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Guidelines for Affiliated Societies

These guidelines are here to help new societies who are just setting up, and also to provide some advice and guidance to existing societies. They bring together experience gathered from many societies over the years.

If you require these guidelines in an alternative format, please contact ousa@open.ac.uk and we will do our best to help.
Introduction

Societies are a recognised feature of student life in all universities, further enriching the study and lives of students.

The OU community also welcomes societies. Special-interest affiliated societies are formed by students themselves and are run autonomously by and for their members; currently there are twenty societies affiliated to the OU Students Association (OUSA) but this changes over time. These Guidelines are the result of many years’ experience within societies and the discussions held between societies, OU Students Association officers and staff through the Societies Committee.

What does it mean to be a society affiliated to the OU Students Association?

Students can meet like-minded people by setting up or joining an OU Students Association affiliated society;

Members understand that societies are being run by and for the benefit of students;

The OU Students Association knows that the societies are being run for students in an appropriate manner;

The OU knows that properly affiliated societies covering a wide range of interests are available to its students.
Starting a Society

It’s great that you are thinking about starting a new society, it can be a hugely rewarding experience and lots of fun. This information should help you make a start, but don’t forget you can always contact us in the OU Students Association Office for help. Email ousa@open.ac.uk or phone 01908 652026.

Policies

The OU Students Association has policies which should be kept in mind by societies if they are applying for affiliation to the Students Association. Details about societies can be found in section 17 of the OU Students Association’s Byelaws.

1. A society’s aims should not conflict with the aims of the OU Students Association.
2. Membership must be open to any member of the OU Students Association who accepts the aims of the society.
3. The OU Students Association’s Policies include an Equal Opportunities policy (section A), and an affiliated society should plan events with this policy in mind.

Every effort should be made to ensure that the activities of your society are accessible to all and they have been planned with this aim in mind. If you need further advice in this respect, please contact the OUSA Office.

Finding members

To find other OU students who are interested in helping form your society you need to advertise! You can find some tips in the Promoting your Society section of these guidelines.
Online forums and social media

Take a look at those already active on the OU Students Association section of the Virtual Learning Environment and on social media – some forums may already cover your chosen area of interest.

- An affiliated society may already exist: if so join it and offer to help.
- Forums can be very effective for contacting students before and after affiliation, but use the facility carefully to avoid accusations of ‘spamming’.
- A newly affiliated society can have its own forum within the Societies area, to set this up contact ousa-controller@open.ac.uk.
- There might be an active Facebook or Twitter group. Contact the office to ask for any details that they might have of these.

Announcements

When your plans begin to come together, it’s a good idea to put together some general information, around 300 words, to tell people about your ideas and publicise your society.

Then you can:

- Send it to potential members,
- Forward it to the OU Students Association (ousa@open.ac.uk) for publication in OUstudents magazine and on the website,
- If your subject area is related to a faculty, send the information to the relevant OU Faculty Department. The OU Students Association Office Team can help you find the appropriate person if you are struggling.

In your announcement, it’s a good idea to:

- Be clear and concise,
- Include a call to action,
- Include a contact email address, forum or social media link,
- Keep a copy on file.

Launching the new society

Keep a careful record of everyone who responds to your announcement so that you can contact them later on when you have an update. When and if you feel there is enough interest (perhaps around 20-30 interested people), you can launch the society!

1. Announce an inaugural meeting on the Society’s online forum, website or on social media.
2. Send a message to everyone who has shown interest. As the founder, be clear on what you want other people to do and what you can do.
3. Contact any potential volunteers who have expressed a particular interest (in editing a newsletter for example).
4. Be flexible about what you are willing and able to do. Remember, to sustain a society it has to be a collaborative effort by a team.

Inaugural Meeting

If possible have an unofficial first meeting with a core potential committee.

Then we suggest holding the inaugural meeting in one of the following ways:

- Online, using OU Live or another online meeting tool. We can help with this.
- Face to Face, in a café, at an OU Regional or National Centre, or at the OU Campus in Milton Keynes. Again, we can help with bookings.
- By Skype
- Within a Facebook group
- By Facebook Live Chat
- Time: allow two hours.
- Attendance: expect ten or more people.

Before the meeting:

- Prepare a draft constitution (an acceptable ‘sample’ is provided in these guidelines).
- Have information on OU Students Association affiliation available to you.
The agenda for the meeting could include:

- The main aims of the new society.
- Agree a constitution to take these aims and operations into account.
- Elect officers, specifically Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.
- Categories of membership.
- Decide on mode of operation and be clear about exactly who is doing what, particularly over the next six months.
- If you want to have a newsletter, appoint an editor and decide on frequency, and then try and get a first one underway.
- What will your members expect from this new special-interest society? What will they want to do?
- Decide on a name for the society and consider a logo but note that while ‘Open University’ can be part of an affiliated society’s name, the OU or OU Students Association logos cannot be used. Although the ‘OU Students Association Societies’ logo and badge can be used.
- Fix annual subscriptions (£5 per annum perhaps) bearing in mind costs your society may incur.
- Consider affiliation to the OU Students Association.
- A recruitment plan for future members.

This is a very important meeting in the history of the society. The decisions you make need careful thought if your society is to succeed.

For example, the more formal bits about elections and terms-of-office in your proposed Constitution. It’s just as well to make the term of office flexible so that Officers can stand down as necessary.

Consider a period of free membership to get your society off the ground.

Think carefully about your banking arrangements. Would a CUBs account or PayPal work for your society?

The OU Students Association recognises that societies are autonomous and will have their own method of working. However regular annual reports of society activities and the submission of audited accounts are fundamental requirements of the affiliation criteria.

(Section 17 of the OU Students Association Byelaws)

The first six months

Feel free to assign tasks as you see fit, but for initial guidance, a traditional way of working might include the roles below.

**The Secretary** should contact all enquirers with news of the launch and include:
- Details of officers, a membership subscription form, constitution and news of what’s planned.
- Call for news items and ideas.

They should also:
- Advertise again.
- Set up a system for holding membership details.

**The Chair** should:
- Plan the first newsletter (with Editor).
- Pursue affiliation with the OU Students Association (with Secretary).
- Keep in regular touch with committee members.

**The Treasurer** should:
- Open a bank account.*
- Set up a bookkeeping system.
- Liaise with Secretary (or membership secretary) on handling subscriptions.
- Apply for start-up grant when affiliated to the OU Students Association, by contacting the Office Team.

A society might also want to have a separate Membership Secretary and Editor.

*Consider using a CUBs account (Cooperative Units Banking Scheme) where all accounting is done for you and the money held centrally. Full details are available from the Resources Team in the OU Students Association Office.

Email: ousa-resources@open.ac.uk
Phone: 01908 652026.
Further advice for the Treasurer

As the OU Students Association’s financial year runs from 1st August to 31st July your society may decide to adopt this too.

If your society decides to use a normal bank rather than CUBS:

- For convenience, transfer the account to a branch near the Treasurer. It is normal to have two signatories, e.g. Treasurer and Chair, with either able to sign for small amounts but both required for larger amounts (which should be specified in your constitution).
- Ask for quarterly bank statements.
- Keep simple accounts on a spreadsheet with columns for ‘Date’, ‘Income’ and ‘Expenditure’.
- You might want to create a form for expenses.
- Use BACS and cheques as much as possible so that bank statements can help check accounts and audit. You may also need to keep some Petty Cash for small purchases.
- Consider opening a ‘PayPal’ account.
- Keep all receipts, vouchers, bills, etc.
- Set a mileage rate if payment for travel is in operation.
- Keep up-to-date! Enter transactions preferably on the day they occur – before you forget. This may seem tedious, but think how much worse it will be if the accounts have not been updated for several months.

Audit

Audited annual accounts should be presented to each society AGM and are required by the OU Students Association. Two auditors are needed (see the OU Students Association Byelaws, Section 17).

Subscriptions

A system for paying-in subscriptions should be established if the Treasurer is not responsible for membership records. The membership list will be needed at the audit.

Grants

The Association’s annual budget includes a small amount to support the Societies Committee. The bulk is used for meetings and travel, but newly-affiliated societies can claim a small inaugural grant to help with set-up costs. Contact the OU Students Association Office for more details.

Budgeting

It is recommended that societies have an internal rule for special purposes (events, sales, etc.) which generate £100 or more in turnover. Such items should be properly budget-estimated by the Treasurer and responsible person and the budget approved by the officers.

The OU Students Association’s General Manager must be sent a copy of the budget if the society’s funds are insufficient to cover a total loss of the society’s commitment in that enterprise.

Submitting Accounts

In order to comply with the affiliation agreement, an affiliated society MUST submit audited accounts annually, whether or not a grant is claimed.

"Good luck – and thank you for your efforts!

Don’t forget to stay in touch and let us know if you need any help."
Affiliation

The arrangements for a society to affiliate to the OU Students Association are described within Section 17 of the **OU Students Association’s Byelaws**.

Here is a brief summary:

- The aims of the society shouldn’t conflict with the objectives of the Students Association.
- The minimum initial number of members required is 10 to seek affiliation.
- A Society must achieve and maintain a minimum membership of at least 25 members within a year and 40 within 2 years of affiliation.
- At least 50% of the society’s full or voting membership must be made up of the following: full members of the Students Association, past full members of the Association or staff of the OU.
- Membership should be open to all members of the OU community.
- A new society needs a Constitution accepted by Vice President Administration and approved by the Association’s Central Executive Committee.
- The society’s constitution must explain that Officers and Committee Members will be elected and explain how.
- Approved accounts must be sent to the OU Students Association each year.

In most other respects every society is autonomous.

You can find a sample constitution, which would be acceptable to the OU Students Association at the end of these guidelines.

The Affiliation Procedure

The formal procedures are:

1. A formal application together with Constitution is submitted to the Vice President Administration.
2. VP Administration reviews the Constitution and consults if any problem arises.
3. When certain criteria are met the VP Administration offers an affiliation agreement for signature.
4. The affiliation is reported to the Central Executive Committee.

Representation

Once affiliated, a society has representation within the OU Students Association:

- Via the Societies Committee;
- Via the VP Administration to the Central Executive Committee;
- At Conference via its Society Delegate/s.
Running a Society

Administration

To affiliate to the OU Students Association a society should have a number of officers which might include the following:

- Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer

To run a society efficiently it is sensible to have people doing the following jobs:

- Membership Secretary
- Societies Committee Representative
- Editor

For new or small societies some of the posts can be combined, perhaps:

- Treasurer + Membership Sec
- Chair + Societies Committee Representative
- Secretary + Editor

Different societies will use different methods to spread the work:

- Small societies may operate with ‘ordinary’ committee members taking on responsibilities as and when required.
- Larger societies may need extra posts such as sales officers or local organisers.
- Other societies have a non-elected President, usually someone with OU connections prominent in a field related to that of the society.

Principal Officers – on the following page we’ve suggested possible responsibilities for Officers; however it is an advantage to be flexible and to have more committee members without specific roles who can get involved as and when they’re able.
### Chair
- Overall responsibility for managing the affairs of the society.
- Ensuring activities agreed at meetings are actioned.
- Keeping in contact with all committee members.
- Ensuring membership services are maintained.

### Secretary
- The day-to-day running of the society, acting as the ‘general manager’.
- Being the link between the Committee, the members, the OU Students Association Office, the Society Committee Representative and the Chair of the Societies Committee.
- Submitting annual reports to the OU Students Association on the status of the Society.

Other normal duties include:
- Receiving correspondence from all sources.
- Ensuring forwarding as appropriate.
- Keeping records, past and current.
- Organising meetings and acting as Minutes Secretary.
- Keeping informed about regulations regarding database information, insurance and travel.
- Being aware of accessibility matters.

### Treasurer
- Control of assets.
- Operation of bank accounts.
- Liaison with the OU Students Association’s Vice President Administration c/o OU Students Association Office.
- Financial planning & reporting.
- Arranging the annual audit.
- Submitting accounts annually to Annual General Meeting (AGM) and OU Students Association.

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**Society Representative to Societies Committee**

- The society should appoint a representative to attend two face to face meetings and the AGM in Milton Keynes every year.
- The representative reports on the Society’s events and discusses society matters.
- The society can also send a deputy if their named rep is unavailable.

**Membership records**

It is important that:
- Membership records should be accurate and up-to-date.
- It helps to have a team who can help with this at busy times.
- Just one current listing should be maintained from which all contact details should be sourced.

**The OU Students Association is registered under the DATA PROTECTION ACT.**

If a society is holding data electronically, then advice should be sought from the OU Students Association’s General Manager as to whether the society should also register under the Act.
Insurance

Societies need to consider Public Liability Insurance, indemnifying itself and their members for third-party injury or property damage where legal liability exists. The OU Students Association is able to offer suggested Insurance Companies if required.

This is especially important:
- When using other organisations’ facilities.
- When planning an event.
- Members should check their own insurance policies for personal accident coverage.

Event insurance and principal speaker cancellation insurance can be particularly important and should be considered where necessary.

Booking venues

When booking venues, care is needed to ensure that they are accessible to all members & other interested OU students. On occasions, a society might have legitimate reasons for arranging trips to locations that are not accessible for example the Mountaineering society and for instances like this is acceptable.

Guidelines for booking venues

1. When booking any event:
   - ensure that people with mobility problems can get into the venue and check toilet facilities.
   - ask whether an audio-loop is available, particularly for large meetings.
2. For longer events needing overnight accommodation:
   - check the nature of the rooms, by understanding what the venue has to offer.
   - check car-parking, especially for those with mobility problems around the venue.
   - ask for details of the member of staff who is the contact for individual needs.
3. Cost of accommodation should be:
   - kept completely separate from the cost of attending an event;
   - then ‘day visitors’ can make their own arrangements and people booking the whole package are aware of the split.

Advertisements & Booking forms:

- let potential attendees know of any special facilities available.
- include a tick box and free text space for ‘dietary or facilitation and support needs’.
- contact everyone who books indicating special needs and, if necessary, put them in touch with the venue contact.

Charitable Status


Once registered it is necessary to liaise with a local tax office, asking for whoever is responsible for exemption to tax under Section 360 (1) (c), Income & Corporation Taxes Act 1970. Then pursue the option for subscriptions to be Gift Aided. The Inland Revenue will advise.

Travel

Package Travel Regulations (1992)

Where packages are booked directly through a travel agent, with the participants making payments to the agent (covering components such as accommodation, travel, leader’s expenses, etc), the monies paid to the agent are safeguarded via the agent’s compliance with the Regulations.

These regulations did not have clubs, societies, schools and the like in mind, but it seems they do apply to all trips involving overnight accommodation. Our understanding is that, while leader’s expenses can be paid by a Society, those taking part should pay for transport and accommodation directly to the provider. One society issues the following disclaimer:

‘Information about events published anywhere in this newsletter does not constitute a Brochure under the Package Travel Regulations (1992)’
Attracting new members

- Send information about your society to be included on the **OU Students Association's website**. This could be text, pictures or a video.
- Use **Social Media** – including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Don’t forget to include the OU Students Association’s accounts so we can share your messages.
- Submit an article for **OUstudents** e-magazine, it reaches students and staff four times a year.
- Contact students through the **Online Forums**, an extensive range of online forums can be found within the **Virtual Learning Environment**.
- Try and keep in touch with Faculties if your society is **course or subject related**, teams may be able to offer support. Try to be understanding of the pressures on Faculties and that staff give their free time to help.
- Get in touch with **The Association of OU Graduates** – graduates make good recruits and many societies rely on their help, here is the **website**.

- **Other societies** may be willing to carry information about events.
- Some **regions and nations** will have newsletters generated by student led Assemblies and may be willing to include information. Send information to **ousa-comms@open.ac.uk** for consideration.
- The **Regional and National online forums** could be appropriate for spreading the word about local events, reaching existing and potential members in the area.
- **OU Students Association Biennial Conference** – with around 400 delegates, observers and visitors attending, it’s a great place to attract new members.
- The OU Students Association produces a **leaflet** that includes basic information on all affiliated societies. It is regularly sent to OU Students Association and OU events.

**Always be clear and concise in communications and try to respond promptly.**
Publications from your society

The Newsletter Editor
Most societies provide their members with a regular newsletter. An editor should be designated to:

- Draw up a schedule,
- Assemble the content,
- Arrange for design and printing if required,
- Arrange distribution in liaison with the membership secretary.
- Ask for copy from individuals. Consider offering free membership to anyone who regularly contributes articles.

Copyright
The Editor must be cautious about copyright materials.

- Short quotations (a sentence or two) which acknowledge their source are acceptable: anything longer or unacknowledged is not.
- The use of photos and illustrations may need permission as well as acknowledgement.
- Authors should understand that it is their responsibility to clear copyright and permissions, but check to make sure.

Production methods

- Many societies send their newsletters electronically via email using PDF or similar.
- The OU Students Association Office is also able to offer newsletter printing and distribution (for more details contact ousa@open.ac.uk).

Society identity and style

- Logos are useful in providing recognition: they give a society an identity.
- It is also useful to adopt a presentation style and tone of voice for your society.
- The “OU Students Association Societies” logo can be used on the website or publications of properly affiliated societies.
- Once a society is affiliated, ‘Open University’ can be part of the society’s name.

Societies online forum
A society can have its own online forum, which is a great way to keep in touch with student members: contact OUSA Controller (ousa-controller@open.ac.uk) for details about setting up a forum. Facebook Groups are also useful and many societies are making sure they are present in this space.

OU and OU Students Association logos are subject to copyright and SHOULD NOT BE USED.

Note also that logos should NOT be a corruption of the OU shield.
The Societies Committee

Membership and business of the Societies Committee is explained in the **OU Students Association’s Byelaws, Section 17.31**, and also below.

- Affiliated societies can send a representative to the societies meeting that takes place twice every year.
- Societies Committee meetings ensure that common issues are discussed between societies and the Association.
- A society may elect any full member to serve on the Societies Committee.
- Society representatives meet to discuss their activities and compare experiences, to talk about their websites, publicity, membership, newsletter production, insurance, subscription levels, etc.
- A senior member of OU Students Association staff is present to take minutes, give advice, and confirm arrangements for events (i.e. Conference) where societies can have a stand & display.

- Between Societies Committee meetings the dedicated Societies Desk in the OU Students Association Office, is there to help and give advice.

**Societies Committee Budget**

The OU Students Association provides a small facilitating budget to the Societies Committee. This covers:

- Meeting and travel costs for Representatives.
- A modest inaugural grant which is offered to new societies.
- A modest annual grant to those societies who apply.

Once established, a society is expected to set subscriptions at a level which should cover the society’s own costs.
OU Students Association Societies Committee Forum

- There is a special online forum restricted to members of the Societies Committee and Society officers.
- Where these officers are current OU students (with student ID and password) access can be simply arranged by OUSA Controller (ousa-controller@open.ac.uk).

OU Students Association Office and services

We're here to help. The OU Students Association Office offers a range of services to societies, for example:

- Publicity through the OU Students Association website and social media;
- Reprographics - printing newsletters and journals;
- Despatch of mailings to members;
- Holding membership lists electronically.

The Office is a resource available to the Association as a whole and:

- The OU Students Association is the main holder of all officer and society representative contact details and should immediately be informed of any changes to these.
- The OU Students Association is registered under the Data Protection Act.
Coping with Problems

Organisational

Within a society it is vital to ensure that:

- People do not over-commit themselves.
- Regular two-way contact is maintained between society officers.
- The Vice President Administration will try to attend a meeting of a society if that is thought to be helpful.

Internal procedures

Societies can easily fall into difficulty when officers or other officials ‘disappear’ without notification. The following steps are advisable if such an incident occurs and are intended to assist the society in such an instance.

1. Contacting an absent officer

The Chair or another officer should begin making enquiries if no contact has been made with an officer over a period of three months.

Should nothing be established from these first enquiries it is suggested that the following steps are taken by the remaining officers:

1. First a letter or email should be sent to the individual expressing concern at the lack of activity or contact.

2. If no response is received within four weeks, a second letter should be sent, stating “that if no response is received within four weeks of the date of this letter, it will be assumed that you have resigned from your post in the Society.” (Copied to Society committee members and the OU Students Association Office for information.)

If the situation is obvious or well overdue, the first letter may be omitted or the two combined.

2. Recovery of accounts

Societies are particularly vulnerable with the disappearance or inadequacies of a treasurer, especially when an annual audit is overdue by three months or more. It is then the duty of the Secretary, copying to the Chair, to:
1. Take the action outlined in paragraph 1 above. The final letter should also include a section strongly demanding the immediate surrender of the accounts, if any, and all related documents, particularly the bank statements and the cheque book. The threat of a Solicitor’s letter (if absolutely necessary and as a last resort) is often effective.

2. If efforts outlined in 2i) above do not obtain a response, the Secretary or Chair should arrange for receipt of duplicate statements of the past period from the bank, then make a financial statement in lieu of an audit to OUSA and the committee of the Society, stating the circumstances adding ‘to the best of reasonable ability’.

Copying the bank statements to the OU Students Association, rather than falling into despair and doing nothing, is the best way forward. A CUBS account is recommended to help avoid such problems.

Any affiliated society with financial problems must report the matter immediately to OUSA’s General Manager.

3. Unfilled officer posts
Where an officer post becomes vacant, procedures for filling that post will be laid out in the individual society’s constitution. If no such provision was made, societies should follow the procedures outlined in the Societies Committee’s Example Society Constitution.

As an emergency short-term measure, another officer can take over the duties of the vacant post until the vacancy is filled.

4. Committee business by correspondence
There may be a reluctance for members to put themselves forward for officer posts. It is as well to note that committee business can be conducted by email, Skype or in online forums.

In such an instance the Secretary would notify the committee of intended action (say in 2-4 weeks) and that ‘no reply is needed unless you wish to intervene’. For the rare need for a committee vote to take place, a vote can be conducted electronically or by post.

None of the above suggestions require constitutional amendment. The underlying advice for struggling societies is to be simple, vigorous and flexible.

5. Postal and General Consultation
If AGMs are poorly attended, the alternative Postal & General Consultation (PGC) should be remembered as a possibility. In order to reduce costs it is possible to include the PGC with a newsletter or journal giving:

- A Postal & General Consultation deadline, say 3-4 months ahead,
- The proposed committee and policy motions,
- A Yes/No cut-out slip for voting.

If constitutional amendments are required, and accepted, bear in mind that such amendments can take between 3-12 months to be ratified by the OU Students Association.

Rescuing a society
1. Where one or more of the following criteria apply:
   - No accounts received by ‘6 months after the last AGM’ cut-off date
   - No known officer
   - No AGM held for a period of 18 months

All known Society officers and the Society’s representative on the Committee will be contacted by the OU Students Association Office, offering assistance and requesting a written response regarding the status of the Society.

2. Where no response is received within six weeks of the date of the enquiry being made, a second email or letter will be sent, requesting a response within six weeks and giving notice of the possibility of disaffiliation by the OU Students Association.

3. When a Society does not respond within the period specified above the Societies Committee Representative to the OU Students Association's Central Executive Committee is given delegated authority to endeavour to bring the Society back within the affiliation criteria before any reference to the Central Executive Committee is made.

4. Where no response has then been received, details will be referred to the Central Executive Committee, who may wish to appoint a Disaffiliation Sub-Committee.

Please refer to section 7 of the OU Students Association’s Byelaws for full information about the procedures and criteria for affiliation and disaffiliation.
An Example Constitution

Each society should draw up a constitution appropriate to its own specific needs.

The constitution your society adopts must be approved by the OU Students Association’s Vice President Administration in order to meet Affiliation Criteria. The specimen constitution below (for a mythical society) meets the OU Students Association’s basic requirements and is intended to help you.

Open University Chunters Society

1. Name
The Society shall be called the ‘Open University Chunters Society’ (referred to hereafter as the ‘Society’). The name may be abbreviated to OUCH.

2. Aims
a. To encourage the development of Chunting in the Open University and the community as a whole.
b. To provide opportunities for its members to meet in local groups to pursue the appreciation of chunting and for social purposes.
c. To encourage the Open University to provide courses leading to professional qualification in chunting and its history.
d. To foster the exchange between members of ideas, theories and practices of chunting and the associated disciplines of critting, dantology and lantometrics.

3. Membership
a. Full membership shall be open to all students, former students and staff of the Open University.
b. Associate membership shall be open to any other person.
c. Family membership shall be open to the families of Full members.
d. Membership may be refused to persons who are opposed to the aims of the Society.

4. Government
a. The governing body and sole policy-making body of the Society shall be the General Meeting consisting of all members of the Society who choose to attend. The quorum for General Meetings shall be 7 (seven) * members of the Society’s Full and Associate membership. The minimum quorum should ensure that officers are a minority: for the standard 3 officers this means 7.
b. The affairs of the Society shall be administered between General Meetings by the Committee.
c. Notice of General Meetings shall be given to all Full and Associate members not less than 21** days in advance of such meetings. Publication in a newsletter or other publication of the Society sent at an appropriate time to all Full and Associate members shall be regarded as notice. The notice shall include the name and telephone number of a member from whom details of the Meeting’s business can be obtained.
d. Any Full member of the Society shall be entitled to speak and vote on any matter before a General Meeting; any Associate or Family member shall be entitled to speak on any matter before a General Meeting except where specifically excluded by the provisions of this constitution.
e. Minutes of all General Meetings shall be kept by the Secretary and shall be available upon reasonable notice for inspection by any Full or Associate member.
f. There shall be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) which shall be called not less than 11 months and not more than 15 months after the immediate previous AGM, subject to clauses ii), iii) and iv) of this section of the constitution. Formal notification of an AGM must be sent to all members six weeks before the meeting to allow for nominations, motions, etc, to be sent and returned.
g. The Committee may call Ordinary General Meetings subject to clause ii) to v) inclusive of this section of the Constitution.

h. An Extra-ordinary General Meeting (EGM) may be called by the Committee or at the request of not less than 33% of the Full members of the Society made in writing to the Secretary. Such requests shall specify the business for which the meeting is to be called. Upon receipt of such request the Secretary shall within 1 calendar month give notice of the meeting to the Society. EGMs shall be subject to clauses ii) to v) of this section of the Constitution. The agenda for an EGM shall comprise only the business for which the meeting has been called.

It is advisable to avoid a quorum that is difficult to obtain.

** The notice period should give reasonable time for members to ask the Secretary to put items on the agenda.

### 5. Officers and Committee

a. The Committee of the Society shall consist of the Officers and not more than 4 ordinary Committee members. The quorum for Committee Meetings shall be 5 members of which at least one member shall be an officer.

b. The Officers of the Society shall be:
   i. Chair
   ii. Secretary
   iii. Treasurer

c. The Officers and ordinary committee members shall normally be elected at one AGM and shall hold office until the end of the succeeding AGM.

d. Only Full members of the Society may nominate or be nominated for officer posts or ordinary committee membership. Elections shall be by secret ballot using the transferable vote system. Nominations which have a proposer and seconder shall be accepted up to the time of the election.

e. No member shall be eligible to be nominated for the same officer post for more than 3 (three) consecutive years. No member shall be eligible to be nominated for membership of the committee (either as an officer or as an ordinary member) for a total of more than 6 (six) years whether consecutive or separate.

The provisions of this clause may be waived in whole or in part for periods of one year at a time at the discretion of an AGM if insufficient eligible members are nominated for officer posts or committee membership.

f. In the event of any casual vacancies either of officers or ordinary committee members, the Committee may in its absolute discretion leave the vacancy unfilled, co-opt from amongst the full members of the Society or call an ordinary General Meeting for the purpose of election. Not more than 3 (three) co options shall be made between General Meetings.

*** The Society can choose its own committee size. It is desirable that officers are in the minority, but that the committee is not unworkably large.

### 6. Finance

a. The Society’s financial year shall run from the … … … to the … … …

b. The Society shall levy subscriptions on its members. Such subscriptions shall fall due on the 1st January of each year and shall be determined by the immediately preceding AGM.

c. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the conduct of all financial matters and shall maintain the accounts of the Society. The accounts shall be available upon reasonable notice for inspection by any Full member of the Society.

d. The accounts of the Society shall be subject to annual audit by two auditors who are not members of the Committee and shall be presented to the AGM.

e. All expenditure shall be in connection with the AIMS of the Society. The Treasurer shall have the authority to spend sums**** in total not exceeding (£50) between committee meetings. The Committee may authorise the expenditure of sums up to (£200) and not exceeding in total (£500) between General Meetings. Any expenditure in excess of these sums must be authorised by a General Meeting.

f. The Treasurer and one other officer will sign cheques or make bank withdrawals on behalf of the Society, subject to clause v) of this section of the Constitution.

**** Amounts specified here are at the discretion of the society.
7. Changes to the constitution

a. This Constitution may be changed only by a resolution supported by at least two-thirds of the Full members present and voting at an AGM of the Society. All Full members are entitled to vote by proxy in writing (through the Secretary) if they are unable to attend the meeting and wish to vote at the AGM. These must be received by the Secretary one full week beforehand.

b. Proposed changes to the Constitution must be notified in writing to the Secretary not less than 10 (ten) weeks before the AGM at which they will be discussed.

c. Changes in the Constitution shall be notified in writing to all Full and Associate members of the Society. Each notification may be by publication in a newsletter and other publications sent out to all Full and Associate members.

8. Dissolution Clause

In the event of the Society being dissolved or wound up its assets shall be realised and any sum remaining after settlement of all outstanding liabilities shall be donated to the Open University Students Educational Trust (OUSET) or other Charitable body whose aims are to assist students of the Open University.

9. This Constitution was adopted at a meeting of the Open University Chunters Society

held on ................................  20 ....

Signed ..........................................  Chair

Date ....................................................

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