The Constitution of the University of Leicester Students’ Union Labour Society

1. **Title**
   
   The Society shall be known as University of Leicester Labour Students, Throughout this document it will be referred to as the Society.

2. **Mission Statement**
   
   The aims of the Society are to further the values of the Labour Party and the cause of Democratic Socialism. The Society believes that by the strength of our common endeavour we achieve more than we achieve alone, so as to create for each of us the means to realise our true potential and for all of us a community in which power, wealth and opportunity are in the hands of the many, not the few, where the rights we enjoy reflect the duties we owe, and where we live together, freely, in a spirit of solidarity, tolerance and respect.

3. **Definitions**
   
   **Society/Club/Association** – referring to the society/sports club/association herein concerned within this constitution

   **Members/Membership** - All paying members of the Society

   **Member** – An individual member from the above mentioned membership

   **Committee** - All committee members, collectively as a democratic decision making body, of the Society elected/appointed to hold positions

   **Majority** – a 2/3 of the Committee/Society members voting in one way, unless expressly otherwise stated

   **The Returning Officer(s)** - Shall be a member or members of the Students’ Union’s Steering Group, whose jurisdiction it is to independently oversee, and thus be the ‘returning officer’ for, the Society’s elections

   **Executive Committee** – the Students’ Union’s Executive Committee, comprised of the five elected full time Executive Officers

   **Union** – University of Leicester Students’ Union

   **Student Development Officer** – the full time Union Officer whose jurisdiction it is to assist and facilitate student groups, such as the one here concerned

   **Student Activities Executive Officer** – the elected full time Union Officer who has jurisdiction and executive authority over student groups within the Students’ Union and who is also a member of the Executive Committee
Constitution – this document; the Constitution of the University of Leicester Students’ Union Labour Society

Students’ Union Constitution/Bye Laws – the constitutional document of the Students’ Union, to which all other policies and regulations and laws, including this Constitution herein, are subordinate to

Section – referring to a specific section of this document herein, e.g. Section 2 – Title

Steering Group – an independent and elected group of students from within Union Parliament, whose job it is, inter alia, to oversee Society Committee position elections

AGM – Annual General Meeting; occurring once a year, it is a meeting of the Society’s Membership and Committee, to discuss policy and/or constitutional issues. Here members may ask open questions to the membership and vote on matters of importance.

Academic Year – Refers to the full year, as prescribed by the University’s calendar and events planning, i.e. October to October.

4. **Aims & Objectives**

The Society shall exist:

a. To secure support for the Labour Party at the University of Leicester;

b. To liaise with Constituency Labour Parties and Young Labour;

c. To propagate democratic socialist views and the cause of the Labour Party;

d. To work with Labour Students nationally to advise the Labour Party NEC on Labour Student organisation, on educational matters and student opinion on other matters of concern to the Labour Party.

e. The Society shall act at all times towards the Society’s objectives as laid down in Section 4a, 4b, 4c and 4d above; failure of the Committee to act within, and/or towards, the Society’s aims and objectives shall be grounds for Committee dismissal if such a decision to dismiss the Committee is made at a Society General Meeting by a majority of the vote of the Society Membership.

5. **Affiliations**

a. Affiliations shall not entail the ‘donation’ of, or otherwise ‘giving’ of, Union monies to external organisations (charitable or other), in accordance with the Charities Act 2006.

b. Nothing in the aforementioned provision (Section 5a) prevents the Society trading with external organisations under normal consumer conditions.

c. Nothing in the aforementioned provision (Section 5a) precludes the Society from co-operating with organisations, or receiving a benefit from organisations that the Society is affiliated to.

d. The Society shall be affiliated to the following organisations:

   i. Labour Students
6. **Membership**

   a. Full members of the University of Leicester Students’ Union shall be eligible for membership on payment of an annual subscription (see Students’ Union Financial Regulations for minimum subscription). To ensure fairness, the subscription must be set for the period before any memberships fees are taken from members, upon which such cannot be changed for that period.

   b. Associate membership, as defined by the Students’ Union’s Constitution/Bye-Laws, shall be available to persons, other than full members of the University of Leicester Students’ Union. Associate members shall not be entitled to vote and shall not count as members for the purpose of assessing the Union grant.

   c. It is within the remit of the Society’s jurisdiction to invite external personnel into the Society either as temporary or symbolic permanent fixtures, in the capacity of advisors, insofar as it is to the benefit to the overall Society’s membership. These personnel cannot be Committee members, and do not have voting rights.

   d. Such inclusion of external personnel into the functioning and operation of the Society must be agreed upon by the Society’s Committee.

   e. Such external personnel shall have no representative power vis-à-vis the Students’ Union, and shall not be recognised as belonging to the Society in any official capacity.

   f. All Members of the Society, whether Full or Associate, shall be entitled to:
      
      i. Attend, speak and place items on the agenda at all Society General Meetings.
      
      ii. Attend, speak and place items on the agenda at all meetings of the Society Committee.

   g. All Full Members of the Society are also entitled to:
      
      i. Stand and vote in Society Committee Elections.
      
      ii. Vote at all Society General Meetings.

7. **General Meetings**

   a. The Society shall have a number of key decision-making bodies. In order, starting with that of highest authority, they are the following:
      
      i. The Society Annual General Meeting and the Society General Meeting.
      
      ii. The Society Committee Meeting.

   b. There shall be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Society. The AGM shall receive a report from the Treasurer on the Society’s finances.

   c. The AGM shall be held during the spring term. Seven days notice of the proposed AGM must be provided by the Committee to its Membership.

   d. A General Society Meeting can be established by the membership of the Society, irrelevant to the Committee’s will, by a petition for a General Meeting that is supported by at least 15% of the Society’s membership.

   e. The Secretary shall make arrangements for the General Meeting to be held on a date not exceeding five (5) academic days from receipt of notice.

   f. The quorum for Society General Meetings is thirty percent (30%) of Society Members.
8. **Elections**

a. Society Committee elections shall be conducted under the framework produced by the Steering Group of the University of Leicester Students’ Union (see; Students’ Union Constitution/Bye Laws, XIII Student Groups, s4).

b. Nominations, and any manifestos, for Committee must be submitted to the Returning Officer, who is to oversee all aspects of the election.

c. A nomination period shall occur for at least 3 days before the corresponding election of such Committee positions.

d. Nominations for any post shall close one (1) day before the vote takes place.

e. Voting shall be by secret ballot at a General Meeting, under the supervision and/or verification of Steering Group.

f. Only Paid Members of the Society will be allowed a vote.

g. The Returning Officer will oversee the distribution of voting ballots in accordance with the paid membership list from the Union at the close of nominations.

h. The vote will be conducted by Single Transferable Vote, with a facility for No Suitable Candidate.

i. Any full member of the Society may run for any elected position within the Society’s structure.

j. Any full members of the Society running for Committee positions must have obtained any insurance cover and required training from any external organisations and/or governing bodies, and thus be qualified to that relevant degree, where applicable, prior to the election(s).

  i. All members must be covered by the Sports Association's injury insurance at the time of joining the club by purchasing a Sportscard or by paying the premium to the Sports Association.

k. An election for all Committee positions must occur once within the Academic Year. This does not preclude elections from occurring during the Academic Year for individual Committee positions.

l. The Returning Officer will facilitate the count outside of the Meeting.

m. The results will be made known either at the election or within five (5) working days of the election.

n. Any challenge to the results must be made within three (3) days of the announcement.

o. The University of Leicester Students’ Union shall be called upon to settle any matters arising from the elections.

p. If called upon, the decision of the University of Leicester Students’ Union shall be final.

9. **Committee**

a. The Committee shall be the official representatives of the Society, for the purposes of recognition by the University of Leicester and the Students’ Union.

b. The Committee is collectively responsible for the management, prudence, and overall running of the Society, and shall therefore be accountable to the Students’ Union, the University of Leicester and the wider community.

c. In accordance with 9b, for the avoidance of any doubt, a Committee Member cannot normally delegate their decision making authority to another Member, external person, or other body, nor can a Committee member fetter their discretion in relation to the enacting and carrying out of policy matters.
d. Decisions of the current Committee of the Society cannot bind future elected Committees of the Society to a course of action, objective or policy.

e. The Committee shall have the right to produce official Society publications and representations.

f. All Committee members shall maintain their insurance cover and/or required training from any external organisations and/or governing bodies, and thus be qualified to that relevant degree, during the entirety of their period in office.

g. The Society’s Committee shall consist of:
   i. Chair
   ii. Vice-Chair for Campaigns
   iii. Vice-Chair for Events and Communications
   iv. Secretary
   v. Treasurer
   vi. Social Secretary
   vii. Women’s Officer
   viii. LGBT Officer
   ix. BAME (Black Asian and Minority Ethnic) Officer
   x. Disabled Students Officer
   xi. First Year’s Officer
   xii. Post-Graduate Officer

If any committee position falls vacant, the committee shall determine if and when a bye-election should be called.

h. In the interim period before any such by-election, the committee may co-opt a full member of the society into the position as a non-voting officer, with the exception of the executive positions.

i. If in the event that a by-election fails to fill a position, the committee may co-opt a full member of the society as a non-voting officer, with the exception of the executive positions.

j. The quorum of Committee Meetings shall be half of the Committee’s membership plus one

k. The Chair shall have an original and, if necessary, casting vote.

l. The Committee has the right to expel Members and Committee members of the Society.
   i. For a Committee member in question, a unanimous vote of the Committee shall relieve that aforementioned Committee member from their position.
   ii. For a Member in question, a two thirds vote of the Committee shall suffice to terminate the aforesaid Member’s membership of the Society.
   iii. Committee Members and Society Members removed by the Society’s Committee shall have 28 days, from the date of the decision being made, to appeal the decision to the Students’ Union Executive.

m. Should the Committee be subjected to a successful vote-of-no-confidence by the membership in accordance with Section 4e, the Committee’s rights and responsibilities shall be transferred, with direct effect, to the Student Activities Executive Officer, for the interim period until an election for the corresponding Committee positions has been completed.

10. Notice

   a. Three days notice must be given of a General Meeting,
b. Seven days notice must be given of a General Meeting at which constitutional changes shall be discussed.

c. Seven days notice must be given of an AGM.

d. Notice shall be communicated to the Society’s Membership, via all means necessary, and thus the event shall become public knowledge.

11. Equal Opportunities

a. The Society will abide by the University of Leicester Students’ Union Equal Opportunities policy as stated in the Students’ Union Bye Laws and that of any Union polices enacted by Union Parliament (see; Students’ Union Constitution/Bye Laws, XVII Equal Opportunity, s1).

12. Finance & Accountability

a. The Society will comply with the Financial Regulations set by the Students’ Union.

b. The Society shall present its accounts for scrutiny to the Students’ Union’s Student Activities Executive Officer upon request.

c. Any bank accounts, grant funding accounts and/or fundraising accounts operated by the Society, whether they be in an internal or external capacity to that of the Students’ Union, shall require two signatures to authorise withdrawals.

d. The Society shall produce its membership list, budget and minutes of all Committee and General Meetings for scrutiny to its Membership upon request by any Society Member(s).

e. The Society shall be accountable for compliance to all Students’ Union Bye Laws, in accordance with Section 14 (below). Failure to comply with the Students’ Union Constitution/Bye Laws shall result in sanctions being levied against the Society (see; Students’ Union Constitution/Bye Laws, XIII Student Groups, s7).

f. The Committee is collectively accountable for the prudent financial management of the Society’s finances, in relation to any bank/grant/fundraising accounts operated by the Society.

g. A Committee Member shall be appointed as the Society’s primary public contact. To that end, the corresponding Committee Member must establish a publically available point of contact, be that by electronic and/or other means.

h. There shall exist a Code of Practice setting out the safety protocols for the Society’s/Club’s sporting/activities. This shall be based on the recommendations of the appropriate national governing body corresponding to the Club’s sport. Every Member shall have read a copy of the Code of Practice on joining the club, and thus shall abide by the Code of Practice.

i. Neither the Society nor the University of Leicester Students’ Union accepts any liability for any debt or other obligation incurred by any of its Officers or other Members, whether or not it is incurred on behalf of the Society.

13. Amendments to the Constitution

a. Any amendments to the Constitution shall require a two thirds majority vote in favour of the changes at a General Meeting of the Society.

b. Amendments to the Constitution require ratification by the Union’s Executive Committee.
c. Amendments to the Constitution cannot entail *ultra vires* activity.
d. The society shall have the right to self-terminate, for any reason, by a majority vote; on this occasion a majority vote shall consist of a 51% vote in favour of dissolution, at any General Society Meeting, with notice given to the Students’ Union Executive with immediate effect of the decision to dissolve the Society.
e. The process of the Society’s dissolution shall be overseen by the relevant Student Development Officer.
f. Upon dissolution of the Society any assets held within the Society, shall be divisible within the Membership, after any outstanding liabilities have been resolved.

14. **Interpretation**

   a. In the event of a dispute as to the interpretation of any part of the Constitution, the ruling of the University of Leicester Students’ Union Student Activities Executive Officer shall be sought.

15. **Students’ Union Constitutional and Policy Supremacy**

   a. Whereby any constitutional provisions or policies operated by the Society, here concerned in this Constitution, come into conflict with any provisions in the Students’ Union Constitution, Students’ Union Bye-Laws or Policies, either that passed by the Students’ Union Executive or Union Parliament, those Society’s Constitutional provisions or policies, as declared and ratified by the Society, shall be subordinate to the Students’ Union Constitution, Students’ Union By-Laws and/or Policies.