



Southampton University Students' Union

Societies Department

2022 / 2023

Constitution

1. Society Outline:

- (a) **Name:** The name of the Society shall be 'Electronics and Computer Science Society' (ECSS) hereinafter referred to as the "Society".
- (b) **Society Type:** Departmental
- (c) **Objectives/Aims:** The aim of the Society shall be to support all ECS students and supplement their degrees by providing a range of events, activities and opportunities, as well as to support the groups and societies which run within the ECS department.
- (d) **Affiliation:** The Society shall be affiliated to the University of Southampton Students' Union, hereinafter referred to as the Students' Union

2. Membership:

- (a) There shall be two types of membership:
 - i. Full membership is open to any registered student at the University of Southampton. All students studying a course provided by the ECS department are automatically enrolled as full members. Students who take courses that are not provided by ECS may register as full members of the Society by enrolling themselves on the Students' Union website. Hereinafter, unless otherwise stated, "member" and "membership" refer to full members of the Society.
 - ii. Associate members of the Union may become associate members of the Society. Associate members shall be entitled to the full rights and privileges of members except that they may not hold office, nominate or vote in meetings or elections.
- (b) There shall be no membership fee.
- (c) The Students' Union and the Secretary of the Society must always be provided with an up to date copy of all member names and corresponding student numbers. The provision of this information is the responsibility of the Secretary
- (d) Members may be expelled from the Society as per the Union guidelines.
- (e) Once a student has become fully enrolled in the Society, they may only vote in elections if they have joined the Society 5 term days before the vote opens. Additionally, they may only stand in elections if they have joined the society 10 term days before the vote opens.

3. Officers:

- (a) The Officers of the Society shall comprise the Society's Committee, hereinafter referred to as the "Committee", which will coordinate the running of the Society.
- (b) The Society and its property shall be administered and managed by the Officers.
- (c) The Officers shall hold their positions between the commencement of successive Summer terms following election at the Annual General Meeting, unless they resign or are removed from their position.
- (d) There are three roles within the Committee which must be filled at all times, hereinafter referred to as the "Core Officers". If they are not filled, the Society Committee may not make any purchasing decisions, and may only be considered quorate for votes and decisions directly relating to the holding of elections for the remaining Core Officer roles, until the Core Officer roles are filled. The Committee must hold these elections as soon as is practically possible, and in any event no later than one month from the issue arising. These are:
 - i. **President:** The President shall be the figurehead of the Society. They shall be responsible for coordinating the Committee and performing any tasks that do not come under the jurisdiction of other Committee members.
 - ii. **Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall be responsible for maintaining the financial accounts of the Society, documentation of which shall be available to the Students' Union and the Societies Department Committee and shall be available for examination at the AGM.
 - iii. **Secretary:** The Secretary shall be responsible for the administration of the Society and ensuring its smooth operation. In particular they are in charge of managing Society documents. This includes taking minutes at meetings and announcing General Meetings to the members. All minutes shall be made available to members via online publication.
- (e) The remaining Officer positions are not integral to the running of the Society, but the Society should endeavour to appoint them in order to ensure its ability to operate successfully. They are:
 - i. **Vice-President Engagement:** The Vice-President Engagement shall act alongside the President and Vice-President Operations in managing the Committee and representing the Society. They will share the responsibilities of the President with the Vice-President Operations if the President is unavailable. In addition to this, they shall be responsible for overseeing the member facing social side of the Committee. They shall work with the Social Secretary, Events Officer, Sports Officer, Welfare Officer, and the Marketing Officer in the smooth running of all of the Society's events. They shall ensure that the society has an up-to-date Health and Safety Policy, and that all reasonable action is taken to comply with it. They shall also work on increasing participation rates within the Society.
 - ii. **Vice-President Operations:** The Vice-President Operations shall act alongside the President and Vice-President Engagement in managing the Committee and representing the Society. They will share the responsibilities of the President with the Vice-President Engagement if the President is unavailable. In addition to this, they shall be responsible for helping coordinate the external facing side of the society. They shall assist the Industry Officer in running large sponsor events and liaise with staff and sponsors when the President is not available. They shall oversee the Web Officer's development of the Society website and ensure that sufficient documentation on running the various aspects of the Society is created. They shall ensure that appropriate risk assessments have been completed, where necessary, for ECSS run events to ensure the safety of all the participants.
 - iii. **Industry Officer:** The Industry Officer shall be responsible for arranging academic events for all members of the Society and coordinating with Society sponsors. They are also responsible for acquiring new Society sponsors, and sourcing the funding to run the Society. They will also regularly update the online ECSS jobs/opportunities board, not exclusive to listings from sponsors.
 - iv. **Events Officer:** The Events Officer shall be responsible for arranging regular events for the society that are non-alcoholic or contain a minimal emphasis on alcohol. Example events are film nights, society meals or games nights. They shall also coordinate with the Social Secretary to organise and manage larger society events. The Social Secretary and Events Officer shall ensure the events organised by the society are sufficiently varied so as to cater to as much of the membership as possible.

- v. **Marketing Officer:** The Marketing Officer shall be responsible for how the Society is presented online and in printed media. They will be responsible for maintaining all social media activity by the Society, and ensuring a consistent brand. They shall also be responsible for organising the Society's merchandise.
 - vi. **Social Secretary:** The Social Secretary shall be responsible for arranging social events for the Society that involve alcohol. Example events include club nights, pub nights and pub crawls. They shall also coordinate with the Events Officer to organise and manage larger society events. The Social Secretary and Events Officer shall ensure the events organised by the society are sufficiently varied so as to cater to as much of the membership as possible.
 - vii. **Sports Officer:** The Sports Officer shall be responsible for communicating with the captains of ECSS sports teams, helping organise their sports events, advertising for the teams, and assisting in securing team funding. They also shall manage other sporting events or competitions, such as group runs and the badminton league table.
 - viii. **Web Officer:** The Web Officer shall be responsible for maintaining the Society's website, maintaining the Society's access to its digital accounts and ensuring that online vote counting for elections is performed accurately. They shall also be responsible for ensuring all eligible members are able to vote and stand in elections.
 - ix. **Welfare Officer:** The Welfare Officer shall be responsible for providing support to the membership and ensuring that, in all its activities, the Society does not unfairly discriminate against or exclude any members.
 - x. **Hackathon Officer:** The Hackathon Officer shall be responsible for arranging technical events and workshops. They shall be responsible for organising and overseeing Hackathon events, alongside the Industry Officer, developing any software or hardware for use by the participants.
 - xi. **The Post-Graduate Representative:** The Post-Graduate Representative shall be responsible for promoting the engagement of members on the Post-Graduate and Master's streams of ECS towards the range of ECSS run events, including industry talks and social activities. They shall liaise closely with the Events Officer, the Social Secretary and the Industry Officer to ensure the smooth running of these events and involvement from the members of these streams. They shall also be responsible for running events aimed solely at the members of the Post-Graduate and Master's streams and for obtaining feedback from these members to allow the Society to engage them more directly.
- (f) Officers may submit their resignation at any time to the President of the Society. Elections for any officer positions that become vacant shall be handled as specified in section 5 of this Constitution.

4. Meetings:

- (a) Committee meetings
 - i. The Committee shall meet often, and in no event less frequently than once every three term months, to discuss the running of the Society.
 - ii. Committee meetings may only be considered quorate for the purposes of voting under the following conditions:
 - A. At least 4 Officers are in attendance at the meeting.
 - B. The President or Vice-President is in attendance at the meeting.
 - C. The provisions of section 3(d) of this Constitution are satisfied.
 - iii. Outside of a meeting, committee votes are only recognised under the following conditions:
 - A. Reasonable efforts have been made for the entire committee to be aware of the vote.
 - B. All Officers on the Committee have voted, or the vote is 24 hours old.
 - C. At least 6 Officers have voted.
 - D. The vote was tabled by the President, Vice-President Operations or Vice-President Engagement.
 - iv. The result of Committee votes shall be made public by default. The President may anonymise the Officers who voted and what they voted for - if not, the Officers and their votes shall also be made public.

- v. The Committee shall abide by the outcome of a Committee vote. Failure to do so is subject to the disciplinary measures in section 10.
- (b) Provisions for all general meetings
 - i. General meetings of the Society shall be conducted in line with the provisions of the Standing Orders of the Society, which are located in appendix A.
 - ii. Minutes of each general meeting shall be recorded by the Chairperson of the meeting, or by the Secretary of the Society if the Chairperson considers delegation of that responsibility to be appropriate, and shall be published online no later than two weeks after the date of the meeting. Such minutes shall also be provided to the Students' Union.
- (c) Termly general meetings (TGMs)
 - i. The Society shall hold a general meeting at least once a term.
 - ii. Notice of such meetings shall be issued at least ten (10) days in advance of the meeting date, and circulated to all members.
 - iii. In the event that there are officer positions unfilled, elections for those positions may begin at a TGM in accordance with the provisions of the Election of Officers section of this Constitution.
- (d) Annual general meetings (AGMs)
 - i. The Society's AGM shall be held in each Spring term, during term time, and shall constitute the general meeting for the term.
 - ii. Notice of the AGM shall be issued at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the meeting date, and circulated to all members.
- (e) Extraordinary general meetings (EGMs)
 - i. An EGM may be called by the Society President, by the Society Treasurer, or by written application to the Society President by at least 6 members of the Society stating the items of business for the EGM.
 - ii. At least 24 hours' notice shall be given for all EGMs, but the Committee should endeavour to give as much notice as is practically possible. An EGM shall be held within 7 term days of the request being given to the President, or the request being made by the Secretary or President themselves. Notice must be given to all members.
 - iii. In exceptional circumstances, where required, an EGM may be held outside of term time. This will be decided by the President or Vice-President. Such a meeting shall only be quorate if at least the fewer of 10% of, or 20 of, the members of the Society, other than those on the Committee, are in attendance.
 - iv. The Students' Union shall, in all cases, be informed of the meeting and the reason for its being called before it is held.

5. Election of Officers:

- (a) No later than 14 days before a Qualifying Meeting, the Society Secretary shall circulate a notice to members inviting nominations for all Committee roles that may be available. Nominations must be given to the Secretary, submitted by any reasonable medium that they may instruct nominators to use, before voting begins.
- (b) Nominations will be closed at the start of the Qualifying Meeting, unless a majority vote is taken during the meeting that nominations may continue to be open until such a time as the meeting may specify, no later than 24 hours following the meeting.
- (c) The elections will be advertised to all members.
- (d) Any member who expects to be a member in the following year may run for nomination and must have support registered by two other members.
- (e) A member may only register support for one candidate's nomination for each position that is advertised for election.
- (f) A member may run for nomination for any number of Officer positions and shall be nominated for each position separately.
- (g) Voting will be conducted electronically and will be open for 7 term days following the Qualifying Meeting. Voting will be advertised to all members and the result will be declared within 7 days of the end of voting.

- (h) If an elected member chooses not to accept their role, the election shall be recounted with that member excluded as described in the Voting section of this constitution.
- (i) In the case that a member is elected for multiple Officer positions, that member shall remove themselves from some number of those positions such that no member shall hold more than one Officer position.
- (j) If any positions are left unfilled due to a member removing themselves in this manner, the election for that position will be recounted with that member excluded.
- (k) Should positions other than those designated to be Core Officer positions fail to be elected, the Secretary should endeavour to hold elections for these positions as soon as possible.
- (l) Results of the elections, together with names, student numbers and contact details of those elected shall be submitted to the Students' Union within 14 days of the election.
- (m) For the purposes of this section of the Constitution, a "Qualifying Meeting" refers to an Annual General Meeting, or a Termly General Meeting at which elections for Officers happens or may happen, or an Extraordinary General Meeting called specifically for the purpose of electing an Officer or Officers. Officers may only be elected at a Qualifying Meeting

6. Voting:

- (a) Proxy votes will not be accepted.
- (b) In any single matter, each eligible voter will be entitled to exactly one vote.
- (c) Voting at General Meetings
 - i. Matters to be put to vote at General Meetings shall require a 50% majority to pass.
 - ii. Any member present at the meeting will be entitled to vote.
 - iii. Voting shall be conducted by show of hands unless any member requests the vote to be performed by secret ballot.
- (d) Electing Officers
 - i. Each member nominated for a Committee position will be on the ballot for that position, as well as the option to re-open nominations.
 - ii. Members may participate in voting for any number of the positions, but are not required to participate.
 - iii. The voting will follow a standard preferential voting process, detailed as follows:
 - A. Voters may rank the candidates in order of preference, starting at their most preferred, as far as they care to.
 - B. If any candidates are to be excluded, their place in the ranking on all votes will be removed before the first round of voting.
 - C. With each round of voting, the candidates shall be sorted by the number of votes cast in which they are the most preferred choice, then the candidate with the fewest votes will be removed from the election and their votes will be redistributed among the remaining candidates according to their next preferred choice.
 - D. These rounds will repeat with candidates being removed until only one remains, who will be elected. In the event that multiple candidates remain after all the rounds, in the first instance, the candidate with the greatest number of first preference votes will be selected. In the event that the candidates tie in first preference votes, all subsequent preferences will be used in order. In the event that the candidates tie in all vote preference rounds, a cryptographically-secure random number generator shall be used to select which candidate has won the election.

7. Society Handover:

- (a) Following the election of a new Committee, the outgoing Committee shall be responsible for overseeing the handover of responsibilities. The newly-elected committee shall become the official committee of the Society within a maximum of 4 weeks after the election. The responsibilities of each outgoing Officer are:
 - i. **President:** The President must ensure that any relevant files are transferred to the incoming President. They should also arrange meetings between the outgoing and new Committees to coordinate the handover.

- ii. **Treasurer:** The Treasurer must ensure that the Society's copy of Grant Aid is up to date and that the new Officer has all bank account details transferred to them and the relevant Officers, along with all relevant documentation.
- iii. **Secretary:** The Secretary will transfer or make available all minutes and relevant documentation to the new Officer.
- iv. **Web Officer:** The Web Officer will change the passwords on all Society accounts and profiles and hand over the login details to the incoming Officer.
- v. **All other Officers:** All other outgoing Officers will ensure that the person taking over from them is aware of their responsibilities and to make sure they are ready to take over from them.

8. **Financial Matters:**

- (a) The President and Treasurer shall be the signatories of the financial accounts, hereinafter referred to as the "Signatories".
- (b) The Treasurer shall provide a summary of the Society's financial activities at regular intervals, and not less than once every six months, to be published on the Society website.
- (c) The Signatories are jointly liable for the proper management of the Society's finances and ensuring that the Union's Grant Aid regulations are applied.
- (d) Society spending must be approved by any two of the Signatories.
- (e) The Committee must vote to approve spending exceeding £200.
- (f) The income and property of the Group must be applied solely towards the promotion of the objectives.

9. **Conflicts of Interests and Conflicts of Loyalties:**

- (a) A member of the Committee must:
 - i. Declare the nature and extent of any interest, direct or indirect, which they have in any decisions of a Meeting of the Committee or in any transaction or arrangement entered into by the Group which has not been previously declared;
 - ii. Absent themselves from any discussions of the Committee in which it is possible that a conflict will arise between their duty to act solely in the interests of the Group and any personal interest, including but not limited to any personal financial interest.
- (b) Any member of the Committee absenting themselves from any discussions in accordance with this Clause must not vote or be counted as part of the quorum in any decision of the Committee on the matter.

10. **Disciplinary Action:**

- (a) Disciplinary action may be taken against any Member of the Group as a consequence of conduct:
 - i. Detrimental to the reputation of the Group or the Students' Union.
 - ii. Opposed to the objects of the Group (see clause 2) or the Students' Union.
 - iii. In contravention of any provision of this Constitution.
- (b) Disciplinary action that may be taken against any Member may be, but is not limited to:
 - i. Issue of a formal written warning.
 - ii. Partial or total ban from certain Group activities.
 - iii. Disqualification from becoming a member of the Committee.
 - iv. Removal of a member of the Committee from office.
 - v. Temporary or permanent revocation of Membership.
 - vi. Referral of the complaint to the Students' Union's Disciplinary Committee.
 - vii. It is the right of the subject of the complaint to choose to have the disciplinary matter heard by either the Members in General Meeting, or a Meeting of the Committee. Either shall have the power to take disciplinary action, including but not limited to those measures set out in paragraphs i – vi inclusive in sub- clause b of this Clause.

- viii. Any disciplinary hearing must be conducted in an impartial, balanced, and fair manner, considering all representations on the matter.
- ix. All disciplinary action must be subject to prior discussion with the Students' Union's Student Groups Officer.
- x. Members subject to disciplinary action have the right of appeal to the Students' Union's Student Groups Committee.
- xi. A full report of all disciplinary action taken by the Group in the previous year must be presented at the AGM.

11. Affiliations:

- (a) The Society may affiliate to an external organisation which is in line with its aims and which provides a benefit to its members. All external affiliations must be reported to the Societies Department Committee and to the Union AGM.
- (b) Any affiliations which concern the financial support of the Society by an external organisation must be signed for by the President or Vice-President as well as any other relevant Officers.
- (c) For a sponsor that has not previously affiliated with the society in the last 3 years, the committee shall allow for a period of 7 days of consultation with Society members before signing a contract with a new sponsor.
- (d) The committee shall have a vote on inviting an external speaker or signing a new sponsorship. The committee shall make the vote results public in the form of meeting notes with each committee member listed as for, against or abstaining.
- (e) The President, Vice-President Operations and Industry Officer shall all be aware of any contact with external third parties with the intention of sponsorship or running an event.

12. Constitutional Amendments:

- (a) Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by any member, subject to the provisions of each of the Standing Orders unless they are suspended, in advance of a General Meeting and circulated with each amendment published in a separate line item or document for all members to read.
- (b) At a General Meeting a vote shall be held to approve amendments to the constitution. Such a vote shall require the assent of not less than two thirds of eligible voters at a quorate General Meeting, as described in the Standing Orders. If this passes a copy of the amended constitution shall be signed by two Officers, usually the President and Secretary.
- (c) The signed, amended copy shall be submitted to the Students' Union for consideration and approval. In the event that the amendments are not approved, an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be called as soon as possible to review the rejection of the amendments and to decide on further steps.
- (d) The Secretary and the Students' Union shall both keep a copy of the constitution, and it shall be made available on the Society's website in PDF form.

13. Appendix 1:

- (a) The dates of meetings of the Society shall be set by the Secretary, and communicated to members along with the location, registration procedure and deadlines for motions.
- (b) Annual general meetings of the Society shall, at the very least, have the following agenda points:
 - i. a report from the President on the Society's activities of the last year;
 - ii. an annual statement of accounts from the Treasurer;
 - iii. reports as appropriate from the other Committee members;
 - iv. presentations from the candidates for election to Committee for the next year; and
 - v. conducting any other business notified in advance.
- (c) Motions must have a proposer and seconder to be debated by a meeting.
- (d) Motions must be submitted at least seven (7) days in advance of the meeting.

- (e) Motions must be published by the Committee no later than five (5) days prior to a meeting. Amendments to the published motions may be submitted by any member at any time prior to the meeting.
- (f) All submitted motions must be considered by an Annual or Termly General Meeting, unless the Committee passes a motion to reject it on any of the following grounds:
 - i. late submission;
 - ii. conflict with the Constitution whilst not amending it so as to resolve the conflict;
 - iii. being incomprehensible, discriminatory, or promotional in nature; or
 - iv. being a duplicate of an already submitted motion.
- (g) At an Extraordinary General Meeting, no motions or business other than that specified in the statement calling the Extraordinary General Meeting may be discussed.
- (h) Amendments to this Constitution may be made only at an Annual or Termly General Meeting, or an EGM called specifically for the purpose of making an amendment or set of amendments.
- (i) The following procedural motions may be put to a meeting, which may be put at any time notwithstanding the requirements of Standing Orders 4, 5, 6 and 7:
 - i. No confidence in the chair;
 - ii. Suspend standing orders;
 - iii. Move to next business;
 - iv. Move straight to a vote;
 - v. Vote by secret ballot; and
 - vi. Vote separately on a section of a motion.
- (j) Voting shall be taken by a show of hands, or by any other mechanism which must be approved by a two-thirds majority of the meeting's attendees at the start of the meeting, unless a request for a vote by secret ballot has been approved. Constitutional amendments and motions of no confidence in Committee members shall require a two-thirds majority; all other motions shall require a simple majority.
- (k) All standing orders may be suspended upon a procedural motion to do so being passed, excepting this order and Orders 2, 8 and 10. Suspension of these standing orders is impossible; they must be modified or removed by a constitutional amendment.
- (l) Constitutional amendments, including amendments to these Standing Orders, will take effect after the close of the General Meeting. All other motions shall be effective immediately.

A General Meeting of the Society approved the above constitution on 11/05/2022.



Lewes D. Barton
President



Kai B. Davis
Secretary