

UCC Societies Executive
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UCC Societies Executive Constitution

UCC SOCIETIES' GUILD CONSTITUTION

As passed at the Annual General Meeting of UCC Societies' Guild March 15th 2016

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1. Title of the Organisation:

1.1 The name of the organisation shall be UCC Societies' Guild.

2. Mission:

2.1 UCC Societies' Guild shall be a self-governing, autonomous body whose aim is to enhance the cultural, creative, social, political and intellectual student experience by facilitating, representing and regulating UCC Societies.

3. Membership:

3.1 Each registered Society of UCC shall be a member of the Societies' Guild.

3.2 To be a registered Society, the Society needs to have been passed by both the Societies' Guild Executive and the Academic Council Committee for the Student Experience.

4. Governance of the Societies' Guild:

4.1 The authority of the Societies Guild shall be vested in, and exercised by, the organs established by this Constitution; namely the Societies' Senate and the Societies' Guild Executive.

5. Societies' Senate:

5.1 The governing council of the Societies' Guild shall be the Societies' Senate, hereinafter referred to as 'Senate'.

5.2 Societies' Senate shall meet at least four times a year, one of which shall act as the AGM.

5.3 Societies' Senate shall be composed of:

5.3.1 The student members of the Societies' Guild Executive.

5.3.2 One representative from each registered Society.

5.4 All members of Societies' Senate shall be entitled to attend, speak and vote at Societies' Senate.

5.5 The functions of Societies' Senate shall be:

5.5.1 To act as a deliberative forum for current issues of concern from members.

5.5.2 The ratification of Societies' Guild policy.

5.5.3 To mandate the President of the Societies' Guild Executive to undertake certain tasks in furtherance of any adopted policy.

5.5.4 The ratification of the President's officer report.

5.5.5 To ensure that the members of the Societies' Guild Executive are held accountable in the conduct of their respective roles.

5.6 Quorum for Societies' Senate shall be half of eligible members plus one.

5.7 A simple majority is required to pass proposed motions.

5.8 Meetings of the Societies' Senate shall be presided over by an independent Chairperson who shall not be a member of Senate. The Chairperson shall be nominated at the first Senate of the year for a one year term.

5.9 The Secretary of the Societies' Guild Executive shall act as the secretary for the Societies' Senate.

6. The AGM:

6.1.1 The AGM of the Societies' Guild shall be held in the second term of the academic calendar for the purpose of electing officers to the Societies' Guild Executive, adopting the annual report of the outgoing Societies' Guild Executive, and for the passing of constitutional amendments.

6.1.2 The Chair of Societies' Senate shall act as Convenor of Elections for all elections held by the Societies' Guild Executive. Where the Chair of Societies' Senate is unable to so act, the Societies' Guild Executive shall select another person to act as Convenor of Elections.

6.1.3 The Convenor of Elections shall be responsible for giving adequate notice of all elections, accepting, verifying and collating all nominations, practical operation of all elections and overseeing the counting of all votes.

6.2 All students of UCC shall be eligible to run for election to the Societies' Guild Executive. Nominations must be submitted by an appointed date.

6.3 Eight students shall be elected at the AGM:

- One President
- One Finance Officer
- Six Ordinary Committee Members

6.4 The President and Finance Officer shall be elected by the alternative vote system and the six

Ordinary Committee Members shall be elected by a first past the post electoral system. In each race there shall be a Re-Open Nominations option. The President, the Finance Officer and each of the six OCMs of the Societies' Guild Executive and each Society shall have the same number of votes as positions available.

6.5 Each Chairperson shall vote on behalf of their Society.

6.6 In the event of any tie the President shall have a casting vote, unless the President is a candidate in an election, in which case the Vice-President or another agreed Societies' Guild Executive member.

6.7 At the AGM there shall be reports from the previous Societies' Guild Executive. The President shall report on the general organisation, and the Finance Officer shall report on the finances of the organisation.

6.8 Any amendments of this constitution and motions shall be passed at the AGM or EGM. A constitutional amendment shall need a two-thirds majority to pass. A motion shall need a majority to pass.

6.9 Quorum shall be one half plus one of all registered Societies.

7. The EGM:

7.1 The Extraordinary General Meeting of the Societies' Guild shall be called by the Societies' Guild Executive by majority to fill vacancies on its committee, amend the constitution, or for other stated purposes.

7.2 The EGM shall follow the procedures of the AGM.

7.3 An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) may be called at a week's notice by the request of 15 Societies which must be communicated by letter brought to the Societies Office with the signatures of at least 15 Chairpersons. The Societies' Guild Executive then have 7 working days to hold the EGM. A decision of the Executive Committee may be nullified by an EGM.

8. The Societies' Guild Executive:

8.1 The day to day running of the Societies' Guild shall be vested in a committee entitled the Societies' Guild Executive.

8.2 This body shall be responsible for the making of policy and rules for the fair and equal running of Societies.

8.3 It shall also make policy within the autonomy granted to it by the Student Rules of UCC and the rules of the Academic Council Committee for the Student Experience.

8.4 The Societies' Guild Executive:

- Shall distribute monies allocated by the University to Societies.
- Shall act on behalf of Societies as required.
- Shall act to co-ordinate activities as required.
- Shall oversee the fair running of society elections.
- Shall be empowered to make recommendations to The Academic Council Committee for the Student Experience concerning proposed or existing Societies.
- Shall supervise and make available Guild resources and equipment.
- Shall resolve inter-society disputes.
- Shall make policy for the good running of Societies.
- Shall be empowered to establish and grant awards.
- Shall be empowered to take such action or to make such policy as is necessary for the good running of the Societies' Guild Executive unless such action or such policy be explicitly prohibited by this Constitution.

8.5.1 The Committee shall be made up of:

- Chairperson who shall be Societies President
- Six students elected by the Societies at the AGM
- Students' Union representative (Nominated by Students' Union President)
- Administrative Officer, Students' Union
- The Societies Officer
- An Ex-Officio nominated by the incoming Societies' Guild Executive.

8.5.2 All members of the Societies' Guild Executive with the possible exception of the President shall work in a voluntary capacity during their term on the committee.

8.5.3 The President of the Societies' Guild shall have an option to take a paid sabbatical year of absence from their academic studies during their tenure as President. Should the President decide to avail of this option, they must express this intention prior to their election at the AGM or EGM (as appropriate) of the Societies' Guild. The remuneration for such a sabbatical year shall be the equivalent of the rate paid to full-time sabbatical officers of the UCC Students' Union, notwithstanding the power of an EGM or AGM of the Societies' Guild to change this amount. The level of remuneration may not however be changed after the President commences their tenure.

8.5.4 The funding for this paid sabbatical position shall be paid from the Societies' Guild Executive budget.

8.6.1 Where a vacancy occurs from for the position of OCM at any time between the AGM and the end of the first term, the Societies' Guild Executive shall convene an EGM in accordance with Articles 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 to fill the vacancy.

8.6.2 Where such a vacancy occurs during the second term, the Societies' Guild Executive may co-opt an individual to fill that vacancy. Such a co-option shall be advertised amongst UCC students and applicants will put themselves forward in accordance with the process for nomination at the AGM. All applicants shall be interviewed by the Societies' Guild Executive prior to the co-option. This provision shall not prevent the Societies' Guild filling a vacant position in the second term in accordance with Article 6.5.1.

8.6.3 Where a vacancy occurs for the position of President at any time during their term in office, the Vice-President, or other presiding officer, shall convene an EGM in accordance with Articles 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 to fill that vacancy.

8.6.4 Where a President or OCM ceases to serve on the Societies' Guild Executive before the end of their term, their powers and duties shall be assigned by the Societies' Guild Executive as appropriate until the vacancy is filled.

8.7 The Societies' Guild Executive may co-opt up to one non-voting member to fulfill a role beyond the portfolios assigned by the President at the start of the year. This decision shall be subject to a simple majority vote of the Societies' Guild Executive and ratification by Societies' Senate.

9. The Officers:

9.1 The President shall be the chair of all meetings of the Societies' Guild Executive. The President shall oversee the good running of the organisation. The President shall be the spokesperson for UCC student Societies on the various committees to which the Societies' Guild has representation on. They shall rule on the meaning of the constitution whenever any dispute arises. This may be overruled by a simple majority vote of the Societies' Guild Executive.

9.2 The Vice President shall act as deputy to the President and, in the absence of the President, shall act as chairperson of meetings and temporarily assume the duties of the President.

9.3 The Finance Officer shall manage the financial policies and allocation of funding of the Societies' Guild Executive, in conjunction with the finance committee and Societies' Guild Executive. The Finance Officer shall prepare and present the financial records of the Societies' Guild Executive at the Annual General Meeting.

9.4 The Secretary shall keep the non-financial records of the Societies' Guild Executive. It is the responsibility of the Secretary to book the room for a Societies' Guild Executive meeting. The Secretary shall send the Societies' Guild Executive the minutes, no more than six days after each meeting (extraordinary circumstances excepting) detailing the tasks that are allocated for each relevant Societies' Guild Executive.

9.5 Members of the UCC Societies' Guild Executive may not serve as either Chairperson or Finance Officer of any UCC Society, during their term of office.

9.6 The President of the UCC Societies' Guild Executive may not serve on any committee of a UCC society, beyond their role as Ex-Officio of all UCC society committees during their term of office.

9.7 The Finance Officer of the UCC Societies' Guild Executive may not serve on any committee of a UCC Society.

9.8 The elected members the Societies' Guild Executive shall serve a term commencing on the first day of June following their election and ceasing on the last day of the following May.

10. Positions:

10.1 The student members of the Societies' Guild Executive shall be allocated portfolios by the President, two of which must be the Vice-President and Secretary.

11. The Independent Appeals Board:

11.1 There shall be an Independent Appeals Board, hereafter referred to as 'the IAB', which shall be the final tribunal of appeal within the Societies' Guild and the ultimate judicial authority of the Societies' Guild.

11.2 The IAB shall be made up of six independent non-students agreed upon annually by the Societies' Guild Executive and the Head of the Student Experience.

11.3 Membership of the IAB shall be for a term of one year. There shall be no term limits for membership of the IAB.

11.4 The IAB shall elect from its membership a Chairperson and a Secretary.

11.4.1 The positions of Chairperson and Secretary may not be held by the same person.

11.4.2 The contact details of the Chairperson and the Secretary shall be available from the Societies' Guild President upon request.

11.5 There shall be a minimum quorum of three members or alternate members for any meeting of the IAB.

11.6 An appeal shall be provided in writing to the Secretary of the IAB, in sufficient detail to allow for an initial consideration of the appeal, and the Secretary shall transmit it to the chairperson of the IAB.

11.6.1 The chairperson shall examine the appeal and make a preliminary judgement as to whether the matters raised in the appeal require a formal hearing; if the chairperson decides within three working days that the matters complained of are immaterial, or

that the appeal is without merit, that decision, and the reasons for that decision shall be communicated to the other members of the IAB.

11.6.2 If one or more members of the IAB consider that the matters raised in the appeal require a formal hearing, a meeting of the IAB shall be convened; otherwise, the appeal shall be dismissed.

11.6.3 If an appeal is considered to require a formal hearing, a meeting of the IAB will be convened by the secretary; such a meeting shall take place within eight working days of the receipt of appeal.

11.6.4 The secretary shall invite submissions from any and all relevant parties to the appeal, either in writing or in person.

11.7 Subject to this Constitution, and to the principles of natural justice and the general rule of the law, and for the general good of the Societies' Guild, the IAB shall decide its own rules and procedures.

11.8 An appeal shall take place where a student of the university believes that the decision, action or inaction of the Societies' Guild Executive in relation to their duties is in breach of the provisions of this Constitution.

11.9 An appeal must be made in writing to the Secretary of the IAB within three days of the relevant decision, action or inaction being published or made publicly known by the Societies' Guild Executive.

11.10 If the IAB concludes that any decision, action or inaction of the Societies' Guild Executive is in breach of the provisions of this Constitution, or that the actions or inactions in relation to their duties, as defined by this Constitution, of the Guild Executive are inconsistent with this Constitution, the IAB shall declare the relevant decision, action or inaction to be ultra vires and cause it to be rescinded, reversed and/or varied.

11.11 The Secretary of the IAB must publish an account of the minutes of any meeting of the IAB and the reasons behind any decision taken by the IAB, where such a publication would not have legal ramifications for the Societies' Guild.

11.12 At all meetings of the IAB, the chairperson of the meeting shall have a deliberative and a casting vote.

11.13 The President of the Societies' Guild shall have a right of attendance at every meeting of the IAB, unless the IAB specifically directs otherwise.

12. Provisional Societies:

12.1 A new or revived society passed by both the Societies' Guild Executive and the the Academic Council Committee for the Student Experience shall be on provisional status for at least two years, after which its status shall be reviewed. It then may be given a further period of provisional status or given full Society status. A provisional Society shall have rights to poster in the university within UCC Societies' Guild guidelines, rights to book rooms within the procedures of the relevant offices of UCC, rights to hold events on campus and to represent the society off campus . If during the period of provisional status a Society collapses they shall be recommended for deletion by the UCC Societies' Guild Executive to the Academic Council Committee for the Student Experience.

13. Full Societies

13.1 A full society shall have rights to poster in the university within UCC Societies' Guild guidelines, rights to book rooms within the procedures of the relevant offices of UCC, rights to hold events on campus and to represent the society off campus.

14. Deletion of Societies:

14.1 The Societies' Guild Executive shall be empowered to recommend deletion of Societies which have been dormant for more than one year to the Academic Council Committee for the Student Experience which shall delete the Society. It shall also be empowered to recommend the deletion of a Society which has brought Societies of UCC into disrepute. On deletion the Society shall no longer be recognised as a UCC Society.

14.2 The Societies Guild Executive shall be empowered to recommend deletion of a Society where the Society has refused to adhere to regulations issued by the Executive or where the named Society has refused to acknowledge the Executive as the regulatory body for UCC Societies or for other stated misbehaviour to the Academic Council for the Student Experience which may delete the Society.

14.3 Verbal and written warning should be given to the Society before notice of deletion, where possible, in an effort to afford to the Society an opportunity to correct the relevant misbehaviour. However in circumstances where the Societies' Guild Executive feels that the stated misbehaviour is serious enough, they may proceed directly to the Academic Council Committee for the Student Experience with their recommendation for deletion.

14.4 During the period from when the Societies Guild Executive has made the recommendation for deletion to its passage through the Academic Council for the Student Experience, the Executive shall have the power to freeze the Society through the issuance to the Society of a freezing order. The effect of such an order is that the Society is barred from operating as a Society until the outcome of the hearing of the recommendation for deletion by the Academic Council Committee for the Student Experience.

14.5 The Society has the right to complain to the Societies' Guild at any stage in this process and their complaint should be considered in a timely fashion and responded to accordingly.

15. Dismissal from the Societies' Guild Executive:

15.1 In the event of poor performance, or other stated misbehaviour, by a two thirds majority of the Executive rounded upwards an OCM may be removed from the committee. The OCM concerned may with the support of fifteen Societies call an EGM to appeal the decision.

15.2 An OCM may also be impeached by an EGM called for that stated purpose.

15.3 The President may only be removed by an EGM called for that stated purpose.

16. Finance Sub-Committee:

16.1 This shall be responsible for the making of grants, special applications, and other financial aid to Societies. It shall be made up of:

- The President,
- The Finance Officer (who shall be the secretary)
- The Societies Officer

16.2 Its decisions are binding once ratified by the Societies' Guild Executive.

17. Interpretation of the Constitution and Amendments:

17.1 The Societies' Guild Executive shall rule on the meaning of the constitution whenever any dispute arises. This may be overruled by a majority vote of Societies at an EGM called for that purpose.

17.2 Amendments to this constitution may be made at an Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Societies' Guild Executive.

17.3 This Societies' Guild Executive's constitution and policies made by the Societies' Guild Executive supercedes all individual society constitutions and policies whenever any contradictions arise.

Ends