

Kent Debating Society

CONSTITUTION

THE KDS COMMITTEE



Kent Debating Society

CORE CONSTITUTION

1 Name

1.1 The name of this society shall be the Kent Debating Society. Throughout this document it will be referred to as the Society.

2 Aims and Objectives

The Society shall exist:

2.1 To establish a positive reputation for the University of Kent in debating regionally, nationally, and internationally.

2.2 To provide an environment where students of all backgrounds and abilities (both socially and academically) can engage in debating and by doing so develop confidence, empathy and strength of convictions through not only the art of arguing but the art of listening.

2.3 To provide a platform of debate that is impartial and free of political association.

2.4 To exploit this environment to engage with the wider community.

2.5 To embrace topics ranging from the whacky to the controversial.

3 Membership

3.1 Full membership shall be open to all full Union Members.

3.2 Associate membership shall be open to all staff and alumni of the University of Kent and to students from other institutions.

3.3 A subscription shall be required as specified by the Societies Federation Committee.

3.4 All references to Members in this Constitution shall be to paid up Members of the Society.

4 Member Entitlements

4.1 All Members of the Society, whether Full or Associate, shall be entitled to:

i. Attend, speak and place items on the agenda at all Society General Meetings.

ii. Attend, speak and place items on the agenda at all meetings of the Society Committee.

iii. Inspect all Society minutes at seven (7) calendar days' notice.

iv. Inspect the Society accounts at seven (7) calendar days' notice.

4.2 All Full Members of the Society are also entitled to:

i. Stand and vote in Society Committee Elections.

ii. Vote at all Society General Meetings.

4.3 All Associate Members of the Society shall be entitled to partake in Society events at the discretion of the Societies Federation Committee.

5 Government

5.1 All government of the Society shall be in accordance with this Constitution, Kent Union's

Constitution and Rules and the Societies Federation Constitution.

5.2 The Society shall have a number of key decision-making bodies. In order, starting with that of highest authority, they are the following:

i. The Society Annual General Meeting and the Society General Meeting.

ii. The Society Committee Meeting.

The General Meeting

5.3 The Annual General Meeting shall be held once per academic year during term time to elect a new Committee and shall be conducted in accordance with the Meeting Rules.

5.4 Society General Meetings may be called in accordance with the Meeting Rules.

The Society Committee

5.5 The Society Committee shall consist of the following elected, voting, Executive Officers:

i. Society President

ii. Society Treasurer

iii. Society Secretary

5.6 The Executive Officers alone shall be entitled to pay out or withdraw funds from the Society's account, or to pay for Union services by internal transfer.

5.7 No Member shall hold more than one Executive post.

5.8 The Society Committee shall also consist of the following elected, voting Officers:

i. Debate Convenor

ii. Publicity and Socials Officer

5.9 The Committee may co-opt such non-voting Officers as it considers necessary.

5.10 The Union Societies Federation Committee shall be informed of the names of all Society Officers.

5.11 The Union Societies Federation Committee shall be informed of any changes to the Committee structure.

The Society Committee Meeting

5.12 The Committee Meeting shall be responsible Kent Union within Constitutional limits for determining policy in accordance with the Committee Meeting Rules.

6 Finance

6.1 All financial matters shall be dealt with in accordance with Kent Union's financial procedures.

6.2 Confirmation of expenditure or withdrawal of money from the Society's account shall be validated by no means other than the signature of the Treasurer and one other Executive Officer.

6.3 Neither the Society nor Kent Union accepts any liability for any debt or other obligation incurred by any of its Officers or other Members, whether or not it is incurred on behalf of the Society.

7 Amendments

7.1 The Society General Meeting shall be the sole body competent to amend the Constitution and Rules.

7.2 All amendments to the Constitution shall require the support of two-thirds of those voting at a General Meeting.

7.3 All amendments to the Rules shall require a simple majority in support, of those present and entitled to vote at a General Meeting, including abstentions.

7.4 Any approved amendments must be presented to the Student Activities Sabbatical Officer for approval before they come into effect.

8 Interpretation

8.1 In the event of a dispute as to the interpretation of any part of the Constitution or Rules, the ruling of the Student Activities Sabbatical Officer shall be sought.

8.2 In the event of a challenge to the Student Activities Sabbatical Officer's ruling, the decision of the Union Council shall be final. [Name] Society

RULES: GENERAL MEETINGS

M 1 Who can come to a General Meeting?

M 1.1 Any Member of the Society and any Member of Union Council and Societies Federation Committee may attend General Meetings in accordance with this Constitution and Rules. Any individuals who are not such members who wish to

attend must receive permission from the Meeting.

M 2 Who may speak at a General Meeting?

M 2.1 Any Member of the Society and any Member of Union Council and Societies Federation Committee may speak at a General Meeting. Any individuals who are not full Members may only speak with the permission of the Meeting.

M 3 Who may vote at a General Meeting?

M 3.1 Only Society Members who are present at the meeting may vote.

M 3.2 The Chair shall have an original and, if necessary, casting vote

M 4 How many Members have to be there?

M 4.1 The quorum for Society General Meetings is thirty percent (30%) of Society Members.

M 5 Who runs the Meeting?

M 5.1 Unless absent, the President shall ordinarily chair the Meeting.

M 5.2 The Society Committee may, in the case of the President's absence, appoint an alternative Chairperson by simple majority vote.

M 6 How must Members be notified of a Meeting?

M 6.1 Notice of any General Meeting shall be given at least three (3) days in advance, stating clearly date, time and place.

M 6.2 Notice of any General Meeting pertaining to the alteration of the Society Constitution and/or Rules shall be given to the Societies Federation Committee.

M 7 How to call a Society General Meeting

M 7.1 A Society General Meeting shall be called by the Society Committee as necessary.

M 7.2 In addition, the Secretary must call a Society General Meeting if handed a petition signed by at least ten percent (10%) of Society Members.

M 7.3 The Secretary may accept a petition gathered electronically, provided they are satisfied as to its authenticity.

M 7.4 The Secretary shall make arrangements for the General Meeting to be held on a date not exceeding five (5) academic days from receipt of notice.

M 8 Minutes

M 8.1 The Society shall keep at least one paper copy of the minutes of any General Meeting.

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RULES: COMMITTEE MEETINGS

CM 1 Calling of Meetings

CM 1.1 Committee Meetings shall be convened by the Secretary, or another Officer appointed by the Committee, on a regular basis.

CM 1.2 The Secretary shall be responsible for publication of details

of all Meetings at least three (3) academic days before the Meeting.

CM 2 Chairing

CM 2.1 Committee Meetings will be ordinarily chaired by the Society President.

CM 3 Quorum

CM 3.1 The quorum for Committee Meetings shall be fifty percent (50%) plus one (1) of the voting Committee Officers.

CM 4 Voting

CM 4.1 All decisions shall be simple majority of decisions of all Committee Members present.

CM 4.2 The President shall have an original and, if necessary, casting vote.

CM 5 Agenda

CM 5.1 Any Member shall be entitled to place Kent Union – Model Constitution for Societies – October 2004 items on the agenda up to two (2) days in advance of the Meeting.

CM 5.2 The agenda shall be published by the Secretary at least one (1) day in advance of the Meeting.

CM 6 Minutes

CM 6.1 Full minutes will be taken at each Meeting and approved at each subsequent Meeting. The approved minutes will be held by the Secretary, but will also be distributed to Committee Members.