

# THE CONSTITUTION OF SOUTHAMPTON COMEDY SOCIETY

*As amended by the members at an Extraordinary General Meeting on May 2nd, 2018.*

Disclaimer: For the purposes of maintaining clarity and precision, gendered pronouns are used throughout this document, gendered vocabulary is to be interpreted as gender neutral.

**1.**—The name of the Society shall be University of Southampton Comedy Society, also known as Southampton Comedy Society.

**2.**—The Society shall continue to be affiliated with the University of Southampton Students' Union ("the Union"), and accordingly this Constitution shall be read and given effect, so far as it is possible to do so, in accordance with Union rules.

**3.**—The general purpose of the Society shall be to give opportunities to its members to be involved, and enhance their skills, in the conception and performance of stand-up, sketch and improvised comedy, as well as in writing, directing and producing the same, and for that purpose the Society shall—

- Organise and run stand-up, sketch and improvised comedy workshops,
- Put on at least two stand-up shows each term,
- Put on two sketch and improvised comedy shows in the Annex Theatre each year,
- Put on at least one show each year at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe,
- Put on such independent shows as may be successfully pitched to the Committee, and
- Offer to its members each year, where practicable, at least one opportunity to take part in a professional workshop.

**4.**—There shall continue to be a Committee of the Society, which shall be composed of the following officers, that is to say, a President of the Society, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, a Web and Publicity Officer, a Socials Officer, and an Ordinary Member, of whom a majority shall constitute a quorum; and in case of an equality of votes on any voting matter before the Committee, the vote of the President shall determine the question on that matter.

**4A.**—Where an officer shall have a direct interest in a voting matter before the Committee, the officer shall be disqualified for voting upon that matter; and in relation to the matter a majority of officers not so disqualified shall constitute a quorum; and if a quorum shall not be present, the matter shall be referred to the members at a general meeting, who shall have power to determine the matter.

**5.**—The Committee shall be under a duty to fulfil the general purpose and aims of the Society, and shall have power, without prejudice to other powers described in this Constitution—

- To raise and spend money, and buy and sell property, on behalf of the Society,
- To set and vary a fee for membership of the Society,
- To regulate productions, and production teams, of shows,
- To regulate its own proceedings and appoint sub-committees, and
- To make such other provision, not being contrary to this Constitution, as it sees fit:

And the legitimacy of any action taken by the Committee shall not be affected by any vacancy among the officers.

**5A.**—Where appropriate, the Committee may elect captains from among consenting members of the Society to assist in the fulfillment of the general purpose and aims of the Society; captain roles may include, but are not limited to, the following positions:

Stand-up Comedy - Shall be expected to run stand-up workshops when asked to by the Committee and assist members of the Society in the relevant areas.

Sketch Comedy - Shall be expected to run sketch workshops when asked by the Committee and assist members of the Society in the relevant areas.

Improvisational Comedy - Shall be expected to run improvisation workshops when asked by the Committee and assist members of the Society in the relevant areas.

Independent Comedy Shows - Shall be required to attend all independent pitches, run workshops to write independent show pitches, and act as a show liaison for independent comedy shows when asked by the Committee.

Welfare - Shall be responsible for the wellbeing of all the society members whilst ensuring that union rules are being adhered to.

Health & Safety - Shall be responsible for the risk assessments of the individual shows and providing a point of first aid to members involved with shows.

These roles shall expire at the AGM in order to allow the new Committee to elect new captains.

**6.**—The President shall lead and represent the Society and have general responsibility for its functioning, and shall have power, with the consent of the Committee, to appoint production teams for shows.

**7.**—The Vice-President shall assist the President in the exercise of his functions, and shall have power to execute, in the name and on behalf of the President, such powers and duties as the President may from time to time delegate to him.

**8.**—The Secretary shall have responsibility for the administration and organisation of the Society, and shall prepare all agendas, minutes and documents, and give his advice and opinion upon questions arising under this Constitution when required by the President, or as occasion requires.

**9.**—The Treasurer shall have responsibility for the finances of the Society, and shall collect membership fees and defray any debt owed by the Society, and shall have power, with the consent of the President, to waive the membership fee in particular cases.

**10.**—The Web and Publicity Officer shall have responsibility for Society websites, web pages and social media accounts, and for actively raising awareness of the Society among members of the Union, and shall from time to time advise the Committee on matters of branding, and see that Society shows and events are appropriately and effectively publicised.

**11.**—The Ordinary Member shall act as a point of contact between the Committee and the members, and shall assist the other officers in performing such of their duties as the Committee may from time to time direct.

**12.**—The Socials Officer shall from time to time organise, or oversee the organisation of, social events for members of the Society, having regard to the wishes of the said members, and at least one of the social events so organised each term shall not primarily involve the consumption of alcohol.

**13.**—The officers shall be chosen each year by the members of the Society, who shall assemble for that purpose and vote by ballot; and such an assembly shall be known as an Annual General Meeting (“AGM”); and if a vacancy shall arise among the officers, the members shall in like manner choose an officer to fill up the vacancy; and the times, places and manner of holding elections for officers shall be prescribed by the Committee.

**13A.**—The Committee may make provision relating to the transfer from an officer to his successor of materials and information necessary for the proper execution of the functions of the office in question, and may in particular prescribe periods (“handover periods”) during which such transferal must be completed, and provide for the censure of persons refusing, or failing without reasonable excuse, to transfer the said materials and information before the expiry of the handover period, in contravention of the provision.

**14A.**—In an AGM or Extraordinary General Meeting (“EGM”) in which four or more elections shall be held, no person shall be a candidate in more than three of them.

**14B.**—In any election, electors shall have the same right to vote to re-open nominations as to vote for a candidate in the election; and where the majority of votes cast in an election shall be to re-open nominations, the election shall be void.

**14C.**—In case of an equality of votes in an election, the candidate with the fewest votes, if any, shall be eliminated and the members shall again proceed to vote by ballot, until a person shall be elected or nominations re-opened: Provided that, if an equality of votes shall persist, the presiding officer may, if of the opinion that there is no real prospect of a choice being made, declare the election void.

**15.**—If an officer shall resign or a successor not be chosen at an AGM or EGM, the officer may choose to continue to hold his office until a successor shall be chosen; and if the officer shall not wish to continue, the Committee may choose a member to perform his duties as an interim officer until a successor shall be chosen.

**16.**—Any member of the Society who has paid the membership fee, or in respect of whom the membership fee has been waived, shall be entitled to vote and stand in elections for officers and to vote on whether to adopt Amendments to this Constitution, subject as hereinafter provided: the presiding officer at a general meeting in which an election is held, or the members present at such meeting, may disqualify a member from voting or standing (or both) in any or all of the elections to be held in that meeting, but only on the ground that the member acquired membership solely or primarily for the purpose of voting in the election or elections.

**17.**—An officer may at any time resign his office by giving notice to the President: Provided that the President may resign only by giving notice in like manner to the Secretary.

**18.**—An officer may request leave of absence, which the Committee may grant at pleasure, and during the period for which the leave is granted, the officer shall be relieved of all duties and responsibilities arising from his office, and the same shall devolve, together with any power attaching to that office, in accordance with arrangements to be made by the President, except as hereinafter provided.

**19.**—If a vacancy shall arise in the office of President, or the President shall for the time being be on leave of absence or otherwise unable to perform the functions of his office, the same shall devolve, together with any power attaching thereto, on an Acting President, who shall be the Vice-President, or, if the office of Vice-President shall be vacant, or the Vice-President shall in like manner be unable to perform the said functions, an officer chosen by the Committee.

**20.**—The Committee may expel or suspend a member of the Society for stated misbehaviour in accordance with such Union rules as may from time to time apply.

**21.**—An officer may be removed from office at an EGM for corruption, maladministration or other serious offences against the Society, or suspended by the Committee for stated misbehaviour; and if an officer shall fail without reasonable excuse to attend three consecutive meetings of the Committee, he shall cease to hold office at the adjournment of the third meeting.

**22.**—The Committee may provide for the conferral upon any person of honorary membership of the Society, which shall expire after eighteen months, or life membership as an award for distinction or service to the Society: Provided that only a member of the Union shall be eligible to vote and be elected in elections for officers.

**23.**—A general meeting shall be held at the request of the President or any two or more of the other officers, or in pursuance of a petition supported by six or more members: Provided that the Committee may by unanimous consent reject a frivolous petition.

**24.**—At a general meeting a majority of active members shall constitute a quorum; and the Committee may from time to time make provision as to the interpretation of “active member”.

**25.**—In case of a sustained dispute relating to Society matters, the same shall be resolved by the President by and with the advice of the Committee, or, where controversy remains, by resolution of the members at a general meeting.

**26.**—This Constitution shall be amended in accordance with any amendment proposed and agreed to by the members at a general meeting.

**27.**—This Constitution shall repeal any Constitution of the Society in force at the time of its enactment: Provided that, unless the contrary intention shall appear, the enactment of this Constitution or any subsequent amendment thereto shall not be construed to abolish or reduce any custom, right or practice, to deprive any person of membership of the Society, or to affect the election, office or term of any officer chosen before it comes into force.