

The University of Southampton Light Opera Society's Constitution

1. Name

1.1. The name of the society is The University of Southampton Light Opera Society, or simply 'LOpSoc', and hereinafter referred to as the Society.

2. Aims

2.1. We are a performing arts society who will meet throughout the year with the intention of producing and performing at least one light operatic production per academic year. Our aim is to promote light opera and similar musical activities in the union and the university in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

2.2. We also aim to put on at least one tour each academic year. The Society is a regular and successful participant in the International Gilbert & Sullivan festival.

2.3. Our repertoire consists of light, comic and ballad operas and operettas. We may perform at most one work outside of this repertoire per academic year, observing the conflict of interests rules in section 2.4 of this constitution. When deciding our shows we will take into account the aims of other current Performing Arts societies and ensure that conflicts of interest are avoided where possible.

2.4. Conflict of interests

A conflict of interest is defined here as a situation in which the concerns or aims of two different societies are seen to be in opposition. For example, if members of one society desire to put on a show that falls under the aims of another society.

In the event of a conflict of interest between two Theatrical Societies, the following procedure should be followed:

a. A meeting must be arranged at the earliest practical date between: the President/Chair of both societies; the Performing Arts Theatrical Representative and one additional member of each committee, as soon as either committee is aware of a situation that may cause a conflict of interest.

b. Should the conflict of interest concern a planned pitch, the appropriate committee must ask the relevant pitch team or potential pitch team to put preparations for the pitch on hold until the conflict has been resolved.

c. Prior to this meeting, each committee should discuss and, if necessary, vote on a stance the committee will take on said conflict.

d. During the meeting, the issue should be discussed and, taking into account the stance of each committee, an agreement should be made that the representatives of both societies feel is fair and in keeping with the best interests of the societies.

e. The result of this meeting will be brought back to each committee and if there are any further problems, the above process should be repeated until an appropriate agreement has been reached.

f. Each conflict of interest will be dealt with at the current committees' discretion, in the best interests of their society.

g. If there is any doubt to whether a conflict of interests is present, this procedure should be followed.

h. If the appropriate agreement is that the pitch to one committee should be stopped, then both committees must encourage and support the pitch team in pitching the show to the appropriate society.

3. Membership and Society Awards

3.1. Any Full, Temporary, Associate or Life member of the Student's Union (as defined in <https://www.unionsouthampton.org/about/membership.html>) are eligible to become members of LOpSoc upon paying a yearly membership fee to the Society. The value of the fee shall be decided by the committee at the start of each academic year.

3.2. Disclaimer: types of Union membership, according to the Student's Union rules.

a. All students of the University of Southampton are automatically Full Members of the Student's Union.

b. All alumni of the University may become Life Members of the Student's Union upon paying a one-off fee to the Union.

c. All Staff and Lifelong Learning students may become Associate Members of the Student's Union upon paying a yearly fee to the Union.

d. All other members of the public who have a significant input to the Society may become Temporary members of the Student's Union upon paying a yearly fee to the Union

e. For further information on Union Membership, contact:

membership@unionsouthampton.org

3.3. Alumni, Associate and Temporary members of the Student's Union shall be entitled to rights and privileges as stated in the Union's rules.

3.4. Full, Alumni, Associate and Temporary Members of the Student's Union who have paid the LOpSoc membership fee for the current academic year and are in any aspect actively involved in the society in the current academic year shall be referred to as Active Members of the society.

3.5. All members must give a contact phone number, email address and current Union number to the Secretary, and must pay the annual membership fee. Members without a contact email or phone number must ensure that they keep up to date on the Society notifications. The Society deems an email sent to all members and verbal notifications in rehearsals as sufficient notice of AGM's, EGM's, socials and other Society events.

3.6. LOpSoc Membership lasts until the end of the new academic year following registration.

3.7. The LOpSoc committee must always be provided with an up to date copy of all member names and corresponding student numbers.

3.8. The Committee shall have the power to expel any Member of the Society on the grounds of misconduct, or for conduct of a nature opposed to the objects of the Society and the Students' Union. Where any Member of the Society is expelled by a Committee, a report of the matter shall be made. Students who are expelled from the Society have the right of appeal to the Societies Department Committee.

3.9. Any member who is expelled from the society, or members who resign membership, are not entitled to a refund of membership fees.

3.10. Society awards.

At the end of each academic year the society grants one of its members with the Professor Lilley Award (3.10.1). In addition, Life Membership (3.10.2) awards may or may not be given at the same time of the year.

3.10.1. Professor Lilley award.

This award, in memory of the society's founder, is to be granted at the end of the academic year to a person who has contributed to the society more than what would be expected of them during that specific year.

Any member of the society may nominate candidates for the Professor Lilley award. The committee, minus those who have been nominated, shall decide among the nominations received who should be granted the award that year by a majority vote.

a. It is encouraged that a nomination period be advertised to active members near the end of the academic year, at the discretion of the chair.

b. It is encouraged that members write a detailed reason for the nomination, in order to inform the awarding committee and aid them on making the appropriate choice for the award.

c. Only one person may receive the Professor Lilley award each academic year.

d. If the remaining committee members sums to less than the amount required for quorum, other members of the society may be asked to help.

3.10.2. LOpSoc Life Membership.

This award shall be given to people who have, throughout their time as active members of the society, contributed and performed services for the society above what would be expected of them. It is the highest award given by the society, granted by nomination and ensuing Committee vote.

Any member of the society may nominate candidates for LOpSoc Life Membership. Nominations can happen at any point in the academic year, and should be communicated to the society's Chair. At the end of the academic year, the current committee shall decide whether the award should or should not be granted that year. If it is decided that an award should be granted, the committee shall proceed to decide, among the nominations received, who is to be awarded with LOpSoc Life Membership. Members of the committee may be excluded from the discussion in the case of a conflict of interests.

- a. In order to be eligible for LOpSoc Life Membership, the candidate must have been an active member of the society for a minimum of 3 years.
- b. LOpSoc Life Members are exempt from paying membership fees and are permanent members of the society.
- c. LOpSoc Life Members should be entered into the Chair's book.
- d. LOpSoc Life Membership can be revoked at any time at the discretion of the sitting committee, at the result of 2/3 majority vote.

4. Officers

The officers of the society and their duties are:

4.1. The Chair:

They shall be in overall charge of LOpSoc, and shall take overall responsibility for its actions. They shall attend theatrical societies meetings as the LOpSoc representative. If they are not able to attend any meetings, they may deputise this responsibility to another member.

4.2. The Treasurer:

They shall be in charge of keeping members informed of the financial position of LOpSoc and be responsible for all financial aspects of the society, particularly accounting for money within show budgets and managing the LOpSoc Ticketsource account.

4.3. The Secretary:

They shall be responsible for correspondence internally and externally, including the LOpSoc newsletter. They shall produce minutes of all committee meetings and upload them to a designate folder in the LOpSoc Google Drive. They will also assume responsibility of vice-leadership of the society including assumption of the Chair's duties in the event that they are unable to perform their role.

4.4. The Social Secretary:

They shall be responsible for organising social events at the discretion of the committee, and shall actively propose and enact plans for social events.

4.5. Publicity Officer(s):

They shall be responsible for updating the content in the LOpSoc social media accounts, organising the events in the Freshers Week ('Bunfight'), inviting reviewers and seeking sponsorship for productions. They will also oversee the general image and publicity of the society. For a disclaimer on the usage of the LOpSoc social media accounts please refer to item 4.7.

- a. They may join the current production team as associate producer(s), at their discretion, and subject to the agreement of the production team. Should they decide to join the production team, they may take as many responsibilities in addition to their tasks as Publicity Officer(s) and get as involved with the production as they wish. This is to be discussed and arranged between themselves and the production team.

b. The Publicity Officer position in the Committee may be occupied by two people, at the discretion of the current Chair. Each Publicity officer has an independent vote in the Committee. Coalitions between candidates prior to the election are not allowed.

4.6. Tours Officer:

They will be responsible for the organisation of the transference of a show to the International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival including communication, accommodation and any other related business. They have the power to request the assistance of other members of the committee in affairs related to the Festival.

a. In the event that the society has not been invited or has not produced an appropriate show for performance at the festival, the Tours Officer shall assume the responsibilities of a second ordinary member

b. The Tours Officer election may happen in an EGM prior to the AGM and election of the new Committee, if the current Committee judges appropriate.

4.7. Webmaster:

They shall have admin access to all of LOpSoc web-related accounts. They shall be responsible for maintaining and updating the contents in the LOpSoc website, updating the email forwarding and mailing lists, and maintaining the LOpSoc Google Drive and social media accounts.

Social Media disclaimer:

a. The Webmaster shall grant / revoke access to social media accounts to incoming / outgoing show producers and incoming / outgoing Publicity Officer(s) and Chair.

b. The only society officers that may update and upload content to the LOpSoc social media accounts are the Chair and the Publicity Officer(s).

c. The only production team members that may update and upload content to the LOpSoc social media accounts are the current show producers.

4.8. Archivist:

They shall be responsible for the creation of records regarding shows and events organised by the society for posterity and future reference. This will include organising the production of show DVDs, keeping the LOpSoc wiki up to date and maintaining the archives.

4.9. Ordinary Member:

They will act as an extra pair of hands to help any other Officer as requested.

4.10. In addition to the responsibilities listed above, all members are expected to do such tasks as directed by the Committee.

4.11. There must be a meeting held between incoming and outgoing Officers, where all duties and responsibilities are outlined to the new officers. At this meeting the new officers will be made familiar with the constitution.

4.12. The Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Publicity Officer(s), Social Secretary and Ordinary Members must be Full Members of the Union, i.e., current students in the University. The

other officer positions (Tours Officer, Archivist and Webmaster) may be filled by Alumni members of the society if uncontested by a Student member.

4.13. The Society's honorary President is Professor Geoffrey Lilley, founder of the society.

5. Committee

5.1. The Society's Committee shall be formed by the Officers described in section 4.

5.2. A regular committee meeting must be held at least once every two weeks during term time. All members of the society may attend regular committee meetings, but they may not vote on said meetings.

5.3. Minutes of all meetings shall be available online in the society's website.

5.4. The Chair shall preside all meetings. In their absence, the Secretary will assume responsibility. The Chair or Secretary must be present at all meetings.

5.5. All committee members are subject to expulsion if they fail to adhere to their duties in an appropriate manner. This decision must be voted on and passed by the remainder of committee. This will be subject to a 2/3 majority vote.

5.6. The quorum for any committee meeting shall be 50% plus 1 additional officer, including either the Chair or the Secretary. (i.e. for a committee of 12, the quorum will be 7).

5.7. Any member of the Society may attend committee meetings, but shall not be entitled to vote upon matters discussed at that meeting.

5.8. Any member of the committee who fails to attend 3 consecutive committee meetings without submitting apologies beforehand or consistently fails to attend committee meetings without appropriate reason, may be asked to resign their post at the discretion of the committee. This will not affect their membership status in the Society.

5.9. The production team of the current / future show may be required to attend committee meetings on request, provided 3 days notice is given.

6. General Meetings

6.1. A LOpSoc AGM (Annual General Meeting) shall be held in accordance to the rules laid down by the University's Student Union , at which the new committee will be elected.

6.2. Any Active Member of the society may nominate themselves for Officer positions, observing the restrictions of item 4.12 (definition of Active Member in item 3.3).

6.3. Self nominations may be received at any point between the announcement and commencement of the elections portion of the AGM. Nominations are to be tendered to the Secretary.

a. It is encouraged, but not mandatory, that candidates make known to the Active Members of the Society to which Officer positions they are nominating themselves prior to the AGM.

b. There is no limit on the number of positions to which one can nominate themselves. However one individual may not be elected for more than one Officer position.

c. Immediately prior to the voting, each candidate has two minutes to expose to the other Active Members why they are suitable for their chosen Officer position.

d. Any kind of coalitions prior to or during the AGM are not allowed.

6.4. With exception of the Publicity Officer(s), each position in the Committee is to be filled by a single person.

a. If the current / outgoing Chair or the majority of Committee members have a legitimate concern regarding the workload of a specific position, they may bring it to discussion and decide to open nominations for a second person to share the tasks of that position.

b. The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer positions may not be shared.

c. Candidates to shared Officer positions shall run individually. Coalitions prior to the election are not allowed.

d. The election of shared officers shall happen in an EGM, or together with the new Committee election at the AGM

e. The election of shared officers (including Publicity) shall happen in two stages, independently. That is, the society will cast a vote to select the first Officer, and once that is set a second vote will be cast to select the second Officer.

f. In the case of two officers sharing the same position, each has an independent vote in the committee.

6.5. The Chair will be responsible for informing all members of the AGM at least seven days in advance. Active Members are responsible for keeping up to date with the Society's announcements, and if an active member fails to do this it will not invalidate the proceedings of the meeting.

6.6. Any items for the AGM agenda must be made public to the society at least seven days in advance. No business other than that specified in the AGM agenda shall be discussed.

6.7. An annual report and accounts shall be made available to all members prior to the AGM.

6.8. An EGM (Extraordinary General Meeting) can be called by the Chair or Secretary of the society, or by written application to the Chair of at least 25% of the Active Members of the Society, together with a written statement of the objects for which the meeting is being called.

6.9. In the event of an EGM, the full Committee shall be informed of the meeting and the reason for it being called before it is held. An EGM agenda must be made public to the society.

6.10. At the EGM no business other than that specified in the written statement shall be discussed.

6.11. At least 24 hours' notice of an EGM must be given, with exception of Show Pitches EGMs (see item 7.4). The meeting must be held within 7 days of the request being given to the Chair.

6.12. All general meetings must have an attendance of at least 50% of the Active Members of the society.

6.14. Only Active Members of the society may vote at general meetings.

6.15. The Student's Union Clubs and Societies Officer must be notified about all general meetings.

7. Show Pitches

7.1. Any member of the Society may submit a pitch for a show.

7.2. A pitch team must be composed of at least one Director, one Musical Director and one Producer.

7.3. A pitch will consist of a written document and a spoken presentation.

7.4. An EGM must be held for the Society's Active Members to vote on the show pitches. The Chair will advertise the date for the spoken pitches at least four weeks in advance. The deadline for written pitches shall be 10 days prior to the EGM.

7.5. After the deadline for written pitches is closed, all submitted pitches must be made available for all active members of the society.

7.6. Written pitches must be submitted to the current Committee by the deadline stipulated by Committee. Written pitches shall contain at least information about:

- a.** the show concept
- b.** the music (chorus and band)
- c.** principal cast auditions
- d.** budget

There is no requirement on the amount of information included. It is in the interest of the pitch team to provide detailed and accurate information about the show in their pitch.

7.7. Any member of the society wishing to pitch a show which may cause a conflict of interest with another society (as described in item 2.4) should consult with their committee at least ten days before the written pitches deadline. The committee should then follow the procedure outlined in item 2.4.

7.8. Any member of the society that pitches a show which may cause a conflict of interest with another society without first consulting with their committee with sufficient notice, should be aware that their pitch will be declined solely on this basis.

7.9. Committee will bring any issues they have regarding written pitches to the following regular meeting after the written pitches deadline (that is, in the week prior to the EGM). Should the pitch teams not address the issues before or by the time of the EGM, the Committee retains the right to bring their concerns to the attention of the society before the voting in the EGM.

7.10. The voting and decision regarding pitches shall be carried out by all Active Members present in the EGM in which spoken pitches are to be presented.

7.11. If the Chair is involved in a pitch team, the EGM will be presided by the Secretary. If they are also involved in a pitch team, the other Committee members shall appoint an officer not associated with any pitch team to preside the EGM.

7.12. Each pitch team has fifteen minutes to present their spoken pitch to the society, followed by questions from the members.

7.13. After all spoken pitches are over, the pitch teams will leave the room while the Society votes. Members of a pitch team are not eligible to vote.

7.14. Each member who is eligible may vote only once. The vote can be:

- a.** to their preferred pitch,
- b.** to Abstain, or
- c.** to Reopen Nominations

7.15. In case the Society votes to Reopen Nominations, a new deadline for written and spoken pitches must be announced by the Officer presiding the EGM as soon as possible. The Officers present at the time of the voting shall give feedback to the pitch teams about the reasons for Reopening Nominations, within one day.

7.16. In the case of Reopen Nominations, the next EGM for the spoken pitch presentations and voting shall happen in the following week.

7.17. After a pitch is chosen, the new Production Team will do their best to uphold the high standards of the society. They may audition for a principal cast as specified in their pitch, however any member of the society should be allowed to join the chorus of the production without auditioning.

7.18. After a pitch is chosen, all members of the new Production Team must become members of the Society.

7.19. After a pitch is chosen, alterations may be made to members of the Production Team at the discretion of said team. Any alterations in the members of the Production Team must be immediately communicated to the LOpSoc committee. If any committee members have objections to the alterations they shall bring them up during the committee meeting. In this case, a vote may be held by committee to approve or reject the alterations.

7.20. After a pitch is chosen, the LOpSoc committee will appoint a committee member act as liaison between the cast and the production team. The liaison should not be a member of the production team or principal cast. If that is not possible, an exception may be made at the discretion of the Chair and subject to approval by a majority vote in committee.

8. Voting

8.1. Voting is by a show of hands except when dealing with contested elections. In this case, voting is by ballot or other method at the discretion of the Chair. Votes shall be counted by the Chair and Ordinary Member, and in the event of a conflict of interests the Committee will appoint another member(s) to count the votes.

8.2. Voting by proxy for absent members may be allowed, at the discretion of the Chair.

8.3. At general meetings each member of the society, including committee members, will have one vote each. In the event of a tie, the Chair has the casting vote.

8.4. In the event that conflicted interests nullify the vote of the Chair, an officer will be appointed by the remaining members of the committee to cast the deciding vote.

8.5. If, in an election with three or more candidates, the lead candidate fails to obtain the majority of the votes, there shall be a second round of votes.

a. The two candidates with most votes shall be subject to a second round of voting. All other candidates shall be eliminated at this stage.

b. A second round of votes will then be cast between the two remaining candidates following the first round.

c. In the event of a tie for the second place in the first round of voting, items 8.3 and 8.4 shall be observed to resolve the tie.

d. Disclaimer: election of shared officers. As per item 6.4(e), the election of shared officers shall happen independently, and this procedure should be applied any time a candidate fails to obtain the majority of votes.

8.6. All votes outside of general meetings will be committee votes, unless advertised to the society with at least 3 working days' notice.

8.7. The detailed results of all votings (i.e., the total of votes cast to each option in question) taken during regular meetings, EGMs and AGM must be written down in the minutes of said meeting, and shall be available to all members of society.

9. Financial Matters

9.1. The Treasurer of the Society shall be responsible for maintaining the accounts of the Society, which shall be available to the Committee.

9.2. An annual statement of the Society accounts must be presented to the AGM by the Treasurer.

9.3. The officers of the Society are jointly liable for the proper management of the Society's finances in line with SUSU policy.

9.4. After a new Treasurer is elected, the outgoing and new Treasurers must change the signatories for the LOPsoc banking account within a calendar month.

10. Affiliations

10.1. The Society may affiliate to an external organisation which is in line with the aims of the Society and which provides a direct benefit to its members. All external affiliations must be reported to the Societies Department Committee and to the Union AGM.

11. Alterations to the Constitution

11.1. The Committee shall approve amendments to the Constitution prior to a general meeting.

11.2. The Committee shall hold a vote to pass any constitutional changes. This shall be done by a ballot or show of hands, at the discretion of the meeting. Should there be a tie, the Chair will hold the casting vote.

11.3. After amendments are approved by the Committee, an EGM must be called in which active members will vote to pass or not the proposed amendments. The Chair shall make the proposed amendments available for all active members prior to the EGM.

11.4. The voting to pass or refuse constitution amendments may happen in the AGM as well, at the discretion of committee.

11.5. If the amendments are refused by the society's active members, the committee shall revise the proposed amendments based on feedback received from the active members in the EGM, and may or may not propose updated amendments, at their discretion.

11.6. The Secretary of the Society and the Societies Department Officer shall both keep a copy of the Constitution. A copy of the constitution will also be available for public perusal on the website.

11.7. This Constitution shall be reviewed by the Committee at the end of each active session with updates to be addressed at each AGM.