

Constitution
of
The Haldane Society
of
Socialist Lawyers

[Date of Adoption]

Constitution

INTRODUCTORY MATTERS

1. Name and Status

- 1.1 The name of the society shall be “The Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers” (referred to below as “the Society”).
- 1.2 The Society is an unincorporated association.

2. Objects

- 2.1 The objects of the Society shall be:
 - 2.1.1 To uphold the principles of justice and liberty in the United Kingdom and elsewhere;
 - 2.1.2 To promote reforms in the law and the legal system in the interests of the working class movement and of democratic and socialist advance within the United Kingdom;
 - 2.1.3 To give advice and assistance to labour movements and other progressive organisations on matters concerning the law;
 - 2.1.4 To provide a forum for discussion on and the analysis of law and the legal system from a socialist perspective.

GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

3. Status

- 3.1 This Constitution forms the rules by which the Society is governed.
- 3.2 No act may be done by the Society which contradicts any provision of this Constitution.
- 3.3 No Policy of the Society may contradict this Constitution.

4. Amendment

- 4.1 This constitution may only be amended by a two-thirds majority vote at a General Meeting.

5. Interpretation

- 5.1 If any question arises as to the interpretation of this Constitution or as to any matter of procedure not provided for by this Constitution, then:
 - 5.1.1 If the question arises at a meeting of the Society, it shall be decided by the Chair of the meeting, whose decision shall be final for the purposes of the meeting; and

- 5.1.2 If it arises otherwise that at a meeting, it shall be decided by the Executive Committee, whose decision shall be final unless overturned by the General Meeting.
- 5.2 No action or decision of the Executive Committee or General Meeting shall be invalidated by reason only of informality or neglect in any service of notices or in any matter of procedure unless in the opinion of the Executive Committee or General Meeting such informality or neglect has resulted or may result in a situation which is substantially undemocratic or otherwise unjust.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE SOCIETY

6. Qualifications for Membership

- 6.1 Membership of the Society shall be open to anyone who is:
- 6.1.1 A socialist; and
- 6.1.2 A lawyer, legal worker, teacher or student of law, apprentice lawyer, or other person who in the opinion of the Executive Committee is substantially engaged or interested in the law; and
- 6.1.3 In general sympathy with the objects of the Society.

7. Applications for Membership

- 7.1 Every application for membership of the Society shall be in such form as the Executive Committee may direct.
- 7.2 The Executive Committee may refuse to admit to membership any person applying for admission, and shall if requested by any such person give reasons for its decision.
- 7.3 Every member shall observe and be bound by the Constitution.

8. Termination of Membership

- 8.1 Any member may resign from the Society by giving notice in writing to the Secretary. Any member resigning shall not be entitled to any refund of subscription, and shall remain liable for any subscription remaining unpaid at the time of his or her resignation.
- 8.2 If any member shall have failed to pay his or her subscription for a period of 12 months, the Treasurer shall give him or her notice in writing that unless the arrears are paid he or she shall be deemed to have resigned. Failure to pay the arrears and current subscription in 14 days shall be taken as constituting the member's resignation.
- 8.3 If any member is guilty of any conduct which in the opinion of the Executive Committee is injurious to the interests of the Society then he or she may be expelled from the Society by resolution of the Executive Committee. Notice of any such proposal shall be given not less than 20 days before the date of the meeting of the Executive Committee at which such proposal is to be considered, and the member shall be given adequate opportunity to make

representations to the Executive Committee.

- 8.4 Any member expelled under Clause 8.3 above may appeal such expulsion to the next General Meeting, which may reinstate membership. In such circumstances the expelled member shall, on making a request in writing, be given notice of the next General Meeting, and may propose or second a motion for his or her reinstatement, and may attend the General Meeting and participate in the discussion on such motion (but may not vote therein) as if he or she was a member of the Society.

DECISION-MAKING BODIES

9. **General Meeting**

- 9.1 All members shall have the right to attend and vote at a General Meeting (GM).
- 9.2 General Meetings shall be held:
- 9.2.1 Whenever the Executive Committee decide that one is necessary;
- 9.2.2 When at least one tenth of the members give notice in writing to the Secretary requiring one and stating its purpose. If, within two weeks, the Secretary has not announced in writing that a General Meeting will be held within 6 weeks, the members who have requested the General Meeting may convene one themselves, and all facilities shall be made available to them to do so.
- 9.2.3 Whenever an Annual General Meeting is required to be held.
- 9.3 Notice of a General Meeting shall be given to all members and affiliated organisations not less than 4 weeks before the day set for it.
- 9.4 A General Meeting may discuss any business of the Society and may pass Policy which binds the Society. Any matter to be discussed must be communicated to the Secretary at least 72 hours before the meeting, with the exceptions of minor amendments which may be proposed at the meeting.
- 9.5 The business of a General Meeting shall be conducted according to the meeting regulations.
- 9.6 The quorum for a General Meeting shall be 20 members, or if there are fewer than 20 members, 50%+1 of the members.

10. **Annual General Meeting**

- 10.1 The Annual General Meeting is a particular type of General Meeting and the provisions of Article 9 above shall apply to it.
- 10.2 An Annual General Meeting of the Society shall be held at intervals of not less than 9 months nor more than 15 months.
- 10.3 The agenda of the AGM shall include:
- 10.3.1 The presentation of an annual report by the Executive Committee;

- 10.3.2 The presentation of the Treasurer's report;
- 10.3.3 The election of Officers and the Executive Committee;
- 10.3.4 The appointment or re-appointment of the President and Vice-Presidents;
- 10.3.5 The election of the auditors.

11. Executive Committee

- 11.1 The day-to-day management of the Society shall be conducted by an Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may pass Policy which binds the Society. The Executive Committee may not overrule the General Meeting.
- 11.2 The Executive Committee shall consist of the following voting members:
 - 11.2.1 The Chair of the Society;
 - 11.2.2 Two Vice Chairs;
 - 11.2.3 The Secretary;
 - 11.2.4 The Treasurer;
 - 11.2.5 The International Secretary;
 - 11.2.6 The Membership Secretary;
 - 11.2.7 Delegates from branches;
 - 11.2.8 Executive Officers without portfolio (the number of Executive Officers without portfolio shall be determined at the time of their election by the AGM);
- 11.3 The Executive Committee may appoint from among its members an Assistant Secretary, Assistant Treasurer, and Assistant Membership Secretary.
- 11.4 Any of the positions referred to in Clauses 11.2.3 to 11.2.6 above may be held by two members on a job-share basis. In such a case the members filling the position must agree before casting a vote in any business of the Executive Committee, and may cast only one vote between them.
- 11.5 Every voting member of the Executive Committee shall be elected at the AGM. The Single Transferrable Vote or Alternative Vote shall be used for all elections.
- 11.6 Every voting member of the Executive Committee shall hold office from their election until the election held at the next AGM, unless they resign or are removed in the meantime.
- 11.7 The Executive Committee may co-opt as non-voting members of the Executive Committee:
 - 11.7.1 Such other members of the Society or delegates of organisations affiliated to the Society as it thinks fit, for a particular time or purpose;
 - 11.7.2 Any member of the Society to fill a casual vacancy on the Executive Committee.

- 11.8 Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be conducted according to the Meeting Regulations.
- 11.9 The quorum for the Executive Committee shall be 5 voting members, or if there are fewer than 5 voting members, 75% of voting members.

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

12. President and Vice-Presidents

- 12.1 The President and Vice Presidents shall not have any powers by virtue of their positions.

13. The Chair

- 13.1 The Chair shall:
- 13.1.1 Chair all meetings of the Society;
- 13.1.2 Be the public face of the Society.

14. The Vice Chairs

- 14.1 The Vice Chairs shall assist the Chair, and shall perform the Chair's functions in the Chair's absence.

15. The Secretary

- 15.1 The Secretary shall:
- 15.1.1 Ensure that a record is kept of all affiliated organisations;
- 15.1.2 Ensure the keeping of minutes of every meeting of the Society;

16. The Treasurer

- 16.1 The Treasurer shall:
- 16.1.1 Receive and pay money on behalf of the Society;
- 16.1.2 Keep accounts of the Society;
- 16.1.3 Present a report on the finances of the Society, together with accounts in such form as the Executive Committee may direct to each AGM.

17. The International Secretary

- 17.1 The International Secretary shall be responsible for dealing on international issues of relevance to the Society, as the Executive Committee shall direct.

18. The Membership Secretary

- 18.1 The Membership Secretary shall:
- 18.1.1 Maintain a list of the Society's members and their contact details;

- 18.1.2 Advise the Executive Committee on Subscription rates;
- 18.1.3 Collect Subscriptions from members;
- 18.1.4 Promote membership of the Society.

BRANCHES

19. Establishment of Branches

- 19.1 Branches of the Society may be formed and carried on in any locality with permission of the Executive Committee or General Meeting.
- 19.2 Only members of the Society or of affiliated organisations may be members of any Branch.
- 19.3 The members in a branch may appoint their own Officers and Branch Committee and conduct their own business in accordance with the objects of the Society. Any election shall use the STV or AV system.
- 19.4 A branch may provide for its own members its own rules, including the right to charge such additional subscriptions as the Branch Committee shall determine. The rules relating to Name, Object, and Membership shall be subject to the approval of the Executive Committee or General Meeting.
- 19.5 No member of the Society nor any Branch shall use the name of the Society or any substantially similar name or pledge the credit of the Society, not hold themselves out as an agent of the Society without a resolution of the Executive Committee or the General Meeting.
- 19.6 Every Branch shall keep minutes of the transactions of the Branch in such form as may be directed by the Executive Committee or General Meeting, and shall send such minutes to the Executive Committee on request, and shall comply with the Policy of the Society.
- 19.7 Every Branch shall keep proper accounts of all monies received and paid out and shall generally act in conformity with the directions of the Executive Committee and Treasurer of the Society in financial matters.

MEETING REGULATIONS

20. Standing Orders

- 20.1 The General Meeting or the Executive Committee may create Standing Orders in order to regulate meetings in line with this Constitution.

21. Attendance of Meetings and Disclosure

- 21.1 All members have the right to attend all meetings of the Society.
- 21.2 No persons other than members may be present during a meeting of the Society unless the meeting decides otherwise.

- 21.3 All business of the Executive Committee or General Meeting may be conducted by a postal ballot or by electronic means. This shall be particularly encouraged if required due to members' disabilities, or work or family commitments.
- 21.4 The business conducted at meetings may, at the meeting's discretion, be kept secret from non-members, but must be communicated to any members who submit a request in writing to the Secretary. An undertaking not to disclose this information to non-members may be required.

ELECTION REGULATIONS

22. Timing

- 22.1 Every ordinary election for Officers or Executive Committee members shall take place at the Annual General Meeting.
- 22.2 By-elections for vacant positions may be held at any General Meeting.
- 22.3 All vacant positions to be filled by election shall be announced in writing to all members at least 4 weeks prior to the election.

23. Nominations

- 23.1 Nominations for election shall be submitted during the General Meeting when the election is to be held.
- 23.2 Any member may stand for election.
- 23.3 Candidates for the positions of President and Vice President shall require a member of the Society to nominate them.

24. Conduct of Elections

- 24.1 All elections are to be conducted by STV or AV.
- 24.2 The General Meeting carrying out the election shall decide whether votes are conducted by a show of hands (in multiple rounds as if necessary) or by a secret ballot.
- 24.3 Results shall be announced immediately.

FINANCIAL AND RELATED REGULATIONS

25. Subscriptions

- 25.1 Members shall pay an annual subscription at such rate or rates as may be determined by a Policy.
- 25.2 The Executive Committee may in their discretion for an special reason excuse any member from paying the whole or part of their subscription.

26. Affiliations

- 26.1 The Society may become affiliated to or a corporate member of any other

organisation.

26.2 The Society may accept affiliation from any other organisation which supports the Society's objects.

26.2.1 Any affiliated organisation shall pay such annual subscription as determined by a Policy.

26.2.2 Any affiliated organisation may appoint a delegate to represent it at meetings of the Society, but not to vote on any business.

27. Powers in Relation to Land

27.1 Any Officer listed in this Constitution designated by the Society may, for the purposes of the Society, deal with any land or any interest therein.

28. Banking Facilities

28.1 Cheques and other such banking facilities shall be signed by such person or persons as the Executive Committee may direct.

29. Audit

29.1 The accounts of the Society shall be audited by the auditors before each AGM.

30. Donations

30.1 The General Meeting and Executive Committee may make donations to any other person or body of persons whether charitable or otherwise.

31. Notices

31.1 Any notice to be served under these rules shall be deemed to be served on the date set out in the table below:

<u>Method of service</u>	<u>Deemed date of service</u>
31.1.1 First class post to the intended recipient's last known address	The second day after it was posted if posted on a business day; or if not, the next business day after that day.
31.1.2 Any instantaneous electronic method	If sent on a business day before 4.30pm, on that day; or in any other case, on the next business day after the day on which it was sent.
31.1.3 Personal Service	Immediately.

32. Copy of Rules

32.1 A copy of these rules shall be maintained on the Society's website. Copies in an alternative accessible format shall be made available if required by a member.

33. Winding Up

- 33.1 The Society may be wound up by a two-thirds majority vote at a General Meeting.
- 33.2 A Policy may determine how the Society's assets shall be distributed in the event of winding up.
- 33.3 In the absence of a Policy as set out in Clause 33.2 above, the Society's assets shall be distributed equally amongst its members on winding up.