

Lancaster University Ballroom Dancing Society Constitution

Last amended 26/04/2016

1 The Society

1.1 The name of the Society shall be “Lancaster University Ballroom Dancing Society”, hereafter referred to as “the Society”.

1.2 The Society shall be associated to Lancaster University Students’ Union (LUSU) subject to conditions set out in Section 27 of the Union Constitution. As such the society agrees to abide by the Union Constitution, its By-Laws, the LUSU Safety Framework and all other Union policies.

1.3 The Society may affiliate to external bodies subject to the approval of the Union Council (see section 20 of the Union Constitution).

2 Aims

2.1 The Society shall exist to provide all those interested with an opportunity to:

- Participate in Ballroom and Latin dancing lessons at all abilities.
- Participate in any dance-related exams and competitions.
- Participate in any social, dance based, or Charity events organised by the Society.

3 Membership

3.1 Membership of the Society shall be open to any person with a Purple Card, or variation thereof appropriate to their status, as is set out in Section 6 of the Activities By-law.

3.2 All members may attend, speak at, propose a motion, and vote at a meeting.

3.3 All members have the right to be a candidate, vote or nominate/second a candidate in elections, with the exception of anyone who is not a member before nominations open. The three principal positions of the Society Exec (President, Vice-President and Secretary), along with the Health and Safety Officer, must be full members of LUSU, as is set out in Section 3 of the LUSU Constitution).

3.4 Honorary membership may be granted on a life basis or for a limited period, subject to the agreement of the qualified majority at the Annual General Meeting. This shall normally be granted to ex-members for outstanding service to the Society, or for those who can continue to offer service to the Society.

3.5 Honorary members have the right to participate in all Society Activities, and attend and speak at meetings.

3.6 The Exec reserves the right to refuse or revoke membership of an individual for breaching this constitution, the Society’s Safety Code of Practice, the LUSU Safety Framework or bringing the Society into disrepute, subject to the complaints procedure set out section 7 of this constitution.

4 Exec

4.1 The Society shall be administered by an annually elected Exec, who shall have the duties and responsibilities set out below.

4.1.1 President, who shall:

- Be the primary representative of the Society to the Union, the University and to external bodies.
- Co-ordinate and oversee the activities of both the Exec and the Society as a whole.
- Attend Activities Council and other relevant meetings.
- Act as a chair to all Society Exec meetings, circulating the agenda in advance of the meeting.
- Reserve the right to veto any actions of the Exec, or any individual therein, that are in violation of LUSU regulations.
- Have overall responsibility for any sponsorship deals entered into by the Society, ensuring that all requirements of the deal are met.
- Oversee the safety aspects of all Society activities and ensure that the LUSU Safety Framework and the Society's Safety Code of Practice is adhered to, working alongside the Health and Safety Officer.

4.1.2 Vice President, who shall:

- Organise the payment of the dance instructors and ensure that this payment is correct and punctual.
- Ensure that any instructor's contract is followed and renewed when needed.
- Be responsible for organising orders for merchandise.
- Be responsible for the organising and running of medal tests.
- Stand in for the President should he or she be unable to complete their duties fully for any reason, and provide support to the President in overseeing Society actions when necessary.

4.1.3 Team Captain, who shall:

- Ensure that the team is ready for medals and competitions.
- Be responsible for organising entries for competitions, working with the Treasurer when necessary.
- Prepare the team for Roses competition, and act as the main point of contact for the York Dancesport Society.
- Be responsible for maintaining and appropriately distributing Team kit, ensuring accurate records are kept when Society members borrow items from Team kit.
- Prepare a report of team performance at competitions and medal tests and prepare a current inventory of team kit to be ratified at the AGM.

4.1.4 Treasurer, who shall:

- Maintain good order of the Society Finances and ensure that the Union Financial Regulations are adhered to.

- Maintain an up to date account of all financial transactions, including membership-related finances.
- Organising finances and transport for competitions, liaising with the Team Captain when necessary.
- Produce and stick to a budget annually.
- Advise the exec and membership on expenditure of the budget, giving monthly updates to the three principal Exec members (as set out in 3.3). Minutes of which should be sent to all Exec members.
- Ensure that all financial transactions of the Society are both appropriate and permitted by LUSU and prevent any violations or potential violations of LUSU financial rules.
- Prepare a statement of revenue and expenditure to be presented at the Annual General Meeting for ratification.

4.1.5 Secretary, who shall:

- Be responsible for administration of all matters relating to memberships and subscriptions and liaising appropriately with the members of the Exec.
- Be responsible for all Society correspondence and administration, forwarding all emails received by the Society onto the relevant Exec member.
- Take minutes at meetings and circulate these minutes to the Exec.
- Informing the membership of other appropriate information as and when necessary.
- Plan Society lessons and deal with room bookings.
- Act as returning officer at all elections and ensure their smooth running.
- Prepare and send termly emails to the Alumni to keep past members informed of competitions and other events organised by the Society.

4.1.6 Health and Safety Officer, who shall:

- Ensure the correct health and safety procedures are carried out at all society events and lessons.
- Be competent in basic first aid (take the course provided by the Students Union at the beginning of the year).
- Maintain the first aid box, and ensure that all incidents are dealt with appropriately.
- Keep the risk assessment up to date, and ensure the correct procedures are followed and known by all members.

4.1.7 Media and Comms Officer (x2), who shall:

- Organise the publicity for all events organised by the Society, including physical and social media.
- Ensure all publicity follows rules set up by Lancaster University Students' Union.
- Maintain the Society's online presence, keeping members informed of lessons and activities organised by the Society.
- Ensure that the website is kept up to date, posting regular updates on social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter etc.), liaising with the appropriate Exec member for content.

4.1.8 Social Secretary (x2), who shall:

- Organise at least two social each term, at least one of which should be friendly to non-drinkers.
- Ensure that the safety aspects of such activities are satisfactorily addressed, and discuss with Health and Safety officer if necessary.
- Maintain good order at all socials/activities, ensuring beforehand that there is at least 1 Exec member on sober duty for every ten individuals on the social.

4.1.9 Charity and Collaborations Officer, who shall:

- Be responsible for any charity based activities or events in which the Society takes part or organises.
- Manage charity-related finances, and ensure correct and prompt payment to the relevant charities in coalition with the Treasurer and other signatories.
- Discuss charity plans with the Exec, and co-ordinate charity events.
- Encourage and arrange inter-society collaborations.
- Represent the Society on the Cultural Arts Committee.

4.1.10 Actions of all individuals within the Exec in both the capacity of their role, and as a group, will be carried out solely in the best interests of the Society and its aims. Actions will be both open and independent at all times. Any claim that the Exec or any of its members have done otherwise shall be brought either to the Exec as a whole, or where appropriate, to LUSU.

4.1.11 All members of the Exec shall:

- Attend all meetings of the Exec and all Society socials, or send apologies to the Secretary if they will be unable to attend.
- Attend at least 2 hours of lessons every week. If an Exec member finds they are unable to carry this out, they must inform the President and Exec via forms of written communication at the earliest opportunity, and ensure that there are enough exec members available to cover lessons. If this is not carried out, the Exec member must consider their position.
- Ensure that the Society complies with LUSU Equal Opportunities Policy and notify the President of any problems they find.
- Be welcoming to new members, and encourage participation in all activities, especially socials, competitions and performances.
- Notify the Exec if they intend to be out of contact (e.g. Overseas, without internet) for over a week in term time or two weeks during vacations.
- Promote the Society and all of its activities, such as through social media.

4.2 In the absence of any member of the Exec, their duties may be delegated to another Exec member. Alternatively a full member may be co-opted to fulfil such duties, subject to the approval of a meeting by the Exec, by unanimous vote.

4.3 The Exec shall be both open and transparent in its running of the Society. Meetings of all meetings shall be kept for the entirety of the committee's period of office and copies of these may be requested by members at any time during the tenure of that committee. Requested minutes will be edited to remove names of members from votes in order to protect their anonymity. Minutes of previous Execs may not be requested after the next Exec has taken office.

4.4 The Exec may, by majority vote, dispose, throw away, donate or in any other manner lose control of Society property. New property may be purchased by a prerogative of any Committee member subject to funding approval from the treasurer or through a majority vote of the Exec.

4.5 Any exec member who fail to attend to consecutive meetings, without acceptable written apology, shall be deemed to have resigned with immediate effect and a by-election shall be held within 4 term-time weeks of the resignation.

4.6 Members of the Exec shall be elected annually, and shall take office from the Monday following the Roses competition, following a hand over period and shadowing from the previous Exec, which will include at least one Exec meeting at which both incoming and outgoing Exec members are present.

4.7 Failure of Exec members to carry out the duties conferred on them by this constitution or by resolutions of Society meetings, without reasonable excuse, shall be grounds for suspension of, or motion of no confidence in the officer concerned. Should the position of President be in question, a meeting of the Exec shall be called, and chaired by the Vice-President. As is stated in 6.3, a qualified majority shall be required to uphold a motion of no confidence.

4.8 Prerogatives of Exec members, excluding presidential veto, may be reversed by a qualified majority of the Exec, majority of an Emergency or Annual General Meeting or by finding a breach of section 4.1.11.

4.9 Members of the Exec (excluding the President) may resign by giving one week's notice. A by-election will be held to replace them or a full member may be co-opted onto the Exec at an Exec meeting by a unanimous vote.

4.10 The President may resign by giving two weeks' notice. Any member of the current Exec may stand for the position of President, with their previous position being filled by a subsequent by-election, should they be elected.

5 Elections

5.1 The running of all Society elections shall be the responsibility of the Secretary who shall act as Returning Officer. Should this officer be a candidate in any election, then another officer may be appointed as Returning Officer by the Exec for the duration of that election.

5.2 All officers shall be elected towards the end of the Lent term.

5.3 All officers elected at this time will attend training offered by the LUSU Student Activities Office where it is practical to do so.

5.4 Any post may be filled by a by-election.

5.5 Society members will be informed of the date of the election, positions available and details for nominations two weeks prior to voting taking place.

5.6 All Society members are eligible to stand for ONE position on the Exec.

5.7 Re-Open Nominations (RON) shall be a candidate in all elections.

5.8 All elections shall be preceded by husts by the candidates, which shall last no longer than 5 minutes. Whether there is a limit lower than 5 minutes for husts shall be decided at the discretion of the Returning Officer. The husts shall be followed by questions to the candidates. The maximum period of time for questions shall be decided by the Returning Officer in advance and the Annual General Meeting shall be informed of this limit prior to the husts by candidates.

5.9 Candidates unable to attend must send written confirmation of their intention to stand and this may include a speech to be read out by the Returning Officer. If no confirmation is received, exclusion from the election will result.

5.10 Voting will take place in sealed ballot cards. Members may only vote once per position. The candidate with the highest number of votes shall be duly elected. The Returning Officer shall be responsible for the count, verified by the most senior outgoing Exec member not running for a position, following the order outlined in 5.13.

5.11 Members who will not be present at the election may vote IN ADVANCE of the meeting by communicating their nominations to the Returning Officer. Members not present at the election are NOT entitled to vote during the meeting, via telephone or any other means.

5.12 Members present at the election may not vote on behalf of other members absent from the meeting. Members may only vote on behalf of another member present if disability prevents them from doing so themselves.

5.13 In the event of a vote being tied, the following procedure shall apply:

1. The vote shall be carried out again, excluding any candidates that were not involved in the tie.
2. Stage 1 shall be repeated iteratively, until no further candidates are removed.
3. If a tie still exists, those Exec Members present, who are not candidates involved in the tie, shall vote.
4. If a tie still exists, the deciding vote shall be cast by the most senior outgoing Exec member present not involved in the tie, according to the sequence President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer.

5.14 At the end of the elections, candidates who were unsuccessful in obtaining their position, and any other exec members present, may stand for vacant positions, and positions in which R.O.N received the most votes. These positions will then be voted on, carrying out the procedure set out in 5.9 and 5.10.

5.15 Any positions remaining vacant at the end of the procedure may be filled via by-election at any subsequent time.

5.16 Any complaints regarding elections should first be taken to the Returning Officer, and then to the Societies Council Chair, as is set out in the complaints procedure detailed in By-law 27.

5.17 Quorum for elections shall be 25 full members.

6 Meetings

6.1 Exec Meetings may be called by either the President, a majority decision by the Exec, or by written request of five or more Society members.

6.2 Exec Meetings must be held no less than once per academic term and at least four days written notice must be given.

6.3 Any elected officer may have a motion of suspension or no confidence placed on her/him at an Exec Meeting and a qualified majority shall be required to sustain it.

6.4 The quorum of an Exec Meeting shall be half of the Exec including either the President or Vice-President. Failure to achieve quorum shall mean that the meeting has no constitutional competence.

6.5 An Emergency General Meeting (EGM) may be called in the same way as a General Meeting save that it shall require five days written notice of the business to be transacted. The quorum for such meetings shall be twenty full members.

6.6 Emergency General Meetings shall only discuss that matter for which the meeting was called. It shall not be able to transact any financial business or amend the constitution.

6.7 There shall be an Annual General Meeting in the last few weeks of the Lent Term each year. The President shall present a report of the Society's activities for the previous year, the Treasurer shall present an audited statement of accounts and the Team Captain shall report on team performance and present a current inventory of team kit.

6.8 Elections for positions on the Exec shall be held at annual elections or, where an Exec Member resigns or is removed, at an Emergency General Meeting.

6.9 The Quorum for the Annual General Meeting shall be 17 full members.

6.10 A General Meeting may be called by a majority vote of the Exec, with the agenda circulated a week in advance of the meeting. A General Meeting shall be able to carry out by-elections, and make constitutional amendments. The quorum for a General Meeting shall be 20 full members.

7 Complaints

7.1 Any complaints about the running or operations of the Society should initially be discussed with the President and then follow the procedures set out in by-law 26 of the Union Constitution.

7.2 Complaints which are not appropriate to be discussed with the President should be referred directly to the procedures set out in by-law 27 of the Union Constitution.

8 Disciplinary Proceedings

8.1 All disciplinary matters with respect to the Society and its members will be governed by LUSU disciplinary procedures and in the event that there is a serious breach of these procedures, the President will consult with the LUSU General Secretary and they will jointly decide on a course of action which they judge to be appropriate.

9 Constitution

9.1 The whole or any part of this constitution may be altered, amended or deleted at any General Meeting or at the Annual General Meeting. Any changes shall require a qualified majority.

9.2 Any ambiguity over interpretation of this constitution shall be resolved by the President, who must consult with the rest of the Exec.

9.3 The constitution shall be ratified annually at the AGM.

10 Safety

10.1 The Society must adhere to the LUSU Safety Framework at all times. Copies of this will be distributed at appropriate times throughout the year. Failure to abide by this framework may result in disciplinary action.

10.2 The Society shall have a Safety Code of Practice that shall be reviewed annually. This code shall be shown to each member before they subscribe to the Society and be made readily available throughout the year.

10.3 It is the duty and responsibility of the President to ensure that the Safety Framework and Safety Code of Practice is enforced in all Society activities.

10.4 The President and Safety Officer shall attend an annual Duty of Care Briefing held by LUSU Student Activities Office in Michaelmas Term.

11 Definitions

11.1 A qualified majority shall be 75% or more of the votes cast. A majority shall be in excess of 50% of the votes cast.

11.2 Veto: An absolute right to block or prevent an action from taking place which may only be challenged by LUSU.

11.3 Prerogative: An authority to act or make decisions in a specified area which stems from the office or group itself.

11.4 Exec Meeting: A meeting of the Executive Committee.

11.5 Annual General Meeting: A yearly meeting of the Society as a whole.

11.6 Emergency General Meeting: A meeting of the Society as a whole to address an issue which impedes the functioning of the Society.

11.7 Exec: Executive Committee.