

# The Association of Communication Support Workers



## Constitution

On Behalf of the  
National Executive Committee.

### **NAME OF THE ORGANISATION**

The name of the organisation shall be The Association of Communication Support Workers (herein after called the Association).

The Association is a non-trading, not for profit organisation and a Company Limited by Guarantee.  
Registration Number: 6171908

### **AIMS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

- a. To represent the interest and views of Communication Support Workers (herein after called CSWs) and the profession.
- b. To encourage good practice of CSWs.
- c. To encourage initial and continued training of CSWs.
- d. To provide a structure for the ongoing professional development of CSWs.
- e. To produce a directory of CSWs.
- f. To provide fora for discussion of issues relating to the work of CSWs.
- g. To encourage research and other initiatives linked to the work of CSWs.
- h. To provide information, assistance and support to CSWs.
- i. To provide representation to and liaising with other organisations involved in the work of CSWs.
- j. Doing all such other things as deemed necessary for the furtherance of the above aims.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

- a. Membership shall be open to all CSWs, regardless of nationality, political party, race, gender, age or religious opinion.
- b. Each member agrees to abide by the Association Code of Ethics.
- c. Inaugural membership is available until such time that a membership criteria is resolved in accordance with the constitution.

### **MEMBERSHIP FEE/SUBSCRIPTION**

- a. Members shall pay an annual fee, the amount of which will be published from time to time on the Association web site. Membership is dependent on subscription; a member is a person having made at least one annual payment and is at least not 4 weeks in arrears. Membership fee is non-returnable, in part or whole.
- b. Each member, on payment of the annual subscription fee, shall be entitled to one vote.
- c. Voters may not nominate a proxy – votes are valid by postal vote received by email or in writing one week prior to an ACSW General Meeting (meeting) and counted with the votes of the members present at meeting. Postal vote resolutions to be sent by email to all members at least three weeks prior to meeting.

### **THE ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE (Officers/Directors)**

- a. An executive shall be elected to carry out the business of the Association.
- b. The executive shall be made up of a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary.
- c. The executive shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. Vacancies arising through the year can be filled by elections at General Meetings.
- d. Officers of the executive may serve up to a maximum of 3 continuous years, at which they will stand down and not seek re-election for the same post in the same or subsequent year. Notwithstanding, officers may seek election to a different post within the executive.
- e. Officers of the executive shall carry out the duties given to them at General Meetings.
- f. The executive shall meet once a quarter and no less than 2 times per year.
- g. Minutes of executive meetings shall be available to members via a members-only secure forum on the Association web site, accessed by members only.

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

- a. There shall be an Annual General Meeting held at which the executive will report on its work, present a statement of accounts and stand down to seek re-election. This AGM must be held within or on the 12-month anniversary of the last AGM.
- b. The AGM shall elect a new executive, vote on recommendations and any amendments to the constitution.
- c. The secretary will notify all members of the date of the meeting not less than 28 days before the AGM, posted on the Association web site.
- d. All meetings of the Association must abide by the Standing Orders of the Association.

### **OTHER GENERAL MEETINGS**

- a. There will be a General Meeting open to all members three times a year.
- b. An Extraordinary General Meeting open to all members will be held if 4 or more members submit by email or in writing a request for such a meeting to the secretary. The secretary shall arrange for the meeting to take place within 28 days.
- c. The secretary will post all General Meetings at least 14 days in advance on the Association web site.
- d. Regional meetings can be arranged by ordinary members with the agreement of the executive, and must follow the Standing Orders of the Association. Agendas and minutes must be submitted to the executive.

### **QUORUM**

No General Meeting or Annual General Meeting shall take place if less than 7 members, including 2 executive members are present. No executive meeting shall take place if less than 2 members of the executive are present.

### **CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION**

- a. The constitution can be altered at an AGM or Extraordinary General Meeting.
- b. Any suggested changes must be submitted to the executive 14 days before the AGM/EGM.
- c. Changes must be agreed by a postal vote received by email or in writing one week prior to an ACSW AGM/EGM. Postal vote resolutions to be sent by email to all members at least three weeks prior to AGM/EGM.

### **DISSOLUTION**

- a. The Association may only be dissolved at an Extraordinary General Meeting called for that purpose and must be advertised at least 14 days before the meeting on the Association web site.
- b. A proposal to dissolve the Association shall take effect only if agreed by a simple majority of the members present at the meeting.
- c. Funds and assets will be donated to an appropriate organisation with similar aims.

### **ASSOCIATION CODE OF ETHICS**

The Association Code of Ethics must be complied with and actively adhered to by all members. If a complaint is received by the Association concerning a member who has been judged to have contravened the Code of Ethics, the Association will follow the procedure for complaints and will have the power to suspend membership, regardless of payment of annual membership fee.

### **ASSOCIATION COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

- a. Compliance with the Complaints Procedure of the Association is implicit upon members joining the Association.
- b. The Complaints Procedure of the Association is as follows: An Arbitrator will be appointed. Any members who have a complaint lodged against them will be entitled to prepare a case for arbitration which will be presented at one meeting with the Arbitrator. The Association will invite the complainant to present a case also which will be presented at one meeting with the Arbitrator. Both parties shall agree to the final decision of the Arbitrator and there will be no opportunity for appeal to be lodged.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

The Association must actively seek to represent the needs and aspirations of all members, insofar as they adhere to the Constitution, Code of Ethics and Standing Orders of the Association. It must uphold equal opportunities and work for good relations among all members. The Association must not discriminate on the grounds of nationality, political opinion, ethnic and cultural background, religious opinion, sex, sexuality, age or disability.

# The Association of Communication Support Workers



## Standing Orders

On Behalf of the  
National Executive Committee.

### I. AGENDA/TIMETABLE

A. All meetings of the Association shall commence and proceed in accordance with the produced Agenda and/or timetable.

### II. PROCEDURE IN DEBATE

A. Only the member who the Chairperson has asked to speak will speak, everyone else will remain silent and seated. When a person is speaking, only the Chairperson may intervene.

B. A member of the meeting when speaking shall address the Chairperson. If two or more persons desire to speak at the same time the Chairperson shall decide to whom priority will be given. No person shall be allowed to speak twice on the same question, unless agreed by the Meeting.

C. All speeches and debate shall be confined to the subject under discussion.

D. Proposals (which throughout these Standing Orders means proposals, recommendations, motions or amendments) standing in a Member's name must be moved by that Member.

E. Proposals must be seconded or else they shall be deemed to have fallen.

F. A proposal may be seconded formally or by a speaker making a seconding speech.

G. The mover of a proposal shall be allowed to speak for not more than three minutes and any other speaker (including the mover exercising the right to reply) for not more than two minutes. In exceptional circumstances a speaker may request the special permission of the Meeting to speak for a longer period. If agreed, the extended period shall not exceed a further two minutes.

H. The moving speaker shall have the right of reply to the debate only if there has been opposition and shall not introduce any fresh matter but shall be limited to answering the debate.

I. The Executive shall be allowed one speaker in debate on all proposals. Exceptionally, with the permission of the Meeting, a second Executive speaker may be allowed.

J. The Executive shall in addition to moving and exercising the right of reply be allowed a maximum of one speaker (which may be the seconder) in a

debate on proposals standing in the name of the Executive.

K. No proposal shall be spoken upon except by the mover, until it has been seconded. If the seconding has been done formally, the seconder shall have the right to address the Meeting in the debate (two minutes).

L. Any Member who has not spoken on the proposal before the Meeting may move "That the proposal be now put" on the seconding of which the Chairperson shall immediately and without discussion put this proposal to the vote. In the event of it being carried by a simple majority of the Meeting, the Meeting shall proceed to vote on the question itself, subject to Standing Order 3(i) and the right to reply as stated in Standing Order 3(h) being exercised.

M. Any Member who has not spoken on the proposal before the Meeting may move "That the Meeting proceeds to next business" on the seconding of which the Chairperson shall immediately and without discussion put this proposal to the vote. In the event of it being carried the Meeting shall at once proceed to the next item on the Agenda.

N. Any proposal may be withdrawn from the Agenda at any time by the sponsor/s who shall notify the Chairperson at the earliest opportunity. Once it has been moved and seconded, however, it shall not be withdrawn except with the agreement of the Meeting by a simple majority vote.

O. Point of Order. Any Member wishing to question the proceedings of the Meeting may rise on a "point of order", and when called by the Chairperson shall state the procedural point in exact terms, whereupon the Chairperson shall immediately give a ruling or refer the matter to the Meeting for a decision. Any person raising points of order must seek to prove one or more of the following:-

1. That the speaker is using unparliamentary language
2. That the speaker is digressing from the subject of the proposal
3. That the rules of the Association are being broken

4. That there is an infringement of the customary rules of debate
5. That there is an infringement of the Standing Orders

A. The Chairperson's ruling on a point of order shall be final unless it is challenged. The correct method of challenging the ruling shall be to move: "I wish to challenge your ruling". Such a proposal shall be carried by a simple majority.

B. Debates in Camera (ie, in which any person present at the Meeting who is not a Member of the Association will be asked to leave the Meeting for the period of the debate) which have not previously been notified in the Agenda can be requested by a Member or the Executive prior to the commencement of the debate and if such a request is supported by a simple majority of the Meeting. Before commencing an in Camera debate, any persons who are not Members of the Association must leave the Meeting. Such persons will be invited to rejoin the Meeting immediately the in Camera debate and vote has been concluded. "Members" for the purposes of this Standing Order shall be as defined under the Constitution Rules: "Membership Fee/Subscription".

C. Proposals and voting regarding change/s to the Constitution of the Association must conform to the Constitution Rules: "Changes to the Constitution (a), (b), and (c)".

D. Proposals and voting regarding dissolution of the Association must conform to the Constitution Rules: "Dissolution (a), (b), and (c)".

### **III. VOTING PROCEDURE**

A. Voting shall normally be by a show of hands or by a system of showing different coloured cards when called for by the Chairperson. As set out in the Constitution Rule: "Membership Fee/Subscription" each Member, on payment of the annual subscription fee, shall be entitled to one vote. Voters may not nominate a proxy – votes are valid upon attendance at Meeting and by postal vote received by email or in writing one week prior to Meeting and counted with the votes of the members present at Meeting. Postal vote resolutions to be sent by email to all members at

least three weeks prior to Meeting. In the event of a split vote the Chairperson shall cast the deciding vote.

### **IV. APPEALS**

A. Notice of intention to appeal against decisions of the Executive as published in the Agenda regarding:

- B. proposals not admitted to the Agenda
1. the priority/placement given to a proposal
  2. timetable/programme of business
  3. the consequential rulings on proposals

C. must be given to the Chairperson or a member of the Executive who is present at Meeting, prior to the commencement of Meeting. Appeals will be deemed carried if they have the support of a simple majority of the Meeting. The Executive will also be required to follow these procedures.

### **V. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

A. Motions to suspend Standing Orders shall only be allowed to deal with business or circumstances that could not have been foreseen when the timetable/Programme of Business was adopted.

B. The Chairperson may accept a motion for the suspension of Standing Orders provided no proposal is being debated at that moment. Such a motion must state the Standing Order/s involved and also state the nature and urgency of the business as to why the suspension is required. The Chairperson shall immediately refer such a motion to the Executive, who shall express their view before the vote is taken. A motion for the suspension of Standing Orders will be carried if supported by a simple majority.

C. At the end of the period of suspension of Standing Orders the Meeting shall return to the published timetable. No subsequent motion for the variation of the timetable to compensate for time lost by the suspension of a Standing Order/s or the discussion of such suspension shall be admissible.