

Lancaster University Magic and Circus Society Constitution

Updated June 2025



1 The Constitution

The whole or any part of this constitution may be altered, amended or deleted at any General meeting or at the Annual General meeting. Any changes shall require a qualified majority.

2 The Society

2.1

The name Society shall be Lancaster University ‘Magic and Circus Society’ hereafter referred to as “The Society”

2.2

The Society shall be associated to Lancaster University Students’ Union (LUSU) subject to conditions set out in the Activities Bye Law. As such the Society agrees to abide by the Union Constitution, its Bye-laws, the LUSU Safety Framework and all other Union policies.

2.3

The Society may affiliate to external bodies subject to the approval of the Union Council (see section 100.6 in LUSU’s Constitution)

3 Aims and Values

3.1

The Society shall exist to provide an opportunity to all those interested in learning, practising, and performing magic and circus skills.

3.2

The values to which the society bases itself are;
genuine and honest,
inclusive and accessible
considerate and mindful,
nurturing and creative.

4 Membership

4.1

Membership of the Society is open to all full and associate members of Lancaster University Students’ Union. Society membership should fall into two categories, full and associate, as laid out in Section 7 of the Union Constitution.

4.2

All members may attend and speak at meetings however, only full and associate members may propose a motion or vote at a meeting.

4.3

The four principal positions of the Society Executive Committee - The President, the Secretary, the Treasurer/VP, and the Health and Safety Officer - must be full members. Associate and full members may run for any other position as described in section 6.9.

4.4

Honorary membership may be granted on a life basis or for a limited period, subject to the agreement of the qualified majority at the Annual General Meeting. This shall normally be granted to ex-members for outstanding service to the Society, or for those who can continue to offer service to the Society. Honorary members will be treated as associate members. The current honorary members are:

Lucie Sapsford,
Andrew Ludar-Smith,
James McMahon,
Harry Rolls,
Andrew Jenkins,
Nikolett Dravcecz,
Sandra Liwanowska,
Anna Strivens,
Cuil Short,
Amy Holmes.

4.5

Any member can request equipment for the society by taking the suggestion to the Executive Committee.

4.6

The Executive Committee reserves the right to refuse or revoke membership, with the approval of Societies Council, of an individual for breaching this constitution, the Society's Safety Code of Practice, the LUSU Safety Framework or bringing the Society into disrepute, subject to the complaints procedure set out in section 7 of this constitution.

4.7

The fees for membership will be decided by the Society Executive Committee at the start of each academic year.

5 Executive Committee

5.1

The Society shall be administered by an annually elected Executive Committee who shall have duties and responsibilities set out below.

5.1.1 President: who shall

- Be the primary representative of the Society to the Union, the University and to external bodies and attend the Societies Council and other relevant meetings.
- Coordinate and oversee the activities of both the Executive and the Society as a whole (book rooms, hold Executive Committee meetings).
- Be responsible for all Society correspondence and administration.
- Informing the members of other appropriate information as and when necessary.
- Oversee the Performance Regulatory Body and form the closing decision of the body.
- Oversee and be a part of the Health and Safety Regulatory Body.
- Ensure the most recent version of the society Constitution is available on the Lancaster Magic and Circus Society Members page.

5.1.2 Events Officer: who shall

- Answer emails and messages for the society
- Act as a contact between the Union and third parties when concerning potential shows and events.
- Publish performance opportunities to members.
- Be part of the Performance Regulatory Body

5.1.3 Social Secretary: who shall

- Organise and publicise a wide range of social events and activities for all members.
- Ensure that the safety aspects of such activities are satisfactorily addressed.
- Maintain good order at all social/activities.
- Create events for the socials on both the current members and alumni pages (where appropriate).
- Prepare a social calendar in advance as determined by the Executive Committee.

5.1.4 Treasurer: who shall

- Maintain good order of the Society Finances and ensure that the Union Financial Regulations are adhered to.
- Maintain an up-to-date account of all financial transactions.
- Be responsible for transferring payments to members or third parties, subject to approval from the President.
- If the President is otherwise disposed, the Treasurer requires a majority approval from the executive committee before transferring payments to third parties.
- Advise the Executive and membership on expenditure of the budget.
- Prepare a statement of revenue and expenditure, prior to Lent term, to be presented at the Annual General Meeting for ratification.
- Complete funding applications and annual budget forms.
- Ensure the previous Executive Committee does not have access to the Society Finances.
- Finances should be made visible to the society at any point.
- Be part of the Performance Regulatory Body
- Act as the Vice President of the Society who shall:
 - Maintain the running of the society in the President's absence.
 - Work alongside the President as a representative to the union.

5.1.5 Secretary: who shall

- Be responsible for administration of all matters relating to memberships and subscriptions and liaising appropriately with the Treasurer.
- Be responsible for all Society correspondence and administration.
- Take minutes at meetings and circulate agendas and minutes of such meetings to the member.
- Informing the membership of other appropriate information as and when necessary.
- Act as Returning Officer at all elections and ensure they're smooth running.
- Respond to all emails and organise the society email inbox.
- Respond to all messages received by the society and alert the relevant executive member to respond to said message.
- Check the LUSU Society mailbox at least once a month.

5.1.6 Health and Safety Officer: who shall

- Oversee the safety aspects of all Society activities and ensure that the LUSU Safety Framework and the Society's Safety Code of Practice is adhered to, and give specific responsibility for this area to a designated member of the Executive Committee.
- Keep the Society risk assessments up to date and ensure they are followed.
- Alert appropriate porters to any fire activities.
- Be responsible for the ordering and maintenance of all Society equipment.
- Oversee the Health and Safety Regulatory Body, and form the closing decision.

5.1.7 Aerial Coordinator: who shall

- Hire instructors.
- Ensure any places in lessons are filled such that the instructor can be paid.
- Organise practice sessions and lessons alongside the president.
- Help write relevant risk assessments alongside Safety Officer.
- Be a part of the Health and Safety Regulatory Body when appropriate.
- Be a member of the Performance Regulatory Body.

5.1.8 Vice Aerial Coordinator: who shall

- Perform the same duties as Aerial Coordinator (above).
- Assist the Aerial Coordinator with the running of Aerial sessions.

5.1.9 Publicity Officer: who shall

- Create leaflets, posters and other advertising paraphernalia.
- Create and distribute posts to the members and public social media pages to remind members of meetings and sessions.
- Be responsible for the advertising and publicity of all events the society is a participant of, when requested.

- Promote the society as a whole and attempt to generate interest in hiring the society by talking to third parties or other Union affiliates.
- Maintain the upkeep of the website, or delegate these duties to appropriate exec/ full time members.

5.2

In the absence of any member of the Executive, their duties may be delegated to another Executive member. Alternatively, a full member may be co-opted to fulfil such duties, subject to the approval of a general meeting, until the next possible election.

5.3

Any Executive members who fail to attend two consecutive general meetings, without acceptable written apology, shall be deemed to have resigned and a by-election shall be held.

5.4

Members of the Executive shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting and shall take office from Week 9 of summer term.

5.5

Failure of Executive members to carry out the duties conferred on them by this constitution or by resolutions of Society meetings, without reasonable excuse, will be grounds for suspension or motion of no confidence of the officer concerned.

5.6

All Society account passwords should be changed with each annual Society Executive Committee handover and not be disclosed to anyone else.

5.7

In the event of Executive Member misconduct, the Executive Committee must have an Emergency Meeting to discuss the misconduct and decide on the actions to be taken. A vote of no confidence can be called to bring the issue to the attention of the society if necessary. Discretion is advised on a case-to-case basis depending on the severity.

6 Elections

6.1

The running of all Society elections shall be the responsibility of the Secretary who shall act as Returning Officer. Should this officer be a candidate in any election, then another officer may be appointed Acting Returning Officer by the Executive for the duration of that election.

6.2

All executive members shall be elected by the end of Lent term at the Annual General Meeting.

6.3

All executive members elected at this time will attend training offered by the LUSU Student Activities Office.

6.4

Any member that wishes to run in the election must be a Lancaster University student at time of elections.

6.5

Any post may be filled by by-election at a general meeting.

6.6

Society members will be informed of the date of the election, positions available and details for nominations two weeks prior to voting taking place.

6.7

Re-Open Nominations (RON) shall be a candidate in all elections.

6.8

All elections are preceded by speeches by the candidates. The Returning Officer shall decide in advance the maximum length of speeches. The speeches shall be followed by questions to the candidates.

6.8.1

No group discussions should take place unless voted on and passed by a majority.

6.8.2

Candidates unable to attend must send written confirmation of their intention to stand and this may include a speech to be read out by the Returning Officer. If no confirmation is received, exclusion for the election will result.

6.9

Voting will take place using an anonymous online voting platform, such as strawpoll. In the case this is unavailable, a show of hands at the meeting shall be taken for each candidate. Members may only vote once per position. The candidate with the highest number of votes shall be duly elected. The Returning Officer shall be responsible for the count.

6.10

Any complaints regarding elections should first be taken to the Returning Officer, and then to the Societies Committee, should their decision be appealed.

7 Meetings

7.1

General meetings may be called by the president, by a majority decision of the Executive Committee, or by written request of five or more Society members.

7.2

General Meetings must be held no less than three times each year and at least seven days written notice must be given.

7.3

Any elected officer may have a motion of suspension of no confidence placed in them at a General meeting and a qualified majority shall be required to sustain it.

7.4

The quorum of General Meetings shall be determined by the Society itself. Failure to achieve quorum shall mean that the meeting has no constitutional competence.

7.4.1

In order to be valid, the quorum should be 150% of the Society Executive Committee – This is the Society Executive Committee plus 50

7.4.2

If this is not possible, the quorum must be 50

7.4.3

A minimum of 10 full members must always occur to achieve quorum.

7.5

Emergency meetings may be called in the same way as a General meeting, save that it shall require five days written notice of the business to be transacted. The quorum for such meetings shall be determined as above in Section 6.4 of this Constitution.

7.6

Emergency meetings shall only discuss the matter for which the meeting was called. It shall not be able to transact any financial business or amend the constitution.

7.7

There shall be an Annual General meeting in the last few weeks of the Lent term each year. The President shall present a report of the Society's activities for the previous year and the Treasurer shall present a statement of accounts.

7.8

Elections for positions on the Executive Committee shall be held at the Annual General meeting.

7.9

Quorum for the Annual General meeting shall be determined as above in Section 7.4 of this constitution.

8 Complaints

8.1

Any complaints about the running or operations of the Society or a member of the Society Executive Committee should initially be discussed with the President and then follow the procedures set below, also taking note of current SU regulations.

8.2

Any complaint regarding the President should be instead given to the Vice President (Treasurer) and then follow the procedures set below, also taking note of current SU regulations.

8.2.1

This section should be treated as highly private, and no external members of the exec or society will be involved unless at the discretion of the complaining member.

8.2.2

The complaint must be discussed with the exec member outlined above (8.1 or 8.2), covering the reasons why it is being placed.

8.2.3

Mediation and reconciliation between the complainer and the exec at focus of the complaint can be discussed prior to any action against the exec member if the member that placed the complaint wishes. If the member does not wish for the other party to be made aware of the complaint, this decision must be respected by all participating bodies.

8.2.4

If reconciliation is attempted and cannot be reached, a vote of no confidence may be called if the complaint is of professional significance, in which case, refer to section 7.3.

9 Performances

9.1

The President, the Events Officer, the Treasurer, and the Aerial Coordinator will form the Performance Regulatory Body who will regulate, enforce, and pass judgement on the terms as set out in the Lancaster University Magic Circus Society Performance Contract.

9.2

The Society expects a certain standard to be maintained, in compliance with the expectations of the event organiser.

9.2.1

If the Performance Regulatory Body deem the event to be ‘high profile’ they may require the Performer to demonstrate what they would do at the event to assess if it is suitable for the performance.

9.2.2

For high risk performances including but not limited to: Aerial; Sideshow magic; Juggling knives; Escapism; Fire performances. The Performer must demonstrate to the Performance Regulatory Body, and circumstantially the Health and Safety Officer, that they can perform their routine in a safe and professional manner.

9.3

Once a Performer has agreed to a performance they must attend said event.

9.3.1

Once the Performance Regulatory Body see them fit to perform, it is their duty to attend the event and any pre- and post-performance duties which may include, but are not limited to: rehearsals, which may be in the venue; moving, preparing and putting away equipment; setting up and clearing/resetting the venue.

9.3.2

Exceptions will be made in circumstances beyond the Performer's control and will be adjudicated by the Performance Regulatory Body or if the Performer has found a satisfactory substitute as deemed by the Performance Regulatory Body.

9.4

The Society recommends that each Performer operates as a self-employed individual. Self-employed individuals are responsible for their own business' management.

9.5

9.5.1

The payment amount shall be agreed upon prior to the event. It will be made clear to the Performer the amount that they will receive upon completion of the performance. The Performer may enquire as to the distribution of the payment from an event, but other performers will remain anonymous unless express permission is given for their information to be shared.

9.5.2

The Society retains the right to refuse payment should the Performer fail to comply with their duties as described in this section.

9.5.3

The Society reserves the right to prohibit any individual from taking part in a paid event with the Society should they have previously failed to comply with the duties described in this section.

9.6

If the Performer is employed by a third party that did not go through the Societies official channels (Facebook Page and Email), the Society is not responsible for any payment the Performer may receive for work done at an event. Disputes will not be mediated by the Society.

10 Safety

10.1

The Society must adhere to the LUSU Safety Framework at all times. Copies of this will be distributed at appropriate times throughout the year. Failure to abide by this framework may result in disciplinary action.

10.2

The Society shall have a Safety Code of Practice, that will be composed of a general safety document and fire safety document, that shall be reviewed annually. This code shall be shown to each member before they subscribe to the Society and be made readily available throughout the year.

10.3

The primary officer responsible for safety, and/or the Safety Officer shall attend an annual Duty of Care Briefing held by LUSU Student Activities Office. The other members of the Society Executive Committee are encouraged to also attend, although this is not compulsory.

10.4

The Society will have a Health and Safety Regulatory Body, which shall consist of the Health and Safety Officer, the President, and the Aerial Coordinator (when appropriate). This body shall oversee any activities that may be deemed higher risk than usual, and shall adhere to duties outlined in the Fire Health and Safety Manual (as of section 10.2).

11 AI Usage

11.1

The Society acknowledges Lancaster University's guidance on the use of Generative AI (Gen AI) tools within the "Amber" category, which permits their use in an assistive role.

11.2

Executive Members are not permitted to use Generative AI tools to produce original creative content, scripts, or performance material for official Society events, performances, or competitions, unless explicitly approved by the Executive Committee for a specific, defined assistive purpose, and with appropriate acknowledgement.

11.3

Assistive Use and Acknowledgment: Where Generative AI tools are used in an assistive role (e.g. for brainstorming ideas, structuring non-performance related documents like meeting minutes, or generating initial drafts for internal discussion that are not presented as final creative output), such use must be clearly acknowledged to the Executive Committee. The nature of the assistance provided by the AI tool must be explicitly stated.

11.4

Executive Members must never input sensitive, personal information on members or clients into any Generative AI tool, in accordance with Lancaster University's AI Usage Guidance on data protection.

11.5

The Executive Committee will provide further guidance and clarification on the appropriate use of Generative AI tools as needed, in alignment with evolving University policies.