



## **SCOTTISH YOUNG LIBERALS CONSTITUTION**

[A note to future YLs, regarding the constitution: We suggest you keep the constitution as short as possible.]

### **Article 1 - Scope of the Organisation**

1. The name of the organisation shall be the Scottish Young Liberals (SYL).
2. Holding firmly to the philosophy and objectives of the Scottish Liberal Democrats (the Party), SYL exists
  - a. to represent the interests of those aged 29 and under and/or in tertiary education within the Party, and to campaign for their interests in wider society.
  - b. to promote Liberal Democrat values to those 29 and under and/or in tertiary education.
3. SYL is an Associated Organisation of the Scottish Liberal Democrats.
  - a. SYL is an independent organisation.
  - b. SYL shall work with and in confederation with the Specified Associated Organisation of the Liberal Democrats (the Federal Party) which represents young people and/or students in tertiary education, the Young Liberals (YL).
  - c. SYL shall ensure the needs and views of its membership are fairly represented to YL and the Party.

4. SYL's membership shall consist of those Party members 29 and under and/or those other Party members in tertiary education who apply for membership.
5. All members of SYL may:
  - a. vote in SYL elections
  - b. stand for election Officers of SYL
  - c. apply to speak and have the right to vote at the Annual General Meeting of SYL (AGM)
  - d. apply to speak and have the right to vote at emergency general meetings of SYL (EGM)
  - e. Request attend Executive meetings, and, where practical, such request will be approved
  - f. Contribute to the SYL policy-making process

The Executive may, for good cause, terminate the membership of any member. Before exercising this power, the Executive will give the member concerned an opportunity to be heard. Failing resolution, any member may appeal their expulsion in the first instance to the executive of the Party (or any sub-group appointed by it to deal with the issue) and, in the second instance to the Appeals Committee of the Party.

## **Article 2 - Executive**

1. The executive committee (Executive) shall consist of the Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Campaigns Officer, Communications Officer, Policy Officer and the Accessibility, Diversity and Enfranchisement Officer (ADE) all of whom shall be Officers of SYL.
2. Decisions of the Executive shall require a simple majority to pass. In the event of a tied vote, if no consensus can be reached, the Chair shall have a casting vote as well as a deliberative vote.
3. There shall be no fewer than 12 meetings of the Executive in each calendar year. The Executive shall fix the dates annually, in advance.

4. Meetings of the Executive shall be chaired by the Chair or, in their absence, by the Vice Chair. Three of those entitled to vote shall constitute a quorum.
5. Meetings of the Executive shall be notified and open to all members. Only Officers shall have the right to speak and vote. The Executive may choose to deal with confidential items in private, when ordinary members will be required to leave the meeting.
6. The Executive may procure assistance for Officers in the execution of their roles.
7. The Executive may form committees or allow members to assist them in governance.
8. The Executive shall conduct the business of SYL subject to the approval of the AGM to whom the Executive shall be accountable

The Executive shall ensure that diversity and inclusion are at the heart of decision making in SYL.

### **The Chair**

The Chair shall

- I. except as otherwise set out in this Constitution, be the primary spokesperson of SYL, and be SYL's primary point of contact with the Party.
- II. entitled to be the SYL representative on the executive committees of the Party and the YL.
- III. work with the Treasurer to draft and present the annual budget to the Executive for approval.

### **The Vice Chair**

The Vice Chair shall

- I. assume the duties of the Chair in their absence.
- II. ensure that minutes of each Executive meeting are taken.
- III. maintain the records of SYL.
- IV. communicate with the Party on all official matters. V. Coordinate SYL's actions at Party conferences.
- VI. Be entitled to be the SYL representative on the Party's Conference Committee.
- VII. organise AGMs and EGMS.

## **The Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall

- I. manage all financial matters in relation to SYL, including in consultation with the Chair, preparing a budget.
- II. proposing initiatives for fundraising, and d prepare accounts for each preceding financial year.
- III. Be the primary point of liaison with the Party in respect of SYL's finances.
- IV. make all necessary returns for SYL under the Political Parties, Elections & Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA).
- V. All disbursements, which must be in line with a policy set by the Executive, shall require the authorisation of the Treasurer

## **The Campaigns Officer**

The Campaigns Officer shall

- I. plan, organise and coordinate SYL events and activities in line with SYL's objectives.
- II. plan, where possible, in liaison with YL and the Party, and procure the implementation of the annual Freshers' Campaign.
- III. with the Communications Officer, increasing and engaging with the membership of SYL.
- IV. plan, in consultation with the Executive, the SYL strategy for all public elections.
- V. Ensure SYL participates in Local Party initiatives and campaigns.
- VI. Be the SYL representative on the Party's Campaigns and Candidates committee, and the YL campaigns committee.

## **Communications Officer**

The Communications Officer shall

- I. with the Campaigns Officer, increasing and engaging with the membership of SYL,

- II. coordinate communication between the Executive and the SYL membership.
- III. manage, in consultation with the Executive, the SYL social media and website.

### **Policy Officer**

The Policy Officer shall

- I. in consultation with the Executive, oversee and develop, SYL policy and policy motions to be submitted to the Party Conference.
- II. monitor policy developments in the Party, Federal Party and YL.
- III. ensure that issues of concern to SYL are timeously raised with the Party.
- IV. Procure the submission of SYL motions are submitted to the Party and/or YL conferences.
- V. Be the SYL representative on the Party's Policy Committee

### **Accessibility, Diversity and Enfranchisement Officer (ADE)**

The ADE officer shall

- I. Whilst it is the role of all Officers and members to ensure that SYL is an inclusive and diverse organisation, the ADE shall take the lead in engaging with members who are from underrepresented groups and ensuring that they enjoy full participation in SYL
- II. Carry out periodic diversity assessments of wider organisational members, practices and processes, and promote practices and policies to redress under representation, and welcome those from underrepresented groups
- III. Ensure the creation of diversity networks to ensure all groups have a voice in SYL
- IV. Create positive action interventions to support under-represented groups
- V. Consult regularly with and be informed by the YL accessibility, diversity and standards officer, and with relevant Party officers and associated groups.

- VI. the ADE ensure that members of SYL who require welfare support or who encounter unacceptable behaviour are signposted to the federal Party's Pastoral Care Officer and the Party's disciplinary system.

### **Article 3- Standards and SYL Structure**

- I. All members shall comply with the Code of Conduct adopted from time to time by the Executive.
- II. The Executive may, at a properly called meeting, by two thirds vote, remove any Officer or member for failure to attend three successive Executive meetings without reasonable excuse or for other good cause, or for material breach of the Code of Conduct. Before exercising this power, the Executive shall give the Officer or member concerned an opportunity to be heard.
- III. Where Local Parties invite an SYL representative to sit on their committees, SYL should, where possible, elect a representative, which failing, appoint a representative.
  - a. SYL should make local parties aware of their activities and communicate with SYL representatives.
- IV. SYL may form "regions", to help govern SYL's affairs locally, using YL practice as a guideline for implementation.
  - a. These regions should be democratic and inclusive, and uphold SYL values.
  - b. These regions should be in regular contact with the SYL Executive, and if there are enough, a committee of regional chairs should be formed.

### **Article 4 - Elections**

- I. Officers shall be elected annually from amongst the members of SYL, and shall hold office concurrently with the federal Young Liberals. Only one person may hold an Office at any one time.
- II. the rules of the election, the voting system, Returning Officer, timetable, and nomination process shall be conducted as under those of the federal Young Liberals.
- III. In the event of any vacancy, the Officers shall, at the first meeting following the occurrence of the vacancy, draw up a list of members, to

be invited to serve. These co-opted Officers will have voting rights, and will serve until the end of the executive term.

### **Article 5 - General Meetings**

- I. The AGM shall be chaired by the Chair or, in their absence, the members may nominate another Officer to act as chair. The Vice-Chair shall ensure that minutes of proceedings are taken.
- II. The AGM shall receive and consider reports from all Officers, and such other reports (if any) as the Executive shall determine;
  - b. consider such policy and business motions as have been duly notified and moved;
- III. The AGM should, where possible, be held to coincide with the Autumn Conference of the Party.
  - a. The Executive shall determine from time to time the arrangements for the AGM.
- IV. If they are not available, the members may nominate someone from the Executive to act as chair.
- V. Extraordinary General Meetings (EGMs) may be called by the Executive.
  - a. The agenda of the EGM shall consist only of those items set out in the notice of the EGM.
- VI. Not less than twenty-one days' written notice shall be given of any general meeting and of motions to be considered at such meeting. Amendments to motions may be submitted to the Vice-Chair in writing not less than seven days before the meeting.
- VII. Other than in respect of amendments to this Constitution, voting at general meetings shall be by a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote.
- VIII. Accidental omission to give due notice shall not invalidate the proceedings unless the error is substantial.

### **Article 6 - Finance**

- I. The SYL's financial year is the calendar year.

- II. The accounts for the year shall be presented, duly examined, for approval at the AGM and the examiner (who shall be a duly qualified person) for the following year shall be appointed by the AGM. The financial year shall be the calendar year.
- III. Copies of the annual accounts shall be sent to the Principal Officer of the Party as required by the Party for the purpose of compliance with PPERA.

### **Article 7 - Honorary President**

- I. SYL may, at its AGM, as determined by the Executive, elect an Honorary President, who shall be a member of the Federal Party, the Alliance of Liberals Democrats for Europe, or Liberal International, and hold (or formerly have held) a prominent elected post.
  - a. The Honorary President shall be elected for the period between one AGM and the next
  - b. The Honorary President shall represent the values and principles of SYL.

### **Article 8- Amendments:**

- II. No amendments shall be made to this Constitution except at a general meeting of the SYL, with at least twenty-one days' notice of the amendment having been given to the membership, and except if passed by at least two-thirds of those present and entitled to vote
- III. Amendments to this Constitution may only be made at a General Meeting if passed by at least two thirds of those present and voting.
- IV. Any amendment to the Constitution shall take effect from the end of the meeting at which the decision to amend was passed.