



## **SCOTTISH YOUNG LIBERALS CONSTITUTION**

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

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

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

- a. vote in SYL elections
- b. stand for election Officers of SYL
- c. apply to speak and have the right to vote at General Meetings of SYL
- d. apply to speak and have the right to vote at emergency general meetings of SYL (EGM)
- e. Request attend Executive meetings, and, where practical, such request will be approved
- f. Contribute to the SYL policy-making process (At the Policy Committee Meeting During the GM)

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

## **Article 2 – Executive**

1. The executive committee (Executive) shall consist of the Convener, Vice Convener, Campaigns Officer, Communications Officer, Policy Officer and the Accessibility, Diversity and Enfranchisement Officer (ADE) all of whom shall be Officers of SYL as well as up to 4 Voting Ordinary Members.
2. Decisions of the Executive shall require a simple majority to pass. In the event of a tied vote, if no consensus can be reached, the Chair shall have a casting vote as well as a deliberative vote.
3. There shall be no fewer than 10 meetings of the Executive in each calendar year. The Executive shall fix the dates annually, in advance.
4. Meetings of the Executive shall be chaired by the Convener or, in their absence, by the Vice Convener. Three of those entitled to vote shall constitute a quorum.
5. Meetings of the Executive shall be notified and open to all members. Only Officers shall have the right to speak and vote. The Executive may choose

to deal with confidential items in private, when ordinary members will be required to leave the meeting.

6. The Executive may procure assistance for Officers in the execution of their roles.
7. The Executive may form committees or allow members to assist them in governance.
8. The Executive shall conduct the business of SYL subject to the approval of the AGM to whom the Executive shall be accountable

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

### **The Convener**

The Convener shall

- I. except as otherwise set out in this Constitution, be the primary spokesperson of SYL, and be SYL's primary point of contact with the Party.
- II. be the SYL representative on the executive committees of the Party and the YL.
- III. Be the SYL representative on the Party's Campaigns and Candidates committee, and the YL campaigns committee.
- IV. proposing initiatives for fundraising and prepare accounts for each preceding financial year.

### **The Vice Convener**

The Vice Convener shall

- I. assume the duties of the Convener in their absence and where possible deputise the duties of the chair.
- II. ensure that minutes of each Executive meeting are taken.
- III. Be entitled to be the SYL representative on the Party's Conference Committee.
- IV. Coordinate SYL's actions at Party conferences & organise GMs at Scottish Conference

### **The Secretary**

The Secretary shall

- I. plan, organise and coordinate SYL events and activities
- II. plan, where possible, in liaison with YL and the Party, and procure the implementation of the annual Freshers' Campaign.
- III. with the Communications Officer, increasing and engaging with the membership of SYL.
- IV. plan, in consultation with the Executive, the SYL strategy for all public elections.
- V. Be the Point of Contact on the executive for Local Parties & Branches.

### **Communications Officer**

The Communications Officer shall

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

### **Policy Officer**

The Policy Officer shall

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

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

The ADE officer shall

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

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

- I. All members shall comply with the Code of Conduct adopted from time to time by the Executive.
- II. The Executive may, at a properly called meeting, by two thirds vote, remove any Officer or member for failure to attend three successive Executive meetings without reasonable excuse or for other good cause, or for material breach of the Code of Conduct. Before exercising this power, the Executive shall give the Officer or member concerned an opportunity to be heard.
- III. Where Local Parties invite an SYL representative to sit on their committees, SYL should, where possible, elect a representative, which failing, appoint a representative.
  - a. SYL should make local parties aware of their activities and communicate with SYL representatives.

- IV. SYL may form “regions”, to help govern SYL’s affairs locally, using YL practice as a guideline for implementation.
  - a. These regions should be democratic and inclusive, and uphold SYL values.
  - b. These regions should be in regular contact with the SYL Executive, and if there are enough, a committee of regional chairs should be formed.

#### **Article 4 - Elections**

- I. Officers shall be elected annually from amongst the members of SYL and shall hold office from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January to the 31<sup>st</sup> of December each Year Only one person may hold an Office at any one time.
- II. the rules of the election, the voting system, Returning Officer, timetable, and nomination process shall be conducted as under those of the Young Liberals
- III. Ordinary Members shall be Elected alongside the Officers, Ordinary Members shall serve concurrently with Executive Officers.
- IV. In the event of any vacancy, the Convener Shall draw up a list of members and invite them to serve. These co-opted Officers will have voting rights, and will serve until the end of the executive term.

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

- I. The GMs shall be chaired by the Convener, or, in their absence, the members may nominate another Officer to act as chair. The Vice Convener shall ensure that minutes of proceedings are taken.
- II. General Meetings should be held one per year at a Scottish Conference.
- III. A GM shall receive and consider a report from the Executive as a whole.
- IV. A GM shall hold a Membership Policy Session to:
  - a. Decide on Policy themes for SYL
  - b. Vote on and amend Current & Proposed Policy

- V. If the Convener and Vice Convener are not available, the members may nominate someone from the Executive to act as chair.
- VI. Extraordinary General Meetings (EGMs) may be called by the Executive.
  - a. The agenda of the EGM shall consist only of those items set out in the notice of the EGM.
- VII. Not less than twenty-one days' written notice shall be given of any general meeting and of motions to be considered at such meeting. Amendments to motions may be submitted to the Vice-Chair in writing not less than seven days before the meeting.
- VIII. Other than in respect of amendments to this Constitution, voting at general meetings shall be by a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote.
- IX. Accidental omission to give due notice shall not invalidate the proceedings unless the error is substantial.

#### **Article 6 - Finance**

- I. The SYL's financial year is the calendar year.
- II. The accounts for the year shall be presented, as part of the accounts of the federal Young Liberals.
- III. Copies of the annual accounts shall be sent to the Principal Officer of the Party as required by the Party for the purpose of compliance with PPERA.

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

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

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

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