



THE LAWS  
*of the*  
Diagnostic Society  
of Edinburgh,

*Being a learned Society  
Of Enquiry, Reason and Discussion*

ESTABLISHED 1787

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**List of Revisors:**

E.J.S. Hughes	President	CCXXX Session	2016
H.D. Wijayathunga	President	CCXXXV Session	2021

## PREAMBLE

1. The name of the society shall be THE DIAGNOSTIC SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH, hereafter referred to as “the Society”.
  2. The aims of the society shall be to promote debate and reasoned argument within the University of Edinburgh. The motions for debate shall often be flippant and, while debate shall be at the heart of the Society, the Society’s debates will encourage humour, within set guidelines of debate. Members shall be encouraged to present speeches to the society, on the tabled motion.
  3. The benefits of the Society shall be to engage students within debate in a traditional setting and to help members to develop both speaking and writing styles through speeches and essays.
  4. The society shall abide by any applicable laws, bye-laws and guidelines of the Edinburgh University Students’ Association, hereafter referred to as “EUSA”, in relation to recognised societies.
  5. The society shall be affiliated to no outside organisations, with the exception of EUSA and the University of Edinburgh, hereafter referred to as “The University”.
1. The Society shall consist of Ordinary, Extraordinary and Honorary Members.

## CHAPTER I – Admission

### *I. Ordinary Members*

2. No one shall be admitted a Member of the Society unless he or she has attained seventeen years of age.
3. Ordinary Members shall be entitled to be invited to speak at the Table. Ordinary Members shall not work to undermine the Society in any way or form, shall not conspire to destroy these Laws, shall treat all Members with equal respect and endeavor to actively attract new members by setting a good example to non-Members. Ordinary Members must pay the termly membership fee of £5.
4. Ordinary Membership shall be open to all matriculated students of the University of Edinburgh.
5. Membership shall be at least 75% matriculated students of the University of Edinburgh.
6. Every acceptance and entry into the Society shall be entered into the Minutes.

7. Members expelled from the Society shall be readmitted on the assent obtained through a simple majority of voting members present at the Meeting at which they re-apply, with voting in a secret ballot. This does not apply to Members expelled as a result of impeachment, who shall only be readmitted on absolute of members and the majority of the current office holders.
8. A list of Ordinary Members should be filed with the Activities Office at least once per semester to ensure membership databases are up to date.
9. If any dispute of membership should arise, the list registered through the Students' Association database will be used as the official list.
10. Ordinary Members shall swear of affirm upon the text of these Laws to uphold them all in equal and sincere measure. The President shall administer the oath. After the New Member shall have taken the Oath or Affirmation, the President shall call upon the Society Assembled to take a collective Oath of Companionship to the New Member, promising Loyalty and Respect.
11. Ordinary Members shall swear of affirm upon the text of these Laws to uphold them all in equal and sincere measure. The President shall administer the oath. After the New Member shall have taken the Oath or Affirmation, the President shall call upon the Society Assembled to take a collective Oath of Companionship to the New Member, promising Loyalty and Respect.

## ***II. Extraordinary Members***

17. Any Ordinary Member desiring to become an Extraordinary Member, must have made a speech at the table. The President shall notify the assembled Society, following which the applicant shall be sworn into the Society, and upon receipt of the necessary dues, shall receive the following signed and dated certification:

*We, N. N., President of the Diagnostic Society of Edinburgh and N.N., Secretary of the Diagnostic Society, do hereby certify that on (Date)*

*Mr/Ms/Other \_\_\_\_\_ was cordially received into the Diagnostic Society as an Extraordinary Member.*

18. An Ordinary Member who shall have attended the Society for three calendar years, or shall have graduated from University, shall be automatically conferred Extraordinary Membership. Other Ordinary Members may apply for such status should they feel entitled or may be nominated for such membership by other Members, whereupon it may be granted by the Society in two-thirds majority by secret ballot.

19. Extraordinary Members shall be entitled to participate fully in the Management of the Society, be able to stand for a Cabinet position and vote on procedural and substantial matters.

Extraordinary Members shall have a duty of attendance at all regular meetings, and thus shall constitute the Rolls.

20. Extraordinary Members who no longer reside in the City of Edinburgh or are no longer Matriculated students of the University of Edinburgh do not have the duty of attendance, nor must they pay the termly membership fee.

### ***III. Honorary Members***

21. The Society may from time to time, in recognition of particular service or merit to the Society, confer Honorary Membership on Members or Non-Members. The Membership shall be motioned for in writing by one Ordinary and one Extraordinary Members or two Extraordinary members, but not the person who is to be the beneficiary him or herself. The President shall then lay out the proposal before the Society present, and a vote is to be taken in which all except the beneficiary and the proponents of the Motion are to participate; upon a simple Majority the candidate is to be declared an Honorary Member.

22. Honorary Members have the same Duties as Extraordinary Members, but are not obliged to pay fees of any sort.

23. Honorary Members shall be treated with especial respect.

24. An Honorary Member's drinks, at a society event, will be taken care of by the Society, within reason.

25. Honorary Members shall not be elected to the Cabinet. If they choose to run for Cabinet, they must resign their Honorary Membership.

26. The Stoker of the Flame shall devise an appropriate ceremony for the conferral of Honorary Membership, which shall be presented at the end of term dinner, and at which one person shall at least make a Disloyal Speech in jocular and humorous tone, outlining a critique of the new Honorary Member.

### ***IV. Resignation and Expulsion***

27. All resignations shall be presented to the President in writing, who shall proclaim the resignation as soon as possible, which is when it is to take effect. All resignations are only to take effect after the payment of all arrears, dues and fines to the Society owed by the resigning Member.

28. Office Bearers resident in town neglecting to attend the meetings of the Society for three consecutive nights, without valid excuse, shall be liable to automatic expulsion.

29. Office Bearers leaving town must signify their intention to the Secretary in writing, or via electronic mail, and shall be liable to expulsion unless all arrears and dues are paid.
30. If it is drawn to the Cabinet's attention that a Committee Member has not performed their duties as required, or has behaved inappropriately according to the Constitution, then a Cabinet meeting must be held immediately to resolve the matter.
31. The Cabinet may impose sanctions for misconduct on Members, based on verifiable evidence collected, taking into account the seriousness of the misconduct with reference to the membership duties and standard code of conduct, any previous warnings, and any mitigating circumstances. When appropriate the following disciplinary measures may be applied:
  - i. Informal Warning.
  - ii. First Written Warnings will be issued for a minor offence or complaint.
  - iii. Final Written Warnings will be issued for: a further offence or complaint or if the conduct of the member failed to improve following a previous warning, or if the actions are serious enough to warrant a Final Written Warning.
  - iv. Immediate Expulsion Without Warning will be issued for: offences that require immediate removal from the premises.
32. Termination of membership will occur if there is a further serious event of misconduct, or if the conduct of the member failed to improve following a previous written warning, or if the member committed an act of gross misconduct.
33. All motions for expulsion shall be brought forward in writing by the Secretary, or any three Members, the question is to be decided upon by the Cabinet.
34. Edinburgh University Students' Association ("the Students' Association") Societies department will be notified upon removal of a member and provided with a copy of the evidence pertaining to the sanctions process and removal. All persons removed from membership may appeal to the Societies' department against such removal.
35. All Members expelled shall be struck from the Rolls. They will be liable for any arrears.

## ***V. Dispensations***

36. Dues-paying members who have appropriately notified the Society of their absence shall be classes Non-Resident Members, shall not be required to pay the dues for any session they do not attend for the majority of its meetings, and shall resume their seat upon their Return to Edinburgh.

## CHAPTER II – Office Bearers

### *I. Office Bearers in General*

37. The business of the Society shall be managed by a Committee of Office Bearers
38. To manage the business of the Society, there shall be annually chosen a Cabinet consisting of a President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and at the discretion of the President, a 4th position. Any of these office-holders may represent the Society to the University and EUSA.
39. The Office Bearers shall be chosen by ballot at the last Ordinary Meeting of the academic session.
40. No Office Bearer shall be entitled to resign their office without giving two weeks previous notice.
41. When the resignation of an Office Bearer has been accepted, the Society shall forthwith proceed to elect their successor by secret ballot.
42. No Member shall hold two offices at the same time.
43. The Cabinet shall consist primarily of the three Office Bearers set out above, though other Office Bearers may join in meetings of the Cabinet.
44. The Cabinet must consist of a President, Secretary and Treasurer (the Executive Officers) as a minimum.
45. Any Extraordinary member of the society shall be entitled to sit on the Cabinet.
46. All office-bearers shall be subject to election annually.
47. All members who are matriculated students of the University of Edinburgh shall be entitled to stand in elections.
48. The Office Bearers must be members of the Society and matriculated students of the University Edinburgh.
49. Society office bearers will complete annual online training as outlined by the Activities Team.
50. Current Office Bearers must be assigned to the Society Profile immediately upon election.

## ***II. The President***

51. The President shall be the Head of the Society in all its Business, presiding over meetings of the Society and of its Cabinet.
52. The president will chair the Cabinet and Emergency General Meetings.
53. Only the President may call Meetings of the Cabinet.
54. The President is responsible to the Annual General Meeting, the Cabinet and shall be ultimately responsible for the conduct of the society.
55. The President shall have the power to appoint, within two weeks of their election, the positions of:
  - i. Master of the Sword – The person responsible for keeping and conferring the Sword of Reason, and for matters pertaining to social aspects of the Society.
  - ii. Keeper of the Faith- The person responsible for the saying of the Diagnostic Prayer (as set out in Appendix I) at the beginning of meetings, and all other matters divine.
  - iii. Stoker of the Flame – The person responsible for all illumination, and master of protocol.
  - iv. Vintner -The person responsible for procuring suitable wine and other beverages for meetings, and any other duties that may arise from this Office. Two Vintners may be appointed if appropriate.
  - v. The Eye of Wisdom- The person responsible for membership, procuring new members.
56. When the President is absent or incapacitated, the Secretary shall preside over Meetings of the Society and the Cabinet. If both the President and Secretary are absent, then the Treasurer presides over Meetings.
57. The President shall constitute and adjourn the Meeting, preserve order and decorum in the Society, and have power to impose fines, without appeal, on any Member, to the extent of £3. Their decision, on all points of order, and on all questions that may arise with regard to the meaning of the laws at the Meeting at which they preside over, shall be final for the Meeting. However, at any subsequent Meeting, the Society may settle the point at issue by an explanatory vote, on a motion to that effect being made after due intimation.
58. As soon after the appointed hour the quorum shall have assembled, the President shall constitute the Society by requesting the Keeper of the Faith to say the Diagnostic Prayer.

59. In cases of equality, the President shall have a casting vote in addition to their deliberative vote.
60. They shall have no part in the question for debate, unless they hand over the Chair temporarily.
61. The President may be impeached for their conduct in the Chair.
62. Should the President resign a new President or Acting President will be voted in at an EGM.
63. It is the President's responsibility to ensure the Society has submitted their annual report, risk assessment and reregistration forms to the Activities Office.

### ***III. The Secretary***

64. The Secretary shall keep the Minutes of the Society, manage the correspondence, and in general, bring, in their order, motions and other business under the notice of the Society.
65. The Secretary shall be responsible to the President for the administration of the society.
66. The Secretary shall also be responsible for any correspondence within or on behalf of the Society and prepare the agendas and the minutes of every committee meeting, AGM and EGM.
67. Should the Secretary resign, a new Secretary or Acting Secretary will be voted in at an EGM.
68. The Secretary shall keep open, for the inspection of Members, the Minute-book, of the Society, and extract from the Minutes, and annex to the Secretary's copy of the Laws, such alterations as may be made on them.
69. At the close of each sederunt, they shall announce the Public Business for the next meeting.
70. The Secretary shall also be responsible for any logistical requirements, which the Society may have, such as the booking of rooms.

### ***IV. The Treasurer***

71. The Treasurer shall be responsible to the President for the finances of the society.
72. The financial year shall run from 1st April to 31st March.
73. The Treasurer shall collect all fines and contributions, manage the Society's funds, acquire membership fees and exhibit a state of their accounts as often as required by the Society.

Any cheque written out in name of the Society shall not be valid, unless it carries the signatures of two Cabinet Members.

74. It is the Treasurer's responsibility to ensure the annual financial report is complete and submitted along with the society's annual report.

75. The Treasurer shall keep and prepare Accounts of the Society and provide provisional budget, as exhaustive as possible, to be presented at the Annual General Meeting.

76. At every meeting, during the Private Business, they shall read out the list of arrears and fines, etc.

77. If not satisfied with an excuse received for fineable an offence, they shall refer it to the decision of the Society.

78. They may take charge of any fund-raising efforts which the Society may wish to undertake.

79. Should the Treasurer resign, a new Treasurer or Acting Treasurer will be voted in at an EGM.

## CHAPTER III - Meetings

### *I. Ordinary Meetings*

80. The Society shall meet every second Thursday evening, unless rearranged with the consent of the Committee, at seven-thirty o'clock or any other hour to be fixed not later than the third Meeting in the Session. The first meeting of the Society shall take place not later than the second Thursday in October, and the last not later than the last Thursday in May.

81. The Society should adjourn not later than twelve o'clock, after which any Member shall be at liberty to leave the meeting; and no private business shall be discussed after the calling of the last Roll.

81. Six Members shall constitute a quorum.

82. Should there not be a quorum assembled at the time and place of the Meeting, the Members present, after waiting half- an-hour, and having signed a minute to that effect, may adjourn; and such as are absent shall be subject to the penalties.

### *II. Extraordinary Meetings*

83. All members of the Society are entitled to attend Annual General Meetings (hereinafter referred to as the AGM), the first of which will be held at the beginning of the first Meeting of the Session.

84. It is the responsibility of the Secretary to ensure that members receive at least 14 days written/email notification of the AGM and of elections not held at the AGM.
85. Motions to be discussed should be presented to the secretary in advance of the AGM.
86. All Office bearer roles shall be subject to election annually at the AGM.
87. The President may call an Extraordinary General Meeting for matters arising during the course of the year which require consideration by members.
88. In the event of a cabinet position becoming vacant, the President will call an EGM to elect a replacement, giving 14 days written/email notice.
89. The EGM shall follow the procedure of the AGM.
90. Where possible, any EGM shall take place in place of an ordinary Meeting.
91. Constitutional amendments shall require a two-thirds majority at a general meeting open to all members; 14 days notice must be given for this vote.
92. An Extraordinary Meeting may at any time be called, upon a requisition to that effect, EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS signed by four Members, being addressed to the President and Secretary.
93. No business shall be considered except that for which the Meeting has been expressly called.

## CHAPTER IV – General Clauses

94. The Students' Association considers the ruling society constitution to be that which is displayed on the Society Profile.
95. Re-registration of the society must be submitted prior to re-registration deadline set by EUSA.
96. Annual and Financial Reports must be completed and submitted as part of the re-registration process following the AGM in second semester.
97. The society may not register to obtain any legal status, including a limited company or a charitable status.
98. The Society shall be non-profit making. The Office Bearers and members may only receive payment, direct or indirect, as reimbursement for legitimate expenses.

99. The society will continue to take all necessary steps to ensure that our meetings, events and socials are accessible to all and that meeting are appropriately inclusive to all.
100. The society will continue to ensure that it complies with any relevant data protection legislation.
101. The Society shall abide by any applicable laws, bye-laws and guidelines of the Edinburgh University Students' Association in relation to recognised Societies.
102. The society believes that discrimination or harassment, direct or indirect, based on a person's gender, age (except where it relates to licensing laws), race, skin colour, nationality, religious belief, socio-economic background, disability, HIV status, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, family situation, domestic responsibilities or any other irrelevant distinction, is detrimental to the society, the university and wider society, and will not be tolerated.

## CHAPTER IV – Society Business

### *I. Public Business*

103. The official dress code for all Sessions shall be Black Tie or National Dress. Where this is not reasonable for an individual, they should aspire to wear their smartest possible alternative. The Cabinet maintains the right to impose fines for breaches of dress code.
104. The use of technology including, but not limited to, mobile phones and laptops, is strictly prohibited in the rooms housing the Debate, with the exception of when the user requires it as a communication aid or to mitigate some other disability or extraordinary situation.
105. Each Session shall be opened by an Introductory, and concluded by a Valedictory, Discourse.
106. Following this a reading pertaining to the motion, as determined by the Cabinet, shall be performed by a member appointed by the President.
107. A motion to the Table will be made; this will take the form of either an Essay and Debate or Classical Debate.
108. All those in attendance of the Debate are entitled to vote on the motion.

#### *i. Essay*

109. An original Essay shall be read, and a Question discussed. Members as well as non-Members may participate in these proceedings, though non-Members will have to specifically invited to do so by the President.
110. Two Members shall be appointed by the President to criticise the Essay to be read, if necessary, a Meeting in advance.

111. No Member shall be allowed to occupy more than thirty minutes in the reading of their Essay.

112. The Essay may be criticised by any of the Members, including the President, before whose criticism, the Essayist shall have the privilege of replying.

113. No person shall speak more than once in the course of the criticism on the Essay, or in the debate, without permission from the President, and then only in explanation, except the Members who open the question in proposition and opposition, who shall have the privilege of speaking last.

114. No Member shall be allowed to speak in the Debate for a longer time than ten minutes, except the Proponent and the Opponent, who shall be allotted a time of fifteen minutes.

115. In addition to the two principal Speakers, two auxiliaries shall be appointed by the President at the previous Meeting to address the Society upon the question of Debate.

116. If two Members rise at the same time, the precedence shall be given to whomever first meets the eye of the President.

## *ii. Debate*

117. Four Members will be appointed by the president to speak at the Table, two speaking as the proposition, two speaking as the opposition.

118. No Tabled Member shall be allowed to occupy more than fifteen minutes when delivering their speech.

119. The Tabled speakers will be called to address the Society individually by the President.

120. After the Tabled speakers have delivered their speeches, the President will open the Floor for speeches on the motion or in rebuttal of the Table.

121. All individuals in attendance are permitted to deliver a Floor speech, at the President's discretion.

122. Floor speeches must not occupy more than ten minutes of time.

123. No person may speak more than once from the Floor.

124. Following Floor speeches, the President will invite the First Proposition, the First Opposition, to deliver Summations and Concluding Remarks on the Debate.

## *II. Private Business*

125. The Private Business of the Society shall be discussed, as declared by the Secretary, after the debate.

126. At the commencement of each Session, a Committee shall be appointed to co-operate with the Cabinet, in the management of the affairs of the Society, to whom the Cabinet may apply for assistance and advice in cases of difficulty.
127. The Cabinet and Committee shall entertain, discuss and decide upon motions and suggestions for speakers, motions for debate, and topics for essays. The Cabinet shall decide speakers in debates and essays. Each member shall strive to participate in debate as often as possible.
128. All Members shall be entitled to suggest speakers, topics for essays, and motions for debate, either in writing or orally, preferably in response to requests by the Cabinet during the meeting.
129. At the last Meeting, or at any point in which an election for Cabinet members maybe required, Members shall elect, in secret ballot, the members of the Cabinet. Notice of any such election shall be given full fourteen term-days in advance, so as to ensure maximum attendance for such an election.
130. The Society's interests in the period between Sessions shall be taken care of by any Members of the Cabinet remaining in Edinburgh. Should no Cabinet member be in Edinburgh for part of the vacation, another Society member shall take over responsibility.
131. A Committee may be appointed for any purpose, on a motion to that effect being made and carried.
132. All protests against decisions of the Society must be made in writing, and must be offered at the Meeting at which the decision is passed; and the reasons of protest shall not be received, unless lodged in writing at the next Meeting of the Society thereafter.
133. Reasons of protest shall not be received by the Society if judged improper by two-thirds of the Members voting.
134. No existing Law shall be suspended without the concurrence of three-quarters of the Members present, and without proper indication of the duration of such a suspension.
135. No existing Law shall be repealed or altered, nor any new one enacted, without one week's previous notice, and without the consent of two-thirds of the Members voting.
136. A simple majority shall determine in all cases not otherwise provided for in the Laws.
137. The President and Secretary shall sign the Minutes of the Meeting.
138. No alteration shall be made on the Minutes after they shall have been approved by the Society.
139. No report of any Debate or other proceeding of the Society shall be published in the newspapers, except by the authority of the Society, and through the medium of the Secretary; and any Member contravening this Law shall be liable to expulsion.

## CHAPTER V – Orders of Business

### *I. Essay*

140. The business shall be taken up in the following order:

- i. The Society Constituted.
- ii. The Prayer (Appendix I) read.
- iii. The first roll called.
- iv. The Minutes of the last Meeting read.
- v. Performance of the Reading
- vi. The Essay read and received.
- vii. Smoking break or short adjournment.
- viii. The Question of Debate raised.
- ix. The Public Business of the next Meeting intimated.
- x. Private Business
- xi. Society adjourned.

### *II. Debate*

141. The business shall be taken up in the following order:

- i. The Society Constituted.
- ii. The Prayer (Appendix I) read.
- iii. The first roll called.
- iv. The Minutes of the last Meeting read.
- v. Performance of the Reading
- vi. Speech of the First Proposition
- vii. Speech of the First Opposition
- viii. Speech of the Second Proposition
- ix. Speech of the Second Opposition
- x. Floor Speeches

- xi. Summations
- xii. Smoking break or short adjournment
- xiii. Question of the Debate raised
- xiv. Private Business
- xv. Adjourn

# APPENDIX I

THE PRAYER  
of the  
DIAGNOSTIC SOCIETY  
*of*  
EDINBURGH

Actiones nostras,  
quesumus Domine,  
aspirando preveni et adjuvando proseguere,  
ut cuncta nostra oratio  
et operatio a te semper incipiat  
et per te copta finiatur.

Quatenus sanctum nomen tuum glorificamus  
et misericordia tua vitam aeternam consequamur  
Per Jesu Christum, dominum nostrum,  
Amen.