

# CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY LIBERAL ASSOCIATION

## CONSTITUTION

### 1. NAME AND OBJECTS

- a. The society shall be called "Cambridge University Liberal Association", hereinafter referred to as the Association or the Society.
  - i. The Association's previous names shall also be legitimate ways to refer to the Association, namely: "Cambridge University Liberal Club", "Cambridge University Social Democrats", "Cambridge University Liberal Democrats", and "Cambridge Student Liberal Democrats".
- b. The objects of the Association shall be to:
  - i. Provide a place for members of the University of Cambridge (hereinafter referred to as "the University") to meet and discuss liberal politics.
  - ii. Encourage members of the University to join the Liberal Democrats (hereinafter referred to as "the Party") and participate in its activities.
  - iii. Campaign for the election of Liberal Democrats to positions at all levels of government and bodies representing members of the University.
  - iv. Promote the interests of members of the University in the policy making of the Party.

### 2. MEMBERSHIP

- a. Membership shall be granted at the discretion of the Committee, subject to the payment of a subscription set by the Committee.
- b. Membership shall be granted for life.
- c. Life members of any previous iteration of the Association shall remain members of the Association.
- d. All members of the University resident in Cambridge, full-time employees of the University (including its constituent faculties and colleges), and students of the Judge Business School shall be eligible to apply for membership.

- e. The Committee may offer Honorary Life Membership to any member of the Party not otherwise eligible for membership if they are deemed by the Committee to make a valuable contribution to the Association. No subscription is payable by Honorary Life Members, and they are not members for the purpose of Sections 4 to 6.
- f. The Committee may expel or suspend a member whose actions are felt to be such as to bring the Society into disrepute, or to adversely affect the smooth running of the Society in a major way. This shall be performed in accordance with Section 7 and any person expelled shall have the right of appeal to the Senior Treasurer.
- g. Committee may by a two-thirds majority vote to grant membership to any individual they wish. The Committee shall have the discretionary right to offer membership to any individual they wish to.
  - i. This is in special regard to a liaison from the local branch of the Party.

### 3. PARTY AFFILIATION

- a. The Association shall affiliate to the Party's youth and student organisation.

### 4. THE OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

- a. The affairs of the Association shall be administered by a Committee which shall determine the subscriptions payable by the members, and have ultimate responsibility for the activities of the Association. The Committee shall have control of the funds and property of the Association, and of its administration.
- b. The quorum for a Committee meeting shall be half of the Officers present, to include the Chair.
- c. It is preferred to meet in person, but from time to time, where necessary, remote meetings of the Committee are permitted.
- d. The Officers of the Society shall be the Chair, Secretary, Junior Treasurer, Campaigns Officer, Social Events Officer, Speakers Officer, Membership Development & Alumni Officer, Communications Officer, Women's/Non-Binary Officer, Senior Treasurer, Ex-Chairs *In Statu Pupillari*, and such roles defined by the outgoing Committee.
- e. The Officers must be members of the Society who continue to satisfy Section 2(d). However, if an Officer's membership is suspended by the Committee as per Section 7.b. then they shall not be deemed to have resigned their role

until a two-thirds majority dismisses them, as per Section 5.e. The Officers must be members of the Society. However, if an Officer's membership is suspended by the Committee as per Section 7.b., then they shall not be deemed to have resigned their role until a two-thirds majority dismisses them, as per 5.e.

- f. The members of the Committee (with the exceptions of the Senior Treasurer and the Ex-Chairs *In Statu Pupillari*) shall be elected by the members of the Association annually, and shall be eligible for re-election. The members of the Association shall not elect several individuals to jointly hold any of the offices. The Chair, Secretary, and Junior Treasurer may only hold one office, but other offices may be held in plurality.
- g. The first task of a new Committee upon its election each year shall be to appoint a member of the Regent House as the Senior Treasurer and a member of the committee (excluding the Chair and Secretary) to act as Vice Chair.
- h. If during the period between the annual elections to offices any vacancies occur amongst members of the Committee, the Committee shall have the power of filling the vacancy or vacancies up to the next election by co-option. In case of the removal of the Chair from office or of their illness, resignation, or death, the Vice-Chair shall assume their duties as Acting Chair until a by-election can be held. Such a by-election should take place at an Extraordinary General Meeting, called by the Vice Chair within two weeks of University full term of the Chair leaving office.
- i. Each office holder must, on relinquishing their office, promptly hand to their successor in Office (or to another member of the Association nominated by the Committee) all official documents and records belonging to the Association, together with any other property of the Association which may be in their possession; and must complete any requirements to transfer authority relating to control of the Association's bank accounts and any other financial affairs.
- j. Ex-Chairs are eligible to be members of the Committee with attending and speaking rights at meetings of the Committee, and shall hold the office of Ex-Chair *In Statu Pupillari*. They shall not have the power to vote in such meetings. These rights last for as long as the Ex-Chair remains *in statu pupillari*.
- k. The new Officers shall take their roles at the second midnight after the meeting at which they were elected has closed, by which time the arrangements for the handover of any documents must have taken place.

- l. The roles of the Officers shall be defined according to the Association's Standing Orders.
- m. From time to time, the Committee may choose to co-opt members for new roles, those roles decided by the Committee and ceasing to exist after becoming vacant. The Committee must vote to open nominations and must vote to accept co-options, giving at least one week of Full Term for individuals to nominate themselves. Nominees shall be subject to eligibility requirements decided by the Committee. Committee Members co-opted in this manner shall:
  - i. Similar to 4.h., have the right to attend and speak at meetings of the Committee.
  - ii. Not have the power to vote at meetings of the Committee.
  - iii. Not factor whatsoever into the calculation of quoracy in meetings of the Committee.
  - iv. Be deemed as Officers for the purposes of their own resignation, missing meetings, and censure.

For the avoidance of doubt, members co-opted according to 4.h., (i.e. for vacancies in existing roles) shall not be subject to the restrictions under this section.

- n. The Chair and the Campaigns Officer must be Members of the Party, or of another party affiliated with the Party. If Party or affiliated party membership is resigned by the Officer, they shall be deemed to have resigned their position, unless the rest of the Committee votes by simple majority to keep them in office. It shall be decided by the Returning Officer(s) whether a candidate for the role of Chair or Campaigns Officer meets this requirement.

## **5. REMOVAL AND RESIGNATION OF OFFICERS**

- a. Any officer may tender their resignation in writing to the Committee.
- b. Any officer who misses more than three meetings of the Committee in a term shall be deemed to have resigned their position, unless in the fourth missed meeting the rest of the Committee votes by a simple majority to keep them in office.
- c. Whenever the Chair transmits to the Secretary their written declaration that they are unable to discharge the duties of their office, and until they transmit to them a written declaration to the contrary, such duties shall be discharged by

the Vice Chair as Acting Chair.

- d. Whenever two or more of the Officers provide their written declaration to the Committee that the Chair is unable to discharge the duties of their office, and subject to the two-thirds majority agreement of the Officers, the Chair shall be removed from office. The Chair in question has the right of appeal as set out in paragraph 7.i.
- e. Officers other than the Chair may be dismissed subject to a vote of censure carried by a two-thirds majority at a meeting of the Committee. The Committee must be given at least one week's notice of the meeting by the Chair and officers may transmit their vote in writing to the Chair should they be unable to attend. The Officer in question has right of appeal as set out in paragraph 7.i.

## 6. MEETINGS

- a. There shall be an Annual General Meeting for all the members of the Association in every Lent Term, convened by the Secretary on not less than fourteen days' notice.
- b. The Annual General Meeting will:
  - v. receive the annual report of the Committee for the previous year and the annual accounts of the Association for the previous year, the report and accounts having been approved by the Committee;
  - vi. consider any motions, whether political, general, or constitutional amendments, of which due notice has been given to the Secretary, and any other relevant business.
- c. An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called in any Full Term by the Chair, Secretary, or Junior Treasurer, on not less than seven days' notice; or on a written requisition by ten or more members, stating the reason for which the meeting is to be called, and delivered to the Secretary not less than fourteen days before the date of the Meeting.
- d. Prior to all General Meetings notice of the agenda shall be sent out with the notice of the Meeting by the Secretary. Amendments to the agenda must be sent out at least 24 hours before the meeting.
- e. The quorum for a General Meeting shall be six members present in person, of whom three must be members of the Committee including the Chair or Vice Chair as Acting Chair.

- f. Every matter, except where this Constitution provides otherwise, shall be determined by a majority of members present and voting. In the case of equal votes the Chair shall have the casting vote. Constitutional amendments shall require a two-thirds majority to pass.
- g. General Meetings may only be held in a Cambridge University full term.
- h. The Committee shall meet no fewer than two times during each University Full Term, and no fewer than eight times during University Full Term over each academic year.

## 7. DISCIPLINARY PROCESS

- a. The Society may expel or suspend a member whose actions are felt to be such as to bring the Society into disrepute, or to adversely affect the smooth running of the Society in a major way.
- b. A suspension can only be effected by a majority vote of all voting members of Committee (excluding Ex-Chairs *In Statu Pupillari* and the Senior Treasurer) and expulsion by a two-thirds vote of such officers.
- c. A suspension is considered indefinite unless stated otherwise by the Committee. Any new Committee shall vote to re-confirm or lift all active suspensions at the start of their term.
- d. In the event of a suspension or expulsion, and unless decided otherwise by the Committee, the excluded member is required to return all equipment, documents and finances belonging to the Society within 7 days.
- e. A member who is suspended or expelled shall not be entitled to attend any society events – even if that event is open to non-members. They shall also not be entitled to a vote at any General Meeting of the Society.
- f. No member who is expelled or suspended shall be entitled to any full or partial refund of their membership fee.
- g. A suspension can only be lifted by majority vote of all voting members of Committee (excluding Ex-Chairs *In Statu Pupillari* and the Senior Treasurer) and expulsion by a two-thirds vote of such officers.
- h. The Secretary shall maintain a list of all members who have been suspended or excluded.

- i. A member who is suspended or excluded or an officer of the Society who is dismissed may appeal the decision to the Senior Treasurer, who will consider all the facts, and whose decision will be final. An appeal as to the process of exclusion, but not a further investigation into the facts, may be lodged with the Junior Proctor.

## **8. THE HONORARY OFFICERS**

- a. The Society shall have a President and up to four Vice-Presidents.
- b. Honorary Officers shall be appointed by motion of the General Meeting, on the nomination of the Committee.
- c. Honorary Officers may be dismissed by motion of the General Meeting, carried by a two-thirds majority.
- d. Honorary Officers shall be members of the Party.

## **9. LIABILITY OF OFFICERS**

- a. The Association may not authorise spending for which funds are not already available.
- b. The Chair and Junior Treasurer are responsible for ensuring compliance with this article, and may veto any Committee proposal which would violate it.
- c. The Chair and Junior Treasurer shall be liable for any Society debts resulting from a breach of this rule.
- d. The Senior Treasurer shall under no circumstances be liable for Society debts except for:
  - i. Debts resulting from spending authorised by them in writing.
  - ii. Debts resulting from negligence in their duties as Senior Treasurer.

## **10. STANDING ORDERS**

- a. Standing orders shall be decided and maintained by the Committee, subject to a simple majority.
- b. They shall be maintained in a document separate from the constitution and shall define the roles referred to in the constitution, and campaigning regulations.

## 11. ELECTION REGULATIONS

- a. The Committee shall unanimously appoint at least one Returning Officer, who shall not be a candidate in the elections, at least seven days before each Ordinary General Meeting. The Returning Officer(s) shall act in accordance with the relevant Standing Order. The Returning Officer(s) shall be either a former Officer of the Association or a current Officer not seeking re-election.
- b. Nominations may be made in writing to the Returning Officer at least twenty-four hours before the meeting.
- c. All candidates present at the meeting shall be allowed equal time to speak. The time allocation is at the discretion of the Returning Officer.
- d. Voting shall be by secret ballot and the Alternative Vote method. Votes shall be counted by the Returning Officer and the results declared immediately.
- e. Any candidate wishing to appeal to the Senior Treasurer shall inform the Returning Officer of their intention to appeal within forty-eight hours of the declaration of the result.
- f. Candidates must not defame any other candidate, person or group in connection with this election and must not act to bring the Society or Party into disrepute.
- g. General meetings may be held online or in person and the Secretary shall be responsible for assuring that the meeting is well publicised and accessible to members of the Society.

## 12. DISSOLUTION

- a. The Association may be dissolved at a General Meeting provided that at least twenty-one days' written notice of the intention to dissolve the Society has been given to the members. At least three-quarters of those present and voting at the General Meeting must vote in favour of the motion for dissolution for it to be effective.
- b. Any motion for dissolution of the Association shall provide that assets remaining after all liabilities have been met shall be transferred either to another Registered University Society, the Societies Syndicate, or the Party, whichever is best placed to pursue the society's objects and aims.