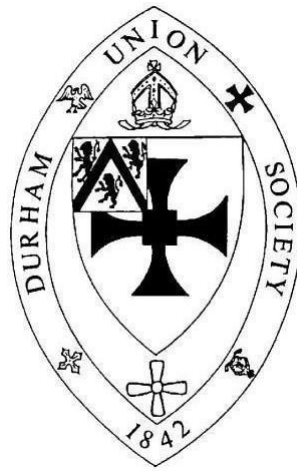


# Durham Union Society



## Constitution, Schedules, Standing Orders and Annexes; & the Rules of the North Bailey Club

*Issued on the 7<sup>th</sup> February 2026, MMXXVI*

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# Constitution

## Name, Object & Ownership

- (xxix) The name of the Society shall be the Durham Union Society, hereinafter referred to as ‘the Society’.
- (xxx) The Society shall aim above all to stimulate debate amongst its members, providing them with a forum in which to express their views.
- (xxxi) The Society shall further aim:
  - (a) to educate those of its members who would learn in the art of public speech and especially of debate;
  - (b) to represent the University at competitive debate;
  - (c) to educate and entertain its members by the bringing of speakers to the Society; (d) to provide its members with a place to meet, *and* (e) to hold social events for its members.
- (xxxii) The Society shall not pursue any aim that is not set out in cls (ii) and (iii), unless it be to benefit a registered charity or to provide its members with an amenity for which there is material demand among the membership.
- (xxxiii) The ownership of the Society is vested in its Trustees, who shall have ultimate authority in the Society, subject only to the Deed of Trust.

## Membership

- (xxxiv) Any member of the University may apply to the Secretary of the Society to become a Full Life Member of the Society. Upon payment of the subscription determined in accordance with the Rules<sup>1</sup>, the Secretary of the Society shall admit to membership any such applicant not previously expelled from the Society who agrees in writing to abide by the Rules. A Full Life Member of the Society shall remain such for life, unless they choose to leave the Society voluntarily or are expelled from the Society.
- (xxxv) Any member of the University may apply to the Secretary of the Society to become a Full Yearly Member of the Society. Upon payment of the subscription determined in accordance with the Rules, the Secretary of the Society shall admit to membership any such applicant not previously expelled from the Society who agrees in writing to abide by the Rules. A Full Yearly Member of the Society shall remain such for a calendar year after their joining, unless they choose to leave the Society voluntarily or are expelled from the Society.
- (xxxvi) A Full Member in good order shall have the right to attend, and when in attendance to vote at, General Meetings of the Society and the right to enjoy the use of all facilities that the Society maintains in the direct pursuance of the aim set out in cl (iii) (d). A Full Member in residence and in good order<sup>2</sup> shall have the right to vote in Presidential elections.
- (xxxvii) Any person over the age of eighteen may apply to the Secretary of the Society to become an Associate Life Member of the Society. Upon payment of the appropriate subscription fee determined in accordance with the Rules and subject to the approval of the Standing Committee of the Society, the Secretary of the Society shall admit to membership any such applicant not previously expelled from the Society who agrees in writing to abide by the Rules. An Associate Life Member of the Society shall remain such for life, unless they choose to leave the Society voluntarily or are expelled from the Society.

<sup>1</sup> As set by General Committee, SO IV §5

<sup>2</sup> Defined in Schedule I

- (xxxviii) Any person over the age of eighteen may apply to the Secretary of the Society to become an Associate Yearly Member of the Society. Upon payment of the appropriate subscription fee determined in accordance with the Rules and subject to the approval of the Standing Committee of the Society, the Secretary of the Society shall admit to membership any such applicant not previously expelled from the Society who agrees in writing to abide by the Rules. An Associate Yearly Member of the Society shall remain such for life, unless they choose to leave the Society voluntarily or are expelled from the Society.
- (xxxix) An Associate Member in good order shall have the right to attend, and when in attendance vote at, General Meetings of the Society and the right to enjoy the use of all facilities that the Society maintains in the direct pursuance of the aim set out in cl (iii) (d).
- (xl) Members of the societies listed in Schedule II, which share reciprocal relations with the Society, shall have the right to attend General Meetings of the Society and the right to enjoy the use of all facilities that the Society maintains in the direct pursuance of the aim set out in cl (iii) (d).
- (xli) A General Meeting of the Society shall have the power to confer Honorary Life Membership on any person.
- (xlii) An Honorary Life Member shall have the right to attend, and when in attendance to vote at, General Meetings of the Society and the right to enjoy the use of all facilities that the Society maintains in the direct pursuance of the aim set out in cl (iii) (d).
- (xlili) A member may terminate their membership of the Society by registering the decision to leave with the Secretary of the Society.

## General Meetings

- (xliv) The President of the Society shall call Ordinary General Meetings<sup>3</sup>. The purpose of such meetings shall be to debate issues of interest to the membership. Such debate shall be the Main Business of Ordinary General Meetings. Ordinary General Meetings may further transact Private Business.
- (xlv) The President of the Society, the General Committee or any member supported by the signatures of thirty members or one fifth of the membership whichever be the lesser may call Extraordinary General Meetings. The sole purpose of such meetings will be to transact Private Business.
- (xlvi) Private Business duly transacted at a General Meeting shall be binding upon the Society subject to the Rules, the powers of the Trustees and the limitations of the force of motions set out in cl (lii).

## The President

- (xlvii) There shall be a President, head of the Society.
- (xlviii) The President shall be ultimately responsible for the furthering of the Society's aims in their term of office, by exercising due leadership, by the calling of Ordinary General Meetings of the Society<sup>4</sup> and by the provision and ultimate control of appropriate events and facilities.
- (xliv) The President shall be elected to serve for a period of one term by secret ballot of the members in residences<sup>5</sup>.

## Interpretative Powers:

- (l) The President shall be the primary but not sole interpreter of the Rules
- (li) Any interpretation of the Rules made by the President may be appealed to the Returning Officer within seven (7) days.
- (lii) The President and the Returning Officer shall meet as soon as practicable, and should endeavour, *in camera*, to agree to a joint resolution on the interpretation, which shall be binding and not subject to appeal.
- (liii) Should a joint resolution not be made, this decision may be appealed to the Rules Committee within seven (7) days of the joint resolution. This session of the Rules Committee shall be

chaired by the Deputy Returning Officer, *in camera*.

<sup>3</sup> Only the President may, SO I §1(a)

<sup>4</sup> A minimum of seven in Michaelmas and Epiphany and three in Easter, SO I §1(e)

<sup>5</sup> Detailed in SO V §3 and Annex IV §6

## The Constituent Committees

- (liv) There shall be a House Committee. Each term a General Meeting shall elect members to the Committee. Members of the Committee shall act as sergeants-at-arms at general meetings and assist the President in the running of events.
- (lv) There shall be a Secretary's Committee whose members shall be the College Secretaries. College Secretaries shall be elected at the start of Michaelmas and Epiphany term at a General Meeting. The members of the Committee shall form individually and corporately the chief link between the colleges and the Society.
- (lvi) There shall be a Social Committee. Ordinary members of the Committee shall be elected in each term at a general meeting. Ordinary members of the Social Committee shall assist the President and the Social Secretary in the managing and the conceiving of social events.
- (lvii) There shall be a President's Committee. Members of the President's Committee shall assist the President, the Presidents-elect and the Speakers Secretary in the finding of speakers for events and the general running of a terms' program of events.
- (lviii) There shall be an Equalities Committee. Ordinary members of the Committee shall be elected at the start of Michaelmas and Epiphany Terms at a general meeting. Ordinary members of the Committee shall assist the Equalities Officer in representing and listening to the interests of historically underrepresented groups, and working to produce policies, practices, and publicity initiatives that promote an open and inclusive environment at the Union
- (lix) There shall be a Debates Committee. Members of the Debates Committee shall assist the Director of Debating in the managing and organising of competitive debating within the Society.
- (lx) There shall be a Media Committee. Ordinary members of the committee shall be elected in Michaelmas and Epiphany term at a General Meeting.
- (lxi) There shall be an Alumni Advisory Board, which shall be composed of seven Graduate Full Life Members not in statu pupillari. The advisory board members will be recommended by the Standing Committee, which will identify and interview potential candidates. These candidates will then be ratified by the Trustees Committee. The Alumni Advisory Board will serve for a period of five years, meet termly, and help advise and direct the alumni offering. Members of said advisory board shall not receive points for the North Bailey Club or a vote at General Committee Meetings and can be removed by a simple majority vote of the Trustees Committee.

## The General Committee

- (lxii) There shall be a General Committee. The General Committee shall consist of:
  - (a) the ordinary members of the constituent committees, being the House Committee, the Secretary's Committee, the Social Committee, the Equalities Committee, the Debates committee, and the Media Committee.
    - i) The appointed members of the President's Committee shall be non-voting members of the General Committee, save for when they hold another position in the Society entitled to a vote as outlined otherwise in Clause (xxviii).
  - (b) those officers and officials<sup>11</sup> elected in direct pursuance of the provisions of the Constitution;
  - (c) such former officers and officials that the Committee has elected in direct pursuance of the provisions of the Constitution who ceased to hold office in the current term, except if they submitted their resignation prior to the committee elections at the start of the current term or were removed by a vote of no confidence;
  - (d) the Presidents-elect;

- (e) any Past Presidents in residence;
- (f) the President; and
- (g) past Officers elected to the Rules Committee

- (lxiii) The General Committee shall be the primary legislative body of the Society.
- (lxiv) Decisions of the General Committee shall be binding on the Society subject to the Rules, the powers of the Trustees, the authority of a General Meeting and the limitations of the force of motions set out in cl (lii).

- (lxv) The General Committee shall have such sub-committees as are set out in the Rules and may institute further sub-committees by the passing of a motion to that effect.

<sup>6</sup>Ten in Michaelmas and Epiphany, eight in Easter SO II §9(b)

<sup>9</sup>Seven members, SO II §6(a); but see Annex III

<sup>10</sup>The selection committee is the Debates Selection Committee, see SO II §6(e)

<sup>11</sup>cls (xxxvi), (xxxvii), (xxxviii), (xxxix), (xl), (xli) and (xlii)

## The Officers and Officials

- (lxvi) There shall be the following full Officers of the Society, elected by the General Committee from amongst its members from among the members of the Society in *statu pupillari* who are current or past members of the General Committee who have held their positions for at least 30 calendar days: the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Custodian, the Social Secretary, and the Equalities Officer.
- (lxvii) There shall be the following further Officers of the Society: the Equalities Officer, the Alumni Officer, the Steward, the Deputy Steward, the Deputy Social Secretary, the Assistant Secretary, the Assistant Custodian, the Sponsorship Secretary and the Outreach Officer, President Emeritus and the Welfare officer.
- a. The Alumni Officer, the Steward, the Assistant Secretary, the Assistant Custodian, the Deputy Sponsorship Secretary and the Outreach Officer shall be elected by the General Committee from amongst its members among the members of the Society in *statu pupillari* who are current or past members of the General Committee who have held their positions for at least 30 calendar days.
  - b. The President Emeritus will be the most recent former President of the Society in *statu pupillari*
  - c. The Welfare Officer shall be appointed by the Standing Committee, following a formal application process, subject to the approval of the General Committee.
  - d. The Deputy Steward shall be appointed by the Steward from the elected Ordinary Members of the House Committee, subject to a simple-majority ratification hearing before the General Committee.
  - e. The Deputy Social Secretary shall be appointed by the Social Secretary from the elected Ordinary Members of the Social Committee, subject to a simple-majority ratification hearing before the General Committee.
- (lxviii) There shall be the following Debating Officers of the Society, elected in accordance with the Rules in SO V Section 5:
- a. the Director of Debating and the Debating Treasurer, who shall additionally be full officers of the Society.
  - b. The Debating Training Secretary
  - c. The Two Debating Competitions Officers
  - d. Two Debating Equity Officers.
  - e. The Debating Publicity Officer
  - f. The Debating Secretary
  - g. The Debating Social Secretary
- (lxix) The chief duties of the Officers shall be as follows:
- a. The Secretary shall be responsible for the writing and keeping of true and correct minutes<sup>12</sup>, Rules<sup>13</sup> and records of membership. The Secretary shall be responsible for the management of and liaison with the College Representatives, and shall seek to represent the views of the general membership and the General Committee to the Officers.
  - b. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the control and management of the Society's Finances<sup>14</sup>. The Treasurer in conjunction with the Standing Committee shall be responsible for the setting of the Union's annual debating budget, which shall be ratified by the Standing Committee.
  - c. The Custodian shall be responsible for the upkeep of the 24 North Bailey Club, its bar,

- Reading Room, accommodation, management, publicity and growth.
- d. The Social Secretary shall be immediately responsible for the organisation of social events. They shall manage Social Media Accounts (a) (ii).
  - e. The Sponsorship Officer shall be responsible for encouraging outside bodies to support the activities of the Society and shall report to the Treasurer.
  - f. There shall be a Equalities Officer, a Full Officer of the Society, elected by the General Committee from among the members of the Society in statu pupillari. The Equalities Officer will support the Society in its equality and diversity practice and as an *ex officio* member of the President's Committee will actively assist the President and the immediate President-Elect in sending speaker invitations to members of underrepresented groups. The Equalities Officer shall also be responsible for hearing issues relating to inclusion and discrimination within the Society from the membership, and reporting these to the Standing Committee. The Equalities Officer shall publish updates regarding the Society's Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) progress at least once per term, and is responsible for overseeing the implementation of EDI reforms, liaising with the President and the Trustees. Holders of this office shall be Nightline trained, received similar training, or else must undergo such training at the earliest possible opportunity. They shall further manage Social Media Accounts (a) (iii).
  - g. Assistant Officers shall be responsible for assisting their senior counterparts.
  - h. The Assistant Custodian shall be immediately responsible for the organisation of social events in 24 NBC. They shall manage Social Media Accounts (a) (v) and (c) (ii).
  - i. The Steward shall be responsible for the management of the House Committee, the good order of the Chamber and the welcoming of members and guests to the House.
  - j. The Technologies Officer shall be responsible for the management of the Technologies Committee, the Society's website and office technology.
  - k. The Alumni Officer shall be responsible for encouraging Graduate Life Members to support the activities of the Society, for enhancing links and communication between the Society and its Graduate Life Members and for collating the contact details of members in residence in order to retain links to the Society after graduation. They shall further manage Social Media Accounts (f).
  - l. The Outreach Officer report to the Treasurer. They shall be immediately responsible for forging community partnerships with local charities and national organisations for the purposes of working for the betterment of the local community and fundraising for charitable causes. They shall also collaborate with student groups across the university on joint events, socials and other such activities as required by the general committee. They shall be responsible for the design, ordering and distributing of stash for members to purchase.
  - m. The Director of Debating shall be immediately responsible for the organisation and promotion of competitive debate and education in public speech and debate. Furthermore, they shall select debating coaches, tournament conveners, and other position they deem necessary.
  - n. The Debating Treasurer shall be responsible for the control and management of the Union's annual debating budget. This includes ensuring invoices arising from the management of the Union's annual debating budget are submitted, collected, and paid in a timely fashion. Furthermore, they shall, with deference to the Director of Debating, decide the subsidising of costs for members competing in external debating competitions.
  - o. the Debate Training Secretary shall be immediately responsible for the co- ordination of the Society's competitive debate training.
  - p. The two Debate Competitions Secretaries shall be immediately responsible for the organisation of all debating tournaments.
  - q. The Debating Equity Officers shall be responsible for the adjudication and enforcement of the Debating Equity Policy as set out in Standing Order VII.
  - r. The Debating Publicity Officer shall be responsible for the management of the Social Media Accounts (a) (vi) and (c) (iii) making sure that events are posted in good time and that they reach as wide an audience as possible.
  - s. The Debating Secretary shall be responsible for the writing and keeping of true and correct minutes of Debates Committee and assisting the Committee with administrative tasks.
  - t. The Debating Society Secretary shall be immediately responsible for the organisation of social events for Durham Debating.
  - u. The President Emeritus will attend the termly Standing Committee meeting with the Trustees, in order that they might be able to give advice or clarification on anything that arises during the meeting, which may have originated or be a continuation from their own term. The President Emeritus should also be invited to attend the first, last, and another Standing meeting of term, in an advisory role. During these meetings, it will be

their role to advise members of the committee on how to achieve long-term goals which have been mutually agreed with the Trustees

- v. The Welfare Officer shall be responsible for promoting the safeguarding of the mental and physical wellbeing of all members of the Society. They will provide a confidential and non-judgmental space for members to discuss any issues or concerns they may have related to their participation in the Society's activities. The Welfare Officer will also work towards creating a supportive and inclusive environment within the Society by fostering and implementing welfare initiatives, providing resources and advice related to health and wellbeing, and raising awareness about available support services within the Society and at College and University level. The Welfare officer must be familiar with the Society's disciplinary and complaints procedures with the aim of advising members in these matters. They shall liaise closely with the Equalities Officer in matters of inclusion and discrimination and should also be Nightline trained, receive similar training, or else undergo such training at the earliest possible opportunity. Furthermore, the Welfare Officer shall be responsible for reporting any significant welfare concerns to the Standing Committee, while respecting the confidentiality of the individuals involved, and will more generally offer suggestions to the Standing Committee in relation to the wellbeing of Members.
  
- w. There shall be a Deputy Social Secretary, an Officer of the Society. The Deputy Social Secretary shall assist with the planning, organising, and executing of the social events of the Society. They shall deputise for the Social Secretary in their absence, and will perform other duties as required by the Social Secretary.

<sup>12</sup>The Secretary must also keep a list of motions of General Committee currently in force, SO II §2(e) <sup>13</sup>See cl (lviii)

<sup>14</sup> Defined more fully in Standing Order IV

- (lxx) There shall be a Returning Officer, an Official of the Society, elected by the General Committee. The Returning Officer shall be immediately responsible for the fair holding of the Society's elections. They shall further advise the President and Standing Committee on the Rules and shall ensure these Rules are properly enforced.
- (a) In the first instance the returning officer shall be elected from amongst the past and present Officers, Past Presidents and members of Rules Committee of at least two terms in *statu pupillari*.
  - (b) If no candidates meeting the initial criteria are found nominations shall re-open instantly and any member of the Rules Committee may put themselves forward for election by the general committee
  - (c) If no candidates meeting this criteria are found nominations shall immediately re-open and any member of the general committee may put themselves forward for election
- (lxxi) There shall be a Deputy Returning Officer, an Official of the Society, appointed by the Rules Committee from amongst the past and present Officers, Past Presidents and members of the Rules Committee of at least one term *in statu pupillari*. The Deputy Returning Officer shall assist the Returning Officer in the fair holding of the Society's elections. They shall be immediately responsible for the organisation of elections to the Constituent Committees and the safe-keeping of a register of members of General Committee.
- (lxxii) There shall be an Office Manager, an Official of the Society, appointed by the Society's Standing Committee. The Office Manager shall be immediately responsible for the management of the Society's Office.
- (a) There shall be a Bar manager, appointed by the Society's committee of trustees. The Bar manager shall be immediately responsible for the management of the Bar of the North Bailey Club and report directly to the Office Manager.
- (lxxiii) There shall be a Publicity Officer, a Full Officer of the Society, elected by the General Committee from among the members of the Society *in statu pupillari*. The Publicity Officer shall be responsible for:
- (a) The promotion and marketing of the Society and its events.
  - (b) Creating strategies for the growth of the Society.
  - (c) Management of Social Media Accounts (a), (b), (c).
    - (i) With the exception of (a) (vi) and (b) (iii), unless collaborating with the permission of the Director of Debating or the Debating Publicity Officer.
  - (d) Chairing of the Media Committee.
    - (i) Candidates for the position of Publicity Officer must meet a minimum set of technical criteria, published and reviewed by the Media Committee on an annual basis.
- (lxxiv) There shall be a Deputy Publicity Officer, an Officer of the Society, elected by the General Committee from among the members of the society in *statu pupillari*. The Deputy Publicity Officer shall be responsible creating posters, creating social media graphics, assisting the President in the creation of term cards and brochures, and for liaising with photographers hired for Society events when the Publicity Officer is unable to conduct those duties.
- (a) Candidates for Deputy Publicity Officer must meet the criteria set out under (xxxix) (a)
- (xli) There shall be a Technologies Officer, an Officer of the Society, elected by the General Committee from among the members of the Society *in statu pupillari*. The Technologies Officer shall:
- (a) Be responsible for maintaining and developing the Society's audio-visual equipment.
  - (b) Manage the Society's website, email accounts, office hardware and Social Media Accounts (d).
  - (c) Be responsible for recording, storing and uploading footage of all General Meetings and Emergency Debates.
    - (i) Candidates for the position of Technologies Officer must meet a minimum set of technical criteria, published and reviewed by the Media Committee on an annual basis.
- (xlii) There shall be a Deputy Technologies Officer, an Officer of the Society, elected by the General Committee from among the members of the Society in *statu pupillari*. The Deputy

Technologies Officer shall be responsible for the management of office hardware and technology for events and Ordinary General Meetings hosted by the Society where the Technologies Office is unable to conduct those duties. Upon a vacancy of the position of Technologies Officer, the Deputy Technologies Officer will have the opportunity to assume the role for a full term of office, upon a ratification vote of the General Committee. If the Deputy Technologies Officer fails to be ratified, there shall be an open election for the position of Technologies Officer, as per (xl) and (xl)(a). The incumbent Deputy Technologies Officer would not be barred from standing in this election under this provision.

- (a) Candidates for Deputy Technologies Officer must meet the criteria set out under (xli)
  - (a)
- (xl) Each President and President-Elect shall have the right to appoint a Speakers Secretary, an Official of the Society, from amongst the members of the Society *in statu pupillari*. Each Speakers Secretary shall assist the President or President-Elect who appointed them by inviting speakers for their term and performing other tasks as the President or President-Elect may require.
  - (b) The decision of whether to appoint a Speakers Secretary is entirely at the discretion of the President or President-Elect.
  - (c) Each President or President-Elect shall only have one Speakers Secretary at any time.
  - (d) Any President or President-Elect may appoint a Speakers Secretary by writing to the Returning Officer.
  - (e) Any President or President-Elect may remove their Speakers Secretary at any time and for any reason by writing to the Returning Officer.
  - (f) A Speakers Secretary shall serve until the end of the term of the President who appointed them unless they:
    - i. Resign their position in accordance with cl (xliv) *or*
    - ii. Are removed by the President or President-Elect who appointed them in accordance with (d) *or*
    - iii. Are removed by the General Committee in a Vote of No Confidence in accordance with SO III Section 6.
  - (g) In the event that a Speakers Secretary is removed for any of the reasons outlined in (e), the President or President-Elect who appointed them may immediately appoint a new Speakers Secretary by writing to the Returning Officer.
  - (h) A person may serve as the Speakers Secretary for more than one President or President-Elect concurrently.
- (xliv) Officers, elected Officials and the members of the Constituent Committees shall hold office for a maximum period of one year unless otherwise stated within the Rules. After this time they may stand for re-election.
- (xlv) Officers, elected Officials and the members of the Constituent Committees may resign their post at any time by writing to or by sending an email to the Returning Officer and may be removed from office according to the procedure set out in the Rules.
- (xlvi) Officers, elected Officials and the members of the Constituent Committees shall serve until their successors are elected.

## **The Combination of Office**

- (xlvii) Where a member is entitled to sit on a committee by more than one provision of the Rules, they shall, nevertheless, have one ordinary vote only.
- (xlviii) No member may hold more than one of the offices listed in cls (xxxii), (xxxiii), Publicity Officer, Deputy Publicity Officer, Technologies Officer or Deputy Technologies Officer.
- (xlviii) No Welfare Officer may hold any other office within the Society. Additionally, they may not serve on any committee save for the Equalities Committee, in which they serve as an *ex officio* member, and the General Committee. The Welfare Officer shall not have a vote on the General Committee.
- (xlix) No immediate President-elect may hold any other office within the Society.
- (l) No President may hold any other office within the Society.

- (li) Should a member come to occupy two positions deemed incompatible by cls (xl), (xli), (xlii) or (xlili) they must resign one position within a week of the situation occurring or forfeit both.

### **The Standing Committee**

- (lii) There shall be a Standing Committee. The Standing Committee shall consist of the Full Officers, the immediate President-elect, and the President.
- (liii) The Standing Committee shall be the Society's executive.
- (liv) Decisions of the Standing Committee shall be binding on the Society subject to the Rules, the powers of the Trustees, the authority of a General Meeting, the decisions of the General Committee and the limitations of the force of motions set out in cl (lii).

### **The Rules Committee**

- (lv) There shall be a Rules Committee. The General Committee shall elect five ordinary members to the Rules Committee from amongst its members and the past officers in statu pupillari. Any past officers elected to the Rules Committee shall be accorded membership of the General Committee. The Rules Committee shall further consist of the Returning Officer, the Deputy Returning Officer and any President-elect.
- (lvi) The Rules Committee shall operate the Society's elections and adjudicate on electoral disputes.
- (lvii) Decisions of the Rules Committee on such matters shall be binding on the Society subject to the Rules and such appeals for which they allow.
- (lviii) Members of the Rules Committee shall not contest any election elected by the General Committee, or any election at a General Meeting.
- (lix) Clause (lviii) becomes void for elections of the Returning Officer, and the Rules Committee.

### **Co-option to Committees**

- (lviii) Any committee may co-opt any member of the Society to sit on it. Members co-opted under this provision shall have no vote.

### **Force of Motions**

- (lix) Private business duly transacted at a General Meeting and decisions of the General and Standing Committees shall be of null effect in so far as they:
  - (a) bear on the business of the Rules Committee or the Appeals Tribunal; *or*
  - (b) force the President to use such powers as are accorded to them by the Rules.

### **Concerning the Rules**

- (lx) There shall be Schedules to the Constitution containing factual information only.
- (lxi) The Constitution or its Schedules shall only be amended after:
  - (a) a resolution to that effect has been passed by a two-thirds majority at a meeting of the General Committee
- (lxii) The General Committee, with the consent of a General Meeting, shall have the power to issue Standing Orders. Standing Orders shall have the force of the Constitution in so far as the are not inconsistent with it. Standing Orders shall only be issued, deleted or amended after:
  - (b) a resolution to that effect has been passed by a two-thirds majority at a meeting of the General Committee
- (lxiii) The General Committee, with the consent of a General Meeting, shall have the power to publish annexes to the Standing Orders. The Annexes shall set down the practice or tradition of the Society, but shall not be binding. The Annexes shall only be published, deleted or amended after a resolution of the General Committee has been ratified by a General Meeting. Annex IV - Durham Union Society Debating may be amended by a simple majority vote of the Debate Committee as outlined in Standing Order VII – Debating Equity Policy.

- (lxiv) Amendments to the Constitution, its Schedules, Standing Orders, Annexes, and Appendices to matters pertaining to the work and operations of the Debates Committee, including but not limited to the work, role and position of Debating Officers, the organisation of competitions, and the electoral regulations, following its approval from the General Committee (under clauses lxi-lxii) must then be ratified via a two-thirds majority from the Debates Committee at the next available Debates Committee meeting.
- (lxv) The provisions of the Constitution, its Schedules, the Standing Orders and its Annexes are ancillary to and to be interpreted in a manner consistent with the Deed of Trust.
- (lxvi) Copies of the Rules shall be safe-kept by the Secretary, the Returning Officer and the Office Manager and shall further be available for the benefit of members in the Society's Office.
- (lxvii) Previous resolutions of the Society and its committees shall not be invalidated by the Rules except insofar as they are inconsistent with its express provisions, in which case such resolutions are immediately superseded.
- (lxviii) All previous constitutions of the Society are explicitly revoked. The Rules shall have effect as from 9th January 2002.

## **Complaints Panel**

- (lxix) There shall be a Complaints Panel, which shall serve as the first point of contact for complaints received from students of the university regarding the actions or behaviour of an ordinary member on Union premises (including 24 North Bailey Club) or at a Union event, or that of a member of General Committee, including elected Officers of the Society, that could be deemed to bring the Society into disrepute.
- (lxx) The Complaints Panel will uphold the founding principles of the Society and act in adherence with the Durham University Policy Statement on Freedom of Expression.
- (lxxi) The Panel shall be composed of three members, including the Chair and two ordinary members:
- (a) The Office Manager as the Chair
  - (b) A Trustee of the Society
  - (c) One member, selected by lot by the Chair, from a panel of qualified persons.
- The panel shall comprise:
- i. All members who have served two terms on the Rules Committee still in residence
  - ii. All former Returning Officers still in residence; and
  - iii. All former members of the Standing Committee in residence provided that no currently serving member of the Rules Committee or the General Committee, nor any former office-holder removed from office by a vote of no-confidence, shall be included in the panel.
- (lxxii) The Panel shall work as follows:
- (a) Following the submission of a complaint, the panel shall meet with the President and the Standing Committee to discuss the complaint.
    - (i) Following this meeting, the panel shall begin an investigation if a simple majority of panel members deem it necessary
  - (b) Once an investigation has begun, the panel should collect evidence. This may include:
    - (i) Witness testimony
    - (ii) Photographs and video or audio recordings
    - (iii) Correspondence between individuals under investigation. The panel has no authority to demand evidence.
  - (c) Immediately prior to concluding an investigation, the panel must notify any concerned individuals and offer them the opportunity to state their case.
  - (d) The investigation may be concluded if:

- (i) The panel reaches an unanimous verdict after reviewing the available evidence.
  - (ii) After two weeks of an investigation being opened, the panel unanimously agrees there is insufficient evidence to reach a verdict.
  - (iii) The investigation has been open for three weeks in which case a simple majority may agree (a) a verdict or (b) that there is insufficient evidence to reach a verdict.
- (e) Once a verdict is reached, the panel may issue a censure, suspension or commence a Vote of No-Confidence
  - (f) Should the alleged incident occur on the property of 24 NBC, once a verdict is reached, the panel may suspend or expel individuals from 24 NBC in accordance with the Rules of the North Bailey Club.
  - (g) The panel may pass evidence to the University Student Conduct Office at any stage of the investigation if the panel finds the individual to be in breach of the University Codes of Practice.
  - (h) Any report produced by the Panel shall be considered their work on behalf of the Society and therefore belong solely to the Society.
  - (i) Any complaints occurring in an electoral environment should first be submitted to Rules Committee
- (lxxiii) Should an ordinary member of the panel derelict their duty or bring the society into disrepute, a Vote of No-Confidence may be passed against them before the General Committee as specified under SO III (6).
- (lxxiv) Any decision reached by the Complaints Panel may be appealed to the Trustees of the Society via the Office Manager.
- (lxxv) That, in order to ensure that the records and institutional memory of the Society is secured, preserved, and risk of loss mitigated against, that the ‘minutes of debates, and committees, as well as term cards, photos and other ephemera of the Society’ should, on a rolling annual basis, be deposited in the Archives Palace Green. This deposit should take place annually with ‘four years of present minutes’ being retained in the Union’s Office for day-to-day use.

## Schedules

### Schedule I – Definitions and Abbreviations

The following expressions and abbreviations shall be defined as follows:

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <i>the Rules</i>    | The Society’s Deed of Trust, this Constitution and the Standing Orders.   |
| <i>the Chamber</i>  | The Society’s Debating Chamber in the Union.  |
| <i>the Colleges</i> | The following colleges of the University: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) University College,</li> </ul> |

- (ii) Hatfield College,
- (iii) St. Chad's College,
- (iv) St. John's College,
- (v) the St. Cuthbert's Society,
- (vi) the College of St. Hild and St. Bede,
- (vii) St. Mary's College,
- (viii) St. Aidan's College,
- (ix) Trevelyan College,
- (x) Collingwood College,
- (xi) Grey College,
- (xii) Ustinov College,
- (xiii) Josephine Butler College,
- (xiv) Stephenson College,
- (xv) John Snow College,
- (xvi) Van Mildert College  
*and*
- (xvii) South College

*their deputy*

That competent Member whom the concerned Officer calls upon to act in their stead; the Treasurer shall normally act as the President's immediate deputy; assistant officer shall normally act as the immediate deputy of their associate full officer.

*cl*

Constitutional clause

*in good order*

- (i) During General Meetings, in accordance with the Rules and the wishes of the House, as personified by the Chair, or personified by the Chair and amended by the House;
- (ii) when voting in a Presidential election, in accordance with the Rules as enforced by the officials of the Society or as enforced by the officials of the Society and amended by the Rules Committee;  
*elsewhere*

- (iii) in accordance with the Rules and with the wishes of the President, or in accordance with the Rules and with the wishes of the President as represented by the officers, officials or members of staff of the Society, or in accordance with the Rules and with the wishes of the President as represented by the Officers, Officials or members of staff of the Society and amended by the General Committee.

*in the usual places*

On the 'Durham Union Members' Facebook page.

*Member of the University*

Those members of the University who are *in statu professori* or *in statu pupillari* and graduates of the University.

*Members in residence*

Those members of the University who are *in statu professori* or *in statu pupillari*.

*Members in statu professori*

Those members of the Society employed by the University or one of the Colleges in an academic capacity.

*Members in statu pupillari*

Those members of the Society who ‘keep term’ as defined under General Regulation V of the University Calendar 1997 – 1998 or the relevant Regulation of succeeding University Calendars.

*Professional Accountant*

A member of one or more of the following bodies:

- (i) the Institute of Chartered Accountants,
- (ii) the Association of Certified Chartered Accountants, *or* (iii) the Institute of Cost and Management Accountants.

*the Union*

The premises of the Society

*the University*

The University of Durham

*Canvassing*

- (i) *A deliberate attempt to acquire political support or votes for an election, group, or ‘bloc’.*
- (ii) *A deliberate attempt to discover information or opinions by asking people in relation to an election, manifesto, pledges and so on.*

*Simple majority*

*More than half of the valid votes cast*

*Socia Media Accounts*

(a) *Instagram accounts:*

- (i) *@durhamunion*
- (ii) *@thedurhamunionball*
- (iii) *@Dus\_equalities\_and\_welfare*
- (iv) *@durham.union.freshers*
- (v) *@24.north.bailey.club*
- (vi) *@durhamdebating*

(b) *Twitter/X @durhamunion*

(c) *Facebook/Meta accounts:*

- (i) *@thedurhamunion*
- (ii) *@NorthBaileyClub*
- (iii) *@DurhamUnionDebatingSociety*

(d) *YouTube @DurhamUnion*

(e) *TikTok @durhamunion*

(f) *LinkedIn @thedurhamunionsociety*

## **Schedule II – Societies Enjoying Reciprocal Relations with the Society**

The Society has reciprocal relations with the following societies:

- (i) the Oxford Union Society;

- (ii) the Cambridge Union Society;
- (iii) Edinburgh University Union;
- (iv) the College Historical Society of Trinity College, Dublin;
- (v) the Philosophical Society of University College, Dublin;
- (vi) the Philosophical Society of University College, Cork;
- (vii) the Union Debating Society of St. Andrew's University.

# Standing Orders

## Standing Order I – General Meetings

1. Ordinary General Meetings
  - (a) The President shall have the sole right to call Ordinary General Meetings.
  - (b) The Secretary shall give a minimum of seventy-two hours written notice of Ordinary General Meetings in the usual places and throughout the University.
  - (c) The President shall call a minimum of seven Ordinary General Meetings in the Michælmass and Epiphany terms and a minimum of three in the Easter term.
  - (d) A member may introduce guests to an Ordinary General Meeting, with the permission of the President. Guests shall take no part in Private Business nor move procedural motions. Guests shall not normally be in residence.
  - (e) Subject to §3, during an Ordinary General Meeting, members of the House shall be allowed to ask questions of Officers, and of the President relative to their official duties.
  
2. Extraordinary General Meetings
  - (a) The following shall have the power to call an Extraordinary General Meeting:
    - (i) The President,
    - (ii) the General Committee, *or*
    - (iii) any member supported by the signatures of thirty members or one fifth of the membership *in statu pupillari* whichever is the lesser.
  - (b) The Secretary shall give a minimum of sixty hours written notice of Extraordinary General Meetings in the usual places.
  - (c) The sole purpose of an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be the transaction of Private Business.
  
3. Quoracy
  - (a) A General Meeting of fewer than twelve members shall be deemed quorate at the discretion of the President.
  
4. The Chair
  - (a) General Meetings shall be chaired by the President or their deputy, who shall be a member of the General Committee.
  - (b) The Chair shall be the sole arbiter of the rules of debate.
  - (c) The Chair shall have the power to call upon any person to explain or withdraw any expression or conduct which they consider improper.
  - (d) The Chair shall have the power to expel any disorderly person from the House.
  - (e) A member of the House shall have the right to ask the Chair, on a point of order, to exercise their powers under (c) or (d), should they consider any person's expression or conduct improper.
  
5. The Minutes
  - (a) The Secretary shall be responsible for the keeping of the minutes of General Meetings.
  - (b) The minutes of General Meetings shall be available for the inspection of members in the Union's Office.
  - (c) In each General Meeting, the minutes of the previous General Meeting shall be:

- (i) read aloud by the Secretary or their deputy;
  - (ii) amended as the House requires;
  - (iii) confirmed by a vote of the House and
  - (iv) signed by the Chair and the Secretary or their deputy. Private Business
- (d) For the duration of Private Business, a General Meeting shall be deemed to be in committee.
- (e) Private Business shall consist of one or more of the following:
- (i) motions tabled in accordance with SO III §3,
  - (ii) questions and reports of Officers, relative to their official duties, *and*
  - (iii) the elections to the Constituent Committees as set out in SO V.

## Standing Order II – Ordering of Committees

### 1. Convening of Committees

- (a) Committees shall be convened by their chair or co-chairs. Chairs shall be obliged to convene them at the earliest opportunity if petitioned by a majority of their members or the President.
- (b) The secretary of a sub-committee shall be responsible for providing its membership with adequate notice of committee meetings.
- (c) No committee meeting shall proceed unless a minimum of one half of that committee's membership is present.
- (d) Members of a Committee shall be under a duty to attend all meetings of the Committee.
- (e) Should any ordinary member of any of the Constituent Committees fail to attend three meetings of any of the committees of which they are a member in one term, without giving reasonable notice to the Secretary or their deputy for General Committee, or the Chair of the relevant Constituent Committee then it shall be deemed that the concerned member has resigned and they shall no longer be a member of the General Committee or any of the Constituent Committees.
- (f) Should any ordinary member of any of the Constituent Committees derelict their duties on three occasions in a single term, they may be removed from their position by the unanimous decision of the President, Returning Officer and the Chair of that Constituent Committee.
  - (i) The Chairs of the Constituent Committees shall be responsible for clearly communicating, in writing, what constitutes a dereliction of duty to the ordinary elected members of their Committees.
  - (ii) Should an ordinary member of a Constituent Committee derelict their duties on two occasions in a single term, the Chair of that Constituent Committee shall notify the Returning Officer, who shall communicate a formal warning to the concerned member, in writing.

### 2. The General Committee

- (a) The General Committee shall act on behalf of the membership to ensure that the Union be organised and managed in the best interests of its membership. It shall especially:
  - (i) oversee the Union's finances as set out in SO IV;
  - (ii) elect officers and committees as required by the Union and subject to the Rules.
- (b) Reports of Officers
  - (i) The President shall submit a report to the Committee on the first and final meeting of each term.

- (ii) The President-elect shall submit a report to the Committee at the final meeting of each term.
- (iii) The Social Secretary and the Sponsorship Officer shall both submit a report to the Committee at the first meeting of each term.
- (iv) The Secretary shall submit a report to the Committee at the second meeting of each term.
- (v) The Custodian shall report to the Committee at the final meeting of each term.
- (vi) The Director of Debating shall report to the Committee at the final meeting of the Easter term.
- (vii) The Speakers Secretary of the President shall submit a report in the first General Committee of each term.
- (viii) The Treasurer shall:
  - a. submit full termly management accounts for the previous term to the Committee at the second meeting of each term accompanied by a written analysis of the term's financial impact on the Union.
  - b. submit full management accounts for the previous year at the second meeting of the Michaelmas term accompanied by a full written report on the Society's financial situation analysing how the year passed compares with the previous years.
  - c. present a budget for the coming year to the Committee at the second meeting of the Michaelmas term.
  - d. present revised budgets at the second meeting of the Epiphany and Easter terms.
- (ix) The Returning Officer shall submit a report to the Committee at the meeting immediately following any Presidential election, including a summary of any decisions of the Rules Committee made since the previous report.
- (x) The Committee shall mandate any Officer, Official or Committee to report in addition to those mentioned here.
- (xi) The Equalities Officer shall submit a report to the Committee at the final meeting of each term.
- (xii) The Debating Treasurer shall:
  - i. submit full termly management accounts of the annual debating budget for the previous term to the Committee at the second meeting of each term accompanied by a written analysis of the term's financial impact on the Union.
  - ii. submit full management accounts of the annual debating budget or the previous year at the second meeting of the Michaelmas term accompanied by a full written report analysing how the year passed compares with the previous years.
  - iii. present a plan of management for the annual debating budget for the coming year to the Committee at the second meeting of the Michaelmas term.
  - iv. present revised plan of management for the annual debating budget at the second meeting of the Epiphany and Easter terms.

(c) The Committee shall meet on at least three occasions each term.

- (d) Notwithstanding SO II §1(c), a meeting of this Committee shall be quorate if one third of its members be present.
- (e) The Committee shall be chaired by the President or their deputy who shall be a member of the Standing Committee.
- (f) The Committee shall be minuted by the Secretary or their deputy<sup>23</sup>. The minutes of the Committee shall be accessible to Members. The Secretary shall further ensure that an up-to-date list of motions in force is kept and accessible to members.
- (g) Any member of the Union may attend and speak at meetings of the Committee, subject to the Chair's discretion, though they shall not vote, nor propose or second motions.
- (h) The Committee shall take all binding decisions by means of the passing of a resolution.
- (i) The Committee shall have the power to arrange forthcoming events and to remit their immediate control partly or wholly to a person or a body other than the concerned President. Such events shall have no right to call upon the concerned Presidential account.
- (j) Should the President vacate their office before the end of their term, the Returning Officer shall immediately convene a joint meeting of both Standing and Rules Committees, which shall be chaired by the Treasurer. Should the position of Treasurer also be vacant then a chair shall be elected by both committees from the Standing Committee. The joint committee shall then come up with a resolution and send it to the trustees for approval, before bringing the resolution before the (General) Committee. The Secretary shall call a meeting of the Committee as soon as reasonably possible. The threshold for passing the resolution shall be a simple majority of those attending the meeting. Should the Committee amend the resolution then a copy of the amended resolution must be sent to the Trustees for approval forthwith by the Secretary. Until a resolution is passed by the Committee the chair of the original joint committee shall temporarily take on the roles of President, these duties may be delegated to other members of the Standing Committee.
- (k) Should a President-elect vacate their office the Secretary shall immediately convene the Committee. The Committee shall take such action as it deems necessary.
- (l) The Committee shall not give money to political causes.

### 3. The Standing Committee

- (a) The Standing Committee shall oversee the day-to-day running of the Union. It shall especially:
  - (i) oversee relations between the Union and other persons and bodies, in particular the University of Durham;
  - (ii) liaise with the Trustees and be responsible for reporting all decisions to them;
  - (iii) be immediately responsible for relations between the Union and its staff, *and*
  - (iv) advise the President.
- (b) The Committee shall meet on at least four occasions each term.

- (c) The Committee shall be chaired by the President or their deputy and meet in open session. In the event that the President deem the Committee's business best kept confidential in the interests of the Union the Committee may hold a meeting in closed session and, if the Committee agree, continue to discuss the reserved business in that closed session. Should the Committee not agree to meet in closed session, the meeting shall return to open session and the business be discussed there.
- (d) The Committee shall be minuted by the Secretary or their deputy<sup>24</sup>. The Committee shall have the right to keep any part of its proceedings confidential, as may be deemed in the interests of the Union.
- (e) The members of the Committee shall have the power as a body and individually to expel from the Union's premises any member whom they consider to be endangering the good name of the Union.

#### 4. Meetings of the Trustees

- (a) A meeting shall be called to consist of the Union Society's Trustees; the Standing Committee; and the Office Manager.
- (b) Such a meeting shall be called at the discretion of the Trustees, to be no less than once per term.
- (c) The meeting shall be chaired by the Chair of Trustees or their deputy and minuted by the Secretary.

#### 5. The Rules Committee

- (a) The Rules Committee shall ensure on behalf of the General Committee that the Union's elections be conducted in accordance with the following general principles:
  - (i) All elections should be fair and seen to be fair;
  - (ii) all members should have and be seen to have an equal chance to vote;
  - (iii) all elections should be conducted with the minimum of personal animosity and
  - (iv) all elections shall be conducted in a manner which does not injure the Union.
- (b) In the pursuance of the aims set out in (a) the Rules Committee shall have the power to rule candidates for elections out of order.
- (c) The Committee shall be chaired by the Returning Officer or their deputy.
- (d) Further to SO II §1(c), a meeting of this Committee shall not be quorate unless at least four of its members be present.
- (e) The Committee shall be minuted by a member of the Committee selected by the Returning Officer. The minutes of the Committee shall be available to members, provided that the Committee shall have the right to keep any part of its proceedings confidential, as it deems in the interests of the Union.
- (f) Impartiality of the members of the Committee
  - (i) Members of the Committee shall not openly support candidates in any election.
  - (ii) Should they wish to stand as a candidate in an election, members of the Committee shall forfeit their membership of the Committee upon such candidacy or nomination.
  - (iii) Should the Committee consider any of its members to be openly partial in regard to an election, it may, by 75% of its membership, save the member accused, remove the member accused.
- (g) Where:

- (i) the Returning Officer is unable to convene a quorate meeting of the Committee owing either to the operation of (f)(ii) or (iii), or to the resignation of members or to the inability of members to attend a meeting, *and*
- (ii) no meeting of the General Committee is convened prior to the next meeting of the Rules Committee, *and*
- (iii) the meeting of the Rules Committee is one required by the provisions of the Rules, the Returning Officer, or their deputy, shall have the power to co-opt Members to the Committee. Such members shall serve only until the next meeting of the General Committee.

## 6. The Media Committee

- (a) The Media Committee shall be responsible for:
  - (i) Assisting the Publicity Officer by:
    - (1) Assisting in the promotion and marketing of the Society and its events
    - (2) Helping to develop and carry out strategies to grow the Society's reach.
    - (3) Assisting in the creation of term cards.
    - (4) Coordinate output of all Union-affiliated media channels, ensuring quality of branding.
  - (ii) Assisting the Technologies Officer in the maintaining and expanding of the Society's audio-visual capacity by:
    - (1) Editing and uploading recordings of General Meetings and Emergency Debates to the relevant Social Media Accounts.
    - (2) Assisting in the creation of thumbnails.
- (b) The Committee shall consist of the Publicity Officer, the Deputy Publicity Officer, the Technologies Officer, the Deputy Technologies Officer
  - (i) There shall be a further two ordinary members.
  - (ii) The Assistant Custodian and Debating Publicity Officer shall be *ex-officio* members of the Media Committee.
- (c) The Committee shall be chaired by the Publicity Officer, or their immediate deputy, and minuted by the Technologies Officer, or their immediate deputy.
- (d) The Committee shall meet at least twice per term, once in the last two weeks of term with the President-Elect present.

## 7. The Social Committee

- (a) The Social Committee shall assist the Social Secretary and the Deputy Social Secretary in the organising of social events and in the generating of concepts for social events.
- (b) The Committee shall consist of the Social Secretary, the President, the Deputy Social Secretary, the immediate President-elect and five ordinary members elected in accordance with cl (xxiv).
- (c) The Committee shall be chaired by the Social Secretary.
- (d) Meetings of the Committee shall be minuted by the Deputy Social Secretary; in their absence, the Chair shall call upon an ordinary member of the Committee to minute the meeting. The minutes of the Committee shall be made accessible to Members.

## 8. The House Committee

- (a) The members of the House Committee shall:
  - (i) assist in the running of Union events;
  - (ii) act as sergeants-at-arms at General Meetings;
  - (iii) represent the opinions of the House to the General Committee; *and*
  - (iv) perform such other tasks as the Steward or Deputy Steward may require.
- (b) The House Committee shall normally consist of ten members in the Michaelmas and Epiphany terms and eight members in the Easter term.
- (c) The Steward may appoint a Senior member of the Committee out of the ordinary members, who shall deputise for them when needed. This shall be an honorary position.
- (d) Each elected Steward shall have the right to appoint a Deputy Steward, an Officer of the Society, from amongst the members of the House Committee *in statu pupillari*

- (i) The Deputy Steward shall assist the Steward who appointed them by assisting the Steward in the running of Union events, deputising for the Steward when they are unavailable, and supporting the mission of the House Committee.
- (ii) The decision of whether to appoint a Deputy Steward is entirely at the discretion of the Steward.
- (iii) The Steward shall inform the Returning Officer by writing of his appointment. The Returning Officer shall initiate a simple-majority ratification hearing at a Meeting of the General Committee.
- (iv) The officership shall remain vacant until the first-round of termly House Committee elections. The Steward cannot recommend a candidate for the Deputy Stewardship to the Returning Officer until after the first-round of House Committee elections. The officership of the Deputy Steward shall expire at the end of each academic term, unless they:
  - a. Resign their position
  - b. Are removed by the Steward who appointed them in accordance with (vi) or
  - c. Are removed by the General Committee in a Vote of No Confidence in accordance with SO III Section 6
- (e) Each Steward shall only have one Deputy Steward at any time.
- (f) Any Steward may remove their Deputy Steward for any reason relating to their duties by writing to the Returning Officer.
- (g) In the event that a Deputy Steward is removed for any of the reasons outlined in (iv), the Steward may appoint a new Deputy Steward by writing to the Returning Officer.

## 9. The Secretary's Committee

(a) The Secretary's Committee shall consist of the Secretary, the Assistant Secretary, Publicity Officer and the College Secretaries. Meetings shall be chaired by the Secretary, or their deputy, and the chair shall call upon an ordinary member to take minutes. The minutes of the Committee shall be made accessible to Members.

(b) There shall be the following College Secretaries, elected by the members of the Society in statu pupillari at an ordinary meeting:

- (i) The University College Secretary
- (ii) The Hatfield College Secretary
- (iii) The St Chad's College Secretary
- (iv) The St John's College Secretary
- (v) The St Cuthbert's Society Secretary
- (vi) The St Mary's College Secretary
- (vii) The Trevelyan College Secretary
- (viii) The Collingwood Secretary
- (ix) The Grey College Secretary
- (x) The St Aidan's College Secretary
- (xi) The Van Mildert College Secretary
- (xii) The Josephine Butler College Secretary
- (xiii) The Stephenson College Secretary
- (xiv) The John Snow College Secretary
- (xv) The South College Secretary
- (xvi) The College of St Hild and St Bede Secretary
- (xvii) The Ustinov College and Postgraduates Secretary

(c) The Committee shall form the chief link between the colleges and the Union.

(d) The Secretary's Committee shall:

- (i) distribute publicity to the colleges of the University and carry out any other publicising or promotional work stipulated by the Secretary or Publicity Officer;
- (ii) use social media to promote the Union by any means directed by the Secretary or Publicity Officer
- (iii) act as the first port of call for members of the Society within the Colleges they represent;
- (iv) recruit members of the Colleges they represent to join the Union;
- (v) represent issues unique to their Colleges in the General Committee; and
- (vi) meet regularly in order to discuss ideas for the future development of the Union.

(e) The committee shall normally meet no less than three times in the Michaelmas and Epiphany terms and at least once in the Easter term.

(f) The Chair may appoint a Senior member of the Committee out of the ordinary members, who shall deputise for the Secretary or Assistant Secretary when needed.

(g) In the first instance, College Secretaries must be elected from those members of the Union in their first year of undergraduate study at the University and who are a member of the college to which they are elected to represent.

- (i) Should the position fail to be fulfilled in the first instance, it shall be opened to all in statu pupillari members of the Union who are a member of the college to which they are elected to represent
- (ii) If the position still cannot be filled, it shall be opened to all in statu pupillari members of the Union who are in their first year of undergraduate study at the University.
- (iii) If the position still cannot be filled, it shall be opened to all members of the Union in statu pupillari.

(h) In the first instance, the Ustinov and Postgraduates Secretary must be elected from those members of the Union undertaking postgraduate study at the University.

- (i) Should the position fail to be filled in the first instance, it shall be opened to all members of the Union in statu pupillari.

## 10. The President's Committee

- (a) The President's Committee shall assist the President or President-Elect who appointed them in the finding of speakers for events and the general running of the term's events.
- (b) The Committee shall consist of the of the President or President-Elect, their Speakers Secretary, the Equalities Officer, and up to 15 appointed members, of which it is the President's responsibility to inform the Returning Officer of whom they appointed..
- (c) Each President or President-Elect shall be entitled to their own President's Committee, of which all appointed members shall be non-voting members of the General Committee.
- (d) The Committee shall be chaired by the President, and they shall call upon an appointed member to take minutes. Minutes of the Committee shall be accessible to members. The Committee shall have their duties discharged by the President or President-Elect and Speakers Secretary.
- (e) The Speakers Secretary may at their discretion engage the full committee of ten ordinary members to assist in inviting speakers for beyond the term of the President-Elect, in accordance with their mandate as outlined in cl (xxxiv).
- (f) It shall be a fundamental principle of the Durham Union Society that all public events, including meetings and debates, are presumed to be conducted in person.
- (g) The President of the Society shall not host, conduct, or participate in any virtual addresses, panels or debates utilising digital communication platforms such as Teams, Zoom, or similar software, as a representative of the Society, without prior explicit approval
- (h) Approval Process:
  - (i) A proposal for conducting a virtual address, panel or debate must be presented to the Standing Committee.
  - (ii) The Standing Committee must approve the proposal by a simple majority vote.
  - (iii) Upon approval, the President may proceed with the virtual address or event in accordance with the details approved by the Standing Committee.
- (i) The Committee will ensure that any speaker who accepts an invitation to speak at the Society is aware of the procedures of the event and the standards of the Society, as detailed in 'Appendix – Society Procedures and Standards'.

## 11. Equalities Committee

- (a) The Equalities Committee shall assist the Equalities Officer:
  - (i) in representing the interests of historically underrepresented groups in the General Committee.
  - (ii) in working to ensure that an open and inclusive environment free from prejudice is promoted and maintained at the Union.
  - (iii) by providing a point of contact for members of the Society who identify as being part of a historically underrepresented group or want to discuss issues

unique to historically underrepresented groups.

(iv) by meeting regularly in order to discuss and produce policies, practices, and publicity initiatives that promote an open and inclusive environment at the Union free from prejudice. These recommendations shall be referred to Standing Committee to consider for adoption or proposal to the General Committee.

- (b) The Committee shall consist of the Equalities Officer, the Welfare Officer, and the Equalities Representatives.
- (c) There shall be the following Equalities Representatives, elected by the members of the Society elected in statu pupillari at an ordinary meeting:
  - (i) The LGBT+ Representative
  - (ii) The People of Colour Representative
  - (iii) The Disability Representative
  - (iv) The International Members Representative
  - (v) The Women's Representative
  - (vi) The Social Mobility Representative
- (d) The Committee shall normally meet no less than two times in the Michaelmas and Epiphany terms and at least once in the Easter term.
- (e) The Committee shall be chaired by the Equalities Officer and minuted by a member selected by the Equalities Officer.

## 12. The Debates Committee

- (a) The Debates Committee shall consist of the Director of Debating, the Debating Treasurer, the Debate Training Secretary, the two Debate Competitions Officers, the two Debating Equity Officers, the Debating Publicity Officer, the Debating Secretary, the Debating Social Secretary and the President.
- (b) The Debates Committee shall assist the Director of Debating in the organisation and promotion of competitive debate and education in public speech and debate.
- (c) The committee shall be chaired by the Director of Debating, or the Debating Treasurer. If both are unavailable, the President shall chair.
- (d) The committee shall be minuted by the Debating Secretary. The minutes of the Committee shall be accessible to Members.
- (e) The Debates Selection Committee (DSC)
  - (i) There shall be a sub-committee of the Debates Committee called the Debates Selection Committee.
  - (ii) The DSC shall consist of the Director of Debating, the Debating Treasurer, the Debate Training Secretary, the two Debates Competitions Secretary and the President.
  - (iii) The DSC shall be chaired by the Director of Debating and shall be minuted by a member selected by the Director of Debating for that purpose.
  - (iv) The DSC shall:
    1. adjudicate on applications, and
    2. select debating coaches, tournament conveners and any other position it deems necessary, in accordance with cl (xxviii).

## **Standing Order III - Motions**

### **1. Main Business Motions**

Motions debated in the Main Business of Ordinary General Meetings shall be organised as the President sees fit. The President may at their sole discretion further hold Emergency Debates prior to the Main Business of a General Meeting. The above debate's conclusions shall be the only ones deemed to express the views of the Union on external issues.

## 2. Motions before a Committee

Motions before a committees shall have a proposer and a seconder, and shall generally be debated in the following manner:

- (a) The proposer shall move the motion and answer any questions directed to them through the Chair;
- (b) the Chair shall ask for formal opposition to the motion and if none is forthcoming ask the meeting to pass it on a general aye; otherwise
- (c) an opposer shall speak against the motion;
- (d) general discussion of the motion shall ensue at the discretion of the Chair;
- (e) first the opposer and then the proposer shall be given the opportunity to summate their cases; *and*
- (f) the meeting moves to a vote<sup>6</sup> at which the Chair shall have a casting vote only.

## 3. The Tabling of a Substantive Motion

- (a) Ordinary motions of Private Business and motions at General Committee shall be submitted to the Secretary or their deputy not less than seventy-two hours in advance of the concerned meeting.
- (b) The Secretary shall give a minimum of sixty hours written notice of motions of Private Business in the usual places. The Secretary shall give a minimum of seventy-two hours written notice of motions at General Committee to all members of the Committee.
- (c) Extraordinary motions of Private Business and extraordinary motions at General Committee may be moved without prior notice at the discretion of the Chair. Such motions shall be of null effect in so far as they amend the Rules.

## 4. Motions of Amendment

- (a) Motions of amendment require a proposer and seconder and may be moved at any time during the discussion of a substantive motion.
- (b) Once moved, such amendments must be passed or rejected by the meeting before the meeting returns to its consideration of the substantive motion.
- (c) No two motions of amendment may come concurrently before the meeting.

## 5. Procedural Motions

- (a) Procedural Motions may be moved on a point of order in General Meetings and in Meetings of the General Committee.
- (b) Should a Procedural Motion be moved at a General Meeting, the meeting shall be deemed in committee<sup>7</sup> whilst the motion be debated.
- (c) Procedural Motions shall take precedence over all other business and are themselves listed below in order of precedences:
  - (i) that a ruling of the Chair be overturned;
  - (ii) that the meeting be closed;
  - (iii) that the meeting be adjourned for a given time;
  - (iv) that the meeting move to a vote;

<sup>5</sup> Or the House whilst it is in Committee

<sup>6</sup> Should a ballot be required the Returning Officer, or their deputy, shall be called for and it shall be conducted like an ordinary election.

<sup>7</sup> Which means that §2 will apply.

<sup>8</sup> It would be out of order to move a lower precedence motion whilst a higher one is being debated.

- (v) that the question not be put;
  - (vi) that the question be remitted to another place
  - (vii) that the question be laid on the table;
  - (viii) that the question be adjourned;
  - (ix) that the question be taken in parts.
- (d) Procedural motions shall be debated in accordance with §2 with the additional provision that should (c) (i) be moved the chair of the meeting shall cede their office to a deputy whilst the motion is debated.

## 6. Motions of No-Confidence

- (a) In cases of a member of the General Committee's substantial or prolonged mis- performance or dereliction of duty; or bringing the Society into disrepute, a motion expressing a lack of confidence in that member may be moved in accordance with the provisions of this section.
- (b) Such a motion of no-confidence may only be moved if seven days' notice has been given both in the usual places and to all members of the Committee.
- (c) Additionally, such a motion may only be moved if *either*:
  - (i) it is seconded by not fewer than a third of the Committee, in addition to the member proposing the motion; *or*
  - (ii) it is proposed by the President and seconded by not fewer than two other members of the Standing Committee.
- (d) Any member named in a motion of no-confidence shall have the opportunity to defend themselves.
- (e) The vote on such a motion must be held by secret ballot, conducted by Rules Committee.
- (f) A Motion of No-Confidence may only be passed if a simple majority of the votes cast are in favour of the motion.
- (g) Should the motion be negatived, no further motion of no-confidence may be moved against that member for the remainder of the current term and the whole of the following term without the consent of the Standing Committee.
- (h) Should the motion be passed, except against a President or President-elect, the member concerned shall immediately, notwithstanding cl (xxxix), cease to hold any Office or position in the Society whatsoever and an election shall be held as if they had resigned.
- (i) Should the motion be passed against a President or President-elect, the member concerned shall immediately cease to hold any Office or position in the Society and the General Committee shall proceed immediately as required by SO II §2 (k) or (l) respectively.
- (j) Any member removed by a vote of no-confidence shall not be counted as a past Officer, Past-President, or similar, for the purposes of any provision of the Rules or any resolution of any Committee.

## 7. Ceding the Chair

Should the Chair wish to speak on a motion they shall cede their position to their deputy whilst the motion is debated.

## Standing Order IV – Finance

### 1. The Treasurer

The finances of the Society shall be administered by the Treasurer on behalf of the General Committee.

### 2. Budgets

- (a) The Treasurer in conjunction with the Standing Committee shall be responsible for the setting of the Union's annual budget, which shall be ratified by the General Committee.
- (b) Further, the Treasurer in conjunction with the Standing Committee shall be responsible for the setting of the Union's annual debating budget, which shall be a constituent part of the Union's annual budget.
- (c) There shall be no significant expenditure in excess of these budgets without the approval of the General Committee.
- (d) In the event of significant expenditure in excess of the Union's annual debating budget, the Debating Treasurer shall meet with the Treasurer to identify the cause of the excess and agree a remedy. This remedy can include, but is not limited to, recommending the excess is forgiven, recommending an adjustment in the management of the budget is adopted, or recommending that the annual debating budget for the subsequent year is reduced to cover the excess. The Treasurer and Debating Treasurer shall give a report to the Standing Committee identifying the cause of the excess and the agreed remedy. The Standing Committee shall vote as to if the recommendations of the report are to be adopted and cannot amend the recommendations without the agreement of both the Treasurer and the Debating Treasurer. If the Debating Treasurer and the Treasurer cannot agree a remedy, or if the Standing Committee vote not to adopt the recommendations of the report, the remedy shall be decided by the Trustees at their next meeting.
- (e) By a majority vote of the Debates Committee, the Debating Treasurer may schedule a funding review of the annual debating budget at the subsequent trustee meeting.

### 3. Accounts

- (a) The Treasurer shall produce full termly income & expenditure statements for the Union's accounts. These shall be presented to and approved by the General Committee<sup>9</sup>.
- (b) The Treasurer shall engage a professional accountant to prepare the Union's annual accounts.
- (c) The Debating Treasurer shall produce full termly income & expenditure statements for the Union's annual debating budget. These shall be presented to the General Committee<sup>10</sup>.

### 4. The Presidential Account

- (a) Each President shall finance their term from their Presidential Account.
- (b) The account shall be credited with an allowance from the General Account, the amount of which shall be determined in the Union's annual budget.
- (c) Net expenditure in excess of the budgeted resources of the Account shall be held to be the President's personal responsibility. Unless General Committee approves such expenditure it shall be the President's personal liability.

<sup>9</sup> As part of the Treasurer's termly report, see SO II §2(b)(vii)

<sup>10</sup> As part of the Debating Treasurer's termly report, see SO II §2(b)(xi)

## 5. Subscription Rates

- (a) The General Committee shall set the subscription rates of the Union.

## 6. Bedroom Rates at 24 North Bailey Club

- (a) The rental rates for each bedroom in 24 North Bailey Club will rise automatically each year by 1.5% plus RPI.
- (b) Extraordinary rises in rental rates can only be proposed by the Standing Committee and are to be ratified by the General Committee, subject to SO III.

# Standing Order V – Election Regulations

## 1. General

- (a) Unless otherwise stated, all elections shall be conducted in line with the Single Transferable Vote procedure, as defined by the Electoral Reform Society of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
- (b) Candidates for elections shall be *in statu pupillari* Members of the Union.
- (c) Candidates shall have a proposer and a seconder who shall be *in statu pupillari* Members of the Union, except in the case of elections under Section 6 of this Standing Order.
- (d) The Returning Officer shall be responsible for the adequate publicising of all elections.
- (e) The Returning Officer shall keep the papers relative to all elections for a period not less than one calendar month<sup>11</sup>.
- (f) Further to any responsibilities under SO II §5(f):
- (i) the Returning Officer, the Deputy Returning Officer, members of the Complaints Panel, members of Rules Committee, the President, the Presidents-elect, and any past Presidents in residence shall not openly support candidates in any election other than to cast their vote in a secret ballot;
  - (ii) in elections to an office, the immediately previous holder of the office shall not propose or second candidates;
  - (iii) in elections for an office which is an assistant, the member of Standing Committee to which that office is subordinate shall not propose or second candidates and vice versa;
  - (iv) in elections to the Constituent Committees, the chairman of the committee shall not propose or second candidates;
- (g) In the event that no candidate comes forward during the period of open nominations, a re-election<sup>23</sup> shall be held in accordance with these Standing Orders.
- (h) Upon the vacating of a position, an election or by-election shall be called by the Returning Officer to be held within one term-time week (excluding the University examination period) of the position being vacated.
- (i) In the event that an election be tied, the tied candidates may choose to see the election decided by the fair toss of a fair coin. Otherwise a re-election shall be held in accordance with these Standing Orders.

<sup>11</sup> This is the same time period as the time limitations of complaints and appeals. <sup>23</sup> Which shall be treated for all purposes like an ordinary election

## 2. Re-Open Nominations

- (a) In all elections, excepting those to the Rules Committee and those held at General Meetings, in addition to the nominated candidates there shall be an additional option on the ballot papers entitled 'Re-open Nominations' (RON).
- (b) The RON option shall be treated as a normal voting option in the election.
- (c) Should the RON option achieve quota a re-election shall be held in accordance with these Standing Orders.

## 3. Presidential Election

- (a) Subject to (f), a Presidential election shall be held during the term which occurs two terms prior to that term which presidency it elects.
- (b) Submission of Nominations
  - (i) In the first instance, persons nominated for the post of Michaelmas or Epiphany President must:
    - 1. Have served as a Full Officer of the Society, entitled to sit on the Standing Committee, for a period of no less than 30 term-time days  
*or*
    - 2. Have attended ten General Committee meetings as a member of the General Committee.
  - (ii) In the first instance, the persons nominated for Easter President must:
    - 1. Have served as a Full Officer of the Society, entitled to sit on the Standing Committee, for a period of no less than 30 term-time days  
*or*
    - 2. Have attended ten General Committee meetings as a member of the General Committee.
  - (iii) If after the nomination period for President has closed, the Returning Officer has received no valid nominations, they shall immediately re-open nominations in accordance with the Standing Orders and the persons nominated for Easter President must:
    - 1. Have attended five General Committee meetings as a member of the General Committee.
  - (iv) In the event that an election for President is held in which the Re-open nominations option achieves quota, a re-election shall be held in accordance with the Standing Orders. In this re-election, the eligibility criteria for President shall be the same as the eligibility criteria for the election in which the Re-open nominations option won.
  - (v) Nominations shall be received by the Returning Officer:
    - 1. From a day of the President's choosing, generally between the second and sixth week of term and in any case far enough prior to the end of term as to allow a re-election should one become necessary under §1(g) or §2(c), *and*
    - 2. for a period of not less than five days.
  - (vi) Nominations shall be constituted and scrutinised as set out in §8.
- (c) Campaigning & Husting

- (i) At two p.m. on a day not more than twelve and not less than seven days before the election day campaigning shall begin. At this time the Returning Officer shall announce nominations, place a copy of each candidate's manifesto in the usual places and upload copies of candidate's manifestoes onto the website.
- (ii) Candidates shall not campaign prior to this time and should take great care not to appear so to do.
- (iii) Candidates may be assisted by a campaign team. All members of a campaign team must be *in statu pupillari* members of the Society and must be approved by the Returning Officer. No amendments to a candidate's team will be permitted after the polls open. A candidate's proposer and seconders shall automatically be members of a campaign team.
- (iv) The Rules Committee may, from time to time, set limits on the size of campaign teams.
- (v) No person may be added to a campaign team unless a letter, signed by that person, is delivered to the Returning Officer.
- (vi) Candidates must make their campaign team aware of all election rules and regulations and will be responsible for all the activities of members of their campaign team.
- (vii) All candidates' written publicity must be approved by the Rules Committee and must conform to the provisions of §9.
- (viii) At some stage during the period of campaigning the President shall call a General Meeting at which hustings shall be held as set out in §7, at which candidates shall normally hust for no more than ten minutes and proposers shall hust for no more than eight.

(d) Polling

- (i) Over a twenty-four hour period starting from six p.m. one evening to six p.m. the following evening on a date selected by the Rules Committee, not less than seven and not more than twelve days after campaigning has begun, polling shall take place.
- (ii) The submission of ballots will be take place electronically through an online system.
- (iii) In the event of a technical fault or other extra-ordinary circumstances, the Rules Committee, with the consent of all candidates, may substitute an alternative ballot submission system.
- (iv) No candidate, their proposer or seconder or any member of their campaign team may come within ten yards of any members in the process of casting their vote.
- (v) Where a member in residence is unable to vote by means of the procedure set out in (ii), the Rules Committee may, at their sole discretion, accept from the member a postal or other paper ballot. Such votes shall be:
  1. wholly in the member's own hand; *and*
  2. submitted to the Returning Officer by five p.m. on the day the polls close.

(e) The Count

- (i) The Returning Officer shall convene the Rules Committee to conduct the count<sup>12</sup>.
  - (ii) Each candidate may nominate a member of the Union to be present at the count as their Independent Observer.
  - (iii) The Count shall normally begin in the evening of the polling day.
  - (iv) Should there be a discrepancy of greater than or equal to five percent between the number of votes cast and those registered, the ballot box shall be ruled out of order.
  - (v) If after the first count the votes cast for the first and second placed candidates are within five percent of each other, there shall be a re-count.
- (f) Should a re-election be required by these Standing Orders, the Rules Committee shall

hold it as soon as is practicable. It shall be treated as a normal Presidential Election.

(g) Campaign Regulations and Costs

(i) The Rules Committee shall determine what limits shall be placed on campaigning methods, devices, and techniques at its meeting immediately prior to nominations opening. Any method, device, or technique shall be deemed prohibited unless permitted by the Committee.

(ii) The Rules Committee shall permit, subject to such limitations as they deem suitable, at a minimum:

1. the distribution of manifestos directly to members;
2. the display of posters across the University;
3. the use of electronic campaigning methods, *inter alia*, the internet, telephones, and other mobile communication devices;  
*and*
4. canvassing of members.

(iii) The following activities shall be prohibited in all elections:

1. any and all campaigning on Society premises and at the North Bailey Club;
2. the display of posters without permission or where prohibited; *and*
3. any method, device, or technique likely to breach the Candidates' Code of Conduct, as determined by the Rules Committee.

<sup>12</sup>This is a full meeting of the Committee, with the usual quorum of five members.

(iv) The Rules Committee shall determine the maximum amount that candidates shall be permitted to spend on their election campaigns at the meeting immediately prior to the nominations opening.

(v) The regulations made by the Rules Committee under (i) and (iv) above shall be publicised in the usual places for the duration of the election process, including the period in which nominations are open.

(vi) All expenditure deemed to benefit a candidate's campaign shall be considered election expenditure, except that expenditure which is met by the Union.

(vii) The Union shall pay half the cost of the printing of the manifestos of each candidate.

(viii) Should candidates make use of a cheap source of materials or services, these shall be accounted for at a rate agreed by the Returning Officer.

(ix) All Candidates shall present a full record of their election expenditure and any other details required by the Rules Committee as part of the their regulations under (i) above to the Returning Officer prior to the close of polling.

#### 4. Elections at General Committee

(a) Subject to (b) and (c) an election shall normally be held at the meeting of the General Committee immediately subsequent to the office becoming vacant.

(b) The Rules Committee may change the date of any election to held at a meeting of the General Committee if appropriate.

(c) Elections shall be publicised to the members of the General Committee at least five days in advance of the election.

(d) Canvassing shall be forbidden.

(e) Nominations

(i) Nominations for those Officers listed in cl (xxxii) shall be:

1. received by the Returning Officer:

a. from the day following the resignation of the previous officer,

- b. for a minimum of five days, *and*
  - 2. constituted and scrutinised as set out in §8.
    - (ii) Nominations for those officers listed in cl (xxxiii) and for Returning Officer, Technologies Officer, Deputy Technologies Officer and Publicity Officer, Deputy Publicity Officer shall be made to the Returning Officer by a candidate's proposer<sup>13</sup> at the beginning of the election.
- (f) Manifestos & Husting:
  - (i) In elections where manifestos are required, the Returning Officer shall distribute a copy of each candidate's manifesto to members of the General Committee at least forty-eight hours in advance of the concerned meeting of the General Committee<sup>26</sup>.
  - (ii) In elections to the positions outlined in cl (xxxii) candidates shall normally hust for a maximum of five minutes and proposers for a maximum of four minutes.
  - (iii) In elections to the positions outlined in cl (xxxiii) candidates shall normally hust for no more than five minutes and proposers shall not hust.
  - (iv) In elections to the positions of Returning Officer, Technologies Officer and Publicity Officer, candidates shall normally hust for no more than four minutes and proposers shall hust for no more than three minutes.
  - (v) In elections to the position of Deputy Technologies Officer and Deputy Publicity Officer, candidates shall normally hust for no more than four minutes and proposers shall not hust.
  - (vi) In elections to the Rules Committee candidates shall normally hust for a maximum of two minutes and proposers shall not hust.
  - (vii) After all candidates for election or all proposers have husted the chair shall open the floor to questions. Questions shall be asked through the chair and must be addressed to all candidates or all proposers. The length of questions and the response of each candidate or proposer to the question shall not normally exceed one minute.
- (g) Voting Procedure
  - (i) Polling shall take place at the Secretary's table immediately following the hustings.
  - (ii) The Returning Officer and the Rules Committee shall be responsible for the proper and accurate distribution of ballots to each member of the General Committee, immediately prior to polling.
  - (iii) The Count shall be conducted by at least two members of the Rules Committee.
- (h) Should a re-election be required by these Standing Orders, it shall be held at the next meeting of the General Committee and shall be treated as a normal election.

## 5. Elections at Debate Training Sessions

- (a) The elections to those Officers listed under cl (xxxiv) shall take place at or before Debate Training Sessions.
- (b) The procedure for these elections is outlined under *Appendix – Regulations Governing Debate Elections*
- (c) All Debate Officers must be ratified by General Committee following their election by the Debate Training Session. They shall hust at the next General Committee meeting after their election for no more than 5 minutes, and their proposer need not hust. There shall then be the opportunity for members to ask questions of the candidate directed through the Chair. The candidate may then be elected by a, or by simple majority should there be any opposition.

<sup>13</sup> This is delivered verbally at the meeting of the General Committee.

<sup>26</sup> Conventionally, these are also displayed in the usual places.

- (d) Appeals against the decision of the Election Committee shall be heard by Rules Committee, and any further appeals shall follow the procedure outlined in Sections 11 and 12 of this Standing Order.
- (e) *Appendix – Regulations Governing Debate Elections* may be amended by the Debates Committee subject to ratification by the Rules Committee.

## 6. Elections at General Meetings

- (a) The elections to the House Committee shall normally be held at the second Ordinary General Meeting of the Michaelmas and Epiphany terms, and the first Ordinary General Meeting of the Easter term.
- (b) The elections to the Social Committee and the Sponsorship Committee shall normally be held at the third Ordinary General Meeting of the Michaelmas and Epiphany terms, and the second Ordinary General Meeting of the Easter Term.
- (c) The elections to the Secretary's Committee shall normally be held at the second Ordinary meeting of Michaelmas term and the first Ordinary meeting of Epiphany term.
- (d) The elections to the Debates Committee shall be held as required when candidates are nominated by the Debates Selection Committee
- (e) Elections, including all available positions and deadlines for the submission of nominations, shall be publicised to Members at least five days in advance of the election, on the 'Durham Union Members' Facebook Group at a minimum.
- (f) The Rules Committee may change the date of any election to be held at a General Meeting if appropriate.
- (g) By-elections shall be held at General Meetings as and when required.
- (h) Nominations shall be received by the Returning Officer from the day one week prior to the elections until noon on the day of the elections.
- (i) A valid nomination for elections at General Meetings comprises an email from the candidate's Durham University email address stating their name and the election(s) that they wish to stand as a candidate in.
- (j) Hustings shall be held at the General Meeting at which the elections are to take place. Candidates shall normally hust for a maximum of two minutes.
- (k) Polling shall take place at or immediately after the General Meeting. In House Committee elections all full members present at the General Meeting shall be entitled to vote, in other elections all full Members present at the General Meeting and in residence shall be allowed to vote.
- (l) In the event that there are the same number of, or fewer nominations than there are positions available, the candidates in that election may be elected on a General Aye. Should there be any opposition to a General Aye, the election shall be held as normal with the Re-Open Nominations option added to the ballot. Any candidates receiving more votes than the Re-Open Nominations option shall be elected. Any candidates receiving fewer votes than the Re-Open Nominations option shall not be elected, and a re-election shall be held for these remaining positions in accordance with these Standing Orders.
- (m) In the event that there are fewer nominations than there are positions available and these existing candidates are taken on a General Aye in accordance with (l), or there are no valid nominations, the remaining positions may be immediately opened to new nominations which shall be submitted verbally at the General Meeting<sup>27</sup>.
- (n) While elections may take place during or immediately after a General Meeting, procedural motions that bear on the business of Rules Committee may not be moved during elections.
  - (o) The Count shall be conducted by at least two members of the Rules Committee.

## 6. Hustings

- (a) For the duration of hustings the Returning Officer or their deputy shall take the chair<sup>14</sup>.

- (b) Candidates shall hush and then answer any questions directed at them through the chair<sup>15</sup>.
- (c) Where these standing orders make such provision, proposers shall hush in their candidates' name and then answer any questions directed at them through the chair, whilst the candidates are absent from the room.
- (d) Where a candidate is unable to attend hustings, the candidate should email the Returning Officer and nominate someone to hush in their stead.

## 7. Written Nominations

- (a) Where these Standing Orders make provision for the submission of written nominations they shall consist of:
  - (i) a letter of proposal signed by a proposer and one seconder; *and*
  - (ii) a draft manifesto containing a photograph of the nominee
- (b) The Rules Committee shall scrutinise nominations, draft manifestos and photographs within forty-eight hours of the closure of nominations and shall declare invalid:
  - (i) any nominations not conforming to the requirements of (a), subject to §11 and shall notify the candidate in writing;
  - (ii) manifestos contravening §9, subject to §11, and shall inform the candidates of the decision in full.
- (c) A candidate whose manifesto has been rejected may revise it and re-submit it to the Rules Committee for further consideration. Should the manifesto remain invalid at the start of campaigning the Returning Officer may declare the nomination invalid, subject to §11.

## 8. The Candidates' Code of Conduct

- (a) Candidates shall not indulge in personal attacks on opposing candidates that are irrelevant to their suitability for office.
- (b) Candidates shall not indulge in irrelevant personal attacks on any other member of the Union.
- (c) Candidates shall not bring the Union into disrepute.
- (d) Candidates shall not be untruthful, nor distort the truth.
- (e) Candidates shall not act in bad taste.
- (f) Candidates should ensure that their supporters conform to this Code of Conduct.

## 9. Electoral Misdemeanours

- (a) The Rules Committee shall determine electoral misdemeanours as falling into one of the following categories:
  - (i) Electoral Irregularity, which shall be defined as any technical infringement of the rules.

<sup>28</sup> These remaining positions may then be elected as normal at the same General Meeting with the new nominations as candidates.

<sup>14</sup> Although they need not actually sit in it.

<sup>15</sup> The order in which candidates answer questions rotates in the interest of fairness.

<sup>31</sup> Who may be their proposer

- (ii) Electoral Misconduct, which shall be defined as infringing the candidates' Code of Conduct, but without perverting the course of democracy.
  - (iii) Electoral Malpractice, which shall be defined as perverting the course of democracy.
- (b) Further to (a) Rules Committee shall have the power to impose the following penalties:
- (i) rule candidates for election out of order
  - (ii) limit a candidate's election budget
  - (iii) limit the number of days for which a candidate may campaign
  - (iv) remove an individual from a candidate's campaign team
  - (v) limit a candidate's use of any electoral method, device, or technique (vi) withdraw the Society's subsidy for the printing of manifestos.
- (c) In all cases where the Committee rules a candidate to have committed Electoral Malpractice, that candidate shall be ruled out of order.
- (d) In cases of grave electoral malpractice, or electoral malpractice not attributable to any candidate, the Rules Committee may rule the election out of order and hold a re-election as soon as practicable.

## 10. Complaints

- (a) Any member may make a complaint to the Rules Committee concerning the conduct of an election or the conduct of any candidate in an election.
- (b) The Committee is bound to hear all such complaints made prior to the count, and may also consider complaints made after the count if they see fit.
- (c) No complaints or appeals shall be heard by the Committee after one calendar month has elapsed from the date of the election.
- (d) Should any plaintiff or defendant be dissatisfied with the decision of the Rules Committee they may revert to the Rules Committee to seek a revision of their decision.
- (e) Should any plaintiff or defendant wish to appeal against a decision made by the Rules Committee under (d) they shall appeal to the Appeals Tribunal.

## 11. Appeals

- (a) The Appeals Tribunal shall normally consist of the President, one Trustee of the Society nominated by the Trustees annually and one member, selected by lot, from a panel of qualified persons<sup>16</sup>. The panel shall comprise:
  - (i) all members who have served two terms on the Rules Committee still in residence;
  - (ii) all former Returning Officers still in residence; *and*
  - (iii) all former members of the Standing Committee in residence provided that no currently serving member of the Rules Committee or the General Committee, nor any former office-holder removed from office by a vote of no-confidence, shall be included in the panel.
- (b) The Tribunal shall be chaired by the President.
- (c) The Rules Committee shall be represented by the Returning Officer or their deputy. Any plaintiff or defendant shall put their own case.
- (d) All parties and the Appeals Tribunal shall have the right to call whichever witnesses they see fit.
- (e) Appeals Tribunal proceedings shall be held in closed session and any deliberations shall remain confidential.

<sup>16</sup> Provided, obviously, that no person who is either a supporter of any candidate or a member of the current Rules Committee who has been involved in the decision being appealed will be included.

- (f) The Appeals Tribunal shall deliberate and reach a decision in accordance with the Rules.
- (g) The decision of the Appeals Tribunal shall be published in the usual places.
- (h) All plaintiffs, defendants and the Rules Committee shall receive full reasons for all decisions in writing. The reasons for the decisions should remain confidential.
- (i) In the event that the Appeals Tribunal cannot be convened within a reasonable time, it shall be postponed and the electoral process suspended, until it can be held and has reached a decision.
- (j) All decisions made by the Appeals Tribunal shall be both final and binding on all concerned<sup>17</sup>.

## Standing Order VI – Internal Debating Competitions<sup>18</sup>

### 1. The Robson Cup

- (a) The Robson Cup exists in memory of F. A. B. Robson (Hatfield College) and of his generosity to the Society, and is the competition to find the Society's best debater in *statu pupillari*.
- (b) The Cup shall be awarded in the Easter Term of each year.
- (c) Every member of the Society in *statu pupillari* shall be eligible to enter the Cup with the exception of the President.
- (d) Selection of the Finalists
  - (i) The President shall select six members to compete in the final of the Cup, unless more are required under the provision of (ii) or insufficient interest is shown in the competition to fill it, chosen according to the procedure outlined below.
  - (ii) Any previous winner of the competition, still a member of the Society *in statu pupillari*, shall be offered a place in the final without requirement to compete in any preliminary rounds.
  - (iii) The President may further offer a number of members places in the final without requirement to compete in any preliminary rounds. The total number of members selected in this manner shall not be such that the number of members selected under this provision and that of (ii) exceeds three.
  - (iv) The President shall choose the balance of the finalists from those who do best in the preliminary rounds of the competition. (e) Preliminary Rounds
    - (i) Where necessary, the President shall hold preliminary rounds for the Cup at some time in the fortnight preceding the final.
    - (ii) The choice of judges and motions for the rounds and the overall format of the competition shall be at the discretion of the President with the consent of the Standing Committee.

### (e) The Final

- (i) The President shall arrange for the final of the Cup to take place as the main business of an Ordinary General Meeting.
- (ii) The motion for the final shall be chosen by the President.
- (iii) The judges of the competition, whose decision shall be final, shall be chosen by the President and shall consist of at least one person not *in statu pupillari* and three in all.
- (iv) The Cup shall be presented by the chairman of the judges.

<sup>17</sup>Note cl (lii) concerning the limitation of the force of motions.

<sup>18</sup>Many of the duties of the President in this Standing Order are generally delegated to the Director of Debating

## 2. The Robson Shield

- (a) The Robson Shield exists in memory of F. A. B. Robson (Hatfield College) and of his generosity to the Society, and is the award for the member in residence who has made the year's best speech in the main business of an Ordinary General Meeting.
- (b) Every member of the Society in residence shall be eligible to win the Shield with the exception of the year's three Presidents.
- (c) The winner of the Shield shall be chosen by a meeting of the year's Presidents. Where no exceptional speech has been made in a year, the President shall have the right to declare the Shield unawarded.
- (d) Subject to (c) the Shield shall be awarded at the last General Meeting of the Easter term following the accession of the incoming Michaelmas-term President to the chair, presented by the President in whose term the best speech was made.

## 3. The Inter-Collegiate Debating Trophy

- (a) The Inter-Collegiate Debating Trophy exists as the competition to find the University's best constituent college debating team.
- (b) The Trophy shall be awarded in the Epiphany Term of each year.
- (c) Teams
  - (i) Teams of two members shall be eligible to enter the competition where both members are recognised by the University as members of the same constituent college *in statu pupillari*.
  - (ii) The President shall select four teams to compete in the final of the Trophy.
  - (iii) Where more than four teams enter the competition, the President shall choose the finalist teams from those who do best in the preliminary rounds of the competition.
- (d) Preliminary Rounds
  - i. Where necessary, the President shall hold preliminary rounds for the Trophy at some time in the fortnight preceding the final.
  - ii. The choice of judges and motions for the rounds and the overall format of the competition shall be at the discretion of the President with the consent of the Standing Committee.
- (e) The Final
  - i. The President shall arrange for the final of the Trophy to take place as the main business of an Ordinary General Meeting.
  - ii. The motion for the final shall be chosen by the President.
  - iii. The judges of the competition, whose decision shall be final, shall be chosen by the President and shall consist of at least one person not *in statu pupillari* and three in all.

- iv. The Cup shall be presented by the chairman of the judges.

#### 4. The Novice Cup

- (a) The Novice Cup is the competition to find the Society's best first- year debater in statu pupillari.
- (b) The Cup shall be awarded in the Michælmas Term.
- (c) Every member of the Society *in statu pupillari*, for whom the current academic year is the first that they have entered any Inter-Varsity debating competitions (or the John Smith Memorial Mace), is eligible to enter the Novice Cup.
- (d) Selection of the Finalists
  - (i) The President shall select six members to compete in the final of the Cup, unless insufficient interest is shown in the competition to fill it, chosen according to the procedure outlined below.
  - (ii) Where more than six individuals enter the competition, the President shall choose the finalists from those who do best in the preliminary rounds of the competition.
- (e) Preliminary Rounds
  - (i) Where necessary, the President shall hold preliminary rounds for the Cup at some time in the fortnight preceding the final.
  - (ii) The choice of judges and motions for the rounds and the overall format of the competition shall be at the discretion of the President with the consent of the Standing Committee.
- (e) The Final
  - (i) The President shall arrange for the final of the Cup to take place as an item of business at an Ordinary General Meeting.
  - (ii) The motion for the final shall be chosen by the President.
  - (iii) Where possible, the competition shall be judged by the previous year's winner of the cup, whose decision shall be final. Otherwise the President shall appoint a nominee to judge the competition, whose decision shall be final.
  - (iv) The Cup shall be presented by the President.

### **Standing Order VII – Debating Equity Policy - Internal Debating Competitions<sup>19</sup>**

#### 1. The Debating Equity Policy

- a. The Debating Equity Policy is set out in the appendix "Durham Union Society Debating Equity Policy".
- b. If the interpretation of the appendix conflicts with Standing Order VII, Standing Order VII takes precedence.
- c. The appendix "Durham Union Society Debating Equity Policy" can be amended by a majority vote of the Debates Selection Committee.

#### 2. Scope of the Debating Equity Policy

- a. The Debating Equity Policy shall apply to:
  - i. Debating Practice convened by Training Co-ordinators.
  - ii. Internal Competitions convened according to Standing Order VI.

<sup>19</sup> Many of the duties of the President in this Standing Order are generally delegated to the Director of Debating.

- iii. Socials convened by the Debating Social Secretary
- b. The Debating Equity Policy shall not apply in any other context. This includes, but is not limited to, to any other debate, address, meeting, social, or event of the Durham Union Society.
- c. Serious breach of the Debating Equity Policy likely to bring the Durham Union Society into disrepute must be notified to the Standing Committee by the Director of Debating. In such an instance:
  - i. the breach shall be in first instance dealt with according to the Debating Equity Policy.
  - ii. the Standing Committee may then recommend further action.

### 3. Reporting a breach of the Debating Equity Policy

- a. A breach of the Debating Equity Policy should be reported by:
  - i. completing the online form provided in the appendix “Durham Union Society Debating Equity Policy”.
  - ii. notifying a Debating Equity Officer
- b. If the breach concerns a Debating Equity Officer, the breach should be reported to the Director of Debating.
- c. If the breach concerns both Debating Equity Officers and the Director of Debating, the breach should be reported to the Office Manager.

### 4. Debating Equity Policy Investigation

- a. The Debating Equity Policy Investigation shall be composed of both Debating Equity Officers and:
  - i. If the breach occurred at debating practice, the Debating Training Secretary.
  - ii. If the breach occurred at an internal competition, the Debating Competitions Officers.
  - iii. If the breach occurred at the Durham School Competition, the Debating Competitions Officers.
  - iv. If the breach occurred at a debating social, the Debating Social Secretary.
- b. If the breach concerns a Debating Equity Officer, they should be replaced on the Debating Equity Policy Investigation by the Director of Debating.
- c. If the breach concerns both Debating Equity Officers and the Director of Debating, the Debating Equity Policy Investigation shall be composed of:
  - i. The Office Manager
  - ii. The President
  - iii. The Equalities Officer
- d. The Debating Equity Policy Investigation shall investigate the breach by interviewing all relevant parties and collecting as much factual information pertaining to the breach as possible.
- e. If the Debating Equity Policy Investigation concludes a breach has occurred, they shall consider mediation as the first expedient. If mediation is not successful or deemed appropriate by the Debating Equity Policy Investigation, the Investigation may dispense sanctions as outlined in Standing Order VII 5.

### 5. Sanctions

- a. The Debating Equity Policy Investigation may dispense the following minor sanctions if mediation is not successful or appropriate:
  - i. A warning to those responsible to the breach of the Debating Equity Policy. This warning will outline why the breach was unacceptable and inform them that a record will be kept of the warning. A warning can be used to inform the scope of future sanctions should another breach occur. Those responsible for the breach must also apologise and give a commitment that the breach will not happen again. The apology

may be given to either the complainant or the Debating Equity Officers at the discretion of the Debating Equity Officers. Refusal to apologise is a breach of the Debating Equity Policy.

- ii. A clash notice filed by the Debating Equity Officers. This means that trainers are instructed not to allocate those responsible for the breach and the complainant as debating partners in any practice or internal competition.
  - iii. The individuals responsible for the breach are ejected from the meeting.
- b. The Debating Equity Policy Investigation, with the approval of the Director of Debating, may dispense the following major sanctions if the breach of the Debating Equity Policy is considered serious or repeated:
- i. A fixed length ban from attendance of events covered by the Debating Equity Policy as outlined in Standing Order VII 2a.
  - ii. If the breach occurred during an internal competition, ejection from the internal competition.
  - iii. If the breach occurred at the Durham Schools Competition, ejection from the Durham Schools Competition.
- c. The Debating Equity Policy Investigation may in the most serious of cases refer the breach to the Debates Selection Committee. By a simple majority vote, the Debates Selection Committee may permanently ban those responsible for the breach from attendance of events covered by the Debating Equity Policy as outlined in Standing Order VII 2a. The Standing Committee must be informed of the decision as outlined in Standing Order VII 2c.

## 6. Sanctions

- a. The subject of a Debating Equity Policy complaint is entitled to appeal any decision by the Debating Equity Policy Investigation.
- b. This appeal shall be undertaken by the Complaints Panel.
- c. The appendix “Durham Union Society Debating Equity Policy” and Standing Order VII – Debating Equity Policy shall be the principal documents by which the appeal is judged.

## **Annexes Annex I – Conventions of the House**

1. How the President enters and leaves the Chamber is at their discretion.
2. The wearing of the Presidential gown is at the President’s discretion.
3. How the officers sit is at the President’s discretion.
4. How speakers sit is at the President’s discretion.
5. Speakers shall address all speeches and points of order and information to the President.
6. A speaker shall give way on a point of order.
7. A speaker may give way on a point of information at their discretion; however, no points of information shall be made during the speeches of summation.
8. Those members speaking from the floor are requested to give their name and college at the start of their speech for the benefit of the Secretary.
9. The vote shall be held first by acclamation and, if this fails to yield a decisive result, then by division.
10. Members must switch off Mobile telephones before entering the Chamber.

## **Annex II – Concerning Dinners and Drinks**

1. The President should strive to use their pre-debate dinners for the benefit of the Society.
2. The President should try to invite to pre-debate dinners those members who have made special efforts for the Society which might be expected to include:
  - a. all members of the Standing Committee;
  - b. as many other officers and elected officials as practicably possible; *and*
  - c. as many of the past Presidents in residence as is practicably possible.
3. It is traditional for the previous term's President to be invited to the dinner before the farewell debate.
4. A drinks reception will normally be held after a debate to which the President shall generally invite:
  - a. all those officers who have spoken in the debate to the pleasure of the House;
  - b. all Officers and past Presidents in Residence; *and*
  - c. all those who attended the pre-debate dinner.

## **Annex III – Concerning Debates Committee**

This Annex shall be enforced by the Director of Debating at all times

Any member wishing to find out more about any of these roles in the Society should ask the Returning Officer, the Director of Debating or the current holder of the position.

1. **The Competence and Electoral Procedures of the Debates Committee**
  - (a) Four candidates shall be nominated by the Debates Selection Committee for election to the Debates Committee. Eligible candidates for Debates Committee must have attended:
    - (i) at least three Novice Debating Practices; or
    - (ii) at least three general training sessions
  - (b) The Debates Election Committee may adjudicate on the eligibility of candidates if the above criteria have not been met but other experience exists. The Returning Officer will be advised of this decision.
  - (c) The Director of Debating, with the assistance of the Debates Committee, shall select:
    - (i) Teams and judges from the general membership for all Debating Competitions in accordance with §2.
    - (ii) A coach for general training, from within or external to the society.
  - (d) The convenors of the Durham Inter-Varsity, Durham Schools, and Durham Open will consist of the Director of Debating, the Debating Competitions Officers, and other members of the Debates Committee as the Director of Debating sees fit.

## 2. Guidance on the Selection of Teams and Judges

- (a) The Director of Debating and Debating Training Secretary will select teams and judges for all competitions except the World Universities Debating Championships and the European Universities Debating Championships.
- (b) Where the Director of Debating and the Debating Training Secretary disagree, the Director of Debating shall have the overriding vote. In the instance where the disagreed upon decision involves the Director of Debating, the general coach shall be consulted.
- (c) Selections will be made according to the application process schedule as announced by the Director of Debating at the start of each term.
- (d) Selections will be made on the following criteria. Each criteria does not carry a set value or weight but will be assessed holistically by the DSC during the application process.
  - (i) Ability as determined by the candidates' previous competitive record, as well as their recent performances within training sessions and internal competitions.
  - (ii) The Societies potential gain as determined by the following measurements:
    1. The increase in prestige and quality of inter-institutional relationships that may be achieved for the Durham Union Society
    2. The development of an individual in terms of experience and/or performance.
  - (iii) Commitment as gauged by the applicants' attendance and attitude at training and other debating events given their individual circumstances.
- (e) Once selected, if the applicant is unable to attend the event then they must inform the selectors as soon as possible.
  - (i) If this occurs within ten days or less of the competition in question, then the applicant must find a satisfactory replacement.
  - (ii) If the applicant is unable to do so and unable to attend, then they must reimburse the Society for any expenditure. This is waived if the applicants' failure is linked to exceptional circumstances as judged by the DSC and the Treasurer.

## 3. Timings of Selections of Positions

- (a) The DSC will select the aforementioned positions.
- (b) The DSC will strive to select the positions within the following timescales:
  - (i) Advanced Training Co-ordinator, Intermediate Training Co-ordinator and Novice Training Co-ordinator in the eighth week of Easter Term

- (ii) Schools Programme Co-ordinator in the eighth week of Easter Term
- (iii) Durham IV Convener in the seventh week of Easter Term
- (iv) Durham Open Convener in the sixth week of Epiphany
- (v) Durham Schools Co-Convenor in the eighth week of Michaelmas
- (vi) Durham Women's Open Co-Convenor in the seventh week of Easter Term.

1. Only self-identifying women can apply for this position

#### 4. Guidance on Notification and Selection of Positions

- (a) The DSC will set a date and time of the selection meeting.
- (b) The Returning Officer will notify members of any forthcoming selection meetings by the following means:
  - (i) placing of notices on the board outside the Chamber;
  - (ii) an announcement at a preceding Ordinary General Meeting; *and* (iii) via email to the eligible members *in statu pupillari*.
- (c) These will be publicised at least one week before the selection meeting and applications will close one day before the meeting.
- (d) Applications for a position shall comprise a full written application, submitted to the Director of Debating by one p.m. on the day that applications close.
- (e) There shall be strictly no electioneering.
- (f) Selection meetings of the DSC shall scrutinise the written applications of candidates and then hold interviews of all candidates at their discretion.
- (g) The candidates shall be notified of the decision of the DSC within forty-eight hours of the DSC meeting. The decision shall then be advertised in the usual places.
- (h) Should there not be a successful applicant for the position; the position shall be re-advertised as above.
- (i) If the positions still fail to be filled after sufficient period had passed then they will be taken over by the Debate Training Secretary or Debate Competitions Secretary as deemed appropriate by the Director of Debating.

#### 5. Guidance on selection of WUDC and EUDC teams and judges.

- (a) Selection for WUDC and EUDC shall not be conducted by the Director of Debating or the Debates Committee.
- (b) The Director of Debating shall invite a panel (the size of which is at their discretion) of external and impartial judges. The Director of Debating should follow the 'clash' rules concerning impartiality set out by the WUDC and EUDC councils in their selection of individuals.
- (c) This panel shall construct a selection process of their own choosing that retains the interests of the Society at its core.
- (d) The Director of Debating shall advertise a timescale for applications for trials to all eligible members. Eligible members are as defined by the WUDC and EUDC regulations.
- (e) The panel shall then scrutinise the applications and give trials to applicants at their discretion.
- (f) The panel shall select the teams and judges as they deem appropriate, while retaining the best interests of the Society at its core.

## **Annex IV – Ballot Procedure for North Bailey Club Accommodation**

1. The Standing and General Committees of the Durham Union Society resolve that the following guidelines will determine the ballot for 24 NBC Accommodation:

- (a) 5 points will be awarded for every day spent as President in Michaelmas term.
- (b) 4 points for every day spent as President in Epiphany and Easter terms.
- (c) 3 points for every day spent as a Full Officer of the Society or immediate President-Elect, entitled to sit on the Standing Committee under the Rules.
- (d) 2 points for every day spent as an Officer of the Society or elected official of the Society
- (e) 1 point for every day spent as a member of the General Committee, entitled to vote under any provision of the Rules.
- (f) 1 point for every day spent as Novice, Intermediate or Advanced Debate Trainer as appointed by the Debates Select Committee on the Wednesday of the eighth week of Easter term. Points will be awarded for days served up to and including the Tuesday of the eighth week of the subsequent Easter term.
- (g) 1 point for every day spent as Durham IV Convener, as appointed by the Debates Select Committee on the Wednesday of the seventh week of Easter term. Points will be awarded for days served up to and including the last day of the subsequent Durham IV competition.
- (h) 1 point for every day spent as Durham Open Convener, as appointed by the Debates Select Committee on the Wednesday of the sixth week of Epiphany term. Points will be awarded for days served up to and including the last day of the subsequent Durham Open competition.
- (i) 1 point for every day spent as Durham Schools Co-Convener, as appointed by the Debates Select Committee on the Wednesday of the eighth week of Michaelmas term. Points will be awarded for days served up to and including the last day of the subsequent Durham School's competition.
- (j) 1 point for every day spent as Durham Women's Open Co-Convener, as appointed by the Debates Select Committee on the Wednesday of the seventh week of Easter term. Points will be awarded for days served up to and including the last day of the subsequent Durham Women's Open competition.
- (k) 1 point for every session of door duty completed to an acceptable standard, as determined by the Custodian. In their absence, this shall be determined by the Assistant Custodian. There shall be up to two sessions of door duty per evening that the bar is open, the length of which will be determined by the opening times of the bar. Only members of the General Committee may be awarded points under this provision.

## **2. Ballot Procedure**

- (a) Where members hold multiple positions concurrently, they will be awarded points for the one position only, that which merits the highest number of points. Points awarded from completing door duty will be awarded on top of any points awarded from holding a position.
  - (i) Those members who fail to complete at least 1 session of door duty per term shall have all their previously accumulated points deducted, with the exception of leaves of absence.
- (b) The Custodian will calculate the total number of points that an applicant is entitled to since joining the Society. The highest placed applicant will have first choice of the

rooms, the second placed the second choice and so forth until all eight vacancies have been filled.

- (c) Points will be awarded for days in term time only.
- (d) In the event of a tie the Custodian will flip a coin
- (e) The ballot shall be run by or during the fifth week of Michaelmas term, with points calculated up to and including the Sunday of the second week of term.
- (f) Unless otherwise specified, days shall be determined from the date of election to the day before date of election of their successor.
- (g) All points accrued up to the drawing of the ballot shall be wiped once an applicant has successfully used them in a ballot
- (h) Members of the Society who have never held elected or appointed office will be considered only once all applicants who are entitled to at least 1 point under the above provisions are allocated rooms. Applicants from this category will be ranked by the number of days spent as a member of the Society. In the event of a tie, the Custodian will flip a coin.

## Annex V – Durham Union Society Debating Equity Policy

Durham Debating is committed to providing and maintaining a safe environment for all its members. As such, we have provided this Equity Policy so that everyone may know what is expected of them as well as how to make an Equity complaint. It also details the roles of the two Equity Officers and how they will deal with any complaints.

Our policies apply to all members of Durham Debating and are in line with standard practice across the International Debating Circuit.

This policy is intended for internal use. Separate Equity Policies will be made for the external tournaments that the Society hosts, namely Durham Schools, the Durham IV and the Durham Open

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The Equity Officers

### Who are they?

Durham Debating has two Equity Officers, who are currently Severino Bonvini and Emma Zaoli.

They both have equal power in applying this policy and both report to the Director of Debating. They are responsible for the general welfare of all participants during practices and other debating events. Any issues that arise should be reported to and will be mediated through them.

How can they be contacted?

If you need to contact the Equity Officers at any point, you can:

- Speak to them in person
- Message them on Facebook
- Send an email
- Call them
- Use the [online complaints form](#)

The contact details of each Equity Officer has been provided below:

Contact Detail		
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Facebook		
Durham Email		
Phone Number		

### Scope and Confidentiality

The power of the Equity Officers is limited. Their role extends no further than talking to the parties involved, providing mediation, and at the most extreme, removing people from debating events. They are not trained therapists and cannot provide counselling of any sort. They will not attempt to deal with issues that go beyond their purview.

The Equity Officers will endeavour to investigate all complaints while respecting the confidentiality of the complainant. However, this confidentiality may be broken if the incident is deemed serious enough. Therefore, the Equity Officers reserve the right to report any incidents they deem necessary to a relevant third party (such as Durham University or the police). They will do so if they reasonably believe individuals are at risk of harm. They are happy to continue to talk to the person making a complaint in the event that they seek a higher authority to deal with the issue.

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### Equity and the Equity Policy

#### Who does this Policy apply to?

The Equity Policy applies to anyone who is a member of Durham Debating or who attends any debate-related event. Trainers, members of the Debates Selection Committee, and the Equity Officers themselves are not exempt from any part of this Policy. Any member is able to make a complaint under this Policy.

#### When does this Policy apply?

Equity applies at any debate-related event, which includes, but is not limited to:

- During training sessions
- During any social events organised by the Society
- During any internal competitions organised by the Society
- During external competitions that the Society participates in
- All interactions between participants in the context of the Society and its events, including online communications

#### A note on Externally-hosted Competitions

All tournaments hosted by other institutions in which the Society takes part in ARE covered by this Policy. Therefore, Society members who participate in these tournaments will not only be subject to the Equity Policy of the host institution (as per tournament rules), but also that of Durham Debating.

#### What does Equity involve?

Unequitable behaviour encompasses a range of behaviours that can be very different from each other, ranging from entirely unintentional to purposeful, and from misunderstandings to malice. The next section outlines these behaviours in further detail.

Please note that cases will be treated based on their specifics, and that we are not implying equivalence between the behaviours listed in the next section (or even between different instances of the same behaviour).

## Definitions of Unequitable Behaviour

**Bullying:** Repeated, unreasonable behaviour by an individual or group, directed towards another individual or group that intimidates, offends, degrades, humiliates, undermines or threatens. This includes pressuring another person or group of people to do something that they are uncomfortable with.

**Intimidation:** Threatening behaviour towards any individual who is part of this competition (including volunteers and support staff) such as: yelling, harassing, threatening, acting in a physically or verbally aggressive fashion.

**Direct Discrimination:** Unreasonably treating an individual or group less favourably than another individual or group on the basis of a protected attribute in the same circumstances or circumstances not materially different.

**Indirect Discrimination:** Unreasonably imposing, or proposing to impose, a requirement, condition or practice that has, or is likely to have the effect of disadvantaging an individual or group with a particular protected attribute, and which is not reasonable in the circumstances.

**Harmful Generalisation:** Teams will argue about different groups in a debate. These generalisations do not inherently constitute equity violations.

*When would they constitute an Equity Violation?*

Generalisations may constitute an equity violation in cases where they are derogatory, false, or extremely harmful. Examples might be: “Women cannot lead” or “People from X race are inherently violent”. More importantly, they can perpetuate harmful stereotypes and cause direct emotional harm to someone from that group in the room with you.

*How can I avoid harmful generalisations?*

- Avoid arguing in absolutes e.g. “X people will always engage in a specific action
- Acknowledge that many conditions are externally imposed as opposed to being intrinsic to any group of people
- Give reasons as to why these external conditions make a group/individual from that group likely to behave a certain way or do something
- Speak as respectfully as you would if the person you are speaking of were in the room with you

**Harassment:** Any unwelcome, offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening behaviour that humiliates, offends or intimidates an individual or group on the basis of a protected attribute. Behaviour that might constitute intimidation can include, but is not limited to:

- Degrading public tirades
- Deliberate insults related to a participant's person, identity or competence
- Threatening or insulting comments, whether oral or written (including by e-mail or any form of social media)
- Deliberate desecration of religious and/or national symbols
- Malicious and unsubstantiated complaints of misconduct, including harassment, against others

**Inflammatory language:** The use of triggering language, particularly in debates where discussion of sensitive and difficult subjects might be necessary.

**Sexual Harassment:** Any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favours or any other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that humiliates, offends or intimidates a person and which a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would anticipate making the person humiliated, offended or intimidated.

- Positive Consent must always be given at all stages of any sexual encounter. This may be through words and/or actions, but it must be clear that both parties are willingly engaging. Positive consent cannot exist when someone is coerced or drunk. Consider the power dynamics of the relationship you are entering into, such as age or position of authority in debating.

**Victimisation:** Causing detriment to a person because that person has made a complaint or taken part in complaints proceedings under this Policy.

**Vilification:** The public incitement of hatred, contempt or severe ridicule of another individual or group.

### Preferred Gender Pronouns Introductions

This policy allows all participants in a debate to be referred to in a manner that they are comfortable with. It is designed to ensure that nobody suffers the indignity of being misgendered during the course of a debate, which can be particularly important for people who identify with a gender they were not assigned at birth.

#### *How is the policy carried out?*

Once all participants are seated in the room, the chair will introduce themselves first. They will do this by stating their name and their preferred pronoun(s) and will then invite their wing judges to do the same. They will then invite each team to give their names, speaking order, and preferred pronoun(s). As debaters or judges, you should take a note of all pronouns and ensure that they are used in your speeches, in points of information, and when talking before or after the debate.

For example:

“Could I get the speaking order of Opening Government and your preferred gender pronouns?” “Hannah, speaking first, she or they”

“George, speaking second, he please”

#### *Further notes on the pronoun policy*

- It is important to note that participants are not required to state a preference. They may also ask to be referred to using non-gendered language, for instance “the previous speaker,” “the Leader of the Opposition,” etc.
- Should you accidentally misgender somebody, you should apologise as soon as you realise or are made aware. Mistakes are understandable and can be easily remedied, but an apology is still necessary to recognise the harm the person suffered as a result. Obviously, if someone feels that they were misgendered on purpose, they have every right to raise an Equity complaint.

#### *When and where does the policy apply?*

Following convention in the International Debate Circuit, the policy applies during all rounds of a tournament. For the purposes of this Policy, the pronoun policy would apply to all debates that form a part of internal tournaments.

It will not be required every time there is a debate during training sessions, as it is assumed that members will have already introduced themselves (and made clear their preferred pronouns) upon joining the Society and a particular training stream.

Though, this is not to say that misgendering will be permitted—it, like any other form of Unequitable Behaviour, is strictly forbidden and will be dealt with accordingly.

### Opt-out policy

If a speaker does not wish to speak in a motion for any reason (such as not feeling well or being uncomfortable debating the motion), they have the choice to opt-out.

Given the more informal setting of debates during training, speakers can opt-out by talking to the coach running the session.

During tournaments, this *usually* is done by informing either the Equity Officers or the chair judge in their room. In this case, their partner can give both of their speeches and they will not receive feedback for that round. If both members of a team opt-out of the same round, they will be replaced by a swing team. Though, rules regarding the procedure for opting-out and how it can affect break-eligibility do differ across tournaments, so you are advised to review the Opt-out policy for the tournament in question for more specific information.

### Accessibility as a further Equity Concern

#### Accessibility Requirements

Durham Debating acknowledges that adjustments may need to be made for participants with disabilities, such as the allocation of training rooms (or debating rooms during internal competitions) with wheelchair access.

If you have accidentally been placed in a less accessible room, please understand that this was not done deliberately. Either yourself or a representative (such as your partner) are encouraged to approach the Equity Team promptly so the mistake can be fixed.

#### Use of Electronic Devices

During competitions, following convention in the International Debate Circuit, Electronic devices are not allowed for any purpose during a debate other than looking up words via electronic dictionaries, timekeeping and note-taking.

While this policy will be less strictly enforced during training, it will hold during any internal competitions. As such, any violations of it will be treated as would any other Equity violation.

#### A note on General Pastoral Care

If at any point during a debating event you are in need of pastoral support regarding problems not caused by another participant (such as anxiety), please feel free to contact the Equity Officers—they will be happy to help.

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#### The Equity Complaint Process

##### How to make an Equity complaint

Complaints may be raised with an Equity Officer at any time. All complaints raised are treated as confidential, and the complainant will determine whether or not a complaint is investigated further.

Complaints may be made informally or formally:

- An informal complaint is one that raises concerns, but does not require formal responses such as investigation or mediation. These may be made via any channel—contacting the Officer directly (by Facebook, Email, or Phone) or by filling out the [online complaint form](#).
- A formal complaint is where a formal response is sought, such as investigation or mediation. Formal complaints may be initiated in person with Equity Team members, but must have a written record registered via the [online complaint form](#) to be actioned.

##### Making anonymous complaints

Complaints may also be made anonymously. However, for process reasons, these complaints cannot be investigated. Anonymous complaints will therefore be treated as informal, and will be used to inform future handling of Equity issues.

However, if you do wish to further communicate with the Equity Team with any concerns regarding the matter or to pursue a more expansive set of actions, please feel free to appoint a contact person who will be in charge of communicating between you (thus helping you maintain a level of anonymity) and the Equity Team.

This is a course of action one can pursue in highly sensitive cases where you would feel severely uncomfortable to identify yourself to the equity team. We will exercise discretion in deciding whether to treat it as a formal complaint or an informal one, while also taking into account preferences of the original complainant.

##### Complaints about Equity Officers and members of the Debate Selection Committee

No investigation into a complaint shall be conducted by its subject. The principle takes precedence over the appeals process to ensure the fair application of this Policy.

Members of the Equity Team will excuse themselves from investigating and handling complaints that are made against them personally, or where a personal conflict arises (e.g. one of the parties belongs to an institution they are affiliated with or they have a close personal relationship with one of the parties).

Therefore, if the subject of a complaint is an Equity Officer, the other Officer will investigate and the decision may

only be appealed to the Director of Debating. If the Director of Debating is the subject of a complaint, the decision made by the Equity Officers is final.

#### General Equity concerns

In addition to complaints, members are also encouraged to contact the Equity Team to raise general equity-related concerns, even if they do not feel an incident has occurred. Both anonymous complaints and general concerns enhance the Equity Team's overall understanding of relevant issues occurring at the tournament, and will be used to prevent future equity violations.

#### How Equity complaints will be handled

All Equity complaints will be handled using the following procedure:

1. **Initial complaint:** An individual, who is either the subject of or a witness to the breach, reports it to the Equity Officer(s).
2. **Investigation phase:** If a formal response is sought by the complainant or deemed necessary, the Equity Team will seek to collect as much factual information pertaining to the incident as possible. This will involve speaking with the complainant, offending person and anyone else involved.
  1. Following this process, the Equity Team will determine whether or not a breach of this Policy has occurred.
  2. At any point during this process prior to resolution, a complainant may withdraw their complaint. At such a point, any investigation automatically ceases.
3. **Resolution phase:** If a violation of the Equity Policy has occurred, the appropriate resolution mechanism(s) will be identified and applied.
  1. The basic mechanisms include:
    1. Discussion – explain the complaint to the offending participant and have a discussion with them about why their remark or action was inappropriate.
    2. Warning – issue a warning to the offending participant.
    3. Apology – request that the offending participant provide an apology.
    4. Conciliation – bring the relevant participants together to conciliate the dispute.
  2. For more serious cases, the following resolutions mechanisms may be applied:
    1. Clashing – the trainers are not told the details of the incident, but they are instructed not to allocate that person as the complainant's partner in any practice or internal/external competition.
    2. Suspension – the offending person is suspended from training sessions and internal/external competition for a certain period of time.
    3. Ban – the offending person is banned from Durham Debating, having their membership revoked. This could lead to the revoking of their wider membership of the Durham Union Society, though such a step will necessitate the involvement of the parent society's relevant authorities.
      1. If this step is taken, neither Durham Debating nor The Durham Union Society will be held liable for any incurred losses.
    4. Involvement of law enforcement agencies.

#### Appealing a decision

If anyone involved in an incident feels that the decision made by one of the Equity Officers is grossly incorrect, they may request that the other Officer reassess the final outcome (provided they were not involved in the initial investigation). This may or may not involve reopening the investigation. The second Equity Officer may decide to uphold the previous decision or reach a new one, in which case it supersedes the previous one.

In extreme instances and if all other options are exhausted, a decision made may be appealed to the Director of Debating, in which case the investigation will be conducted anew. This is the final appeal available so their decision is final.

All members of Durham Debating have access to the following resources. Feel free to access them for more information and/or support, depending on your situation:

- Online Equity Complaint Form  
[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeJYA\\_JIsKe-fXH5DgxxjfhTle17AWkX6Q99hdfuav3teLOiw/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeJYA_JIsKe-fXH5DgxxjfhTle17AWkX6Q99hdfuav3teLOiw/viewform?usp=sf_link)
- Durham University Counselling Service  
 0191 334 2200 (9am - 5pm)  
[counsel.service@durham.ac.uk](mailto:counsel.service@durham.ac.uk)  
  
<https://www.durham.ac.uk/colleges-and-student-experience/student-support-and-wellbeing/counselling/>
- College Welfare/Student Support Team  
 Talk to your college for specific contacts and information.
- Athens EUDC 2019 Equity Policy  
<http://bit.ly/2Oii5f0>

## **Annex VI – Hierarchy of the Standing Committee:**

- A) The President
- B) The Treasurer
- C) The Secretary
- D) The Custodian
- E) Director of Debating
- F) Social Secretary
- G) Publicity Officer
- H) Equalities Officer
- I) Debating Treasurer
- J) President-Elect

## **Appendix - Rules of the North Bailey Club**

### **Name, Object & Ownership**

- (i) The name of the Club shall be the ‘North Bailey Club’, hereinafter referred to as ‘the Club’, colloquially known as ‘24s’.
- (ii) The chief objects of the Club shall be:
  - (a) to operate a bar for club members, as well as other specified persons, and
  - (b) to provide social events for its members.
- (iii) The ownership of the Club is vested in its Trustees, who shall have ultimate authority in the Club, subject only to the Deed of Trust.

### **Status**

- (iv) The Club shall be a members’ club and shall consist of those classes of members specified in cl (viii).

## Supply of Intoxicating Liquor and Entry to the Club's Bar

- (v) The permitted hours for the supply of intoxicating liquor shall be as may from time to time be determined by the Committee in accordance with the provisions of the Licensing Act 1964, or any statutory modification or re-enactment thereof, and as notified to the Clerk to the Justices
- (vi) Entry to the Club and the supply of Intoxicating liquor shall only be permitted to persons aged 18 or older.
- (vii) In addition to (vi) entry to the Club shall be permitted only to students in statu pupillari at the University of Durham, or Members of the Club. It shall be noted that the following exceptions apply:
  - (a) Guest speakers of the Durham Union Society, at the discretion of the President
  - (b) Guests of those persons admitted under (vii) (1 guest per person)

## Membership

- (viii) Membership shall be divided into Full Membership, Associate Membership and Temporary Membership.
- (ix) *Full Membership* shall be open to the following:
  - (a) Academic staff and members of the Senior Common Rooms of the departments and constituent Colleges of the University of Durham.
  - (b) Fellows of the University Society of the University of Durham
- (x) *Full Membership* shall be given to any person eligible under cl (ix) upon payment of the membership fee as determined from time to time by the Committee of Management. All members of the Club shall have the right to attend and vote at the Annual General Meeting and to enjoy the use of the Club's facilities.
- (xi) *Associate Membership* shall be awarded to all Full Members of the Durham Union Society, who shall not be required to pay any subscription fee. They shall enjoy the same rights as the Full Members.

## Termination of Membership

- (xii) A member shall cease to be a member:
  - (a) On the delivery to the Secretary of their written resignation.
  - (b) On expulsion from the club pursuant to the Rules on Suspension and Expulsion
- (xiii) Any Full or Associate Member may introduce up to four guests per day, to participate in club activities and use the facilities of the Club.
- (xiv) No person shall be allowed to participate in activities who has been expelled or suspended from membership.

## Guests

- (xv) Any Full or Associate Member may introduce up to four guests per day, to participate in club activities and use the facilities of the Club.

- (xvi) No person shall be allowed to participate in activities who has been expelled or suspended from membership.
- (xvii) No person whose application for membership has been refused or who has been expelled from the Club shall be introduced as a guest.

## **Suspension and Expulsion**

- (xviii) Members whose participation in club activities has been rendered undesirable may be expelled or suspended from entering the Club's premises following the Durham Union Society's Complaints Panel procedure, outlined in clause (lxi) of the Constitution of the Durham Union Society.
- (xix) Members or guests may be temporarily be suspended from the premises by staff on duty.

## **The Annual General Meeting**

- (xx) A General Meeting of the Club shall be held at least once per year and fifteen months must not elapse without a General Meeting.
- (xxi) The General Meeting will be called by the Custodian at any time, with seven days' notice. Notice shall be satisfactory if the meeting is advertised in the usual places.
- (xxii) A General Meeting may also be called by any member with full voting rights upon submission to the Secretary of a list of the signatures of thirty members, or of one fifth of the total number of members, whichever is the smaller.
- (xxiii) The General Meeting shall have the power to elect members of Committee of Management and shall also be a forum for the Full and Associate members to question the Officers of the Club.

## **The Committee of Management**

- (xxiv) The Committee of Management of the Club shall consist of eight members. Four of these shall be elected at the Club's Annual General Meeting. The remaining four members shall  

be *ex officio* the President, Custodian, Assistant Secretary and Assistant Custodian of the Durham Union Society.
- (xxv) Potential candidates for the Committee of Management must be Full or Associate Members of the Club. Candidates may nominate themselves orally at the General Meeting, or be nominated by a proposer who must be either a Full or Associate Member of the Club.
- (xxvi) Meetings of the Committee shall be called by the Custodian, who shall give 10 days notice to the members of the Committee.

## **Officers**

- (xxvii) The President shall be the head of the Club and shall be the sole interpreter of Club Rules.
- (xxviii) The Custodian shall be responsible for the day-to-day management of the Club, as well as for the upkeep of the Club's facilities. The Chairman shall further be responsible for chairing the Committee of Management, as well as liaising with the Trustees.
- (xxix) The Secretary shall be responsible for the keeping of true and correct minutes, records and rules; and shall be responsible for the setting and distributing of agendas for General Meetings and the meetings of the Committee of Management.

- (xxx) The Assistant Custodian shall be immediately responsible for coordinating social activities of the Club. The Assistant Custodian shall further be responsible for the control and management of the Club's finances.

### **Ratification of Decisions**

- (xxxi) Decisions taken at General Meetings and by the Committee of Management of the Club will only be valid insofar as they are ratified by the Standing Committee of the Durham Union Society.

# Appendix – Regulations Governing Debate Elections

## 1. The Elections Policy

- a. This policy governs the election process for debating officers.
- b. This policy shall be updated by the Debates Committee and ratified by the Rules Committee on a simple majority vote.
  - i. Changes to this policy are only allowed outside of election and appeals periods.

## 2. The Election Committee

- a. When there is an upcoming vacancy on the Debates Committee, an ad hoc Election Committee shall be appointed by the Debates Selections Committee.
  - i. This marks the start of the election period.
- b. The Election Committee shall facilitate the election by being solely responsible for fairly applying this policy, adjudicating on any complaints which may arise, and deciding on areas where this policy may be unclear during the election period in a fair and equitable way.
  - i. If there are multiple upcoming vacancies on the Debates Committee, the Election Committee shall run all elections concurrently.
- c. The Election Committee shall consist of 4 members.
  - i. A person is ineligible to be on the Election Committee if:
    1. They are interested in standing as a candidate in the election.
    2. They are the immediately previous holder of the office being elected.
    3. They have been previously banned from being on the Election Committee in accordance with (6)(d)(ii)(2).
- d. The members of the Election Committee shall be selected among current members who are not ineligible under (c)(i) and who, in decreasing order of priority:
  - i. Are current members of the Debates Committee.
  - ii. Are past members of the Debates Selections Committee.
  - iii. Are current or past members of the Debates Committee or trainers.
  - iv. Are current or past members of the organisational committee of an external Durham competition.
  - v. Are eligible to vote in this election under (4)(b).
- e. The Election Committee shall be chaired by one of its members, as determined:
  - i. By the seniority of their position under the order in (d).
  - ii. By the total length of time they have held that position by the start of the election period.
- f. The Election Committee shall make all of its decisions by simple majority.
  - i. In the event of a tie, the Chair's vote shall be the tiebreaker.
- g. If a member of the Election Committee resigns before the end of the election period, the Chair shall find a suitable replacement, in accordance with the provisions of (c)(i) and (d).
- h. The Election Committee shall be disbanded at the end of the election period.

### 3. The Notice of Election

- a. The Election Committee shall have discretion to set the date, time, and location for the Election Meeting.
  - i. Whenever possible, the date and time for the Election Meeting shall be:
    - 1. At least 10 calendar days after the start of the election period.
    - 2. Immediately before Novice Debate Practice or Intermediate Debate Practice.
  - ii. When any of the requirements in (i) cannot be reasonably satisfied, the Election Committee shall select an alternative date and time and include an explanation of their reasoning in the notice of election.
- b. The Chair of the Election Committee shall post the notice of election to the Durham Union Debating Facebook group.
  - i. The notice of election must include:
    - 1. The name and a brief description of the position to be elected.
    - 2. The date, time, and location of the Election Meeting.
    - 3. The names and current or past positions of all members of the Election Committee.
    - 4. A brief overview of the processes for running and voting.
    - 5. A call for those interested to contact members of the Election Committee for further information.
    - 6. A hyperlink to this policy.
    - 7. Any other information as required by any part of this policy.
  - ii. The Election Committee shall adequately advertise the notice of election, by liaising with the trainers and occasionally reposting it.

### 4. Eligibility to Vote and Stand for Election

- a. The Election Committee shall produce a list of those eligible to vote and stand for election.
- b. All persons who have cumulatively attended at least 3 debating training sessions in Novice Debate Practice, Intermediate Debate Practice, or Advanced Debate Practice in the current academic year shall be considered eligible to vote.
  - i. If the election period overlaps with the first 5 weeks of Michaelmas Term, the Election Committee may choose to use attendance in the previous academic year to determine eligibility instead.
  - ii. The Election Committee shall request and receive a copy of the official attendance records from the Debates Training Secretary on the day of the Election Meeting to produce the final list of those eligible to vote.
  - iii. If a person has been barred from attending practices as per the Equity Policy before the start of the election period, they shall not be considered eligible to vote, regardless of their previous attendance record.
- c. All persons currently on a year abroad who cumulatively attended at least 3 debating training sessions in Novice Debate Practice, Intermediate Debate Practice, or Advanced Debate Practice in the previous academic year shall also be considered eligible to vote.
- d. All eligible voters under (b) shall be considered eligible to stand for election for Debates Competitions Secretary or Debates Training Secretary, unless they are currently banned from standing in elections in accordance with (6)(d)(ii)(2).
- e. All eligible voters under (b) who are current or past members of the Debates Selections Committee who have held their positions for at least 30 calendar days shall be considered

eligible to stand for election for Director of Debating, unless they are currently banned from standing in elections in accordance with (6)(d)(ii)(2).

- i. If no such candidates stand for election, all eligible voters under (b) who are current or past trainers, members of the Debates Committee, and members of the organisational committee of an external Durham competition who have held their positions for at least 30 calendar days shall be considered eligible to stand for election for Director of Debating, unless they are currently banned from standing in elections in accordance with (6)(d)(ii)(2).
- ii. If no such candidates stand for election either, all eligible voters under (b) shall be considered eligible to stand for election for Director of Debating, unless they are currently banned from standing in elections in accordance with (6)(d)(ii)(2).

## 5. The Election Meeting

- a. The Election Meeting shall not be considered quorate unless there are 12 people present, including members of the Election Committee.
- b. The Election Meeting shall be chaired by the Chair of the Election Committee.
- c. There shall be no requirement for candidates to nominate themselves in advance of the Election Meeting.
  - i. Prospective candidates shall be allowed to contact the current holder of their desired position to enquire about the role during the election period.
- d. Prospective candidates shall be allowed to openly discuss their intention to stand for election and their ideas for their desired role during the election period.
  - i. The Election Committee shall reserve the power to issue warnings or bar any person from standing for election if they are found to:
    1. Have indulged in personal attacks on opposing candidates or other members that are irrelevant to their suitability for office.
    2. Have brought the Union into disrepute.
    3. Have been knowingly untruthful, or distorted the truth.
- e. The Election Meeting shall be open to all members, regardless of their eligibility to vote or stand for election under (4).
- f. The Chair shall ensure that the Election Meeting adheres to the following structure:
  - i. The Election Committee shall outline the relevant parts of this policy and answer any questions.
  - ii. The Chair shall ask candidates to verbally nominate themselves.
    1. Candidates shall be allowed to nominate themselves in absentia by contacting the Chair of the Election Committee before the Election Meeting.
      - a. Candidates in absentia may name a representative to speak on their behalf at the Election Meeting.
      - b. Members of the Election Committee, current or past members of the Debates Selections Committee, and other candidates may not act as candidates' representatives.
    2. There shall be no requirement for proposers or seconders.
  - iii. All candidates shall be invited to hush in their names for a maximum of 5 minutes.
    1. The order shall be alphabetical by last name.
    2. Candidates shall be given a grace period of 30 seconds to conclude their points.
    3. Candidates shall be allowed to directly compare their experience and skills to other candidates' in a civil and non-insulting way.
  - iv. Members of the audience shall ask questions of candidates and candidates shall answer them.

1. The order in which candidates speak shall be cycled through for every question.
  2. Those unable to attend the Election Meeting may pass on their questions to members of the Election Committee who shall pose them on their behalf.
  3. Members of the Election Committee shall be allowed to ask questions.
  4. The Chair shall not set a limit to the number of questions asked.
- v. A vote shall be conducted by secret ballot.
1. At least two members of the Election Committee shall remain by the ballot box at all times.
  2. The Election Committee shall distribute paper ballots to those eligible to vote.
  3. Re-Open Nominations shall be a valid option.
  4. The single transferable vote method shall be used.
    - a. In the event of a tie, the winner shall be determined by a coin toss.
    - b. Candidates shall be ranked in decreasing order of preference.
    - c. There shall be no requirement for all candidates to be ranked.
  5. Eligible voters who are unable to attend the meeting may cast a vote in absentia.
    - a. Eligible voters may send their preference to at least two members of the Election Committee at any point between the start of the election period and the start of the count.
    - b. These members of the Election Committee shall fill out a paper ballot on behalf of the voter and send them a picture before casting it.
    - c. These members of the Election Committee shall disclose the identity of the voter but not how they voted to the rest of the Election Committee.
- vi. The Election Committee shall retire to a different room with the ballot box to conduct the count.
1. Candidates or their representatives shall be allowed to observe the count.
  2. The Election Committee shall err on the side of considering ballots valid if the intention is clear beyond reasonable doubt, even if they are not strictly in order.
  3. The result shall be recorded and the ballots stored by the Chair of the Election Committee until the end of the appeals period.
- vii. The Chair shall announce the full result of the vote.
- viii. The Election Committee shall briefly outline the appeals process in accordance with
- (6). ix. The Chair shall close the meeting.
1. This marks the end of the election period and the start of the appeals period.
- g. If Re-Open Nominations wins the most votes, the position shall remain vacant and the election process shall be restarted after the end of the appeals period.

## 6. The Appeals Process

- a. The Rules Committee shall be solely responsible for investigating and adjudicating on appeals against the process or results of an election in a fair and equitable way.
- b. The appeals period shall last a full calendar week.
  - i. If there are any pending appeals at the end of the appeals period, it shall be extended.
- c. An appeal shall only be considered valid if all the following conditions are met:

- i. It is raised during the appeals period.
  - ii. It is raised by a member, regardless of their eligibility to vote in this election.
  - iii. It is substantial and not trivial or inconsequential.
  - iv. It is submitted in writing to the Returning Officer.
- d. When a valid appeal is raised, the Rules Committee shall review all the available evidence in a timely manner and reach a decision.
- i. If the appeal is dismissed, the outcome of the election is upheld.
  - ii. If the appeal is upheld, the Rules Committee shall rule the election out of order.
    - 1. If the election is found to be perceived as generally unfair by a large number of members, the Rules Committee may rule it out of order, even if this policy was not violated.
    - 2. If a person is found to have knowingly violated or attempted to violate any part of this policy, the Rules Committee shall both:
      - a. Ban them from ever being appointed to an Election Committee or Appeals Committee.
      - b. Ban them from standing in elections for a calendar year.
  - iii. The Returning Officer shall communicate the decision and the reasoning behind it to the complainant in writing.
- e. If an election is ruled out of order the appeals period shall immediately end and the election process shall be restarted.
- i. If the winner of the election has already been ratified in accordance with (7), they shall immediately cease to hold office.

## 7. The Ratification Process

- a. The winner of the election shall be ratified by the General Committee at its first meeting following the end of the election period.
- b. The Chair of the Election Committee shall email the Returning Officer to put the winner of the election up for ratification.
  - i. This shall be done within a day of the end of the election period.
  - ii. Neither the winner of the election nor the Chair of the Election Committee need to sit on General Committee.
- c. The winner of the election shall be invited to hush for no more than 5 minutes.
- d. Members of the General Committee shall pose questions to the winner of the election and they shall answer them.
- e. The General Committee may ratify the winner of the election on a general aye.
  - i. If there is any opposition, a simple majority vote shall be taken, with the options being 'yes' and 'no.'
  - ii. If the winner of the election is not ratified by the General Committee, an emergency meeting of the Debates Selections Committee shall be held to decide what to do next.
- f. The immediately previous holder of their position shall carry out a handover process.
  - i. The newly ratified Officer shall be given a handover document detailing ongoing tasks, priorities, and advice for the role.
  - ii. The newly ratified Officer shall be given the access credentials to all relevant online accounts.
  - iii. If the immediately previous holder of their position is unavailable, the rest of the Debates Selections Committee shall oversee the handover process.

## Appendix – Code of Conduct for Officers and Officials

Welcome to the Durham Union. We are delighted that you are willing to contribute to our work by taking on a position and we are sure it will be a rewarding experience. Listed below are the core values we expect all our Officers and Officials to share and actively work towards achieving. These are crucial to ensuring the Society can run efficiently and be open to all.

### Dedication

Officers and Officials shall complete their duties as set out in the constitution. A consistent failure to perform duties is defined as ‘Dereliction of Duty’.

- Familiarise yourself with the duties of your officership as outlined in the constitution. Talk to former holders of that office and ensure you complete a full handover with the outgoing Officer.
- Be aware of other duties and expectations of Officers such as attending events and door duty at 24 NBC.
- Communication is key: if you have to miss a meeting, give apologies for your absence.

### Respect

Officers and Officials act as representatives of the society, so shall conduct themselves with mutual respect for other Members and shall avoid bringing the society into disrepute.

- Maintain respect towards all Members of the Union and our invited Guests on the basis of age, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, disability, religion or economic circumstance.
- During debate it is important to respect all Members and our invited Guests right to free speech.

### Inclusive

As part of the executive of the Society, it is vitally important that Officers and Officials conduct themselves in a way that creates a welcoming environment for all.

- Listen to suggestions from your fellow Officers, Committee or Members and ensure you respond to them following due consideration.
- Be aware of wider issues on campus. We strongly advise the completion of modules available on duo; these include, but are not limited to *Unconscious Bias*, *Equality*, *Diversity & Inclusion*, and *Respecting Others*.

### Transparency

Officers and Officials should be transparent about any decisions being made and where possible, consult other Officers, their Committee, the Office Manager or the Trustees before reaching a decision.

- All committee meetings should be minuted as stated in the constitution, and these minutes made available to all Members in the Union Office.
- Decisions made by Officers and Officials should be explained through reports to the General Committee (if listed under the duties of your role) so they may be recorded in the minutes.

By accepting your role within the Society, it is expected that you act in accordance with the values outlined in this Code of Conduct. Failure to do so could see your position reviewed within the complaints or confidence process.

## Appendix - Durham Union Society Members' Code of Conduct

Welcome to the Durham Union Society. We are delighted that you have joined and are willing to engage in discussions and debates about the big issues of our time, and we are confident that this will be a rewarding and fulfilling part of your university experience.

Durham Union Society wants every member to feel welcome and respected in every space or activity associated with the organisation.

We have a Code of Conduct, applicable to all members of the Society, which is crucial to ensure clarity about the standards of behaviour we wish to encourage and support in order to be a safe, open, inclusive, welcoming and respectful organisation.

The Code of Conduct applies to any member engaged in an activity encompassed in the Society's Constitution.

The Code of Conduct should be read as supplementary to the [Durham University Student Pledge](#).

### EXPECTED STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

The Society encourages all members to uphold values of respect, inclusion, and integrity in their actions. All members are expected to act respectfully and responsibly and engage with others in a manner that fosters mutual respect, dignity, and safety. This includes:

- Acting with kindness and consideration.
- Avoiding behaviours that might distress or intimidate others.
- Treating others with respect.
- Refraining from any form of harassment, bullying, or victimisation. We encourage members to engage with each other in a way that promotes an inclusive and positive atmosphere.
- Respecting diversity and avoiding discrimination on any grounds.
- Protecting the Society's facilities, acting with care and responsibility.
- Engaging honestly in meetings and discussions, ensuring that all statements and contributions are truthful and in line with the Society's values.
- Acting lawfully, reasonably and civilly.
- Fulfilling roles and responsibilities diligently. Expectations of officers are set out separately in our officers' code of conduct.

### DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

A person shall have committed a Disciplinary Offence if they are found to have committed harmful, reckless or dangerous conduct while in the Society's Buildings or when they are engaging in purposes directly connected to the Society. Examples of such misconduct include:

- physical violence or behave in a way that poses a threat to others' physical well-being.
- conduct that amounts to harassment, bullying, or victimisation.

- a harmful course of conduct motivated by discrimination.
- a course of conduct that amounts to extortion or blackmail of another person.
- theft, dishonesty, or other behaviour that damages the Society's interests.
- being otherwise engaged in behaviour that in the view of the Trustees brings the Society into disrepute.

A person alleged or reported to have committed a Disciplinary Offence shall be subject to an investigation by a Complaints Panel. Following such an investigation, the Panel has the discretion to impose disciplinary actions, including suspension or expulsion. Further details on how this process works can be found in section (lxviii) of [our Constitution](#).

All members are expected to uphold this Code of Conduct, ensuring a positive and respectful environment for all in the Durham Union Society.

23 September 2025

## **Appendix - Society Procedure And Standards:**

The Durham Union Society is an organisation fundamentally committed to promoting open, honest, and thought-provoking debate on the matters of the day. We firmly believe that freedom of expression and respectful engagement can coexist, and that robust discussion is most productive when all participants feel welcome and safe to contribute. This appendix outlines how we approach guest speakers, uphold our values, and respect our members' right to question and critique.

### **Speaker Expectations:**

From guests and members alike, we expect all speakers in our events to behave to a proper standard: to speak respectfully and courteously at all times, to debate in good faith, to not impede on the right of others to express their views and to be generally respectful of other members of the house. This also extends to the choice of language our speakers use: we ask that speakers generally refrain from swearing or using overly explicit language and generally prioritise using polite and respectful terms when referring to their fellow speakers and their points throughout the debate, although the chair will handle questions of improper language on a case-to-case, context-considerate basis.

We expect our speakers to respect the structure of our events to the best of their ability, including speaking within agreed upon timeframes and respecting our constitutional procedures. We ask our speakers to understand that our events are invitations to dialogue, not endorsements, and that engagement with our members should be with the aim to convince and shed light on new perspectives.

We ask our speakers to accept that our members maintain the unalienable right to respectfully disagree, and we ask that all speakers come to our events with the expectation that the ideas they present will be robustly scrutinised by our members.

### **Member Expectations:**

Members and guests are encouraged to question and critique ideas expressed at our events. We ask that such contributions remain respectful and focused on ideas rather than individuals. The Chair may manage questions and floor speeches to ensure fairness and maintain a constructive atmosphere. The Chair may also manage questions and floor speeches to ensure our events proceed in a timely and organised manner. We ask that all members generally respect the decisions of the chair.

### **Single-Speaker Events:**

The Durham Union hosts many single-speaker events, generally in either 'address' style or 'in conversation with' style addresses. We invite guest speakers from a variety of personal backgrounds, professions and demographics to talk about their area of expertise. An invitation to such an event should not be regarded as an endorsement of a speaker or their views, but a recognition of their ability to offer a unique contribution to the knowledge of our members and a relevant insight into current issues which may challenge or broaden the opinion of our members. For addresses to the Union, we will offer guest speakers the opportunity to give a speech to the society on a subject(s) of their choosing and for an agreed length. Following this, the Chair will ask a series of questions: these are intended to respond to or scrutinise the ideas or arguments

presented in the main speech.

For 'in conversation with' style events, we will offer guest speakers the opportunity to engage in discussion with the Chair on a number of pre-agreed questions on a subject(s) of their choosing and for a length of their choosing. Following these agreed upon questions, the Chair will further ask a series of questions these are intended to respond to and scrutinise or ideas or arguments presented in the previous answers.

For all single-speaker events, once the Chair has concluded their questions, the Chair will invite our members to freely ask questions to the guest speaker.

## **Debates:**

The Durham Union hosts many debates throughout our terms. We invite speakers from a variety of political, professional and demographical backgrounds to discuss and debate a subject relevant to the day. An invitation to such an event should not be regarded as an endorsement of a speaker or their views, but a recognition of their ability to offer a unique contribution to a discussion on a subject matter, and an opportunity to present a case for any given side of a motion.

For debates, speakers will be invited either to give a speech in favour of ("for the Proposition") or against ("for the Opposition") of a statement ("motion", e.g. 'This House Regrets Brexit'). A motion is not a stated view of the Society, but a proposal the Society will hypothetically entertain in the interest of encouraging debate on a topical matter.

Multiple speakers (generally six) will be invited to give a speech for a pre-agreed amount of time. Speakers are expected to present a persuasive case for their side of the debate, critique ideas presented by the other side and offer a unique perspective from their personal insight on the matter being debated. Speeches will begin with a first speaker for the proposition, alternating between the proposition and opposition until all speakers have spoken. Speakers are expected to respect the pre-agreed speech length: exceeding this length will be indicated by the Secretary.

Speakers are allowed to offer contributions to other speeches ("Points of Information"), expressed generally by standing up and stating asking "Point of Information?" or "May I?". If invited by the speaker giving the speech, the speaker making the point may ask a question, generally with the interest of seeking to clarify or criticize the argument of the speech. Points of Information should be brief in length, and the Chair may ask a speaker to cease should their point be unreasonably long. Points of Information should not be submitted in the first or last minute of a speaker's speech ("Protected time"), which will be indicated by the Secretary. After all speeches are concluded, members of the Society will be invited to give shorter speeches for either side of the motion ("Floor Speeches"). We ask that speakers respect and engage with the floor speeches in the same manner that they would the main speeches of the event.

After all floor speeches are concluded, the Chair will invite questions from members. After the question, a speaker from the side of the debate questioned will have a brief opportunity to respond, which may potentially be followed by an equally brief response from the other side of the debate, should the question be directed at both sides, or if the question raises a point of interest to both sides.

After questions are concluded, the Chair will direct members to vote by a verbal vote ("acclamation") before then having their votes physically counted ("division"), generally by a

teller by the venue's exit.

A vote for or against a motion is not a definitive position of the Society, but a recognition of which side of the house was more persuasive in their speeches.

### **Accountability:**

The Union is wholeheartedly committed to upholding the standards discussed in this appendix, which is chiefly expressed through the power of the Chair in responding to Points of Order raised by members, officers or speakers.

If you feel that a speaker is violating the expectation of proper conduct during the course of an event, we encourage you to raise a "Point of Order" on a matter of "Improper conduct/language". This is an intervention intended to hold speakers to the respectful and convivial tone the Society seeks to uphold in our events. The Chair is constitutionally bound to consider whether the speaker's behaviour constituted a breach of this expectation, and may take action according to their judgement. If you feel that the chair has made an erroneous decision, this decision may be potentially challenging as outlined in Standing Order III, Section 5, (c) (i).

If you feel that a speaker has otherwise violated the values of our Society, or that appropriate action to counteract such a violation has not been taken, we encourage you to direct your concern to the Equalities Officer at [equality@dus.org.uk](mailto:equality@dus.org.uk), who can raise such a concern to the President and other officers to ensure it is handled in the best way possible.

If the contributions of a speaker, or the subject of a debate, have caused you personal distress or concern, we encourage you to speak to our Welfare Officer at [welfare@dus.org.uk](mailto:welfare@dus.org.uk) who can provide you with support, signpost you to other bodies to provide more in-depth or specific remedies and take action on your behalf from within the Society.