



The Constitution of The Cambridge University Law Society

PART 1 NAME AND OBJECTS

1 The Name of the Society

- (1) The Society shall be known as ‘The Cambridge University Law Society’

2 The Aims of the Society

The Society shall—

- (1) Promulgate information, advice and contacts regarding academic issues and careers in legal and other areas
- (2) Provide regular speaker and social events for its members (including an annual Law Ball, Annual Dinner, and Garden Party, to be held in Michaelmas Term, Lent Term and Easter Term respectively)
- (3) Hold regular Mooting Competitions and facilitate participation in external competitions by members
- (4) Publish a termly magazine, Per Incuriam, containing articles of legal interest
- (5) Act as a point of liaison with other law societies and faculties of law across the world
- (6) Produce a term-card for each of the three terms of the year

3 The Structure of the Society Committee

- (1) The Society Committee shall be comprised of an Executive Committee, a non-Executive Committee, and sub-Committees
- (2) The term ‘Committee’ shall hereafter be used to refer to the Executive Committee and the non-Executive Committee combined, but not including the sub-Committees

PART 2 MEMBERSHIP

4 The Scope of Membership

Membership shall be open to all members of the University of Cambridge

5 The Membership Fee

- (1) The Executive Committee of the Society shall set the membership fee at the commencement of each term of office

- (2) Any changes in the membership fee may take effect at a later date
- (3) The Executive Committee may set a variable membership fee

6 Termination of Membership

- (1) The Committee may terminate any individual's membership for conduct unbecoming to the Society on a three-quarters vote at any Committee meeting—
 - (a) The quorum for any such meeting being eight Committee members, including the full Executive Committee
 - (b) The notice for such a meeting being seven days or more
 - (c) The individual concerned being given an opportunity to justify his conduct by way of a hearing at the meeting
- (2) The individual concerned being granted a right of appeal to the Senior Treasurer

PART 3 THE OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

7 The Components of the Committee

The affairs of the Society shall be managed by a Committee consisting of four Officers and not more than twenty other non-Executive Committee members

8 The Officers

- (1) The four Officers of the Society shall be the President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary-
 - (a) They shall be elected annually
 - (b) Together, they shall comprise the Executive Committee
- (2) All decisions of the Executive Committee shall seek to be unanimous
 - (a) If this proves impossible, a majority vote including that of the President will suffice
 - (b) Should the Executive Committee be evenly split on any vote, the President will carry the deciding vote

9 The Non-Executive Committee

Must include—

- (1) Membership Secretary
- (2) Communications and IT Secretary
- (3) Master of Moots
- (4) Editor of Per Incuriam
- (5) Social Coordinator
- (6) Speakers' Secretary
- (7) Law Ball Secretary

- (8) Foreign Exchange Coordinator
- (9) First Year Representative

10 Sub-Committees

- (1) A sub-committee may be formed to aid any member of the Committee
- (2) The forming of the sub-committee may take place either at the initiative of the Executive Committee, or with the permission of the Executive Committee on the initiative of any Non-Executive Committee member
- (3) Members of such sub-committees shall not attend main Committee meetings
- (4) Members of such sub-committees shall not hold voting rights on the main Committee

11 Senior Treasurer

- (1) A new Senior Treasurer shall be elected by mutual agreement between the Committee and the outgoing Senior Treasurer
- (2) In the case of irreconcilable disagreement, the Committee may elect a new Senior Treasurer

12 Collegiate System

The Committee must be comprised of individuals from at least five different colleges

13 Handing Over

- (1) The outgoing Executive Committee shall hand over to the incoming Executive Committee at the Society Annual Dinner
- (2) The outgoing President shall pass the incoming President a bound version of the Constitution, which shall be the authoritative copy

PART 4 ELECTIONS

14 The Elected Positions

The elected posts for each term of office are those comprising the Executive Committee, namely the President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary

15 Candidature

- (1) To stand for election, candidates must be members of the Society and undergraduate members of the University of Cambridge
- (2) First year undergraduates are permitted to run for any post

- (3) Joint candidatures are forbidden
- (4) To be eligible to run, the candidate must be *in statu pupillari* until the end of his or her term of office

16 The Returning Officer

- (1) The Returning Officer shall be responsible for organising Hustings as well as for the administration of the elections
- (2) The outgoing President shall be the Returning Officer, and the outgoing Vice-President shall be the Deputy Returning Officer
- (3) The Returning Officers are not permitted to vote in the elections
- (4) If the outgoing President is barred from acting as Returning Officer, through standing for an elected position or some other reason, then he or she shall be superseded by the outgoing Vice-President, personally selecting a Deputy Returning Officer
 - (a) If the outgoing Vice President is also unavailable, the remainder of the outgoing Committee shall appoint a Returning Officer by way of a three-quarters majority vote at any Committee meeting
 - (b) The quorum at any such meeting shall be at least eight members of the Committee
- (5) The decision of the Returning Officer with regard to the running of the elections and interpretation of the Constitution regarding election matters shall be subject to a right of appeal to the Senior Treasurer, whose decision shall be absolute and final

17 Timing of Elections

- (1) Elections shall take place by the end of the sixth week of Lent Term
- (2) The Returning Officer must ensure that the candidates and all members of the Society eligible to vote are informed of the time of the elections and how to vote in the elections by e-mail and any other suitable form of advertisement, and that voting remains open for at least five hours

18 Nominations

- (1) All candidates must be nominated and seconded
- (2) Any member of the Society may nominate or second a candidate for office, with the proviso that—
 - (a) No candidate may nominate or second another candidate for office
 - (b) Any such nomination shall be void

19 Opening of Nominations

- (1) The opening of nominations shall be one week before the close of nominations
- (2) The Returning Officer shall ensure that all eligible voters are notified of the opening of nominations by email at least five days in advance
- (3) Prospective candidates submit their nominations to the Returning Officer both in writing and in electronic format

20 Close of Nominations

- (1) Nominations shall close one week before elections
- (2) The Returning Officer shall ensure that all candidates and other members of the Society who are eligible to vote are notified of who is standing for elections by email and by posting manifestoes on the Society's notice board in the Faculty of Law, and on the Society's website at least five days before the elections

21 Publicity

- (1) Each candidate for a post on the Executive Committee shall be required by the Returning Officer to submit a written manifesto of up to 250 words (including a single photograph only of themselves) by the close of nominations
 - (a) Failure to comply with this requirement invalidates the nomination
 - (b) The Returning Officer is required to bring these rules to the attention of candidates
- (2) Each candidate shall be granted £15 by the Law Society as a budget, for the production and distribution of manifestoes, with a maximum of fifty A4 pages or their equivalent permitted
 - (a) Exceeding this budget shall constitute an electoral offence
 - (b) All expenses must be claimed by proof of receipts for the entirety of the expenditure to the Returning Officer before distribution
 - (c) The Returning Officer is required to bring these rules to the attention of candidates

22 Hustings

- (1) Hustings shall take place on the day preceding elections, and all candidates for all posts shall be required to present their manifestoes in a short speech
- (2) The procedural format adopted at Hustings shall be determined by the Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer. The procedural format must:
 - (a) Be notified to all candidates at least twenty four hours before Hustings
 - (b) Allow each candidate a minimum of three minutes to speak

- (c) Allow the audience to ask each candidate at least three questions
- (3) Failure on the part of a candidate to attend Hustings without an excuse accepted by the Returning Officer shall constitute an electoral offence
- (4) These rules should be brought to the attention of the candidates, and enforced by, the Returning Officer
- (5) The Returning Officer shall inform all eligible voters of the date, time and location of Hustings at least five days in advance. The Returning Officer should also encourage them to attend

23 Electoral Offences

- (1) It shall constitute an electoral offence for any candidate to—
 - (a) Publish election material other than that approved first by the Returning Officer
 - (b) Intimidate or defame any other candidate
 - (c) Interfere with the publicity produced by another candidate
 - (d) Perpetrate any other action which the Returning Officer considers to be contrary to the fair, dignified and equal procedure required in a Society election
- (2) If the Returning Officer considers that any candidate has committed an electoral offence, he or she may come to a decision with the Deputy Returning Officer as to the consequences
 - (a) This decision is subject to a right of appeal to the Committee in an emergency committee meeting, who may then come to a conclusion on a three-quarter majority vote
 - (b) The quorum for such a meeting is eight people
 - (c) The decision of the Committee is subject to a right of appeal to the Senior Treasurer
 - (d) In both cases, at the Committee meeting and before the Senior Treasurer, the accused candidate shall be allowed a hearing to make his or her case

24 Voting

- (1) Only resident members of the Society, that is those currently registered as students of the University of Cambridge, may vote in elections
 - (a) This shall be subject to a transitional arrangement for non-resident life members who joined before the 2011 elections
- (2) The Returning Officer must be satisfied that only eligible voters may cast a vote in the election and that the voting system satisfactorily identifies prospective voters
- (3) The Society's membership list shall close on the opening of nominations, and any prospective voters must have paid their membership fee by that date

25 Slate Entries

Slate entries are not permitted in Law Society elections

PART 5 EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETINGS

26 Calling an EGM

- (1) An EGM may be called at the instigation of the President, a three-quarters majority of the Committee, or any twenty-five members of the Society
- (2) If the President is not calling the EGM, then a petition must be made to the President who is then obliged to call it
- (3) At least seven days' notice of such a meeting shall be given to all members of the Society
- (4) The quorum at such a meeting shall be thirty members
- (5) The President shall be responsible for publicising the EGM
- (6) If the meeting concerns the conduct of the President, then the Vice-President shall be responsible for publicity
- (7) If the meeting concerns the conduct of the President and Vice-President, or the Executive as a whole, or the Executive as a whole and further members of the Committee, then any Committee members not directly involved and those responsible for the instigation of the meeting shall be responsible for publicity

27 Powers of an EGM

- (1) An EGM shall have the power to—
 - (a) Require any Committee member to give an account of his or her actions
 - (b) Remove any Committee member from office
 - (c) Alter the Society's Constitution
- (2) Any proposed action at an EGM shall be approved by a three-quarters majority of those present at the meeting

28 Chair of an EGM

- (1) The President of the Society shall be the Chairman of an EGM
- (2) If the EGM concerns the conduct of the President directly, then the Vice-President shall be the Chairman
- (3) If the meeting concerns the conduct of the President and Vice-President, or the Executive as a whole, or the Executive as a whole and further members of the

Committee, then the Chairman shall be elected by all members present at the meeting, excluding those whom the meeting concerns

29 Right of Appeal

Any Committee member removed from office by the procedure outlined above shall have a right of appeal to the Senior Treasurer

PART 6 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

30 Timing and Conduct of the AGM

- (1) An AGM shall be held at the end of the tenure of each President
- (2) The date and time shall be left to the discretion of the President, but must take place before the Society annual dinner, in order to allow the incoming Executive Committee to appraise the previous work of the Society
- (3) At the AGM, the President shall be required to give a thorough report of the activities and progress of the Society over the previous year
- (4) The President, in conjunction with the rest of the Committee, shall be required to produce a written review and assessment of the work of each area of the Society, to be available both in printed format and on the website

PART 7 DISCIPLINE

31 Impeachment of Executive Committee Members

- (1) If an elected member is considered to be failing in his or her duty as an Officer, a vote of impeachment may be proposed by either the President or two other Committee members
- (2) The impeachment proposal must be presented to all members of the Committee and the Senior Treasurer
- (3) The examination of the conduct of the member shall take place at an EGM, with the member in question permitted to answer any charges of misconduct or negligence brought against them
- (4) The impeachment process shall be subject to the same procedural requirements as an EGM
- (5) The vote of impeachment shall be a secret ballot undertaken in the absence of the member in question
- (6) This process shall be subject to a right of appeal to the Senior Treasurer

32 Removal of Non-Executive Committee Members from Office

- (1) The Executive Committee shall be permitted to remove any Non-Executive Committee member from office by way of a unanimous vote for—
 - (a) Failure to attend two or more Committee meetings without a reasonable excuse
 - (b) Failure to perform his or her responsibilities to an acceptable level
 - (c) Indiscretions deemed to reflect poorly on the Society or deemed to bring it into disrepute
- (2) This decision shall be subject to a right of appeal to the Senior Treasurer

PART 8 APPEALS

33 Requirements of the Senior Treasurer

- (1) For the purposes of the removal of a society member, impeachment and other forms of discipline, the Senior Treasurer shall not be permitted to attend the Committee meetings or vote on the process
- (2) An appeal shall be heard within a week of the Committee vote if requested by the aggrieved member
- (3) The Senior Treasurer shall chair a panel of three, chosen at his or her discretion, to hear the appeal
- (4) The appeal decision shall be absolute and final

PART 9 CHANGING THE CONSTITUTION

34 Manner of Alteration

- (1) The Constitution may only be changed in the following ways—
 - (a) By a three-quarters majority vote at an EGM
 - (b) By a three-quarters majority vote of those members present at any Committee Meeting, the quorum for such a meeting being eight people
- (2) Seven days notice of any amendment proposals shall be given to all Committee members

35 Submission of Proposals

- (1) Any proposed amendment in the Constitution must be submitted to the Senior Treasurer for final approval
- (2) Any proposed amendment to the Constitution shall take effect as soon as it has received the approval of the Senior Treasurer

PART 10 THE TREASURER

36 Requirements of the Treasurer

- (1) The Treasurer shall have particular responsibility for the financial affairs of the Society—
 - (a) He or she shall keep records of all expenditure and income which shall be inspected by the Executive Committee at least twice during their term of office
 - (b) He or she shall prepare the accounts of the Society for annual submission to the relevant University Proctor, after their approval by the Senior Treasurer
- (2) All documents must be made available to the Treasurer-Elect for inspection within seven days of an election. They should officially be handed over before the Society Annual Dinner, at the end of the term of office
- (3) The Treasurer shall have special responsibility, along with the Secretary and Communications and IT Secretary, for the running of the Law Society book sale
- (4) An Assistant Treasurer may be appointed to the Committee at the discretion of the Executive Committee—
 - (a) His or her powers shall be as the Executive Committee decide
 - (b) He or she may never be a signatory to the Society accounts
- (6) The Treasurer is responsible for updating the Committee of the change in the financial status of the Society from the previous Committee meeting

37 Authorisation of Payments

- (1) The Treasurer shall be responsible for using the online banking facility to manage Society funds as well as for the security of any passwords associated with the online banking system
- (2) The Treasurer shall make payments by cheque as far as is practical
- (3) Any cheque to be paid out of Law Society funds, including any committee expenses, must be signed by a minimum of two members of the Executive Committee—
 - (a) One of these must be the Treasurer
 - (b) It should be normal practice for the President to provide his signature, but with his authorisation, or in the event of an emergency, the Vice-President or Secretary may provide theirs
- (4) All online transfers must be authorised by a minimum of two members of the Executive Committee—
 - (a) One of these must be the Treasurer
 - (b) It should be normal practice for the President to approve such transactions, but with his authorisation, or in the event of an emergency, the Vice-President or Secretary may provide theirs

- (5) Authorisation should take the form of a written declaration stating the date of transfer, intended transferee, a short description of the reason for payment and the amount of the payment, signed in accordance with the authorisation procedure under subsection 3 above. This declaration should be kept with the society accounts.
- (6) Such authorisation should usually occur before payment is made, however in an emergency or when practicality prohibits this (such as when a payment must be made within a short period outside of term) a transfer may be ratified in writing after the event. In this case there must be:
 - (a) An oral authorisation before the online payment is made
 - (b) A written ratification, made as soon as practically possible. A subsequent ratification shall be conducted in the same manner as a prior authorisation and record that oral authorisation was given before the payment occurred

PART 11 COMMITTEE MEETINGS

38 Timing of Committee Meetings

Committee Meetings must be held at least once term

39 Calling of Committee Meetings

- (1) A committee meeting may be called by either-
 - (a) The President
 - (b) Any six members of the Committee
- (2) Notice of committee meetings must be given to all committee members at least seven days in advance

40 Attendance at Committee Meetings

- (1) All members of the Committee are required to attend Committee Meetings
- (2) Failure to attend will be subject to the disciplinary proceedings outlined in Part 7