of July.
- c. The AGM shall be called by one of the executive committee or the Head of Engagement.
- d. Solent Students' Union and Society Members must be notified of the AGM meeting electronically at least fourteen (14) days in advance. This notification shall include the time, place and purpose of the Meeting, along with a call for any additional Agenda items.
- e. The Agenda shall be based upon the standard template issued by Solent Students' Union with items added at the request of Members. Additional Agenda items must be received no later than seven (7) days in advance of the AGM.
- f. The AGM shall be chaired by the President of the society, or if the President is not available the chair shall be voted upon by the Meeting.
- g. The Vice President shall take the minutes of the Meeting, unless elected as chair. In which case the treasurer would minute the meeting.

Commented [FA6]: I can send over a previous agenda example?

Commented [PK7R6]: That might be helpful, thank you, I would be interested in that.

Commented [PK8R6]:

- h. Associate Members are entitled to place items on the agenda, attend and speak but may not vote.
- i. Full Members are entitled to place items on the agenda, attend, speak and vote.
- g. Solent Students' Union representatives are not required to attend however, representatives are entitled to attend.
- h. Quorum for an AGM shall be 10%+1 of all Full Members. (This is to align with the society council quoracy level).

**Commented [FA9]:** Optional but not compulsory hat SU staff attend. Head of student engagement will usually attend as a liaison but does not get a vote and can only really give updates or ask for feedback.

#### Article 17. Society Extraordinary General Meeting

- a. EGM's can be called if a matter of importance needs to be discussed e.g. changes to the Committee or by-election(s).
- b. EGM's may be called by:
  - i. A majority vote of the Society Committee;
  - ii. A petition of 25% of all Members;
- c. The operation of the EGM shall be the same as an AGM,
- d. The Head of Student Engagement must be invited to the EGM as an impartial observer. If unavailable, another Sabbatical Officer may take their place.

**Commented [PK10]:** If the AGM meetings were to go to individual soc meetings. Would this work? Could we guarantee this many students attend to ensure quoracy? Especially with the larger socs

#### Article 18. General meetings

- a. The purpose of the General Meetings is:
  - i. 'For members to give feedback on all matters that relate to the society';
- b. A General Meeting shall be called by the Vice President, either;
  - i. At the request of the President;
  - ii. At the request of the majority of the Society's Committee; or
  - iii. At the request of 10% of all Members.
- c. Society Members must be notified of the General Meeting electronically at least seven (7) days in advance. This notification shall include the time, place and purpose of the Meeting, along with a call for any additional Agenda items which must be received no later than twenty four (24) hours in advance of the Meeting.
- d. The Vice President shall take the minutes of the Meeting.
- e. Associate Members are entitled to place items on the agenda, attend and speak, but not vote.
- f. Full Members are entitled to place items on the agenda, attend, speak and vote.
- g. Solent Students' Union representatives are not required to attend however, representatives are entitled to attend.

**Commented [FA11]:** Optional but not compulsory hat SU staff attend. Head of student engagement will usually attend as a liaison but does not get a vote and can only really give updates or ask for feedback.

#### Article 19. Society committee meetings

- a. The Society's Committee consists of persons of all properly elected positions, as detailed in Article 11 and 12.
- b. The purpose of these meetings are to:

- i. 'Organise socials and events (e.g. Christmas, student pride), look at and discuss feedback from members.'
- ii. 'To review the overall functionality and day to day running of the society.'
- c. Committee Meetings will be called by the President, or at least two other members of the Executive Committee.
- d. The Committee must be notified of the Meeting electronically at least seven (7) days in advance. All Committee members are entitled to be present and participate at a Committee Meeting.

#### Article 20. Membership fees

- a. The membership fee for the society will be set annually at an agreed level by the Executive Committee and Solent Students' Union.
- b. Societies can charge a membership fee, of which the minimum is £5, or run a free society. To run a free society, proof must be provided to the Communities Department that there are no running costs, by registering a completed a budget plan.
  - i. The move from paid to free membership cannot be made mid-year.
  - ii. The move from free to paid membership cannot be made mid-year.
  - iii. The membership fee amount also cannot be changed mid-year.
- c. Membership to the Society must be purchased online.
- d. Membership is valid from the date purchased until the 31<sup>st</sup> of June, unless only half membership is purchased. In which case membership would expire half way through the academic year. This date will be determined by the Head of Student Engagement in conjunction with the Union's Finance department and its procedures.
- e. Members should be aware that their membership fee does not necessarily cover all costs and society activities. Other costs may occur during the year.
- f. The Society should assist Solent Students' Union in ensuring that only students or associates who have paid for membership are active within the Society. Any society found to have unpaid but active members will be subject to the disciplinary procedures set out in the Bye-Laws of Solent Students' Union.
- g. Solent Students' Union shall not be held or considered liable for the actions or injury of any student or associate who has not purchased the appropriate membership.
- h. Under the United Kingdom's distance selling regulations, those who have purchased a membership to a society have a Fourteen day cooling off period during which they have the right to cancel the membership and receive a full refund. This should be requested through the Community Department.
  - i. Within the Fourteen days, no reason is needs to be given to cancel the membership. To receive a refund, a valid receipt must be presented. If there is no receipt, a refund cannot be given.
  - ii. An additional 7-day taster period is offered; the Union may refund up to 75 % of the membership costs within this period. For the sake of clarity, the taster

**Commented [FA12]:** Mutual agreement is made between the society and the community team about the set fee for their society and this will be reviewed and if changed the reasons for a change in cost will be discussed.

period begins 15 days after the time and date of purchase and ceases 21 days after the time and date of purchase. Thereafter no refund will be given.

- iii. If a member chooses to cancel the membership after 21 days of the original payment (including the fourteen day cooling off period and an additional fourteen days to allow for taster sessions and trials), then the Union will not refund the payment as it is considered that the individual will have benefited from being an active member by having access to member information, obtaining any associated discounts, and participated in activity.
- iv. The Communities department must inform the Finance Department immediately when a refund has been requested.
- v. All the relevant communications about the refund must be forwarded to the Finance department. Only the Finance department can issue the refunds through the MSL system.

**Article 21. Society Finance**

- a. Solent Students' Union will hold the Society's 'bank accounts'.
- b. Solent Students' Unions Finance Policy & Procedures should be followed by the Society and all Members at all times, including when sourcing any sponsorship.
- c. Society membership money and any additional funding may only be spent in pursuit of the aims and objectives of the Society as outlined within this Constitution.
- d. Any work undertaken by a person on behalf of the Society (i.e. driving the minibus) is deemed voluntary and that person is not entitled to seek payment for their services.
- e. The Treasurer must submit a proposed budget to the Union Coordinator by the end of September. The Student Communities Manager will assist with this if requested to do so. This budget must detail the proposed activities of the Society for the year.
- f. To request additional funding from the Union, a completed Additional Funding Application Form (including Risk Assessment) must be submitted within this timeframe to be considered for funding. Please be prepared, if requested, to provide 3 quotes from 3 different suppliers if applying for equipment/assets. These quotes must be from a UK supplier in Great British Pounds (£) and not Dollars or Euros.
  - i. Applications are open between 1st September and 31<sup>st</sup> January annually.
  - ii. There are 2 decision dates for the funding rounds which close on 31st October and 31st January.
  - iii. The total additional funding amount is split between these deadlines by (a 50%, 50% split respectively) so that one bid does not use up the entire budget.
  - iv. Funding requests are reviewed within 14 days (if applying for under £300) and within 21 days (if applying for over £300) of the application deadline.
  - v. Requests below £300 will be reviewed by the Student Communities Manager and Head of Student Engagement.
  - vi. Requests above £300 will be taken to the Students' Union Leadership Team. The Leadership team normally meet once every 2 weeks.

- vii. There is no limit to how many requests a society or student group can submit in an academic year, however your previous applications will be taken into consideration.
- viii. Additional funding cannot be applied for items that your society or student group have already purchased.
- ix. Successful applicants must spend their funds within 28 days of the confirmation date, April successful applicants must spend their funds by 31st of May.
- g. Any money remaining in the Society's account at the end of the academic year will roll over to the following year.
- h. Neither the Society, nor Solent Students' Union, accepts any liability for any debt or other obligation incurred by the Committee or other Members, whether or not it is incurred on behalf of the Society.
- i. Any society or Society Member found to be operating outside of Article 21 may be suspended pending an investigation in accordance with the Code of Conduct and the Bye-Laws of Solent Students' Union.

**Article 22. Complaints**

- a. Complaints regarding Society business should at first attempted to be resolved informally within the Society.
- b. If it has not been possible to agree on a resolution then the Head of Engagement and the Student Communities Manager should be called on for guidance and potential arbitration.
- c. Complaints of a personal nature shall not be considered under the governance of this Constitution or the Bye-Laws of Solent Students' Union unless it is determined by the Head of Engagement, or representative, that a material breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred relating to the operation of the society.
- d. All students are subject to the Student Procedures of Solent University at all times.

**Article 23. Vote of No Confidence (VNC)**

- a. Members of the Society's Committee may be removed by a vote of no confidence.
  - i. A VNC can either be submitted by a signed petition (with signatures from, at least, 51% of the society's membership).
  - ii. The completed petition needs to be forwarded to all members of the society's committee and the Head of Student Engagement.
  - i. An Emergency General Meeting (EGM) must then be called, with the announcement of dates and times to members at least 7 days before it is due to take place.
  - ii. The Head of Student Engagement must be invited to the EGM as an impartial observer. If unavailable, another Sabbatical Officer may take their place.
  - iii. For the VNC to be passed there must be a majority vote.

- b. For the avoidance of doubt, removal from a Committee position does not equate to removal from membership of the Society but it does prohibit that person from running for the same position again or being co-opted into any position within the Society.
- c. If the VNC is not passed, the committee member shall continue in their position.
  - i. If the VNC is not passed, another VNC against the same person cannot be presented until 28 days after the vote.
  - ii. If a new VNC is introduced after 28 days it must be based on new material. If it is too close in nature to the original VNC, the Communities Manager, with the approval of the Head of Student Engagement, may dismiss it.

**Article 24. Removal of members**

- a. Members may have their membership removed by Members of the Society.
- b. In order to remove a Member a petition must be circulated amongst all Members of the Society and achieve a two thirds majority of all Members.
- c. If a petition that has a two thirds majority has been achieved, the petition organiser must notify the Society President, the Head of Engagement and the Student Communities Manager.
- d. To be accepted by Solent Students' Union this petition must hold a minimum of two thirds of Full Members' names and associated signatures (or, should the petition be circulated electronically, associated student ID numbers) at the time the petition is received.
- e. For the avoidance of doubt, removal of membership of the Society prohibits that person from re-joining the Society at any stage, but does not prohibit that person from continued participation in or joining other Solent societies.

**Article 25. Disbanding the society**

- a. If it is deemed by the Committee, with a two thirds majority vote at an AGM or EGM, that the Society is no longer viable then it may be disbanded.
  - i. However, the society should go through all steps, deemed reasonable, to try and ensure the long term viability of the society.
  - ii. At least 1 Students' Union representative should be in attendance for such a vote.
  - iii. If a majority vote is achieved the society's committee must create a report detailing the reasons why the society is no longer viable and the steps taken to try avoid this.
  - iv. This report should be sent to the Head of Engagement and the Student Communities Manager.
  - v. A small panel, made up of the Head of Engagement, Students Communities Manager and Union Coordinator should meet to discuss whether or not all reasonable steps were taken to ensure viability of the society.



- vi. If deemed that there are more steps that can be taken the Students Communities manager should communicate this back to the society.
  - vii. If the report is accepted by the panel the Student Communities Manager will confirm this with the report sender.
  - viii. The Union Coordinator will then ensure the society is moved onto the adoption list.
- b. If the Society is deemed to be dormant, for example is on the adoption list (with no activity) for over three years, the Union may also disband the Society, with the agreement of the Head of Engagement.

**Article 26. Declaration**

- a. As President, I declare that I have read this Constitution in its entirety and do hereby agree to be bound and uphold this Constitution both in letter and spirit.
- b. By signing below I agree to and shall abide by:
  - i. The values of Solent Students' Union;
  - ii. The Articles of Association of Solent Students' Union;
  - iii. The Bye-Laws of Solent Students' Union;
  - iv. Solent Students' Unions Code of Conduct;
  - v. The Data Protection Policy and Data Handling Agreements;
  - vi. All Union and University policies relating to social media;
  - vii. Any other current reasonable and relevant policy and procedure of Solent Students' Union; and
  - viii. The rules, policies and procedures that I am bound to as a Solent University student.
- c. I understand that any breach of Article 26 is likely to result in sanction and/or removal from elected office.

**Signed**

<b>Philip Kloppenborg, Student Communities Manager</b>	
<b>Danny Humby, Head of Engagement 2021/22</b>	
<b>XXXXX, XXXXX President 2021/22</b>	
<b>Date</b>	