



**Southampton University Students' Union**

**Societies Department**

**2015/2016**

**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 School of Electronics and Computer Science.

**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 shall automatically be members of the Society upon enrolment at the University. 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 Clubs and Societies Officer and the Secretary of the Society must always be provided with an up to date copy of all member names and corresponding student numbers.
- d. Members may be expelled from the Society as per the Union guidelines.

### 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 abdicate 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". 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 Clubs and Societies Officer 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: The Vice-President shall act alongside the President in managing the Committee and representing the Society. They will take over the responsibilities of the President if they are unavailable.
  - ii. Academic Secretary: The Academic Secretary shall be responsible for arranging academic events for all members of the Society and coordinating with Society sponsors.
  - iii. Games Officer: The Games Officer shall be responsible for arranging gaming events for the Society.
  - iv. Marketing Officer: The Marketing Officer shall be responsible for how the Society is presented online and in printed media. They will be responsible for overseeing all social media activity by the Society, and ensuring a consistent brand.
  - v. Social Secretary: The Social Secretary shall be responsible for arranging social events for the Society. These shall be sufficiently varied so as to cater to as much of the membership as possible.

- vi. Sports Officer: The Sports Officer shall be responsible for managing the Society's sports teams and arranging sporting events.
- vii. Web Officer: The Web Officer shall be responsible for maintaining the Society's web presence and running all digital accounts and profiles associated with the Society.
- viii. 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.

#### **4. Meetings:**

##### **a. Conduct of Meetings**

- i. The Secretary shall compile an agenda before all meetings. All members shall be able to suggest points for inclusion on the agenda except in the case of Emergency General Meetings, where no additional business will be considered. The agenda will be addressed before any other business, after which the Chairperson may open the floor for discussion.
- ii. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all meetings which shall be made available to the members, Clubs and Societies Officer and the Societies Department Committee.
- iii. Voting shall be carried out as specified in the 'Voting' section of this document.
- iv. General Meetings shall usually be chaired by the person who has been elected as President, or the Vice-president if they are not available.
  - 1. In the event that there is no such person or they are not present within fifteen minutes of the time appointed for the General Meeting, the members present must elect one of their number to chair.
- v. An associate member may speak at a General Meeting with the permission of the Chairperson.

##### **b. Committee Meetings**

- i. The Committee shall meet often to discuss the running of the Society.
- ii. Votes may only be held in Committee meetings under the following conditions:
  - 1. At least 4 Officers are in attendance at the meeting.
  - 2. The President or Vice-President is in attendance at the meeting.

##### **c. Termly General Meetings (TGM)**

- i. The Society shall hold a General Meeting at least once a term, which shall be advertised to all members. Notice of the meeting shall be issued at least 10 days in advance.

- ii. In the event that there are Officer positions unfilled, elections for those positions may be held at a TGM following the process outlined in the Elections section of this constitution.
- d. Annual General Meeting (AGM)
  - i. The AGM shall be held in the Spring Term and shall count as a General Meeting for the Spring Term.
  - ii. Notice of the AGM shall be issued at least 14 clear days in advance and advertised to Union members.
  - iii. An important matter at the AGM will be the election of the next Officers, as outlined in the Elections section of this constitution.
  - iv. Each member of the Committee may be invited by the Chairperson to make a short speech concerning their activities during the previous year. This speech is compulsory for the Treasurer, who must also present the year's accounts for examination if requested.
  - v. Minutes of the AGM shall be published online at the start of the Summer Term.
- e. Extraordinary General Meetings (EGM)
  - i. An EGM can be called by the President or Secretary, or by written application to the President by at least 6 members, together with a statement of the objects for which the meeting is being called.
  - ii. At the EGM no business other than that specified in the written statement shall be discussed.
  - iii. At least 24 hours' notice of an EGM shall be given. The meeting must be held within 7 term days (where term days are days outside University holidays as per the University Calendar) of the request being given to the President.
    - 1. In exceptional circumstances, where required, an EGM may be held outside term-time. This will be decided by the President or Vice-President.
  - iv. The Clubs and Societies Officer shall be informed of the meeting and the reason for it being called before it is held.

## **5. Election of Officers:**

- a. The Secretary shall invite nominations at least 14 days before the AGM. Nominations must be given to the Secretary before voting begins.
- b. Nominations will be closed at the start of the AGM.
- 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 a single candidate's nomination.

- 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 AGM. 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 re-counted 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 the following requirements are satisfied:
  - i. 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. If any Core Officer positions are not elected, a Secretary shall be elected and they will be responsible for ensuring that elections for the remaining positions are held as soon as possible.
- l. Should other Officer positions fail to be elected, the Secretary should endeavour to hold elections for these positions as soon as possible.
- m. Results of the elections, together with names, student numbers and contact details of those elected shall be submitted to the Clubs and Societies Officer within 14 days of the election.

## **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:

1. Voters may rank the candidates in order of preference, starting at their most preferred, as far as they care to.
2. If any candidates are to be excluded, their place in the ranking on all votes will be removed before the first round of voting.
3. 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.
4. These rounds will repeat with candidates being removed until only one remains, who will be elected.

**7. Society Handover:**

- a. Following the election of a new Committee, the outgoing Committee shall be responsible for overseeing the handover of responsibilities for a minimum of 2 weeks. 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. The Treasurer may also submit a budget application for the following academic year to the Clubs and Societies Officer before the end of the Summer Term.
  - 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, Vice-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 upon request by any member.
- 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 himself or herself 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.
- c. 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.
- d. Any disciplinary hearing must be conducted in an impartial, balanced, and fair manner, considering all representations on the matter.

- e. All disciplinary action must be subject to prior discussion with the Students' Union's Student Groups Officer.
- f. Members subject to disciplinary action have the right of appeal to the Students' Union's Student Groups Committee.
- g. 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.

**12. Constitutional Amendments:**

- a. Amendments to this constitution shall be proposed in advance of a General Meeting and made available for all members to read.
- b. At a General Meeting a vote shall be held to approve amendments to the constitution. 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 Clubs and Societies Officer for consideration and approval by the Societies Department Committee.
- d. The Secretary and the Clubs and Societies Officer shall both keep a copy of the constitution, and it shall be made available on the Society's website in PDF format.



A General Meeting of the Society approved the above constitution on:

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Role \_\_\_\_\_