**Edinburgh University Debates Union Constitution**

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## 1. Name

### 1.1 Official Title

1. The name of this society shall be the Edinburgh University Debates Union. It may also be referred to as EUDU.

## 2. Aims

### 2.1 The Aims of the Society

1. The aims of the society shall be to promote speech and debate development within the University of Edinburgh and the wider community. This will be done through the provision of weekly workshops during each semester, with high quality speaker training in British Parliamentary style debating. Focus may also be given to public speaking skills more general, and the building of the confidence of our members when presenting arguments generally. This aim will be furthered through working with EUSA and other societies as appropriate to provide these schools at a wider level within the University. Public events will also be run throughout the year which all students to witness high quality debate on many interesting and current issues. Again, collaboration with other societies, EUSA, the wider community and external bodies may be engaged in. Access will be provided to competition entry, both in the UK and further afield, for interested students to participate in competitive debating against other academic institutions, for the purpose of development and cementing important contacts in world debating. It will also run its own competitions along three strands: inter-varsity, schools level and internal competitions for students of the University of Edinburgh.
2. The society may be affiliated to external debating bodies (including, but not limited to, the Scottish Students Debating Council, the European Debating Council and Worlds Debating Council) and, potentially, external bodies sponsoring debating in Edinburgh (of which there are, currently, none). Such affiliation to aforementioned student debating councils enables the free flow of ideas between academic institutions in all matters concerning competitive debating at all levels, and ensures that EUDU remains at the forefront of debating knowledge and training at all levels; a key benefit for all students participating in debating at the University of Edinburgh.

## 3. Membership

### 3.1 Forms of Membership

1. Full Membership of the Society is open to all matriculated students of Edinburgh University.
2. Membership shall be at least 75% matriculated students of Edinburgh University.
3. Full membership lists should be filed with the Activities Office at least once per semester to ensure membership databases are up to date.
4. If any dispute of membership should arise, the list registered through the Students’ Association database will be used as the official list.

### 3.2 Breach of Member Responsibilities (and Conflict Resolution)

1. The Committee may impose sanctions for misconduct on members, based on verifiable evidence collected, taking into account the seriousness of the misconduct with reference to the membership responsibilities and standard code of conduct, any previous warnings, and any mitigating circumstances. When appropriate the following sanctions may be applied:
	1. Informal Warning
	2. First Written Warnings will be issued for a minor offence or complaint;
	3. Final Written Warnings will be issued for: a further offence or complaint or if the conduct of the member failed to improve following a previous warning, or if the actions are serious enough to warrant a Final Written Warning.
	4. Removal from membership will occur if there is a further serious event of misconduct, or if the conduct of the member failed to improve following a previous written warning, or if the member committed an act of gross misconduct.
2. Edinburgh University Students’ Association (“the Students' Association”') Societies department will be notified upon removal of a member and provided with a copy of the evidence pertaining to the sanctions process and removal. All persons removed from membership may appeal to the Societies' department against such removal.

## 4. Management

### 4.1 The General Committee

1. The business of the Society shall be managed by a Committee of Office Bearers.
2. Any full student member of the Society shall be entitled to sit on the Committee.
3. The Office Bearers must be members of the Society and a matriculated student of Edinburgh University.
4. All Office Bearers will complete annual online training as outlined by the Activities Team.
5. The Committee of EUDU will consist of:
	1. President (who may also be referred to as the Convener) (Responsible for making sure Twitter, Facebook, website and email of EUDU stay up to date)
	2. Workshops Co-ordinator
	3. Secretary (who is also responsible for the taking of minutes at each committee meeting, and providing copies of said minutes to all committee members before their next meeting)
	4. Treasurer
	5. Sponsorship Co-ordinator
	6. Internal Competitions Co-ordinator
	7. Schools Convener
	8. Advanced Speaker Development Co-ordinator
	9. Public Events Co-ordinator
	10. Social Secretary
	11. Women’s Inclusions Officer
6. The Committee may also contain up to three Ordinary Members who require to be elected to Committee by 50% of members present at an ordinary Monday meeting.
7. In the annual election of up to 3 Ordinary members, one Ordinary position will be reserved for must be a new member to EUDU (who has not been a member of the society in any previous semesters).
8. The Committee will meet weekly during semesters, unless exceptional circumstances preclude this. Extra meetings may also be arranged on an ad-hoc basis as required to fulfil the duties of the Committee.
9. The minutes of committee meetings will be released on a weekly basis.

### 4.2 Executive Office Bearers

1. The Committee must consist of a President, Secretary, and Treasurer (the Executive Officers) as a minimum.
2. These Office Bearers will be elected at the Annual General Meeting.
3. No person may be elected to more than one of these posts simultaneously.

### 4.3 President

1. The President will chair the General Committee and Emergency General Meetings.
2. The President is responsible to the Annual General Meeting and the General Committee and is ultimately responsible for the conduct of the Society.
3. It is the President’s responsibility to ensure the Society has submitted their annual report, risk assessment and re-registration forms to the Activities Office.
4. Should the President resign a new President or Acting President will be voted in at an EGM.

### 4.4 Treasurer

1. The Treasurer shall be accountable to the President and committee and members for the finances of the society.
2. The Treasurer shall keep and prepare Accounts of the Society and provide a provisional budget, as exhaustive as possible, to be presented at the Annual General Meeting.
3. It is the Treasurer’s responsibility to ensure the annual financial report is complete and submitted along with the society’s annual report.
4. Should the Treasurer resign, a new Treasurer or Acting Treasurer will be voted in at an EGM.

### 4.5 Secretary

1. The Secretary shall be responsible for the administration of the society.
2. The Secretary shall also be responsible for any correspondence within or on behalf of the Society and prepare the agendas and the minutes of every committee meeting, AGM and EGM.
3. Should the Secretary resign, a new Secretary or Acting Secretary will be voted in at an EGM.

### 4.6 Suspension/Impeachment Process

1. Committee members can call a vote of no confidence regarding other members on committee, including the President, in cases of serious violation(s) of the equity policy or continual failure/mismanagement of their role.
2. Members submitting the motion may do so anonymously via the President if they wish, but must provide a written justification for the vote.
3. Should 3/4 of committee (rounded up) or more vote in favour of the motion, the committee member in question will be suspended from their duties and removed from the post.
4. The President will can an EGM and take on their roles until a new officer has been elected. In the case of the President being removed, the Treasurer will call an EGM and act as an Interim President until then.

### 4.7 Annual General Meeting

1. All members of the Society are entitled to attend Annual General Meetings (hereinafter referred to as the AGM).
2. It is the responsibility of the Secretary to ensure that members receive at least 14 days written/email notification of the AGM and of elections not held at the AGM.
3. Motions to be discussed should be presented to the Secretary in advance of the AGM.
4. Only fully-matriculated students are entitled to vote at the AGM.
5. All Office Bearer roles shall be subject to election annually at the AGM.
6. All members who are matriculated students of the University of Edinburgh shall be entitled to stand and to vote in elections.
7. The quorum of a general meeting shall be 25 % of current membership in order to validate any decisions/votes made
8. The Executive must be assigned to the Society Profile as soon as possible after election
9. All committee positions will be elected positions at the AGM. 7 days minimum written notice will be given of intention to stand for election at an AGM and names of those standing will be released a minimum 5 days before the AGM. (Maximum times can vary) Before release only non-returning members of the society will have access to the names of people running.
10. All committee members will be elected by Alternative Vote whereby if no candidate is the first choice of the majority, the votes of those members who put the least popular candidate as their first choice will be allocated to their second choice in successive runoffs until a majority is obtained by a candidate.
11. Any non-matriculated students will not be able to vote on matters concerning changes to EUDU’s constitution, nor will they be able to stand for office.

### 4.8 Emergency General Meeting

1. The President may call an Extraordinary General Meeting for matters arising in the course of the year which require consideration by members.
2. The EGM shall follow the procedure of the AGM outlined in 4.7 above.
3. All members must receive at least 14 days written/email notification of the EGM.
4. In the event of an Executive position becoming vacant, President will call an EGM to elect a replacement.
5. Any newly elected Office Bearers will be communicated to the Societies Team after the election has taken place.

## 5. Finance

### 5.1 Finance Policy

1. The financial year shall run from 1st April to 31st March.
2. The committee should have the power to set the membership price for the year.
3. The Treasurer should give a report at the end of the year on the financial situation of the society
4. There will be two signatories on the bank account - the Treasurer and President

### 5.2 **General** Finance

1. The Society shall be non-profit making. The Office Bearers and members may only receive payment, direct or indirect, as reimbursement for legitimate expenses.

## 6. Policy

### 6.1 Re-registration, Annual Reports, and Financial Reports

1. Re-registration of the society must be submitted in accordance with the deadlines set by the Activities Team.
2. Re-registration of the society must be submitted prior to Week 12 of Semester 2
3. Annual and Financial Reports must be completed and submitted as part of the re-registration process following the AGM in the second semester.

### 6.2 Society Status

1. A Society may not register to obtain any legal status, including a limited company or a charitable status.

### 6.3 Equal Opportunities Policy

1. The society has taken and will continue to take all necessary steps to ensure that our meetings, events and socials are accessible to all
2. The society has ensured and will continue to ensure that it complies with any relevant data protection legislation
3. The society believes that discrimination or harassment, direct or indirect, based on a person’s gender, age (except where it relates to licensing laws), race, skin colour, nationality, religious belief or non-belief, socio-economic background, disability, HIV status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, family situation, domestic responsibilities or any other irrelevant distinction, is detrimental to the society, the university and wider society, and will not be tolerated
4. The society shall abide by any applicable laws, bye-laws and guidelines of the Edinburgh University Students’ Association in relation to recognised societies

## 7. Alteration of the Constitution

### 7.1 Alteration

1. Any motion to alter the Constitution will have to be supported by two-thirds of the members present at the AGM or EGM, 14 days notice of which shall be given.
2. The Students’ Association considers the ruling society constitution to be that which is displayed on the Society Profile

## 8. Room Bookings

### 8.1 EUSA Room Booking Policy

1. To comply with EUSA room booking policy when running EUDU’s Schools and University competitions the society will:
2. Advertise cheaper registration to teams who pay before the day of the competition incentivising them to turn up on the day
3. If teams do not turn up one year the union will still require full team registration to be paid.
4. The society will keep up to date on the amount of teams attending and keep in contact with EUSA and let the room booking staff knows at the earliest possible time if all the room will not be used.
5. If the above clauses are applied, EUSA will then be willing to give EUDU a 2 room waiver- ie. If two rooms are not filled at competitions due to unforeseen circumstances by the Society EUSA will not remove EUDU’s block book privileges for future semesters.

## 9. Equity

### 9.1 Equity Policy

1. The position on internal equity officer will be electable. This is not a committee position.
2. The equity policy shall be given the power of the constitution.
3. Gender pronoun policy shall be used in all debates.

## 10. Miscellaneous

### 10.1 Miscellaneous

1. The Rules and Guidelines shall be adopted into the constitution

## 11. Inclusions Sub-Committee

### 11.1 Composition

1. The Inclusions Sub-Committee will be comprised of:
2. BAME Inclusion Officer
3. ESL Inclusion Officer
4. LGBTQIA+ Inclusion Officer
5. Disabilities Inclusion Officer

### 11.2 Role of Sub-Committee

1. Women’s Inclusion Officer will be supported by the Inclusions Sub-Committee, which represent: BAME Inclusions, ESL Inclusions, LGBTQIA+ Inclusions, and Disabilities Inclusions.

### 11.3 Election of Sub-Committee Members

1. The sub-committee position will be electable. This is not a committee position.
2. Permanent members of the committee can also hold subcommittee Inclusions Officer roles.
3. The sub-committee Inclusions Officer positions are reserved for members who self-identify as a member of the relevant group.
4. Voting for the the sub-committee Inclusions Officer positions is reserved for members who self-identify as a member of the relevant group.
5. In the event that there are no other candidates running for a sub-committee Inclusions position, a subcommittee member is eligible to hold more than one Inclusions subcommittee positions, should they self-identify for more than Inclusions position.