



# **Limerick Institute of Technology**

## **Students' Union**

### **Constitution**

**The Limerick Institute of Technology Students' Union shall consist of the following campuses:**

**Moylish, Clare Street, Thurles, Clonmel.**

**ARTICLES**

- 1. Name**
  
- 2. Membership**
  
- 3. Aims & Objectives**
  
- 4. Structure and Authority**
  
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**Article 1: NAME**

The name of the organisation shall be 'Limerick Institute of Technology Students' Union' abbreviated to 'LITSU' and hereafter called The Union.

**Article 2: MEMBERSHIP**

- 2.1. Membership of the Union shall automatically be conferred on all students' registered who have paid their registration fee on the 1<sup>st</sup> October of each academic year.

**Article 3: AIMS & OBJECTIVES**

- 3.1. To promote the collective and individual participation of the membership in the democratic framework of participation and representation.
- 3.2. To represent the interest of its members on matters relating to their education and welfare, and to protect and further their rights as students and citizens.
- 3.3. To provide and manage social, recreational and commercial services designed to meet students' needs and seek to develop and expand these services.
- 3.4. To act as the spokesperson for its members in dealing with the college authorities and any other relevant outside group both locally and nationally.
- 3.5. To promote and facilitate communication within and between all campuses.
- 3.6. The Union shall be accountable to its members.

**Article 4: STRUCTURE AND AUTHORITY**

- 4.1. The structure of the Union shall be based on the democratic principle that every member shall have the fullest possible opportunity to participate in Union affairs.
- 4.2. The structure of the Union focuses at four levels:
- Referendum
  - Union General Meeting
  - Class Representative Council
  - Union Sabbatical Team
- 4.3. Standing orders shall be applicable in all Union meetings.
- 4.4. Referendum.
- 4.4.1. The articles of this constitution can only be amended by referendum.

- 4.4.2.** A referendum may be called by:
- Union General Meeting
  - Class Representative Council
  - 300 Union Members (Students)
  - Union Sabbatical Team
- 4.4.3.** All referenda are to be decided by simple majority.
- 4.4.4.** A quorum of 5% of the Union membership is required to validate a Referendum.
- 4.4.5.** Referendum shall be binding on all Union Bodies, including Union General Meetings.
- 4.4.6.** Referendum shall be held within two academic term weeks after it has been called.
- 4.4.7.** All motions must be posted on the main Union Notice Boards on each campus at least 5 college days before the referendum for constitutional amendments. Each notice must contain the current wording of the articles to be amended as well as the articles as they would be, if the amendment or amendments were carried in the referendum.
- 4.5.** Union General Meeting (UGM).
- 4.5.1.** Meetings shall be held at least once each academic year.
- 4.5.2.** At least 10 working days' notice must be given for the holding of each UGM.
- 4.5.3.** A UGM can be called by the President, a majority of the Union Sabbatical Team, or by obtaining 5% of member signatures.
- 4.5.4.** The Quorum for General Meetings shall be 2.5% of Union members. In the event of no quorum being present the remaining business shall be deemed lost.
- 4.5.5.** An Emergency General Meeting (EGM) may be called by the President or a majority of the Union Sabbatical Team and only two days' notice is required in the case of an EGM.
- 4.5.6.** A request for an EGM shall state the purpose for which the meeting is being called and only items contained in this request shall be discussed.
- 4.5.7.** Voting at General Meetings shall be decided by a simple majority. In the case of a dispute, the President shall have a second casting vote.
- 4.6.** Class Representative Council.

- 4.6.1. There shall be a representative body which shall manage the affairs and give advice on the policy of the Union. This body shall be known as The Class Representative Council and shall meet at least twice a semester.
- 4.6.2. The Class Representative Council is the Governing Body of the Union.
- 4.6.3. The Class Representative Council shall consist of at least one representative, and no more than two representatives from each class of all full-time courses offered in the Institute. These representatives shall be elected by and from the members of each class. It shall be the responsibility of the Union Sabbatical team to inform each class of the requirement to elect a Class Representative but it shall be the responsibility of each class to actually select its representative.
- 4.6.4. It shall be the duty of each Class Representative to represent the interests and views of their class on the Council and to keep their class informed about the proceedings of the Council and the Students' Union.
- 4.6.5. A class may remove its Class Representative by a petition presented to the President or Vice-President consisting of two thirds of the registered class.
- 4.6.6. In the case of a vacancy arising on the Council, whether by the removal of a Representative, election to a part time Student Union Officership, or otherwise, the Union Sabbatical Team shall communicate with the class concerned regarding the need to select a new Class Representative.
- 4.6.7. In cases of voting in Class Representative Council, every class has one vote only, no matter how many class representatives per class.
- 4.6.8. The President will cast one vote after conferring with the three other Sabbatical Officers. In the event of a dispute between the Sabbatical Officers, the President shall have a second casting vote.

#### 4.7. Union Sabbatical Team and Union Officer Team.

##### 4.7.1.

Union Sabbatical Team shall consist of the following:

- President (Based Moylish)
- Deputy President (Based Moylish)
- Tipperary Convenor (Based Thurles)
- Clare Street Convenor (Based Clare Street)

Union Officer Team shall consist of the following:

- Clare Street Deputy Convenor (Based Clare Street)
- Thurles Deputy Convenor (Based Thurles)

- Clonmel Deputy Convenor (Based Clonmel)
- Clubs & Societies Officer
- Welfare Campaigns Officer
- Mature Student Officer
- Publications Officer
- Moylish Entertainments Officer
- Clare Street Entertainments Officer
- Tipperary Entertainments Officer (May be based in either Thurles or Clonmel)

**4.7.2.** There shall be a Union Sabbatical Team as well as Union Officers elected by the members of the Union according to the election schedule of this constitution, except in the case of the following officers who shall be elected no later than the first week of October during the next academic year. These elections shall take place according to the election regulations of this constitution.

- **Clubs & Societies Officer**
- **Publications Officer**
- **Mature Student Officer**
- **Welfare Campaigns Officer.**

**4.7.3.** The Union Sabbatical Team shall be responsible for the initiation of policy of the Union subject to Class Representative Council, Union General Meeting and Referendum.

**4.7.4.** No member of the Sabbatical Team may hold any other Sabbatical position in the Union at the same time.

**4.7.5.** All members of the Sabbatical Team as well as members of the Officer Team shall be required to present a written Officer Report at all Union General Meetings and at the request of the President. This report is to be made available to any member of the Union who requests it prior to ten working days' notice.

**4.7.6.** The Sabbatical team shall meet at least once per month during term. If this is not possible than an alternative method of communication shall be utilised. Eg. Conference or Video calling.

**4.7.7.** The quorum for all Sabbatical team meetings shall be 50% + 1; however, the President or their nominee must be present for the meeting to be quorate.

**4.7.8.** All motions passed by the Sabbatical Team and other meetings must specify the person(s) who is to be responsible for their implementation.

**4.7.9.** The positions of President, Deputy-President, Tipperary Convenor and Clare Street. Convenor shall be Full-Time Sabbatical positions and shall be salaried. No other officer positions shall receive a salary.

- 4.7.10.** The terms of office of the Sabbatical Team as well as the Officer Team shall be from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July to the 30<sup>th</sup> of June of the following year inclusive, with the exception of the positions outlined in **4.7.2** who shall commence their positions in October and finish June 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year.
- 4.7.11.** At the time of election the candidates for the position of any Sabbatical or Officer positions must be full members of the Union. The offices are held for one year and any one position may only be held for two years in total by the same person.
- 4.7.12.** Any member may only be a Sabbatical Officer for a total of three years in the Union.
- 4.7.13.** The President, Deputy President, and both Convenors shall represent the views of the Union Members which are expressed by the Class Representative Council, Union General Meeting or Referendum.
- 4.7.14.** The Sabbatical Officers shall take joint responsibility for the day to day functions of the Union.
- 4.7.15.** Areas of competence for the Sabbaticals shall be allocated at the beginning of each year, following discussion between the four Sabbaticals. In instances where there is a disagreement in allocating responsibility, the President shall have authority to decide.
- 4.7.16.** There shall be four Full-Time Sabbatical Officers in the Union who shall receive remuneration and expenses for their work within the Union in accordance with LIT SU Policies and Procedures.
- 4.7.17.** The other Officers of the Students' Union shall be Un-Paid Part-Time Officers and shall receive expenses at the discretion of both the President and the Manager of the Union in accordance with LIT SU Policies and Procedures.
- 4.7.18.** There shall be a minimum of six Part-Time Officers in the Union.
- 4.7.19.** They shall report directly to the President of the Union, or their relevant Convenor.
- 4.7.20.** They are also directly required to give a report of their work to the Sabbatical Team, Class Representative Council, Union General Meetings and any other meeting as requested by the President.

#### **Article 5: UNION OFFICERS**

##### **5.1. The President.**

- 5.1.1.** The President shall have full membership and shall be the principal spokesperson and Chief Executive of the Union and co-ordinator of all activities of the Union.

**5.1.2.** The President shall be the chief representative of the students and shall have five main areas of responsibility:

- Finance (In conjunction with the Students' Union Manager)
- Representation
- Organisation
- Supervision
- Guidance of Policy and Media/Publicity Issues

**5.1.3.** The President shall automatically take up office on the college Governing Body and Academic Council at the beginning of their term of office and the outgoing President shall be deemed to have resigned.

**5.1.4.** The President shall perform other duties in relation to the organisation of meetings, requesting meetings to take place and other functions as outlined in this constitution.

## **5.2.** The Deputy President.

**5.2.1.** The Deputy President shall deputise for the President during the Presidents absence where appropriate, as determined by the President.

**5.2.2.** The Deputy President is responsible for the implementation and development of the Union's education policies across all campuses subject to the general direction of Class Representative Council, Union General Meetings, Referendum or Union Executive.

**5.2.3.** The Deputy President will make every effort to undertake such research surveys, etc. and shall contribute to the development of educational policy across all campuses as well as both locally and nationally.

**5.2.4.** The Deputy President shall deal with all queries in relation to grants, and shall assist the Convenors within this remit.

**5.2.5.** The Deputy President shall provide information as regards transferring procedures for Limerick Institute of Technology Students to other campuses.

**5.2.6.** Deputy President will be responsible for educational campaigns and events across all campuses in conjunction with the relevant Convenors.

**5.2.7.** The Deputy President shall automatically take up office on the Academic Council at the beginning of term and the out-going Deputy President shall be deemed resigned.

## **5.3.** The Tipperary and Clare Street Convenors.

**5.3.1.** The Convenors shall be the principal spokesperson for their respective campuses.



- 5.3.2.** The Convenors shall report directly to the President.
- 5.3.3.** The Convenors shall work closely with the President and Deputy President on the implementation of any campaigns and policies across all campuses.
- 5.3.4.** The Convenors shall be responsible for increasing students' awareness of any and all available facilities and resources that may be of use, benefit, or interest to students on their relevant campus, and in the local community. They shall also be responsible for working to improve the relationship and image of the student body within the local community.

**5.4.** The Deputy Convenors. (Clare Street, Thurles, Clonmel)

- 5.4.1.** The Deputy Convenor shall deputise for the relevant Convenor during the Convenors absence where appropriate, as determined by the Convenor.
- 5.4.2.** The Deputy Convenors shall assist in the day to day duties of the Convenor.
- 5.4.3.** The Deputy Convenors shall hold a special focus on the issues raised by students on their specific campuses, and it is their responsibility to report this to their relevant Convenor.
- 5.4.4.** The Deputy Convenors shall assist in the running of campus-specific events in conjunction with the On-Campus Entertainments Officer.

**5.5.** The On-Campus Entertainments Officer.

- 5.5.1.** The On-Campus Entertainments Officer shall assist in the co-ordination of the entertainments on campus. The On-Campus Entertainments Officer shall not enter into any financial commitments without first consulting both the President and the Manager of the Union.
- 5.5.2.** The On-Campus Entertainments Officer must observe the best interests of the Union Membership during the planning stages of all functions and events.
- 5.5.3.** It is the responsibility of the On-Campus Entertainments officer to organise a wide range of different events to suit the needs of the Union Members.

**5.6.** The Welfare Campaigns Officer.

- 5.6.1.** The Welfare Campaigns Officer shall seek to ensure that no discrimination of any kind occurs among students.
- 5.6.2.** The Welfare Campaigns Officer shall be responsible for increasing awareness on campus of any and all facilities and resources in the local community that may be of use, benefit or interest to students. They shall also be responsible for working to improve the relationship and image of the student body within the local community.

**5.6.3.** The Welfare Campaigns Officer will be responsible for all welfare related events both locally and nationally.

**5.7.** The Mature Students Officer.

**5.7.1.** The Mature Students Officer shall be a mature student upon registration of Limerick Institute of Technology

**5.7.2.** The Mature Students Officer shall work closely with the Sabbatical Team to represent the interests and concerns of the mature students across all campuses.

**5.7.3.** The Mature Students Officer shall help with the organisation and implementation of any campaigns affecting mature students.

**5.8.** The Clubs & Societies Officer.

**5.8.1.** The Clubs & Societies Officer shall assist the Sabbatical Team with all issues relating to societies throughout the college.

**5.8.2.** The Clubs & Societies Officer shall represent the views of the societies to the Sabbatical team and shall communicate Union Policy to both areas.

**5.9.** The Communications and Publications Officer.

**5.9.1.** The Communications and Publications Officer shall report directly to the President.

**5.9.2.** The Communications and Publications Officer will be responsible for posters and videos relating to Union events and assist with all Union Publications.

**5.9.3.** The Communications and Publications Officer will be responsible for keeping social mediums such as Twitter, Facebook, and the Students Union website etc. up to date.

**Article 6: ELECTIONS**

**6.1.** The Returning Officer for the Sabbatical and Officer Elections will not be a member of the student body. The Returning Officer shall be an external member of the public appointed by the Sabbatical Team. The President will be responsible for the good conduct of the election.

**6.2.** The election of the Sabbatical and Officer Positions shall take place in the second semester of the academic year no later than the final week of April.

**6.4.** No person may be nominated for more than one office on the Students' Union.

- 6.5. No person may be nominated for a Part-Time Officer position if they are required to be on work placement for more than six weeks in any one semester.
- 6.6. The dates of all elections and a copy of the election regulations shall be communicated to students at least two weeks before the election.
- 6.7. All members of the Union shall be entitled to vote on Sabbatical and Part Time Officer Positions.
- 6.8. It will be the responsibility of all outgoing Sabbaticals and Officers if requested, to make themselves available to all candidates – for information purposes.
- 6.9. Nominations; candidates for all posts must be nominated by twenty Union members.
- 6.10. All members who are full time registered students of LIT at the time of nominations may be nominated for any position within the Students' Union. Sabbatical officers at the time of nominations are also entitled to be nominated regardless of their current registration status. The official nomination papers must contain, as well as the names of twenty nominees, the candidate's name as registered in the college, their college ID number and course of study. Current members of the Sabbatical Team, at the time of nominations, are not required to present their college ID number and course of study.
- 6.11. The election for all positions shall take place not less than five college days after the close of nominations.
- 6.12. Nomination forms signed by the candidates shall be returned no later than 12.00pm on the day of close of nominations.
- 6.13. Any Sabbatical position nomination form must be signed and witnessed by the President.
- 6.14. The decision on valid candidacy is at the discretion of the Returning Officer whose decision shall be final.
- 6.15. Voting: The system of voting shall be by simple majority.
- 6.16. Votes will be cast in sealed ballot boxes.
- 6.17. Voting slips shall bear the name of each candidate alphabetically and the office being contested.
- 6.18. The President and/or Returning Officer shall publicise the location and arrangement of polling station(s) and shall make arrangements whereby provision is made for all full members of the Union to vote in advance of polling day.
- 6.19. Polling stations will be situated in areas giving greatest convenience to the voters and must not be open earlier than 10:00am and close no later than 5:00pm

- 6.20. No other polling station can be opened other than those on the college campus authorised by the Returning Officer.
- 6.21. No canvassing may take place within the red perimeter line circumference of the polling booth(s). 10 Meters in any direction is the minimum distance allowed.
- 6.22. Voters must be fully registered students at the time of voting and must be able to identify themselves with a valid photo ID before being able to vote.
- 6.23. Any vote on which a clear preference is shown will be considered valid.
- 6.24. Counting: The counting of votes shall take place no earlier than 30 minutes after closing of the polling stations in an area designated by the Returning Officer.
- 6.25. Candidates have the right to call for a recount within 20 minutes after the result of the count has been announced. If a candidate is for any reason absent from the count result announcement the candidate may still request a recount within 20 minutes of the announcement being made. The Returning Officer alone will make the decision as to if and when the recount will take place.
- 6.26. The order of the count after ascertaining total poll shall be at the discretion of the Returning Officer.
- 6.27. Grievances: Any corrupt practice i.e. attempted double voting will be disciplined at the discretion of the Returning Officer.
- 6.28. Any candidate or ordinary member of the Union who has reason to believe that there was an irregularity of any kind regarding the conduct of the elections shall have the right to lodge an objection with the Returning Officer within one college day of the alleged irregularity taking place.
- 6.29. By-Elections: The above rules shall also apply for by-election.
- 6.30. Constitutional Amendments: This constitution can only be amended by a referendum.

**Article 7: CANVASSING**

- 7.1. Canvassing may not commence until after the closing of nominations.
- 7.2. All candidates are expected to treat all other candidates with dignity and respect.
- 7.3. No canvassing may take place inside the Students Union offices.
- 7.4. Where an election is in progress under this constitution the Returning Officer may at their discretion, make such regulations as may be appropriate to govern the canvassing or other activities of candidates in seeking election.

- 7.5.** Hustings/Speeches: All hustings or public debates with or between candidates or interested parties in an election shall be convened by the Returning Officer. The Returning Officer will also propose an independent chairperson.
- 7.5.1.** This person must be agreed by all candidates.
- 7.5.2.** Candidates shall hust in alphabetical order.
- 7.5.3.** Candidates shall have equal time for their main speeches. Five minutes for Sabbatical Officers and three minutes for Part-Time Officers.
- 7.5.4.** Points of information shall not be allowed. Points of order may only be made by the candidates and shall only be related to the running of hustings.
- 7.5.5.** Questions from the floor shall be subject to approval and read out by the Chairperson.
- 7.5.6.** Appropriate language must be observed at all times during hustings.
- 7.6.** All canvassing material must be cleared from each campus no later than one day after voting closes.
- 7.7.** Any canvassing material deemed inappropriate or offensive may be removed by the President and/or Returning Officer

**Article 8: REMOVAL/RESIGNATION FROM OFFICE**

- 8.1.** A Sabbatical Officer may only be removed from office if they are found to be in serious breach of their contracts.
- 8.2.** In the event of the resignation or removal from office of the President, the Deputy President shall take the role of President and an election for the role of Deputy President must take place no later than 5 working days after the resignation.
- 8.3.** In the event of the resignation or the removal of both the President and the Deputy President, there shall be an immediate by-election for the two positions in accordance with the election schedule.
- 8.4.** A Non-Sabbatical Officer may be removed from office by a two-third majority of Class Representative Council or Union General Meeting.
- 8.5.** Non- Sabbatical Officers can be removed from office by a 50% + 1 majority of a Union Sabbatical team vote of no confidence in a secret ballot. The Non-Sabbatical Officer must be given a chance to defend themselves and must be informed three days before the meeting of all the accusations made against them. Members can abstain from voting. In the event of a tie, the President shall have a second casting vote

- 8.6.** In the event of the resignation or removal from office of a Non-Sabbatical Officer a by-election will take place in accordance with the election schedule.
- 8.7.** The resignation of a Sabbatical Officer shall only take effect upon notification of same by letter to the Union President and one other Sabbatical Officer.

**Article 9: UNION POLICY**

- 9.1.** Autonomy. The Union is an autonomous organisation and shall not be affiliated to any organisation whose conditions of membership may affect the autonomy of the Union.
- 9.2.** Amendments. The sole amending body of this constitution and schedules shall be by referendum in accordance with 'Article 4' of this constitution.
- 9.3.** Indemnity. Every Officer, appointee or member of staff of the Union shall be entitled to be indemnified out of the assets of the Union against all losses or liability which they may sustain or incur in or about the execution of their office or otherwise in relation thereto, and no Officer, appointee or member of staff shall be liable for any loss, damage or misfortune, which may happen to be incurred by the Union in the Executive of the duties of his or her office or in relation thereto. Provided that nothing in this clause shall affect their ability for the consequence of any negligent or unlawful act on their part.
- 9.4.** The constitution is to be reviewed at least every three years.

**Article 10: FINANCE**

- 10.1.** The President shall be responsible for the allocation and control of the Union Account funds together with the Student Union Manager. Every other Student Union Account will be the sole responsibility of the President and the Manager of the Union. The Union must be willing to collectively account for their decisions to the membership.
- 10.2.** The Union Manager shall be responsible for the keeping of accounts. Both the President and Union Manager shall exercise supervision over all Union finances.
- 10.3.** The Union through the President, the Deputy President, and both Convenors shall incur contractual obligation on behalf of the Union in pursuance of the aims and objectives of Union Policy.
- 10.4.** The accounts of the Union shall be audited by a qualified external auditor.
- 10.5.** The Union shall hold bank accounts in the name of the Union.
- 10.6.** Cheques shall be signed by both the President and the Union Manager.

- 10.7.** The auditor in conjunction with the Union Manager shall be responsible for the preparation of annual accounts relating to the Union activities which will comprise of, as a minimum, a Balance Sheet, a Profit & Loss count, a Statement of source and application of funds and supporting notes to the accounts as well as comparative figures from previous session accounts.