



INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY TRALEE  
**STUDENTS' UNION**

**Institute of Technology, Tralee  
Students' Union  
Constitution**

**RATIFIED ON: 01/03/2012**

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**Article 1: NAME**

The name of the organisation shall be 'Institute of Technology Tralee Students' Union' abbreviated to 'ITTSU' and in Irish language 'Aontas na Mac Léinn, Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Trá Lí' – abbreviated 'AMLÉ ITT' 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.
- 2.2. Honorary members are Union members with no voting entitlements.
  - 2.2.1. Honorary membership may be granted to an individual at the discretion of a 2/3 majority of the Student Union Executive.
  - 2.2.2. All Union Presidents shall be considered honorary members of the Union after a full term of office is served.

**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 the two 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 Executive

**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
- Union Executive

**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 Board 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 5 working days' notice must be given for the holding of each UGM.

**4.5.3.** A UGM can be called by the President, the Union Executive 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 Union Executive 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.
- 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 Supreme Governing Body of the Union.
- 4.6.3.** The Class Representative Council shall consist of one representative 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 Executive 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 the Executive or otherwise, the Executive 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 reps per class.
- 4.6.8.** The President will cast one vote after conferring with the two other Sabbatical Officers.
- 4.7.** Union Executive.
- 4.7.1.** Union Executive is the following:
- President
  - Vice-President - Education Officer
  - Vice-President - Welfare Officer
  - Communications and Publications Officer
  - On-Campus Entertainments Officer

- Equalities and Citizenship Officer
- Mature Students Officer
- Societies Officer
- Sports Officer

- 4.7.2.** There shall be an Executive elected by the members of the Union according to the election schedule of this constitution, except in the case of the Societies Officer who shall be elected in the final term of the year at a general societies meeting and the Sports Officer who shall be elected in the final term at a general clubs meeting.
- 4.7.3.** The Executive 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 Executive may hold any other Executive/Non-Executive position in the Union at the same time.
- 4.7.5.** All Executive Officers shall be required to present a written Officer Report to 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 five working days' notice.
- 4.7.6.** The Executive shall meet at least fortnightly during term.
- 4.7.7.** The quorum for all Executive 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 Executive and other meetings must specify the person(s) who is to be responsible for their implementation.
- 4.7.9.** The positions of President and Vice-Presidents shall be Full-Time Sabbatical positions and shall be salaried.
- 4.7.10.** The terms of office of the Sabbatical Officers shall be from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July to the 30<sup>th</sup> of June of the following year inclusive.
- 4.7.11.** At the time of election the candidates for the position of any Executive positions must be full members of the Union. The offices are held for one year and any one position can be held for two years in total by the same person.
- 4.7.12.** A full member can only be a Sabbatical Officer for a total of three years in the Union.
- 4.7.13.** The President and Vice-Presidents shall represent the views of the Union Members which are expressed by Executive, 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 three Officers. In instances where there is a disagreement in allocating responsibility, the President shall have authority to decide.
- 4.7.16.** There shall be three Full-Time Sabbatical Officers in the Union who shall receive remuneration and expenses for their work within the Union.
- 4.7.17.** The other Officers of the Executive shall be Part-Time Officers and shall receive expenses at the discretion of the President of the Union.
- 4.7.18.** There shall be six Part-Time Officers in the Union.
- 4.7.19.** They shall report directly to the President of the Union.
- 4.7.20.** They are also directly required to give a report of their work to the Union Executive, 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
  - 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 Vice President-Education Officer.**

- 5.2.1.** The Education Officer will deputise for the President during the Presidents absence where appropriate, as determined by the President.

- 5.2.2.** The Education Officer is responsible for the implementation and development of the Union’s education policies subject to the general direction of Class Representative Council, Union General Meetings, Referendum or Union Executive.
  - 5.2.3.** The Education Officer will make every effort to undertake such research surveys, etc. and shall contribute to the development of educational policy locally and nationally.
  - 5.2.4.** The Education Officer shall deal with all queries in relation to grants.
  - 5.2.5.** The Education Officer shall provide information as regards transferring procedures for Institute of Technology Tralee Students to other colleges both in Ireland and abroad.
  - 5.2.6.** The Education Officer will be responsible for educational campaigns and events such as “Your Future week” etc. and also the training of Class Representatives at Class Representative Training.
  - 5.2.7.** The Education Officer shall automatically take up office on the Academic Council at the beginning of term and the out-going Vice-President Education shall be deemed resigned.
  - 5.2.8.** The Education Officer shall be responsible for providing a wide range of application forms, a prospectus and other relevant material for colleges both in Ireland and abroad.
- 5.3.** The Vice President – Welfare Officer.
- 5.3.1.** The Welfare Officer is responsible for dealing and providing information on welfare issues of the union.
  - 5.3.2.** The Welfare Officer shall seek to ensure that no discrimination of any kind occurs among students.
  - 5.3.3.** The Welfare Officer shall be responsible for increasing the raising 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.
  - 5.3.4.** The Welfare Officer will be responsible for all welfare related events both locally and nationally.
  - 5.3.5.** The Welfare Officer will provide training for Class Reps on Welfare issues.
- 5.4.** The Communications and Publications Officer.



- 5.4.1. The Communications and Publications Officer shall be responsible for the minute taking at all Union meetings, and distributing minutes and agenda when deemed necessary.
- 5.4.2. The Communications and Publications Officer shall assist in all Union publications such as the S.U.R.F. magazine etc.
- 5.4.3. The Communications and Publications Officer will be responsible for posters and videos relating to Union events.
- 5.4.4. 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.

**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 the President of the Union.
- 5.5.2. The On-Campus Entertainments Officer must also observe the Institute's alcohol policy when arranging events/functions.

**5.6. The Equality and Citizenship Officer.**

- 5.6.1. The Equality and Citizenship Officer shall have responsibility for the implementation and development of all Union policy and for running campaigns in relation to issues of discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, family status, gender identity, marital status, membership of the Traveller Community, nationality, race, religion, sexual orientation, and/or socio economic circumstance.
- 5.6.2. The Equality and Citizenship Officer shall have responsibility for running events and campaigns relating to citizenship in areas such as the environment and civic, social and political participation, with particular emphasis on voter registration; working with community and voluntary groups etc.
- 5.6.3. The Equality and Citizenship Officer shall co-chair an Equalities Working Group with the Vice-President for Welfare. This working group shall consist of a representative from each minority group present in the college as deemed appropriate by the Chair of the Working Group. The Mature Students Officer automatically holds a seat on Equalities Working Group.

**5.7. The Mature Students Officer.**

- 5.7.1. The Mature Students Officer shall be a mature student upon registration of IT Tralee
- 5.7.2. The Mature Students Officer shall work with both Vice-Presidents to represent the interests and concerns of the mature students.
- 5.7.3. The Mature Students Officer shall help with the organisation and implementation of any campaigns affecting mature students.
- 5.7.4. The Mature Students Officer shall sit on the Equalities Working Group.

#### 5.8. The Societies Officer.

- 5.8.1. The Societies Officer shall assist the Students Services Societies Officer with all issues relating to societies throughout the college.
- 5.8.2. The Societies Officer shall represent the views of the societies on the Executive and shall communicate Union Policy to both areas.
- 5.8.3. The Societies Officer shall sit on the College Societies Council.
- 5.8.4. The Societies Officer shall be elected by the College Societies at the general societies meeting during the last term of the college year.

#### 5.9. The Sports Officer.

- 5.9.1. The Sports Officer shall assist the college Sports Officer and GAA Officer with the co-ordination of all sports clubs within the college.
- 5.9.2. The Sports Officer shall be the chief spokesperson for the sports clubs on the Students' Union Executive.
- 5.9.3. The Sports Officer is elected by and sits on the College Sports Council.
- 5.9.4. The Sports Officer shall communicate the relevant Union policy to the clubs operating in the college.
- 5.9.5. The Sports Officer will organise sport related activities for the year on and off campus in conjunction with the On Campus Entertainments Officer.

### **Article 6: ELECTIONS**

- 6.1. The Returning Officer for the Sabbatical election will not be a member of the student body. The Returning Officer shall be appointed by the Secretary of the Governing Body of the College. The President will be the Returning Officer for the Part-time Executive positions. The President will be responsible for the good conduct of the election.

- 6.2. The election of the Executive shall take place in the second semester of the academic year.
- 6.3. In no circumstances shall the elections take place within three weeks of the commencement of the second semester exams.
- 6.4. No person may be nominated for more than one office on the Union Executive.
- 6.5. No person may be nominated for a Part-Time Officer if they will 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 full members of the Union shall be entitled to vote on Executive positions excluding the positions of Societies Officer and Sports Officer.
- 6.8. It will be the responsibility of all outgoing Executive Officers if requested, to make themselves available to all candidates – for information purposes.
- 6.9. Nominations; candidates for Executive posts must be nominated by twenty Union members.
- 6.10. 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.
- 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 5.00pm 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 President whose decision shall be final.
- 6.15. Voting: The system of voting shall be proportional representation with the single transferable vote, as operated under the 1923 Electoral Act of Ireland.
- 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 Chairperson 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 6:00pm
- 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).
- 6.22. Voters must be able to identify themselves with their college ID card 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 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 using all the media at the Union Executive's disposal.
- 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 husting or public debates with or between candidates or interested parties in an election shall be convened by the President. The President 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. Parliamentary language must be observed at all times during hustings.
- 7.6. All canvassing material must be cleared from each campus one hour after voting closes.
- 7.7. Any canvassing material deemed inappropriate or offensive may be removed by the President.

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

- 8.1. A Sabbatical Officer may only be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of a referendum. The Sabbatical Officer must be given a chance to defend themselves at Class Representative Council meeting three days before the referendum takes place.
- 8.2. In the event of the resignation or removal from office of the President, it will be Vice President-Education Officer who will take the role of President.
- 8.3. In the event of the resignation or the removal of both the President and the two Vice-Presidents, there shall be an immediate by-election for the three 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 Union Executive 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 and the President can only exercise their vote in the event of a tie.
- 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 an Executive 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 act on their part.
- 9.4. The constitution is to be reviewed at least every three years.
- 9.5. The Union shall hold a USI affiliation referendum at least every three years.

**Article 10: FINANCE**

- 10.1.** The President shall be responsible for the allocation and control of the Union Administration Account funds in consultation with the college management. The Entertainment Account and every other Student Union Account will be the sole responsibility of the President. The Union must be willing to collectively account for their decisions to the membership.
- 10.2.** The Union President shall be responsible to the Union for the keeping of accounts and shall exercise supervision over all Union finances.
- 10.3.** The Union through the President and the Vice- Presidents 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 the President and Vice President-Education Officer.
- 10.7.** The auditor in conjunction with the Union President 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.