

Edinburgh University Female Voice Choir Society Constitution



c/o The Activities Office
5/2 Bristo Square
Potterrow
EH8 9AL

Paragraphs

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** Clauses in blue are subject to change based on the nature of your society

**** Clauses in red are required in the constitution by the Students' Association**

** Clauses in green are subject to change to office role descriptions 2023

1. Name

1.1. Official Title

- a. The Society shall be known as “the Edinburgh University Female Voice Choir” hereinafter referred to as the Society.
- b. The Society may also be known as “EUFVC, both titles having equal validity to the title outlined in Sect 1.1(a)

2. Aims

2.1. The aims of the Society shall be

- a. To provide an opportunity for singing works written and arranged specifically for upper voices in an informal and friendly atmosphere. There will be no auditions at any time, though in the event of soloists being required, these will be selected by the musical director after volunteers express an interest.
- b. Concerts and events will donate a percentage of the profit to a charity nominated by members.
- c. To perform a semesterly concert to exhibit repertoire learnt over the semester and will also aim to sing altruistically, for example at the Marie Curie Hospice, retirement homes, or by Christmas carol singing, to raise funds for charity and the society when needed.
- d. Although the choir is for female voices only, male members can be involved in logistical support, publicity, and accompaniment in relevant pieces.

3. Membership

3.1. Forms of Membership

- a. Full Membership of the Society is open to all matriculated students of Edinburgh University.
- b. Membership shall be at least 75% matriculated students of Edinburgh University.
- c. Full membership lists should be filed with the Activities Office at least once per semester to ensure membership databases are up to date.
- d. If any dispute of membership should arise, the list registered through the Students' Association database will be used as the official list.

3.2. Membership Entitlements

- a. All members shall be entitled to attend all society events and socials. In the event of a limited space for an event, the members allowed to attend will be decided on a first come first served basis.
- b. All members shall be entitled to borrow copies of sheet music to take home between rehearsals and the concert. This music must be returned.
- c. All members shall be entitled to perform in the end of semester concert.

3.3. Membership Responsibilities

- a. Attend as many rehearsals as possible. Arrive at the venue in good time, preferably early.
- b. Pay membership by the date provided by the committee. Please refrain from taking music home before paying deposit or membership.
- c. Make all additional payments – e.g. hoodies, tour payments – on time.
- d. Return music from the previous semester at the beginning of the new term.
- e. Respect other members of the society. For example, please do not talk when other sections are practicing.
- f. At auditions, please refrain from spectating – the audition is private. If you are auditioning, please move away from the performers while you are not performing.
- g. Make all effort to attend rehearsals and concerts.
- h. Help the committee to put away plastic chairs after each rehearsal.

3.4. Breach of Member Responsibilities (and Conflict Resolution)

- a. The General Committee may, at their discretion, issue a warning to any member or guest who disturbs a Society meeting or event, causes distress or harm to other members, or brings the Society into disrepute.
- b. If the warning is ignored that person may be ejected from the venue; barred from attending future meetings and events; and in the case of members may have their membership revoked with no refund.
- c. **The Committee 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 responsibilities and standard code of conduct, any previous warnings, and any mitigating circumstances. When appropriate the following sanctions 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. **Removal from 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.**
- d. **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.**

4. Management

4.1. The General Committee

- a. **The business of the Society shall be managed by a Committee of Office Bearers.**
- b. **Any full student member of the Society shall be entitled to sit on the Committee.**

- c. The Office Bearers must be members of the Society and a matriculated student of Edinburgh University.
- d. All Office Bearers will complete annual online training as outlined by the Activities Team.

4.2. Executive Office Bearers

- a. The Committee must consist of a President, Secretary, and Treasurer (the Executive Officers) as a minimum.
- b. These Office Bearers will be elected at the Annual General Meeting.
- c. No person may be elected to more than one of these posts simultaneously.

4.3. President

- a. The President will chair the General Committee and Emergency General Meetings.
- b. The President is responsible to the Annual General Meeting and the General Committee and is ultimately responsible for the conduct of the Society.
- c. It is the President's responsibility to ensure the Society has submitted their annual report, risk assessment and reregistration forms to the Activities Office.
- d. The President shall also:
 - i. Make announcements at general meetings.
 - ii. Delegate tasks to the committee members.
 - iii. Lead committee meetings and provide the agenda in concert with the secretary.
 - iv. Introduce the choir at concerts and events.
 - v. Assist in organising large social events.
 - vi. Be an active member of the Joint Societies committee
- e. Should the President resign a new President or Acting President will be voted in at an EGM.

4.4. Treasurer

- a. The Treasurer shall be accountable to the committee and members for the finances of the society.
- b. The Treasurer shall keep and prepare Accounts of the Society and provide a provisional budget, as exhaustive as possible, to be presented at the Annual General Meeting.
- c. It is the Treasurer's responsibility to ensure the annual financial report is complete and submitted along with the society's annual report.
- d. The Treasurer shall also:
 - i. Take payments and deposit them in the appropriate account
 - ii. Update us on the financial matters at each committee meeting or provide details where attendance is not feasible.
 - iii. Keep accurate records of the society's financial matters.
 - iv. Look after the cash box – if possible, collect it after every event.
 - v. Reimburse committee members in good time and provide receipts.
- e. Should the Treasurer resign, a new Treasurer or Acting Treasurer will be voted in at an EGM.

4.5. Secretary

- a. The Secretary shall be responsible for the administration of the society.

- b. 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.
- c. The Secretary shall also:
 - i. Complete the admin for the society in association with the other members of the executive committee
 - ii. Take accurate and detailed minutes at meetings.
 - iii. Organise room bookings.
 - iv. Monitor emails and ensure that any necessary emails are passed on to the relevant members of committee
- d. Should the Secretary resign, a new Secretary or Acting Secretary will be voted in at an EGM.

4.6. Non-Executive Officers

- a. The General Committee may appoint any such non-executive Officer Bearers as it deems necessary to the running of the Society from eligible members of the Society.
- b. These Officers shall include the roles outlined below, though any of these positions may be left empty or occupied by more than one person, should the society deem this appropriate for a particular session.
- c. Said appointments will be made at the AGM, following the same procedure as the executive roles. Alternatively, appointments for empty posts may be made during a rehearsal, by individual nomination or, in the case of multiple candidates, a vote.
- d. Vice-president, who shall:
 - i. Assist the executive committee with their duties when necessary
 - ii. Organise the annual ball with the help of a separate ball committee
 - iii. Book the concert venue
- e. Social secretaries, who shall:
 - i. At least one must attend all social events.
 - ii. Plan events for the choir, both during the day and at night.
 - iii. Organise events in good time.
 - iv. Keep the Facebook page updated.
 - v. Notify office bearers in good time if rooms are needed.
 - vi. Make clear, repetitive announcements at each rehearsal.
 - vii. Assist the publicity in publicising events when necessary
- f. Publicity officers, who shall:
 - i. Produce a programme for the concerts
 - ii. Produce posters and tickets for concerts, major social events (such as the ceilidh) and fundraisers.
 - iii. Write the weekly email beginning in week 1
 - iv. Be active on social media, delegating to the socials secretaries when necessary
- g. Librarians, who shall:
 - i. Make adequate quantities of copies of music
 - ii. Ensure that all selected music is copied by week six
 - iii. Keep all receipts
 - iv. Ask for assistance if you are struggling

- v. Organise the filing cabinet – keep an inventory of its contents.
 - vi. Bring appropriate resources to each event (napkins, cups etc)
 - vii. Collect old music at the end of each semester.
- h. Ordinary members, who shall:
 - i. Assist other members in general duties
 - ii. Order clothing and other society merchandise
 - iii. Keep up to date, both with choir and committee matters
- i. Charity Rep, who shall:
 - i. Liaise with the chosen charity and any other organisations we choose to help
 - ii. Organise and publicise charity events along with the publicity officers
 - iii. Attend events where possible.
 - iv. Make announcements both at rehearsals and on the Facebook page.
- j. Section Representatives, who shall:
 - i. Act as a link between the general members and the committee.
 - ii. Assist the other committee members where necessary.
 - iii. Organise and order society merchandise.
 - iv. Be a representative of their section, which would involve ensuring all members are happy with their part in the song and being a voice for those who do not wish to speak up
- k. Welfare Officer, who shall:
 - i. Act as a link between the general members and the committee
 - ii. Have a separate email specifically for welfare issues, which must be checked regularly.
 - iii. Must hold at least two opportunities of open hours each semester where members are free to seek guidance and support. These must take place in a social and neutral area such as a coffee shop.
 - iv. Ensure accessibility of any FVC events – wheelchair access etc.
 - v. Advise committee on welfare issues.
 - vi. Assist in general running of the choir.

4.7. Office Bearer Conduct

- a. All Office Bearers shall:
- b. Act as a representative of the society in their words and actions at all times
- c. Attend as many rehearsals as possible on time and stay for the whole rehearsal. If you are unable to attend the rehearsal you must inform either the president via private message or the entirety of the committee through the group chat, providing a reason for your absence. You should not miss more than three rehearsals in a row.
- d. Make appropriate announcements relating to your role, along with adequate plans for tasks. If you cannot complete the tasks, alert an appropriate committee member for assistance.
- e. Endeavour to attend every committee meeting. Ideally, one representative of each role should be present. If you cannot make it you must let the committee know why in good time.
- f. Submit suggestions for discussion at meetings before each meeting and read the minutes afterwards, particularly if you cannot attend.

- g. Ensure you keep accurate receipts of purchases made on behalf of the society so that you can be reimbursed.
- h. For the concert raffle, make all effort to participate in prize collections.
- i. Use the Facebook page for information about fundraising, social events and choir matters. Important matters must also be publicised through the EUSA mailing list by the office bearers.
- j. Ensure that upon taking up your role you have read through the constitution and understand what is required of you.
- k. If you are unable to perform your role for any reason you must inform the president and either step down from your role or ask for the appropriate help.

4.8. Accompanist code of conduct

- a. In order to receive full payment for services provided, the accompanist shall:
- b. Endeavour to attend all rehearsals. Failure to attend without providing adequate notice and/or a substitute accompanist will result in a proportion of the fee being deducted.
- c. Respect the constitution - it is a social choir, thus members are not required to sight-read music or participate in all activities
- d. Make sure you are at rehearsal and the concert venues in good time - ideally a few minutes early
- e. Be able to accompany the choir for seven to nine pieces per semester, chosen by our members
- f. In extenuating circumstances the committee may alter the payment for the conductor or accompanist as they see fit.

4.9. Recall

- a. The members shall have the right at an Extraordinary General Meeting to seek the recall of any or all of the Office Bearers by a special resolution (i.e.: a 75% vote in favour of the resolution).
- b. For such a vote to be binding on the Society the Meeting must be quorate.
- c. The quorum shall be 75 % of the membership of the Society.
- d. Grounds for recall may be founded on the failure of any office holder or member of the General Committee to comply with the terms of the constitution, or for any other reason deemed legitimate by the General Meeting.

4.9. Annual General Meeting

- a. All members of the Society are entitled to attend Annual General Meetings (hereinafter referred to as the AGM).
- b. 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.
- c. Motions to be discussed should be presented to the Secretary in advance of the AGM.
- d. Only fully-matriculated students are entitled to vote at the AGM.
- e. All Office Bearer roles shall be subject to election annually at the AGM.
- f. All members who are matriculated students of the University of Edinburgh shall be entitled to stand and to vote in elections.

- g. Motions carried by the necessary majority (i.e. a 50% vote in favour of the motion) at quorate AGMs are binding on the Society.
 - h. **The quorum shall be (25%) of the membership of the Society.**
 - i. It is the responsibility of the outgoing Treasurer to present the final reports for the previous year and a complete account of the current state of finances. They must present an accurate breakdown of the definite commitment for which the Society has been engaged in the current year, henceforth to be known as the Budget. Emphasis must be placed on comparing this Budget with current income.
 - j. The Secretary shall report on the administrative affairs of the society.
- 4.10. Emergency General Meeting
- a. **The President may call an Extraordinary General Meeting for matters arising in the course of the year which require consideration by members.**
 - b. Following the receipt of such a request by the Secretary the General Committee shall have twenty-eight (28) days to implement the request, and must take reasonable measures to notify the members of the time and place of the Extraordinary General Meeting.
 - c. **The EGM shall follow the procedure of the AGM outlined in 4.10 above.**
 - d. **All members must receive at least 14 days written/email notification of the EGM.**
 - e. **In the event of an Executive position becoming vacant, the President will call an EGM to elect a replacement.**
 - f. **Any newly elected Office Bearers will be communicated to the Societies Team after the election has taken place.**

5. Code of Conduct – Musical Director

- 5.1. In order to receive the full payment for services provided, the musical director shall:
- a. Endeavour to attend all rehearsals. Failure to attend without providing adequate notice and/or a substitute conductor will result in a proportion of the fee being deducted.
 - b. Respect the constitution – it is a social choir, thus members are not required to sight read music, or participate in all activities, for example warm-ups, or to audition for membership.
 - c. Make sure you are at the rehearsal and concert venues in good time – ideally, a few minutes early.
 - d. Teach and rehearse between seven and nine pieces per semester with some input from the choir in selecting them.
 - e. Regarding solo acts in the concerts, hold auditions at least two rehearsals before the concert proper. You **MUST** let the acts know at least a week prior to the concert whether they have been successful. All acts must audition.
 - f. Auditions must be before at least three people from the following list:
 - i. Conductor
 - ii. Assistant conductor
 - iii. Pianist
 - iv. Office bearer committee members – president, treasurer, secretary.
 - g. In respect to other events – tour and alternative concerts – make all reasonable efforts to attend. Alternatively, provide reasonable notice of and reason for absence, preferably along with a substitute conductor.

6. Finance

6.1. Finance Policy

- a. The Treasurer must endeavour to ensure that the ordinary expenditure of any given year is not more than the ordinary income of that year.
- b. **The financial year shall run from 1st April to 31st March.**
- c. The definition of ordinary and extraordinary expenditure is the responsibility of the General Committee.

6.2. General Finance

- a. **The Society shall be non-profit making. The Office Bearers and members may only receive payment, direct or indirect, as reimbursement for legitimate expenses.**
- b. Core income shall be defined as income arising from membership fees and any other source as agreed by the General Committee.
- c. Any reserves at the end of the Financial Year shall be carried over into reserves for the following Financial Year.
- d. A loss carried forward into the following financial year must be notified and explained at the Annual General Meeting.

7. Policy

7.1. Re-registration, Annual Reports and Financial Reports

- a. **Re-registration of the society must be submitted in accordance with the deadlines set by the Activities Team.**
- b. **Annual and Financial Reports must be completed and submitted as part of the re-registration process following the AGM in the second semester.**

7.2. Society Status

- a. **A Society may not register to obtain any legal status, including a limited company or a charitable status.**

7.3. Equal Opportunities Policy

- a. The Society shall uphold and maintain its policy on the equality of opportunity as defined in the Equal Opportunities Policy.
- b. **The Society will take all necessary steps to ensure that their meetings, events and socials are accessible to all.**
- c. **The Society will ensure that it complies with any relevant data protection legislation.**
- d. **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 reassignment, family situation, domestic responsibilities or any other irrelevant distinction, is detrimental to the society, the university and wider society, and will not be tolerated.**
- e. **The Society shall abide by any applicable laws, bye-laws and guidelines of the Edinburgh University Students' Association in relation to recognised Societies**

7.4. Zero Tolerance Policy Towards Sexual Harassment

- a. The Society has a zero tolerance policy on sexual harassment in line with that of The University of Edinburgh and the Students Association (EUSA).

b. Sexual harassment covers a wide range of behaviours, including but not exclusive to, sexual comments or jokes, unwanted sexual advances, touching and various forms of assault, the sharing of pictures, photos or sexual drawings.

c. The society believes that sexual harassment is always the fault of the person doing the harassing. The victim is never at fault.

d. The committee and society has a role to support any victims of harassment and ensure that the society is a safe place for all members and affiliated persons.

8. Dissolution

8.1. Dissolution of the Society

- a. The Society shall not be wound up except by a resolution of three quarters of those present at an Extraordinary General Meeting called for that purpose.
- b. All funds remaining after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities following such a resolution shall be passed on to a charitable organisation having objects similar to those of the Society as the General Committee.

9. Alteration of the Constitution

9.1. Alteration

- a. Any motion to alter the Constitution will have to be supported by two-thirds of the members present at the AGM or EGM, 14 days notice of which shall be given.
- b. The Students' Association considers the ruling society constitution to be that which is displayed on the Society Profile.

10. History

- 10.1. This constitution was accepted at an AGM held on **17/03/20**.