



DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY FLAC SOCIETY CONSTITUTION

1. **Name of Society:**

- 1.1. The name of the Society shall be the DCU FLAC SOCIETY: Free Legal Advice Centre

2. **Aims & Objectives:**

- 2.1. To facilitate the practice of FLAC in all its forms.
- 2.2. The promotion of accessible free legal information in all its forms.
- 2.3. To foster the development of members.
- 2.4. To provide a forum for members to interact, educate and socialize through free legal information clinics, academic speakers and social events.
- 2.5. To assist Society members to represent the Society at a higher level.

3. **Members:**

- 3.1. Membership of the Society shall be open to all students, staff and graduates of the college.
- 3.2. Membership shall be obtained by paying the appropriate fee and signing the Roll of Members for the current academic year.
- 3.3. The Society recognizes the importance, experience and knowledge that graduates and former students bring to the society, therefore we will endeavor to maintain contact with such former members as wish to retain their connection with the Society.
- 3.4. To this end the Governing Executive Committee of the Society shall be empowered to create a class of "Associate Member" of the Society.
- 3.5. Graduate Membership shall be open to former members of the society who are no longer students of Dublin City University. It shall not be a requirement of associate membership that such members should hold a degree or any other academic award given by Dublin City University
- 3.6. Associate Members shall pay an annual membership fee to the Society. The amount of this fee shall be determined by the Governing Executive Committee, but may be altered by a majority vote at a general meeting of the Society. The associate membership fee shall not be less than the ordinary membership fee and no more than 10 times the ordinary membership fee.

- 3.7. Associate Members shall be ineligible for election to the society's governing committee
- 3.8. Associate Members shall be entitled to attend all general meetings of the society. Voting rights of associate members at general meetings shall be determined by the Governing Executive Committee and may be altered by a majority vote at a general meeting of the society.
- 3.9. Other rights of Associate Members shall be determined by the Governing Executive Committee but may also be granted or revoked by a majority vote at a general meeting of the Society
- 3.10. The rights of an Associate Member shall not exceed those of an ordinary member of the society
- 3.11. All members shall be bound by this constitution

4. **Governing Executive Committee:**

- 4.1. The Society shall have a Governing Executive Committee (The Committee).
- 4.2. The Committee shall run the society on behalf of its members and in accordance with the aims and objectives and in compliance with the regulations set down by the Society Life Committee.
- 4.3. Although decisions should be arrived at by the consensus of the committee (where possible), committee decisions shall be decided by majority voting.
- 4.4. A quorum shall be $\frac{2}{3}$ of committee members.
- 4.5. The Committee shall consist of these core positions:
 - Chairperson
 - Clinics Manager
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Public Relations Officer
 - 1st Year Representative

And optional positions;

- Vice Chairperson
 - Events Manager
 - 1st Year BCL Representative
 - Ordinary Committee Member
 - Legal Research Officer
 - Sponsorship Officer
 - Deputy Legal Research Officer
- 4.6. The Term of Office of these elected officers shall be one academic year.

- 4.7. A person shall not hold the same office for more than 2 successive years.
 - 4.8. The 1st Year representatives on a committee must be in their 1st Year of study in DCU.
5. **Election of the Governing Executive Committee:**
- 5.1. The Committee Members shall be democratically elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) or at an Extra-ordinary General Meeting (EGM).
 - 5.2. To seek election to the Committee, each candidate must have 2 nominations by current members of the society.
6. **Duties of the Governing Executive Committee:**
- 6.1. The Chairperson shall be the Chief Officer of the society whose functions include chairing all meetings of the committee and officiating at meetings of the society.
 - 6.2. The Chair of any meeting shall have an ordinary vote at committee meetings and meetings of the society. In the event of a tied vote on any matter they shall have the casting vote.
 - 6.3. The Vice-Chairperson shall assist the Chairperson in all their duties.
 - 6.4. The Vice-Chairperson shall assume the duties of the Chairperson (unless otherwise directed by a general meeting of the society) in the event that the Chairperson is absent or is unable to perform their duties.
 - 6.5. The Secretary's function shall be to deal with all correspondence and records of the society.
 - 6.6. The Secretary keeps the minutes of all committee meetings, of all general meetings, of the Annual General Meeting or any other meetings relating to the business of the society when requested by the committee.
 - 6.7. The Secretary may keep a record of authorization of expenditure.
 - 6.8. The Secretary shall give notice to all members of the society's meetings, events, and functions.
 - 6.9. The Treasurer's function shall be to administer the funds of the society and to maintain accounts and budgets.
 - 6.10. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the maintenance of accounts subject to the decision of the committee in compliance with the regulations set down by the Society Life Committee of DCU.
 - 6.11. The Treasurer shall keep full records of income and expenditure of the society. The Treasurer shall also keep a record of who authorized various expenditures and shall issue receipts.
 - 6.12. At least 2 signatories on the Society bank account shall sign all cheques and withdrawal forms for the Society's bank account.

- 6.13. Any 2 signatories on the Society bank account may sign cheques and withdrawal forms for the society on consultation with the Society Life Committee.
- 6.14. Unless otherwise designated, the treasurer shall be responsible for the fixed and current assets of the society in compliance with the regulations set down by the Society Life Committee.
- 6.15. Unless otherwise designated, the treasurer shall maintain a record of all fixed and current assets belonging to the society and will report an inventory list to the committee at the start and end of the academic year.
- 6.16. The Committee shall assist the Treasurer to organize fundraising events and sponsorship where necessary.
- 6.17. The Events Officer shall be responsible for organizing all events with the exception of Free Legal Information Clinics.
- 6.18. The Events Office shall maintain a record of needs of speakers, venues and materials needed for each event.
- 6.19. The Public Relations Officer (along with the Secretary) shall be responsible for the advertising of all functions of the society through all means possible.
- 6.20. The Public Relations Officer (along with the Secretary) shall deal with external correspondence and maintain records of the contribution outside bodies have had for the society and to give notice of all members of these contributions.
- 6.21. The Clinics Manager shall be responsible for (with the assistance of the committee where necessary) running legal information training sessions to prepare members for participating in the free legal information clinics.
- 6.22. The Clinics Manager shall be responsible for contacting the legal professionals necessary for the running of the free legal information clinics. They shall also organize a suitable venue and panel of trained members to participate in the clinics.

7. **Dismissal and Resignation of Committee Members:**

- 7.1. No member of the committee shall be dismissed from office unless:
 - Written notice of a resolution to seek such a dismissal, signed by 10% of the members of the society is received 4 working days prior to a general meeting at which such a resolution shall be debated.
 - $\frac{2}{3}$ of the Governing Executive Committee may also call a meeting to debate the dismissal of another committee member.
- 7.2. A resolution to dismiss a committee member shall be passed by a simple majority vote at the relevant and quorate meeting.

- 7.3. A committee member wishing to resign must submit a letter in writing declaring that intention to resign to the Chairperson or Secretary, who will immediately inform the committee as a whole.
- 7.4. The responsibilities of the newly resigned committee member shall be delegated to other committee member(s) until a by-election can be held to re-elect a new person to the position.

8. **Meetings:**

- 8.1. There shall be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) held each year.
- 8.2. The AGM shall be held no later than in the final month of the Academic year where the main committee members will be elected (where possible).
- 8.3. Elections for the offices of the Governing Executive Committee shall take place at this meeting.
- 8.4. A quorum of the meeting shall be 2 Governing Executive Committee members and 10% of the ordinary membership.
- 8.5. The business of the AGM shall include elections of relevant Executive Governing Committee as well as annual reports from the outgoing Governing Executive Committee (which should include a Treasurer's report on the finances of the society).
- 8.6. An Extra-ordinary General Meeting (EGM) shall be convened if:
 - 10% of the ordinary membership of the society requests such a meeting in writing.
 - A quorum of the Governing Executive Committee requests such a meeting in writing.
 - A vacancy on the current committee occurs and there is a need to elect a replacement.
- 8.7. Elections for the offices of the Governing Executive Committee shall take place at the AGM or EGM (where relevant).
- 8.8. Notice of all meetings shall be given to the membership at least 3 working days prior to the date of the meeting.
- 8.9. At a meeting, a member may propose a resolution relating to the business of the Society. The resolution shall be voted on by a show of hands and a declaration by the Chairperson that the resolution is carried (unless a secret ballot is demanded by any 5 members) shall be conclusive evidence that the resolution has passed or failed.
- 8.10. In the event that the Chairperson's resolution (8.9) is challenged a recount of the votes will be administered in which a number of appropriate people will be appointed by the committee as "tellers" to count the votes. The result will be announced by the Chairperson or the Vice-Chairperson (where requested by the general meeting).
- 8.11. No resolution may contravene DCU policy or Society Life Committee.

9. **General:**

- 9.1. There shall be a President of the Society who shall be a staff member in compliance with the regulations set down by the Society Life Committee.
- 9.2. The membership fee for the Society shall be in compliance with the conditions set down by the Society Life Committee.
- 9.3. Each member of the Society shall be entitled to receive a copy of this Constitution, on demand, free of charge.
- 9.4. In the event of a clash with the Society Life Committee Constitution, the Society Life Committee Constitution shall take precedence above this constitution.
- 9.5. In joining the Society, members agree to be bound by the rules and regulations of the Society as laid down in this constitution and by the Governing Executive Committee. Members violating these rules and regulations shall be answerable to the committee and may have their membership revoked and no monies refunded, for persistent breaches or extremely serious breaches, as deemed by a majority of the committee. In the event that the committee cannot resolve a dispute with a member(s), Society Life Committee shall rule on the matter and its decision is final.

10. **Amendments to this Constitution:**

- 10.1. Notice of a proposal to seek an amendment to this Constitution shall be given to the members at least 4 working days prior to the meeting at which such a proposal shall be considered.
- 10.2. A proposal to amend this Constitution must receive the approval of $\frac{2}{3}$ of the members present and entitled to vote at the relevant meeting.