



Union of Students in Ireland

Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn

USI Constitution

Table of Contents

Preamble	Page 3
Article 1 Title of the Organisation	Page 4
Article 2 Membership	Page 4
Article 3 Basic Principles of USI	Page 5
Article 4 Governance and Policy Setting Structures of USI	Page 5
Article 5 The Officerboard	Page 8
Article 6 Steering and Elections Committee	Page 14
Article 7 Committees and Advisory Panels	Page 15
Article 8 Union Finances	Page 17
Article 9 Miscellaneous Provisions	Page 20
Article 10 Transitory Provisions	Page 22
Schedule A Membership	Page 23
Schedule B Finance	Page 27
Schedule C Procedures	Page 28
Schedule D Elections	Page 33
Schedule E Standing Orders	Page 36
Schedule F NUS-USI Trilateral Agreement	Page 39
Schedule G Definitions	Page 45
Schedule H Advisory Panels	Page 46
Schedule I Employee Procedures & Contracts	Page 47
Schedule J Governance & Procedures Manual	Page 48

Preamble:

We, the Students' Unions representing students in Ireland, do hereby unite and form a union to represent our members on a national and international level.

The Union shall represent all students and shall be the representative organisation for students nationally and internationally.

The Union shall be a democratically governed confederation which shall represent and campaign for the rights of students without bias, fear or favour, and shall be respectful of the differing views within its membership, but accountable to all members for the performance of its duties.

Article 1: Title of the Organisation

- 1.1 The name of Ireland's national union of students is Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn – abbreviated as A.M.L.É or in English; the Union of Students in Ireland – abbreviated as U.S.I., hereinafter referred to as 'the Union'.

Article 2: Membership

- 2.1 The Union is a confederation of Students' Unions, referred to as Member Organisations.
- 2.2 All Students' Unions are accepted as Member Organisations provided that:
 - 2.2.1 Their constitution has been approved by National Council.
 - 2.2.2 They have applied and been accepted as a Member Organisation according to the application procedure as defined in Schedule A and who pay affiliation fees as decided by National Council.
 - 2.2.3 They have accepted the Union Constitution and agree to facilitate the implementation of policy as decided at Congress, keeping in mind the confederal nature of the Union.
 - 2.2.4 They have accepted in writing that they may not disaffiliate without providing twelve months written notice to National Council. During the notice period the Member Organisation shall continue to be a Member with all the rights and duties pertaining thereto.
 - 2.2.5 Upon affiliation, a Member Organisation shall enter into a legally binding contract confirming their acceptance of provision 2.2.4 of the constitution.
- 2.3 Individual students are said to be ordinary members of the Union and have such rights as are outlined in this Constitution and its schedules by virtue of being a member of an organisation accepted in accordance with Article 2. The elected officers of the Union's Officerboard are ordinary members of the Union for the duration of their term of office and have such rights and duties in addition as are laid down by this Constitution and its Schedules.

Article 3: Basic Principle of AMLÉ

- 3.1 The basic principle on which the students in Ireland build their Union is for the defense, promotion and organisation of the fundamental educational, welfare, economic, political, social, cultural and other interests of all the students in Ireland on a national and international level.
- 3.2 To realise this basic principle, the Union shall work to foster an education and training system open to all the people on the Island of Ireland, irrespective of any consideration, and which truly serves their interests.
- 3.3 USI believes that students have a right to a decent standard of living including the right to financial support, proper housing and future prospects of employment in Ireland.
- 3.4 USI regards the defense and promotion of all democratic and human rights as a core goal of the organisation.
- 3.5 USI shall seek to provide student services, including commercial services, for the benefit of the membership on the principle that control of student services should lie with the membership.
- 3.6 USI shall be a democratic, student led organisation, independent of all external authorities, with decision making being made at the level closest to students as possible, and where formulation of policy by the students ordinarily occurs by simple majority vote of their delegates at Congress except in such cases outlined in Schedule C6.3 and Article 4.1.8. USI respects the right of the students through their Member Organisation to call to account and instruct those charged with office within the union and to discipline and ultimately dismiss those who fail to carry out their responsibilities.

Article 4: Governance and Policy Setting Structures of USI

4.1 Congress:

- 4.1.1 The highest governing body of the Union is its Congress. It has the power to review and amend this Constitution and its Schedules, to decide policy and to direct the Officerboard through mandates.
- 4.1.2 The Annual Congress, shall review, adopt and set policy, amend the Constitution, review the Unions finances and the work of the National Council and Officerboard as well as electing the officers of the Officerboard

- 4.1.3 A Special Congress can be convened at any time on authority of Congress, National Council or on the written request of eight or more Member Organisations to the President. These MOs must represent at least one third of the ordinary members of the Union. It shall take place not less than 28 days and not greater than 42 days from the date it was called and shall deal only with the specific matter for which it has been called
- 4.1.4 Delegates for Congress shall be composed of the members of the Officerboard and members elected by and from each Member Organisation in the manner as laid out in Schedule C. All delegates shall have speaking rights.
- 4.1.5 The Annual Congress shall elect all members of the Officerboard excluding the NUS-USI President. Any ordinary member of the Union is entitled to contest any elected position at Congress. All registered delegates are entitled to vote in each election at Congress except in the case of the elections for the Vice Presidents for Union Development and Liaison. The electorate for the positions of Vice President for the Border, Midlands and Western Region and Vice President for the Southern Region shall be the registered delegates from Member Organisations located wholly or mainly in that Officer's region, as defined by Schedule G and the relevant Vice President.
- 4.1.6 Motions at Congress shall take two forms:
- 4.1.6.1 Mandates
Mandates instruct a member or members of the Officerboard, Committees excluding Finance Committee or National Council to perform certain tasks. The Mandates, which shall be contained in a published Mandates Manual, must contain a date specifying when the task is to be completed by, or when the Mandate shall lapse which may be a maximum of three years from the date of the Congress at which it was passed. Mandates may be removed from the Mandates Manual upon the completion of the task by the with the consent of National Council.
 - 4.1.6.2 Union Policies
Formal adoption of Union policy occurs by motion at Congress with the policy document itself appended to the Clár. Union Policies shall be contained in a published Union Policy Manual and they shall automatically lapse after three years unless reauthorised by Congress.

- 4.1.7 All Mandates and Union Policies that are due to expire shall be individually debated and put to the floor at Congress in a session of Congress prior to debating of motions and mandates submitted to that Congress.
- 4.1.8 Motions at Congress; both Mandates and Union Policies, shall be put to the floor in accordance with the rules and procedures laid out in Schedule E. National Council may, by resolution, place on the agenda of Congress a Preferendum. Such Preferenda, shall be conducted by written ballot at the same time as elections to Officerboard, using single transferable vote method with the results being equivalent to an Mandate or Union Policy passed under the rules and procedures laid out in Schedule E. Such Preferenda may only be placed on the Agenda of Congress provided 28 days notice is given to MOs. All Preferenda shall have, as the last option on the ballot paper, an option to select none of the above. Any policy passed by Preferenda shall supersede any previous conflicting policy.

4.2 National Council:

- 4.2.1 National Council is composed of the members of the Officerboard and one delegate from each Member Organisation who shall have the voting rights of that Member Organisation. All elected officers from each Member Organisation shall have a right to attend National Council. Speaking rights at National Council shall be in accordance with the Standing Orders of National Council as provided for in Schedule E.
- 4.2.2 The Officerboard shall be treated as a Member Organisation except that it shall not be treated as such for the purposes of quorum.
- 4.2.3 National Council is the executive body of the Union and must meet at least eight times per academic year. Its primary functions are to organise and implement effective campaigns to protect and advance the interests of students in terms of the education system and society, as per Union policy and to hold the members of the Officerboard to account.
- 4.2.4 National Council may not, reverse a policy or mandate passed by Congress, except in an emergency situation due to unforeseen circumstances it may, by a supermajority, suspend a policy from Congress and create a new policy in its place. This new policy

shall automatically be included on the Clár at the next Annual Congress

- 4.2.5 National Council may, if there is no policy in a particular area adopt interim policy which shall be automatically put on the Clár at the next Annual Congress for ratification.
- 4.2.6 Policies created under Articles 4.2.4 and 4.2.5 shall be placed in the relevant session of Congress and proposed by the original proposer or their nominee
- 4.2.7 Votes at National Council shall be taken as one Member Organisation, one vote, with the Officerboard having one vote, to be cast by the President or their nominee, except in the case of a tie or when the delegates from at least five Member Organisations request that voting shall be weighted in line with voting entitlements at Congress. This method of voting shall be known as a card vote.
- 4.2.8 National Council shall have the power, by resolution, to devolve its authority to another organ of the Union when required.

Article 5: The Officerboard

5.1 Composition of the Officerboard:

The Officerboard is composed of:

- 5.1.1 The President;
- 5.1.2 The Vice President for Academic Affairs & Quality Assurance;
- 5.1.3 The Vice President for Welfare;
- 5.1.4 The Vice President for Campaigns;
- 5.1.5 The Vice President for Equality & Citizenship;
- 5.1.6 The Vice President for the Border, Midlands and Western Region;
- 5.1.7 The Vice President for the Southern Region;
- 5.1.8 The Vice President for the Irish Language & Culture
- 5.1.9 The NUS-USI President;

who shall collectively be known as the Officerboard. Meetings of the Officerboard shall be chaired by the President, or the Deputy President in their absence, and shall not be quorate unless one half of the Officerboard is present. For the purposes of quorum, members of the Officerboard may be present by use of videolink or teleconference. In the event of a tie vote, the chairperson shall have casting vote. The Officerboard shall meet regularly but not less than once per month.

5.2 Work of the Officerboard:

The Officerboard shall:

- 5.2.1 Produce a plan of work for their term and present it for approval not later than the second National Council of the year.
- 5.2.2 Prepare a report of their work for each meeting of National Council and Annual congress
- 5.2.3 Advise the President and Finance Committee in the preparation of the annual budget.
- 5.2.4 Be collectively and individually responsible for the implementation of Union policy on a day to day basis.
- 5.2.5 Shall be bound by collective confidentiality.
- 5.2.6 Have the authority to act as the executive of the Union and make decisions when it is not possible to convene a meeting of National Council. All such decisions must be reported to the next such meeting of National Council.
- 5.2.7 Attend National Council, Officerboard, relevant Committees and other relevant USI Committees and Training Events except in the case of unexpected circumstance with the prior approval of the President.
- 5.2.8 Shall, in consultation with Finance Committee open and close such bank accounts as may be necessary.

5.3 The President:

- 5.3.1 The President shall have overall responsibility to lead the Union's work, to allocate and direct the work amongst the officers of the Officerboard and to report to Congress and National Council on the Union's work.
- 5.3.2 The President is the chief spokesperson and representative of students in Ireland.
- 5.3.3 The President is the Chief Executive Officer of the Union and can take such decisions that do not require a meeting of National Council or Congress. All such decisions must be reported to the next meeting of National Council.
- 5.3.4 The President or his or her nominee, shall be responsible for the human resource management of the union. The President must

consult the Finance Committee in the areas of staff recruitment and termination. All recruitment shall be in a manner to be agreed with Finance Committee.

- 5.3.5 The President shall propose for ratification, to the first National Council each year, another member of the Officerboard to act as their Deputy in their absence, or, in the event of their death, resignation or incapacity.
- 5.3.6 The President oversees the work of the Presidents Committee of which they are Chairperson.
- 5.3.7 The President shall nominate an appropriate member of Officerboard to assist Member Organisations not covered by Schedule G.
- 5.3.8 Where USI is requested to nominate a member or members to the board of an external body or committee the President shall inform National Council of all nominations made under this provision.

5.4 The Vice President for Academic Affairs & Quality Assurance:

- 5.4.1 The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance (hereinafter referred to as the VP/Academic) shall have special responsibility for the Union's work on academic policy and quality assurance at levels five and upwards on the National Qualifications Framework, including, full-time and part-time students in Further Education and Higher Education, students on Labour Market Activisation Programmes and Apprenticeships. They shall act as an advocate for the Union's education policy on a national and international level and shall assist the VP/Campaigns in relation to campaigns on education matters.
- 5.4.2 The VP/Academic shall also be responsible for supporting Member Organisations to develop academic policy within their own institutions and shall produce such research and develop such support structures, as this task requires.
- 5.4.3 The VP/Academic shall be responsible for policy and research on postgraduate issues and shall assist the VP/Campaigns in relation to campaigns on Postgraduate issues.
- 5.4.4 The VP/Academic shall be Chairperson of the Academic Affairs & Quality Assurance Committee and shall oversee its work. The function of this Committee is to support the VP/Academic in

developing, implementing and planning the Union's academic affairs and quality assurance policies. It also assists the VP/Academic in supporting the academic affairs and campaigns of Member Organisations.

5.5 The Vice President for Welfare:

- 5.5.1 The Vice President for Welfare (hereinafter referred to as the VP/Welfare) shall assist the VP/Campaigns in relation to campaigns for the defense and promotion of student welfare.
- 5.5.2 The VP/Welfare has responsibility for the implementation and development of the Union's welfare policy and oversees the work of the Welfare Committee of which they are Chairperson.
- 5.2.3 The VP/Welfare also shall have special responsibility for the provision of welfare publications and materials.

5.6 The Vice President for Campaigns:

- 5.6.1 The Vice President for Campaigns (hereinafter referred to as the VP/Campaigns) has overall responsibility for organising all Union campaigns.
- 5.6.2 The VP/Campaigns has the responsibility to organise and prepare campaign strategies and plans of action as required by National Council, Officerboard or Congress in pursuit of Union policy in liaison with the President.
- 5.6.3 The VP/Campaigns shall be responsible for overseeing Union publications, including electronic publications, in liaison with the President .
- 5.6.4 The VP/Campaigns oversees the work of the Campaigns Committee of which they are Chairperson.

5.7 The Vice President for Equality & Citizenship:

- 5.7.1 The Vice President for Equality & Citizenship (hereinafter referred to as the VP/Equality) shall have responsibility for the implementation and development of all Union policy 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.
- 5.7.2 The VP/Equality shall assist the VP/Campaigns in relation to campaigns for the defense and promotion of student's rights in the

areas of equality and citizenship with special focus on LGBT rights including carrying out the Union's policy on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights, encouraging the participation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students in the Union and working to eliminate prejudice against the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community.

- 5.7.3 The VP/Equality shall have overall responsibility for the running of Equality, Citizenship and LGBT training events such as Pink Training.
- 5.7.4 The VP/Equality shall be the chairperson of the Equality & Citizenship Committee.
- 5.7.5 The VP/Equality shall assist the VP/Campaigns in relation to campaigns on, and shall be responsible 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.

5.8 The Vice President for The Border, Midlands and Western Region:

- 5.8.1 The Vice President for the Border, Midlands and Western Region, (hereinafter referred to as the VP/BMW) shall be responsible for Union development and liaison in their region. They shall also be responsible for the overall direction of the work of their region in conjunction with and reporting to the Officerboard.
- 5.8.2 The VP/BMW shall communicate the message of the Union to ordinary members, Member Organisations, external organisations and the general public through various means including, but not exclusively, social media, traditional media, meetings, conference events, campaigns and training events.
- 5.8.3 The VP/BMW shall communicate regional and Member Organisation's issues to the Officerboard.
- 5.8.4 The VP/BMW shall work with all Colleges in the Border, Midlands and Western Region to develop their Unions focusing on Unions who have been suspended or where a College does not have a functional Union, to assist the students of that College to establish one.

5.9 The Vice President for the Southern Region:

- 5.9.1 The Vice President for the Southern Region, (hereinafter referred to as the VP/Southern) shall be responsible for Union development and liaison in their region. They shall also be responsible for the overall direction of the work of their region in conjunction with and reporting to the Officerboard.
- 5.9.2. The VP/Southern shall communicate the message of the Union to ordinary members, Member Organisations, external organisations and the general public through various means including, but not exclusively, social media, traditional media, meetings, conference events, campaigns and training events.
- 5.9.3 The VP/Southern shall communicate regional and Member Organisation's issues to the Officerboard.
- 5.9.4 The VP/Southern shall work with all Colleges in the Southern and Eastern Region to develop their Unions focusing on Unions who have been suspended or where a College does not have a functional Union, to assist the students of that College to establish one.

5.10 The Vice President for the Irish Language:

- 5.10.1 The Vice President for the Irish Language (hereinafter referred to as the VP/Irish) shall be responsible for carrying out (in conjunction with a full-time officer) Union policy on the Irish language and culture and for encouraging the use of Irish within the Union with the aim of developing a bilingual policy for the Union. They shall act as an advocate for the Union's Irish policy on a national level and shall assist the VP/Campaigns in relation to campaigns on Irish matters.
- 5.10.2 The VP/Irish shall also be responsible for supporting Member Organisations to develop an Irish policy within their own institutions and shall produce such research and develop such support structures, as this task requires.
- 5.10.3 The VP/Irish shall be Chairperson of the Irish Council and shall oversee its work. The function of this Council is to support the VP/Irish in developing, implementing and planning the Union's Irish language campaign and policies.

5.11 The NUS-USI President

- 5.11.1 The NUS-USI President shall be a member of Officerboard and shall have duties, rights and responsibilities as defined in Schedule F.

5.12 Conditions

- 5.12.1 No member of the Officerboard may serve a cumulative total of more than three years on the Officerboard. With the exception of the VP/Irish, who shall be unpaid, the other members of Officerboard shall be paid a salary decided by Finance Committee. Their term shall be from the 1st July until the following 30th of June.
- 5.12.2 Candidates for elections to the Officerboard, shall be required to, on acceptance of nomination, agree to be bound by the terms and conditions of Office as set by Finance Committee and shall on taking up Office sign a contract corresponding to the terms and conditions previously notified to and agreed to by the said candidate.
- 5.12.3 Members of the Officerboard shall have their starting salary matched to a grade in the Irish Civil Service, to be decided upon by Finance Committee. The starting salary of all officers shall be matched to the same level except for the President which shall be one grade higher. Should any Officer be re-elected to a second or third term, in the same position, they shall receive a long service increment or increments as decided by Finance Committee.

5.13 Impeachment and Discipline

- 5.13.1 All elected Officers of the Officerboard shall be deemed to be employees of the Union as defined by the Unfair Dismissals Acts 1977 – 2007 and shall be subject to and have the protection of employment legislation for the time being enacted in the State.
- 5.13.2 The Union is an equal opportunities workplace and is committed to providing a safe place of work and all employees shall abide by the terms and conditions of their employment and shall be subject to sanction and discipline up to and including dismissal.
- 5.13.3 The Union shall keep an up to date an employee procedure manual including but not limited to employee grievance, disciplinary, dismissal and bullying and harassment procedures as well as codes of conduct to be approved by National Council at least every three years and shall be included as Schedule I.
- 5.13.4 Dismissal of an officer shall be sanctioned by a supermajority of National Council or Congress.

5.14 Vacancy

- 5.14.1 Should a vacancy arise, other than in the case of the President,

through the death, resignation, elevation of an Officer to the Presidency, dismissal, impeachment or otherwise long term incapacity of a member of the Officerboard, then the following shall apply:

- 5.14.1.1 If the vacancy arises and there is six months or more of the Officer's term unexpired, then there shall be a by-election at the next National Council where it is reasonable to hold such an election given the time necessary to open and close nominations.
- 5.14.1.2 If the vacancy arises and there is less than six months of the Officers term unexpired then the President shall nominate a remaining member of the Officerboard, or in exceptional circumstances, with the consent of National Council, appoint a member of National Council to assume the responsibilities of that Officer. In the case of a member of National Council being appointed, they shall not have a vote at Officerboard.
- 5.14.2. Should a vacancy arise in the case of the President, an election shall take place at a meeting of National Council to be held not later than 28 days after the vacancy has arisen. The Deputy President shall act as President until such time as a new President is elected.
- 5.14.3 Where the application of Article 5.11.1.2 would result in the membership of the Officerboard being less than five persons, that Article shall not apply.

Article 6: Steering Committee

6.1 Composition and Election of Steering Committee

- 6.1.1 Elections for Steering Committee shall be held every two years and shall be organised and supervised by the President. Each candidate must be proposed by a Member Organisation or the President. Steering Committee shall have an Elections Subcommittee to which four members of Steering Committee shall be elected by the whole of Steering Committee.
- 6.1.2 Members of Steering Committee shall not be current members of the Union but shall have attended a previous Congress and shall have been a member of the Union.
- 6.1.3 There shall be twelve members of Steering Committee.

Vacancies can be filled by co-option and the term of co-opted members shall expire at the next Steering Committee election. Members are eligible for re-election.

- 6.1.4 Quorum for Steering Committee or Elections Subcommittee shall be half plus one of the total memberships of the committee or half plus one of that subcommittee.
- 6.1.5 From their number, Steering Committee shall elect a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of Steering Committee. Elections Subcommittee shall also elect a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson. The Chairperson of Steering Committee shall nominate members of Steering Committee to be Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson/Secretary of National Council. The Chairperson of Steering Committee may not also chair Elections Subcommittee. The Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of Elections Subcommittee shall be the Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer, respectively, of the Union
- 6.1.6 They may form other subcommittees and divide necessary work as they see fit within their membership.
- 6.1.7 Unless dismissed, they shall remain in office until their successors have been elected.

6.2 Functions and Powers of Steering Committee

- 6.2.1 Steering Committee shall order the business of Congress according to the provisions of the relevant Schedules and the direction of National Council.
- 6.2.2 Steering Committee shall chair the sessions of Congress and have responsibility for ensuring the running of Congress as laid out in the Constitution and Schedules.
- 6.2.3 Elections Subcommittee shall be responsible for the running of all Union elections according to the relevant rules and the direction of National Council.
- 6.2.4 Elections Subcommittee shall receive, investigate and adjudicate on all complaints relating to the running of Union elections; organise and chair Congress elections, make regular reports to Congress and National Council regarding Union elections, and act as a credentials vetting Committee for delegates to Congress.

Article 7: Committees and Advisory Panels

7.1 Committees

- 7.1.1 There shall be ten established Committees made up of representatives of Member Organisations, members of the Officerboard and members of Officer Advisory Panels who are invited by the Chairperson of the Committee.
- 7.1.2 The five Committees shall be:
- 7.1.2.1 The Presidents Committee
 - 7.1.2.2 The Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance Committee
 - 7.1.2.3 The Welfare Committee
 - 7.1.2.4 The Campaigns Committee
 - 7.1.2.5 The Equality and Citizenship Committee
 - 7.1.2.6 The Entertainments Committee
 - 7.1.2.7 The Southern Regional Committee
 - 7.1.2.8 The Border, Midland & Western Regional Committee
 - 7.1.2.9 The Dublin Regional Committee
 - 7.1.2.10 The Irish Language Committee
- 7.1.3 The Committees shall be chaired by the corresponding Officer on the Officerboard save for the Dublin Regional Committee and the Entertainments Committee where the President shall nominate a member of the Officerboard to chair the Committee. Each Committee shall elect another member of the Committee to act as Deputy Chairperson and another member to act as Secretary. The Secretary shall be responsible for taking and circulating minutes of each meeting. The Chairperson shall be responsible for putting together the agenda for each meeting.
- 7.1.4 The Presidents Committee, the Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance Committee, the Welfare Committee and the Equality and Citizenship Committee, the Irish Language Committee, the Regional Committees shall be forums to inform and advise relevant members of the Officerboard, to formulate, review and implement policy and to share expertise and experience.
- 7.1.5 The Entertainments Committee shall be a forum for its members to

share expertise and ideas in relation to, but not limited to, the organisation, promotion and running of events. It may be attended by the staff of USI or MOs, or by any guest by invitation.

7.2 Advisory Panels

- 7.2.1 Not later than the second National Council each year the VP/Academic, VP/Welfare and VP/Equality shall each present National Council, for their ratification, with a list of nominations of people they deem appropriate to advise them in relation to specific areas of their portfolio. These nominations, once ratified, shall constitute an Advisory Panel that the Officer may convene, in whole or in part, to assist them in their work during their term of office.
- 7.2.2 The Advisory Panel for each officer shall contain members for each area defined in Schedule H. Members of Officer Advisory Panels may be removed from their portfolio by a simple majority vote National Council provided the Advisory Panel member has been given the right to speak on their own behalf and/or make personal representations prior to the vote.
- 7.2.3 The members of the Advisory Panels shall be unpaid, however they may draw expenses, as set out by Finance Committee, where such expenses were incurred subsequent to a specific request for assistance from the member of Officerboard in charge of that panel.

Article 8: Union Finances

8.1 The Finance Committee

- 8.1.1 The Finance Committee shall be responsible for overseeing the finances of the Union and shall advise National Council and Congress accordingly of any developments or initiatives taken.
- 8.1.2 The role of Finance Committee is to:
 - 8.1.2.1 Draft the annual Union budget in consultation with the President who shall present it for approval not later than the second National Council meeting of the academic year.
 - 8.1.2.2 Monitor the budget on a quarterly basis. In the event of a deviation of plus or minus five per cent the Chairperson of the Committee shall submit a written report to the next meeting of National Council with a detailed explanation.

- 8.1.2.3 Examine the Union's annual accounts and submit them with a detailed commentary to Congress for approval.
 - 8.1.2.4 Determine, set and regulate the Officerboard's terms and conditions of employment.
 - 8.1.2.5 Oversee the general financial management and commercial development of the Union.
 - 8.1.2.6 All decisions other than those specifically outlined in Article 8 or Schedule B taken by the Finance Committee must be referred to National Council for notation. To overturn the decision and/or action taken by the Finance Committee a two-thirds plus one vote of National Council is required.
 - 8.1.2.7 Set expenses rates for all officers, committees, staff and panels of the Union
- 8.1.3 Finance Committee shall meet as often as necessary but at least once per quarter and not less than six times annually..
- 8.1.4 Finance Committee shall consist of seven members who shall be:
- 8.1.4.1 The President of the Union.
 - 8.1.4.2 The Chairperson of the Committee who shall serve a three year term and be nominated by the Board of Trustees and ratified by National Council. The Chairperson may only be removed from office during that term by a two-thirds majority of a National Council, provided that at least one month's notice of such motion is given.
 - 8.1.4.3 Two members, who must be members of the National Council at the time of their election, but not members of the Officerboard and are directly elected by the National Council. The first member shall be elected at the last meeting of the academic year and shall hold office for following twelve months. The second member shall be elected at the first National Council of the academic year and shall hold office for the following twelve months. These members may be dismissed by a two thirds majority at National Council. In the event of a vacancy of either of these members it must be filled at the following National Council
 - 8.1.4.4 Three qualified people from outside the Union, who are not members of the Union but may be serving Trustees, who can contribute by virtue of their experience. They shall be nominated by the President and ratified by National Council. Such persons shall hold office for three year terms.

- 8.1.4.5 One former President of the Union, proposed by the President and ratified at National Council and shall have a three year term and may only be removed from office during that term by a two-thirds majority of a National Council, provided that at least one month's notice of such motion is given.
 - 8.1.4.6 Staff members of the Union may attend at the invitation of the President when they deem appropriate and shall act as a secretariat to Finance Committee.
- 8.1.5 No member of the Finance Committee, other than the President of the Union, may serve more than two terms

8.2 The Board of Trustees

- 8.2.1 The President may seek the advice of the Trustees on any aspect of the Union's affairs.
- 8.2.2 All the real property and investments of the Union shall be vested in the Trustees who shall deal with such property as directed by resolution of National Council or Congress.
- 8.2.3 There shall be no less than three Trustees of the Union who are ratified by National Council on the recommendation of the President. Trustees can only be removed by a two-thirds plus one vote of a quorate National Council. They shall continue to hold office unless they resign, are removed or are incapacitated.
- 8.2.4 The Trustees, from among their members, shall elect a chairperson and shall meet as a Board when necessary but not less than once per year. Prior to Annual Congress, the Board, shall satisfy themselves as to the financial state of the Union. They shall communicate their satisfaction or otherwise to the Finance Committee and Congress.
- 8.2.5 The Board of Trustees and the President shall sign all property leases upon resolution of National Council or Congress.
- 8.2.6 The Board of Trustees shall be indemnified against risk and expense out of the assets of the Union.

8.3 Financial Responsibilities

- 8.3.1 As the executive of the Union, National Council shall ultimately be responsible for the finances of the Union.
- 8.3.2 National Council shall have the power to borrow, raise or secure the payment of money for the purposes of the Union and with a

view thereto, to direct the Trustees to mortgage or charge any of the real or personal property of the Union. National Council for the purpose of such borrowing or raising or securing the payment of money for the purpose of the Union shall be empowered to authorise the Trustees and the President to act on its behalf and enter into the necessary agreements and sign guarantees

8.3.3 The Trustees and the President in acting on behalf of National Council shall be indemnified against risks and expenses out of the assets of the Union.

8.3.4 The Union shall keep an up to date governance manual including but not limited duties and responsibilities of trustees, duties and responsibilities of members of Finance Committee, procurement procedures and an internal operations procedure to be drafted by Finance Committee and approved by National Council at least annually and shall be included as Schedule J.

Article 9: Miscellaneous Provisions

9.1 Relationship between the Constitution and Schedules

The Schedules to this Constitution contain the detailed provisions necessary for the enactment of the various articles of this Constitution. This Constitution consists of these Articles and all its Schedules. In the case of a conflict arising between anything contained in the Schedules of this Constitution and the Articles, then in such a case the Articles take precedence.

9.2 Amendments to this Constitution

Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed at the Annual Congress or a Special Congress. Not less than 28 days notice shall be given by the President to all Member Organizations stating the time, date and location of such Special Congress and this notice shall include the proposed amendments to the constitution. Constitutional amendments must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote provided the number voting in favour exceeds half the total number registered for Congress. The amendments shall take effect twenty eight days after the vote unless a lesser period is stipulated in the motion moving the resolution.

9.3 Amendments to the Schedules

Amendments to the Schedules may be proposed at National Council and at Congress, provided one months notice is given, and must be approved by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting. They

shall have effect one month after ratification unless National Council or Congress decides otherwise.

9.4 Amendments to the Table of Contents

Subsequent to each Congress, Steering Committee may make such alterations to the Table of Contents as they deem fit to reflect changes to this Constitution and Schedules.

9.5 Interpretation of the Constitution

The interpretation of the Constitution shall be vested, with the Chairperson of Steering Committee or another member of Steering Committee in their absence.

9.6 The Irish Language

The Union's Constitution shall be held in both the Irish and English languages and may be referred to in either. In the case of a conflict of meaning or interpretation between the English and the Irish translations, the English version shall be the definitive.

The Union has a bilingual policy, with regard to the Irish and the English languages. USI should give equal standing to both languages in all operations of the Union where practical to do so.

9.7 Revocation

All previous Constitutions are hereby revoked. However membership, elections, appointments and policies adopted under the previous Constitution are not invalidated or made inoperable as a result of this revocation.

9.8 NUS-USI Agreement

- 9.8.1 USI hereby recognises the unique and valued relationship between USI, NUS UK and NUS-USI.
- 9.8.2 The student movement in Northern Ireland is administered jointly by USI and the National Union of Students (NUS-UK). This unique agreement shall be governed as per the provisions of the Tri-lateral Agreement set out at Schedule F hereto.
- 9.8.3 Where there is a conflict between Articles of this Constitution and the Trilateral Agreement, as laid out in Schedule F, Schedule F shall prevail in relation to Member Organisations as defined in Schedule G..

9.8.4 For the purposes of this constitution and its schedules, the term Constituent Organisation (CO) shall be equivalent in all respects to the term Member Organisation (MO).

9.9 Review

There shall be a complete review of the Union's Constitution every five years effective from the date at which this Constitution was passed by Congress.

9.10 Indemnity

The Trustees, members of National Council and members of the Officerboard shall be indemnified by the Union against all liabilities properly incurred by them in the performance of their duties.

Article 10: Transitional Provisions

10.1 Revocation

To facilitate the transition to these new constitutional arrangements, the constitution in force at the time of passing of this constitution shall remain in effect and continue to operate in all respects until midnight on the the 1st of July 2012 when this constitution shall then come into effect. The exceptions to this is in relation to Congress 2012 where elections, procedures, nominations, portfolios, mandates and policies etc. shall be followed as per this constitution as if it was in force in its entirety. This Constitution supersedes all precedents of the Union up to the 1st of July 2012. Nothing in this Constitution shall invalidate any election or appointment made under the previous constitution

10.2 Deletion

Article 10 shall be automatically deleted in its entirety 1 am on the 1st of July 2012.

Schedule A: Membership

A1 Applying for Membership

The process for Unions to become a Member Organisation is as follows:

- A1.1 An applicant union seeking the status of a Member Organisation of the Union must fulfill the provision of Article 2 by:
- A1.2 Submitting a copy of its Constitution to the Officerboard of the Union at least three weeks in advance a of meeting of National Council at which their membership application will be considered;
- A1.3 Submitting a copy of a formal resolution of the applicant union, adopted with the authority of their membership which specifically seeks membership of the Union and contains an agreement to pay the affiliation fees, to accept the Constitution of the Union and to facilitate the implementation of the Union's policy bearing in mind the confederal nature of the union.
- A1.4 The meeting of National Council shall ensure that the conditions for membership are strictly adhered to and shall give full consideration to each application in its own right and hear any presentation made by the applicant Union in support of its membership.
- A1.5 The President shall, acting on instruction from Finance Committee, certify in writing, the full membership of each new, and re-certify the continuing membership, of each Member Organisation on the 1st July each.
- A1.6 Applicant organisations shall not be deemed to be a full Member Organisation until that date and in the event that an application is made after the 1st of July the Applicant shall not be deemed to have attained Member Organisation status until the 1st of July of the following year.
- A1.7 No membership fee shall apply until the applicant organisation is certified as a full member by the President.
- A1.8 While awaiting Member Organisation status an applicant shall be deemed to have observer status and such status will entitle such organisation to attendance at all Union organised events including Congress however such Observer Members shall not have a vote at Congress and shall not be entitled to submit any motion to

Congress, they will however be entitled to speak at Congress but not be entitled to run candidates for any position, Committee or other role. If an Observer member wishes to attend Congress appropriate fees will apply.

- A1.9 The Union may defer an application for membership in order to give a union a period in which to comply with the conditions for membership.

A2 Conditions of Membership

The conditions and duties of Member Organisations are as follows:

- A2.1 Its Constitution is broadly in accordance with Article 3 of this Constitution.
- A2.2 That it allows for membership of all students in the institution, covered by the description in Article 2.1.
- A2.3 It is exclusively a student organisation with all the members having full rights and duties without discrimination.
- A2.4 In the case of a Member Organisation having contrary policy to that of the National Union, it shall allow the officers of the Union an opportunity to present Congress views to Member Organisation's members.
- A2.5 Member Organisations will not be considered for quorum purposes until they have submitted an Executive Committee list to the Union and until the first event that delegates from the Member Organisation attend from July 1st to June 30th. The Union recognises the part-time nature of many Member Organisations and shall consider this when implementing this point.

A3 Individual Membership

If any student attends more than one college, their membership rights and duties for the purposes of this Constitution are taken to apply arising out of the status of the Union in the college which is the seat of their primary area of study.

A4 Expulsion

The conditions for suspension and expulsion of a Member Organisations are laid out as follows:

- A4.1 National Council or Congress, by a supermajority vote, subject to appeal to Congress, may suspend the membership or expel any Member Organisation where it is shown to be in continual serious and active violation of the fundamental principles of the Union.
- A4.2 Breach of the conditions of membership laid down by the Constitution and its Schedules will lead to the forfeiture of the status of Member Organisation except where National Council decides that the nonpayment of dues is the direct result of the actions of the educational or state authorities against a Member Organisation. In such a case the Member Organisation shall make such payment as decided by National Council.
- A4.3 In no case can a simple policy difference result in the suspension or expulsion of a Member Organisation.
- A4.4 A resolution proposing such action by the Union shall be circulated to all Member Organisations one month in advance of the session of Congress or meeting of National Council which is to hear the motion to suspend or expel a Member Organisation. A representative of the Member Organisation concerned has the right to speak before the vote is taken. Suspended Member Organisations shall not be deemed to be retain Member Organisation status and as such shall operate under a limited status equivalent to applicant Member Organisations and therefore will be entitled only to attendance at Union organised events including Congress however such suspended Member Organisations shall not have votes at Congress and shall not be entitled to submit any motion to Congress, they will continue however to be entitled to speak at Congress but not be entitled to run candidates for any position, Committee or other role. If a Suspended Member Organisation wishes to attend Congress appropriate fees will apply.

A5 Default

- A5.1 Any Member Organisation who fails to pay affiliation fees for a period of three consecutive years can be deemed, at the discretion of Finance Committee and National Council, to have withdrawn from the Union.

A6 Re-admissions

- A6.1 Re-admissions shall be dealt with as in the case of a first time applicant. Where a Member Organisation's membership lapses or is forfeited that Organisation shall discharge all of its financial obligations to the Union before its membership can be again considered except in cases of a hardship plea to be approved by Finance Committee.

Schedule B: Finance

B1 USI Finances

B1.1 The term "in benefit" describes a Member Organisation which is fulfilling its financial obligations to the Union as laid down in the Constitution and Schedules.

B2 Subscriptions

B2.1 The Union shall seek details of student numbers from the Higher Education Authority before 31st December every year. In the case of MOs not funded by the HEA they must provide certified details of student numbers before this date. Such student numbers shall be those for the previous completed academic year.

B2.2 The Annual Subscription for which a Member Organisation is liable shall be decided by National Council. It shall be calculated on the number of students represented by that organisation in the last completed academic year. Member Organisations shall pay and be liable for all full-time students and for those part-time students from whom they receive a fee. Where a student of a Member Organisation is by virtue of the course of study also considered as a part-time student in another Member Organisation, they shall only be affiliated through the Member Organisation in which they are registered as a full-time student.

B3.3 Finance Committee shall set a deadline for the payment of the annual subscription not later than seven days prior to the beginning of Congress. Member Organisations remaining in arrears after this date may have delegate entitlements withdrawn in line with Schedule C2.4.

B3 Arrears

B3.1 All Member Organisations who owe arrears shall agree with the Finance Committee a schedule for arrears payments, such schedule to be completed inside 2 years (exceptionally 3 years with the approval of Finance Committee). In the case of genuine financial hardship, Finance Committee may enter into other structured arrangement upon the production of financial documentation by the MO. In the event of Finance Committee's refusal of such an application an appeal can be made to a National Council preceding Congress. Failure to comply with the above will result in loss of delegate status at Annual Congress.

B3.2 Affiliation Fees owing must be cleared in a timely manner. In the case of a Member Organisation failing to clear an invoice or successfully seek a deferral of payment the Finance Committee shall, without prejudice to the

right of Finance Committee to withdraw delegate status at Congress, refer the matter to National Council.

- B3.3 Any Member Organisation in serious financial difficulties may apply to the Finance Committee to make alternative arrangements. Such application must be in writing and accompanied by such financial information as is available. In the event of Finance Committee's refusal of such application, the MO may appeal that decision to National Council.

Schedule C: Procedures

C1 Procedures for Congress

- C1.1 At the beginning of the academic year, National Council shall decide on the date of the Annual Congress.
- C1.2 Special Sessions of Congress may be called in the manner laid down in Article 4 of this Constitution.

C2 Delegates at Congress

- C2.1 Each Member Organisation is entitled to a minimum of two delegates and to one further delegate for every 1,000 members (or part thereof) for which affiliation fees are paid. Figures used for these calculations shall be those which are obtained as outlined in Schedule B2.1.
That is:
 - 0 – 1,000 students - 2 delegates
 - 1,001 – 2,000 students - 3 delegates
 - 2,001 – 3,000 students - 4 delegates etc.,
- C2.2 Delegates shall be elected in a manner prescribed by each MO.
- C2.3 Any incoming officers of member organisations shall have observer status if they are not acting as a delegate for their Member Organisation and shall not be counted as such for the purposes of C3.1. Such Observers shall incur the same fees as other delegates.
- C2.4 Notwithstanding Schedule C2.1, Finance Committee shall make recommendations to the National Council immediately prior to Congress regarding the withholding of full or partial delegate entitlements to Member Organisations who have monies outstanding and have not successfully made an application in line with Schedule B3.3
- C2.5 All members of Officerboard shall automatically be delegates at Congress.

C3 Observers at Congress

- C3.1 Each Member Organisation shall be entitled to send a maximum of two observers to Congress. Observers shall have speaking but not voting rights except where a delegate from the same Member Organisation transfers their voting card to an accredited Observer. No person may exercise more than one delegate vote at one time.

C4 Visitors at Congress and National Council

C4.1 Visitors may be invited by National Council or the President to attend Congress or National Council. They shall speak only at the invitation of and express permission of National Council, subject to ratification by Congress during formal business, or at the direct invitation of Congress, decided during formal business, in the case of visitors at Congress. Visitors shall under no circumstances exercise a vote. Congress shall however be open to the public with reasonable efforts made to provide a separated area on Congress floor provided there is no disruption to the work of Congress

C5 Quorum at Congress

C5.1 The quorum of a meeting of Congress shall consist of one half plus one of the total of the number of delegates registered as in attendance at Congress provided that one half plus one of the total number of delegates entitled to attend Congress are registered as in attendance.

C6 Motions at Congress

C6.1 Member Organisations may submit five motions each and may second seven motions. All members of the Officerboard and each Committee they chair may all submit three motions, and may second five motions each. To be placed on the Clár, each motion must be proposed and seconded by a different Member Organisations or a member of the Officerboard. A member of Officerboard may not second a motion proposed by a Committee that they Chair or vice versa. From time to time National Council may establish ad hoc Committees/Conferences who shall have the power to submit up to five motions. These motions must still be seconded in the manner above.

C6.2 Motions may be submitted under the following headings: Union Organisation; Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance; National Affairs; Welfare; Equality; Citizenship; International Affairs; Irish Language; Administration and Finance; and Constitutional Amendments.

C6.3 Constitutional Amendments require a two-thirds plus one vote of a quorate Congress in order to be passed as do National and International Affairs motions not directly affecting the members of the Union. All other motions with the exception of preferenda need a simple majority vote to pass.

C6.4 Steering Committee shall facilitate the composing of motions and amendments to policy motions providing that those Member Organisations who are proposing like or similar motions or amendments agree mutually to the composing of such motions and amendments that they have submitted. Composing sessions shall comprise of a member of Steering Committee and the proposers of the motions and amendments which it is

proposed to composite. Such sessions shall take place at the National Council meeting preceding Congress. No combined motion shall be composed without the consent of the proposer of the motion(s) which it is proposed to composite. Composing sessions may appoint proposers for the motions it has been agreed to composite and recommend an order of business.

- C6.5 The length of the various sessions of Congress shall be determined by the Steering Committee in agreement with the Congress Director and the President.
- C6.6 If a motion is being discussed when the guillotine on that session of Congress falls, the chairperson of that session shall immediately invite the proposer to summate and shall then proceed to a vote on said motion. In such circumstances the session of Congress shall be extended for a sufficient amount of time to comply with this provision
- C6.7 National Council, in consultation with Steering Committee shall set such deadlines for submission of motions as it feels necessary, bearing in mind the need for these motions to be thoroughly discussed by the membership in the Member Organisations however proposed amendments to this constitution must be received not less than 28 days prior to the opening of Congress.
- C6.8 Emergency Motions at Congress shall be accepted by Steering Committee up to a date and time announced by Steering Committee at Congress and shall only deal with emergency situations. i.e. the matter has arisen or the event has occurred after the deadline for submission of motions to congress.

C7 Agenda at Congress

- C7.1 The Agenda for the Congress shall be based on:
 - C7.1.1 Formal Business.
 - C7.1.2 Report from members of the Officerboard on their work.
 - C7.1.3 Policies & Mandates due to expire
 - C7.1.4 Discussion of Preferenda Motions
 - C7.1.5 Elections & Preferenda
 - C7.1.6 Policy & Mandate Motions
 - C7.1.7 Emergency Motions
- C7.2 Mandate Motions shall follow Policy Motions under each heading as defined in C6.2.
- C7.3 Amendments to Motions shall be discussed immediately prior to the motion being moved that it seeks to amend.

C8 Role of Steering Committee and Congress Director

- C8.1 The Steering Committee shall chair and co-ordinate the composing sessions and shall advise National Council on the adoption of deadlines for the receipt of reports, nominations, motions and amendments for Congress
- C8.2 On the nomination of the President, National Council shall approve a Congress Director who shall organise the Congress under the direction of the Steering Committee and the President.
- C8.3 Motions and amendments must be sent to the Congress Director by the date decided by National Council. Motions must be submitted on the headed paper of that Member Organisation and signed by the President of that MO by either email containing a scanned copy, or by fax.
- C8.4 Steering Committee shall perform such other functions as are laid down in the Constitution and Schedules including the preparation of a record of the decisions taken by each session of Congress which shall be presented to the President within one month of the end of Congress.
- C8.5 Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the Congress shall be conducted with the Standing Orders laid down in these Schedules.

C9 Procedures for National Council

- C9.1 The quorum at a meeting of the National Council shall be half plus one of all Member Organisations in benefit. The votes of the Officerboard shall not be included in the determination of a quorum.
- C9.2 Meetings of the National Council shall be convened by the President. At least seven days notice must be given to all Member Organisations for ordinary meetings. Emergency meetings of the National Council may be convened within one week of the written request of any five Member Organisations. The request shall state the purpose for which the meeting is being called and only this business shall be discussed at the meeting. The quorum of such emergency meetings shall be one-third of all Member Organisations in benefit. All Member Organisations must have at least five days notice of the date, venue and business to be discussed at such a meeting. Member Organisations must receive five days notice for the suspension of Congress policy.
- C9.3 In the absence of a member of the Steering Committee to chair National Council, National Council may elect an acting Chairperson who shall not be a member of the Officerboard.
- C9.4 Subject to the provisions of the Constitution the National Council shall be

conducted in accordance with those Standing Orders which are applicable, to be decided by the Chairperson of National Council, as described in Schedule E.

C10 Agenda at National Council

C10.1 The agenda for ordinary meetings of National Council shall be based on:

- Minutes of the previous meeting
- Matters Arising
- Reports from members of Officerboard.
- Completed Mandates
- Formal business
- Elections
- Any other business

C10.2 An agenda for each meeting shall be sent to each Member Organisation at least five days before the date appointed for the meeting, accompanied by a report from each member of the Officerboard

C10.3 Items of Any Other Business at National Council shall be accepted by the Chairperson in exceptional circumstances i.e. the matter has arisen since the closing of items for the agenda of that meeting

C11 Procedures for Elections and Steering Committee

C11.1 National Council may dismiss a member of Steering Committee by submitting a motion to dismiss to the President. The motion shall state the grounds for dismissal and the committee member concerned shall have the right to speak on the motion before any vote is taken.

C11.2 The election for Steering Committee shall be by means of a Proportional Representation, Single Transferable Vote system. Candidates shall not be current members of the Union. Member Organisations shall receive at least two weeks notice of the election

C11.3 Elections Subcommittee shall have responsibility for the smooth running of all Union elections. Elections Subcommittee shall propose timetables for Union Elections to National Council and shall inform Member Organisations of the timetables agreed.

C11.4 Elections for Steering shall be held at the last National Council each year and their term shall be from the July 1st.

Schedule D: Elections

D1 Elections at Congress & Preferenda

- D1.1 Elections and Preferenda at Congress and National Council shall be the responsibility of Elections Subcommittee.
- D1.2 Electors shall mark their ballot papers and the count shall be conducted according to the provisions of the Electoral Act (1992) as amended.
- D1.3 In all elections to Officerboard where there are any nominations, ballot papers shall include as an option the statement "Re-Open Nominations". For the purpose of counting votes, the "Re-Open Nominations" box shall be treated as a candidate. If the "Re-Open Nominations" candidate is elected, the Returning Officer shall declare the vacancy unfilled and shall hold an election for the vacant post at the next National Council.
- D1.4 The President and candidates and/or their nominee shall be entitled to attend the count in respect of the office for which they have been nominated.
- D1.5 When election or Preferenda results are announced the number of first preferences secured by each candidate/option in the first and all subsequent counts shall be announced.
- D1.6 No person may stand for election to an officer position who has ceased to be a member of the Union.
- D1.7 Candidates for the positions of President, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance, Vice President for Campaigns, Vice President for Welfare, Vice President for Equality & Citizenship, Vice President for the Irish Language, must be nominated by at least two Member Organisations, who are in benefit, before the date agreed by National Council which shall be not less than six days before the beginning of Congress. The Vice President for the Border, Midlands and Western Region and the Vice President for the Southern Region must be nominated by at least two organisations, who are in benefit, within the relevant region before the date agreed by National Council which shall be not less than six days before the beginning of Congress.
- D1.8 Elections Subcommittee shall determine regulations for the conduct of election campaigns to be ratified by National Council no later than December 31st each year.
- D1.9 No person who has already served in any position on the Officerboard for two terms and more than 50% of a third term, shall be eligible for election to that office. The one-year term of office shall be from the 1st of July to

the 30th of June of the following calendar year. However, outgoing Officers shall continue to serve as paid fulltime advisors for their successors from the 1st of July to the 7th of July inclusive after their terms expire.

- D1.10 Nominations must be sent to the Returning Officer by the date decided by National Council. Nominations must be submitted on the headed paper of a Member Organisation and signed by the President of that MO and submitted either by email containing a scanned copy or by fax. Candidates must also submit documentation proving their membership of the Union to Returning Officer by the close of nominations.

D.2 Procedures for Complaints with Elections

- D2.1 Complaints on any matter relating to the conduct of any Union election may be made by any elected officer of any Member Organisation President, a candidate in that election, or a member of Officerboard and shall be addressed to the Elections Subcommittee before the opening of ballot boxes for the election to which the complaint relates. No ballot box shall be opened until all complaints have been resolved. Elections Subcommittee, having fully considered the complaint received, shall recommend a course of action to Congress or to National Council (as appropriate) and ask if there are any objections. In the absence of any objections, the Elections Subcommittee's recommendation shall be binding. Objections shall be clearly stated and shall require a two-thirds majority of those present and voting to be sustained. In the event of an objection being sustained, the only course of action shall be a new election.
- D2.2 Complaints relating to the conduct of a count of votes in any Union election must be made by a Member Organisation President, a candidate, or a member of the Officerboard and shall be addressed to the Elections Subcommittee within 14 days of the count to which the complaint relates. The result of the count to which the complaint relates shall not become binding until all complaints have been resolved. Elections Subcommittee, having fully considered the complaint received, shall recommend a course of action to a meeting of National Council to be held within 14 working days of receipt of the complaint, and shall ask if there are any objections. In the absence of any objections, the Elections Subcommittee's recommendation shall be binding. Objections shall be clearly stated and shall require a two-thirds majority of those present and voting in order to be sustained. In the event of an objection being sustained, the only course of action shall be a new election.
- D2.3 Upon completion of all Union elections, ballot papers shall be sealed in

packets and kept in the custody of the Union's legal advisor for six months. Packets, if not opened, shall be destroyed after this time. Packets will be opened only in the event of a complaint relating to the conduct of the count or in the event of a candidate taking legal action.

D.3 Eligibility of Candidates for Elections

D.3.1 Queries concerning the eligibility of a candidate for any Union election may be made by any elected member of any Member Organisation a candidate, or a member of the Officerboard and shall be addressed to Elections Subcommittee not later than one week prior to the election concerned or 48 hours after the closing of nominations whichever later. Voting in the election concerned shall not commence until all queries are answered. Elections Subcommittee shall investigate any query raised and shall report to the next meeting of National Council and shall recommend a course of action and ask if there are any objections. In the absence of any objections, the Elections Subcommittee recommendation shall be binding. Objections shall be clearly stated and shall require a two-thirds majority of those present and voting to be sustained. In the event of an objection being sustained, the only course of action shall be a new election.

Queries concerning the credentials of any delegate to Congress may be made by a Member Organisation President or Delegation Leader or a member of the Officerboard and shall be addressed to Elections Subcommittee. Elections Subcommittee shall investigate and make a Report and recommendation to Congress at the earliest opportunity and shall ask that Elections Subcommittee's recommendation shall be binding. Objections shall be clearly stated and shall require a two-thirds majority of those present and voting to be sustained. In the event of an objection being sustained the Elections Subcommittee shall adopt that course of action.

Schedule E: Standing Orders

The business of the Congress shall be conducted in accordance with the following Standing Orders:

- 1 The time of assembly and adjournment shall be fixed by the Officerboard. Any delegates with the support of 10% of delegates present may on a point of order call a quorum count. In the event of Congress being inquorate the Chairperson shall adjourn that session until Congress becomes quorate. No formal business shall be conducted after 10.30 p.m. This Standing Order once adopted cannot be changed in the course of Congress
- 2 A member of Steering Committee, appointed by that Committee shall preside at all sessions of the Congress except for the initial formal business when the chair shall be taken by the President.
- 3 The Chairperson of the session or any other member of the Steering Committee shall not exercise a vote at any session of the Congress or participate in any substantive debate.
- 4 The Chairperson of the session shall have general responsibility for ensuring that discussion is conducted in an orderly fashion and that speakers are not interrupted except as provided for in these Standing Orders. He shall enforce any time limits and other matters recommended by Steering Committee and approved by Congress by simple majority vote.
- 5 Every motion, amendment or report shall be proposed by a member of the Officerboard or a delegate from a Member Organisation and shall thereafter be open for discussion.
- 6 No member shall speak more than once on the same question (unless it is a report) except the mover of the original resolution who shall be allowed the right of reply to the discussion immediately before the vote is taken.
- 7 Voting on resolutions shall take place in the order recommended by Steering Committee and approved by Congress.
- 8 If an amendment is carried, the mover thereof shall become the mover of the amended substantive motion.
- 9 Procedural Motions
The following procedural motions may be moved:-
 - 9a. A motion that the question now be put;
 - 9b. A motion that the question not be put;

- 9c. A motion that the question be taken in specific parts;
 - 9d. A motion to refer (or refer back) the matter to a specified later time or meeting or Officer or Committee or National Council;
 - 9e. A challenge to the Chairperson's ruling;
 - 9f. A motion of no confidence in the Chairperson;
- 10 Procedural motions shall require a seconder, and cannot be proposed during a point of order or during the act of voting or during a speech.
 - 11 The proposer of any procedural motions may speak to it for one minute followed by one speaker against it for one minute. The proposer of the substantive motion shall have priority in speaking against procedural motions except in the case of procedural motions (e) and (f) where the Chairperson shall have priority. The motion shall then be put to a vote without discussion.
 - 12 When procedural motions (e) or (f) is proposed the Chairperson shall immediately leave the chair until it is determined. If procedural motions (e) is carried the Chairperson shall rule in accordance with the procedural motion. If procedural motions (f) is carried, the Chairperson to whom it relates shall not take the Chair for the remainder of the session
 - 13 The Chairperson may refuse to put any procedural motion if one of similar effect and related to the same subject matter has been defeated within the previous fifteen minutes.
 - 14 If procedural motion (a) is carried, the Chairperson shall allow the proposer the right of reply before proceeding to the vote.
 - 15 Only one procedural motion may be proposed at any one time; amendments may not be proposed to procedural motions.
 - 16 A point of order shall take precedence over all other business except the act of voting, unless it relates to the conduct of the vote. It may be raised by any member provided they raise the point immediately and states that they are rising "on a point of order" and specifies the matter to which the point of order relates. A point of order shall relate only to the procedure adopted or to the conduct of the meeting.
 - 17 Points of information may be raised by any member who states that they are rising on such a point, and such member may be heard if the speaker gives consent. Points of information shall be limited to 15 seconds, such time to be taken from the time allowed to the speaker at the microphone.

- 18 The method of voting shall be by show of delegates' cards, each delegate having one vote, except in the case of elections, when it shall be by secret ballot in accordance with the system of proportional representation as laid down in the Electoral Act (1992) of the Republic of Ireland. If a delegate is temporarily absent he may deputise their vote to a registered observer from the same Member Organisation provided that such a person does not thereby exercise more than one vote. The Chairperson, with the approval of Congress, shall appoint tellers.
- 19 Suspension of standing orders may be used to facilitate business which is not on the agenda and that can only be introduced by suspension of Standing Orders. Standing Orders, other than this order and Standing Order number one may be suspended upon a motion to that effect being passed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting. Such motions shall require a seconder, shall state the purpose for which it is sought to suspend Standing Orders and the maximum period for which they are to be suspended, and shall be put to a vote without discussion. They may not be proposed while a member is speaking on a point of order or during the act of voting. Only that business for which Standing Orders are suspended may be discussed during the suspension. These Standing Orders shall not be changed during the course of Congress.

Schedule F THE NUS-USI AGREEMENT

Proposed revised trilateral Agreement between the National union of Students of the United Kingdom (NUSUK), The Union of Students in Ireland (USI), (the National Unions) and the NUS-USI student movement of the National Union of Students of the United Kingdom and the Union of Students in Ireland (NUS-USI) on the operation of joint work in Northern Ireland Region (the Region).

Preamble

- 1.1 NUSUK and USI as sovereign and independent national students" unions wish to further develop their unique relationship by working together to secure and assure the effective representation of the interests of students in Northern Ireland.
- 1.2 The objective of all joint work undertaken by the two National Unions shall be to promote defend and extend the rights of students and to develop and champion strong students' unions in the North of Ireland. Both National Unions recognise that close co-operation over and above normal international contact is vital in pursuing these objectives.
- 1.3 The National Unions are committed to supporting and empowering local democratic self organisation and determination as being the most effective way to achieve these aims.
- 1.4 This agreement recognises the central principle of NUS and USI working within their own policy frameworks in the region and as such are committed to fully involving and supporting all students" unions in the region in their respective national structures.
- 1.5 To this end, NUS and USI hereby commit to working in partnership to create a thriving, active, democratic student association in Northern Ireland to represent, develop, unify and support its students and unions. Locally autonomous but centrally supported by a partnership between NUS and USI, NUS-USI is established and funded from affiliation fees, subsidy and other sources from the National Unions and locally.
- 1.6 In working together in these ways, the National Unions reaffirm their commitment to the goal of achieving lasting peace and stability in the region.
- 1.7 The National Unions respect each other"s views of their own national affairs and this agreement in no way affects the rights of NUSUK or USI as independent National Unions.
- 1.8 NUS-USI has been consulted on and hereby approves the contents of this agreement.
- 1.9 This agreement supersedes and replaces all previous bilateral agreements between NUS and USI. Its purpose is to set out the conditions upon which NUS and USI agree to support NUS-USI to exist autonomously.

Membership

- 2.1 The NUS-USI constitution shall include appropriate criteria for membership as well as procedures for application, withdrawal and suspension of constituent membership.
- 2.2 Upon acceptance into membership of NUS-USI under its constitution, membership of both NUS and USI shall automatically be conferred upon the constituent member.
- 2.3 Disaffiliation from NUS-USI in accordance with the relevant rules in the NUS-USI constitution will result in exclusion from membership from each of the National Unions. Similarly suspension or removal from NUS or USI under their relevant schedules of the respective constitutions would result in suspension or removal from NUS-USI.

Governance and Ownership

- 3.1 The constitution of NUS-USI shall provide for governance arrangements that assure absolutely the political autonomy of students and their unions in the region.
- 3.2 The constitution of NUS-USI shall ensure that the political and representative bodies of NUS-USI shall be directed by students and their representatives.
- 3.3 The constitution of NUS-USI shall ensure that the administration of NUS-USI, whose purpose shall be to secure an organisational framework and facilities through which the aims of NUS-USI can be realised, shall be governed by a stakeholder management committee which shall include students, students' union officers, appropriate lay members from the region, and representatives from NUS and USI.
The constitution shall be subject to approval by NUS and USI on the basis that it reflects the provisions of this agreement.
- 3.4 The Constitution of NUS-USI shall form a schedule of the NUS Constitution and of USI Constitution.

Finances

- 4.1 The membership affiliation fee shall be set by the administering union of NUS-USI; save that it shall never be lower than the lowest rate of either of the National Union fees. The administering union's hardship fund criterion shall apply equally to members of NUS-USI.
- 4.2 Before December 31st of each year the organisational members of NUS-USI shall provide to the management committee of NUS-USI evidence of:

- 4.2.1 the latest student numbers for that organisational member i.e. the student numbers from the previous academic year. NUS-USI reserves the right to contact the Department for Employment & Learning for official figures if required
- 4.2.2 details of the block grant funding received by that organisation.
- 4.3 The constitution or Standing Orders of NUS-USI shall confirm that failure to provide this information to NUS-USI by a member will result in the member being barred from taking part in any votes of the members of NUS-USI, NUS or USI.
- 4.4 The constitution or Standing Orders of NUS-USI shall state that the management committee of NUS-USI may take into account the financial information provided under clause 4.2 when calculating voting entitlements in NUS-USI, for the following academic year. Voting entitlements in NUS and USI respectively shall be determined by the relevant constitutional provisions in each union however, the provisions of clause 4.4.1 & 4.4.2 shall apply in the case of USI.
 - 4.4.1.1 Recognising the different method of affiliation fee calculation and varying permutations in relation thereto as between USI, NUS-USI and NUSUK, voting entitlement within USI for constituent organisations shall be determined no later than February of each year by the Finance Committee of USI (or such other entity within USI as may in the future assume the functions of the USI Finance Committee as currently comprised). The determination shall be issued to COs at least ten working days in advance of the next meeting of USI National Council immediately following the issuance of the determination. Such voting entitlement shall be effective from USI Annual Congress to USI Annual Congress.
 - 4.4.1.2 The USI Finance Committee in reaching such determination shall consider the Full-Time Equivalent student numbers of each constituent organisation as certified by NUS-USI; the affiliation fees paid by each constituent organisation to the administering union and/or to NUS-USI; and any representations made on behalf of a constituent organisation. Having consider such factors the USI Finance Committee shall determined whether a constituent organisation has paid a fee commensurate with their student numbers ("a Full Fee") or a nominal fee in the context of their student numbers ("a Nominal Fee"). 4.4.1.3 Where a constituent organisation is considered to have paid a Nominal Fee then that constituent organisation shall be allocated a minimal delegate entitlement on the basis of the minimum

- delegate entitlement prescribed in the USI Constitution applicable at the time.
- 4.4.1.4 Where a constituent organisation is considered to have paid a Full Fee then that constituent organisation shall have delegate entitlements on the basis of their Full-Time Equivalent Student Number being counted as "the number of ordinary members in respect of which affiliation fees are paid" for the purposes of the Table set out at Schedule C, Paragraph 3(a) of the USI Constitution (or for the purpose of any provision of the USI Constitution from time to time amending, repealing or supplementing same).
- 4.4.1.5 The determination of Finance Committee in this regard in respect of a constituent organisation may be appealed solely by that constituent organisation to the next meeting of USI National Council immediately following the issuance of the determination and in the absence of such appeal the determination of Finance Committee shall be final and binding.
- 4.4.1.6 In unusual circumstances it shall be open to Finance Committee to determine that a constituent organisation though not having paid a Full Fee, has in fact paid a fee in excess of a Nominal Fee. In such circumstances Finance Committee may recommend to USI National Council for approval that a constituent organisation shall receive a delegate entitlement in excess of the minimum delegate entitlement but not in excess of the delegate entitlement that would have been applicable had a Full Fee payment been determined by Finance Committee.
- 4.4.2 Recognising the part-time nature of many constituent organisations/constituent members, whilst still affirming their membership of NUS-USI, constituent organisations/constituent members will not be considered in USI structures for quorum purposes until they have submitted an Executive Committee list to NUS-USI and until the first USI event that delegates from the constituent organisation/constituent member attend in each academic/Student Union year.
- 4.5 A level of additional subsidy sufficient for the operation of NUS-USI which is reasonable shall be agreed by NUS and USI in accordance with clause 4.8.
- 4.6 The constitution of NUS-USI shall provide for one of the national unions to act as the administering union for each academic year of NUS-USI, and the process for determining which national union is the administering union shall be specified in the constitution or Standing Orders of NUS-USI. The role of the administering union will include any or all of the following activities on behalf of NUS-USI:
The administration of NUS-USI affiliation fee income

- The operation of an NUS-USI account against which affiliation fees shall be accounted and from which expenditure on NUS-USI activity shall be financed
- The provision of NUS-USI staff and management support
- The provision of business development services and support including but not limited to IT, Communications and Purchasing
- The provision of senior management support for NUS-USI staff
- Financial management of NUS-USI's affairs such that regular financial statements are created, proper financial control is maintained and that accounts are independently audited for each financial year
- 4.7 The real costs of providing these services including appropriate depreciation charges for capital equipment will be calculated each year and recorded/charged formally as a charge to NUS-USI under a formal "administering union" agreement between NUS-USI and the administering union.
- 4.8 The national unions hereby commit to providing a level of support to NUS-USI from their own respective funds to ensure its success in the form of Presidents salary 2/3rd NUS and 1/3rd USI. The level of this support in excess of this shall be ad-hoc and determined by the respective budgeting processes of each national union and communicated clearly to NUS-USI. Any "in kind" support should as far as possible be costed for transparency in accordance with clause 4.7.
- 4.9 The administering National Union shall be responsible for any expenses related to visits of their own Executive or staff members to the Region except in relation to formal joint meetings held under this agreement.
- 4.10 The national unions hereby agree that any surplus in the NUS-USI account should be ring fenced for the future benefit of NUS-USI. In the event of deficit, costs shall be borne in subsequent years from the NUS-USI budget; save that in the event they cannot be met from future savings
- 4.11 In relation to the administering union:
The terms and conditions of employment for staff of NUS-USI shall be the same as those for staff employed by the administering National Union Employees shall be encouraged to join the appropriate Trade Union Administration of day to day employment and personnel matters shall be carried out through the line management structures of the administering union. Clear lines of accountability will be established such that NUS-USI representatives will be actively involved in the assessment, development and appraisal of staff that have been allocated by the administering union to support NUS-USI.
- 4.12 The constitution of NUS-USI shall be established as a schedule of each of the constitutions of NUS and USI. In addition the subsidiary charity of NUS-USI is the vehicle through which the charitable activities of NUS-USI are run.

President / Northern Area Officer

- 5.1 The President of NUS-USI (referred to as the Northern Area Officer within USI Structures and the USI Constitution) and from time to time as determined by NUS or USI other officers of NUS-USI, shall be recognised as the representative of Students' Unions in the Region and shall be granted full rights in the relevant structures of USI and NUSUK.

Joint Meetings

- 6.1 A formal joint meeting of NUS, USI and NUS-USI senior officers and staff shall take place bi-annually. At these meetings representatives of NUS, USI and NUS- Union of Students in Ireland USI shall discuss any matters which require formal agreement but the meetings shall focus on joint work which could progress the aims of NUS-USI.
- 6.2 The National Unions are further committed to maintaining a high level of contact outside formal meetings and informal meetings shall be arranged as and when necessary.
- 6.3 Where possible, both National Union Presidents shall attend NUS-USI Conferences accompanied by other relevant national officers.

Amendments

- 7.1 Amendments to this Agreement shall be agreed at formal joint meetings but must subsequently be ratified by the [managing bodies] of each National Union.
- 7.2 Either National Union may withdraw from the agreement based on a decision of its relevant respective managing body but notices of such intention must be given at least 12 months before withdrawal. [Neither NUS nor USI may terminate this agreement unless the non-terminating party (i.e. NUS or USI) is satisfied that the termination of this agreement will not result in a substantial threat to the financial stability or continuance of NUS-USI.

Governing Law

- 8.1 This Agreement shall be governed and construed in accordance with the laws of the jurisdiction of the administering union.

Signed and agreed by

NUSUK _____ date _____
USI _____ date _____
NUS-USI _____ date _____

Schedule G: Definitions, Terms etc.

Definitions used in this Constitution and Schedules are as follows:

- G1 'The Union' refers to USI.
- G2 'The President' refers to the President of USI except where otherwise indicated.
- G3 'Committee' refers to one or more of the Committees laid out in Article 7.1.2 or where otherwise indicated.
- G4 'The Southern' is defined as the counties of Carlow, Clare, Cork, Kerry, Kilkenny, Laois, Limerick, Tipperary, Waterford, Wexford and Wicklow.
- G5 'The Border, Midlands and Western Region' is defined as the Counties of Cavan, Donegal, Galway, Leitrim, Longford, Louth, Kildare, Mayo, Meath, Monaghan, Offaly, Roscommon, Sligo and Westmeath.
- G6 The region governed by the Trilateral agreement is defined as the Counties of Antrim, Armagh, Derry, Down, Fermanagh and Tyrone.
- G7 A 'supermajority' at National Council is a majority that is carried by two thirds or greater of those present and eligible to vote and that those votes are from Member Organisations that represent at least 50% of the total number of students whose delegates are present and eligible to vote.
- G8 'Ireland' is defined as the island of Ireland.
- G9 Except where otherwise indicated, the law governing this constitution shall be that of the Republic of Ireland.
- G10 Except where otherwise indicated, a year shall be construed as to be equivalent to the term of member of Officerboard i.e. from the 1st of July to the 30th of June.

Schedule H: Members of Advisory Panels.

H1 Academic Affairs & Quality Assurance

- H1.1 A person with experience/knowledge of apprenticeships.
- H1.2 A person with experience/knowledge of postgraduate research.
- H1.3 A person with experience/knowledge of medical studies.
- H1.4 A person with experience/knowledge of further education.
- H1.6 A person with experience/knowledge of teacher training
- H1.7 Such other persons as the VP/Academic may feel are necessary.

H2 Equality & Citizenship

- H2.1 A person with experience/knowledge of disability rights.
- H2.2 A person with experience/knowledge of international student issues.
- H2.3 A person with experience/knowledge of mature student issues.
- H2.4 A person with experience/knowledge of the LGBT campaign.
- H2.5 A person with experience/knowledge of the Irish language campaign.
- H2.6 A person with experience/knowledge of voter registration and youth politics.
- H2.7 A person with experience/knowledge of gender issues.
- H2.8 A person with experience/knowledge of environmental campaigns.
- H2.9 Such other persons as the VP/Equality may feel are necessary.

H3 Welfare

- H3.1 A person with experience/knowledge of road safety.
- H3.2 A person with experience/knowledge of mental health campaigns.
- H3.3 A person with experience/knowledge of physical health campaigns.
- H3.4 A person with experience/knowledge of sexual health campaigns.
- H3.5 A person with experience/knowledge of substance abuse campaigns.
- H3.6 Such other persons as the VP/Welfare may feel are necessary.

Schedule I: Employee Procedure Manual,

(To be approved later at National Council)

Schedule J: Governance and Procedures Manual,

(To be approved later at National Council)