

BRISTOL UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN UNION CONSTITUTION

As adopted at a General Meeting on 19th March 1936; and amended on 18th March 1937, 26th May 1949, 16th February 1950, 14th March 1953, 12th December 1953, 2nd March 1957, 12th March 1960, 23rd January 1962, 10th March 1962, 15th March 1966, 16th February 1971, 20th February 1973, 8th March 1980, 20th February 1982, 25th February 1984, 5th May 1984, 21st February 1987, 27th February 1988, 18th February 1989, 25th November 1989, 25th February 1993 and 22nd February 2007, 20th February 2008, 11th June 2009 (awaiting official approval by Societies Exec, Clause 13b), 25th February 2010 (awaiting approval) and 11th March 2010 (awaiting approval).

1. NAME

The name of the Society shall be “The Bristol University Christian Union” (Hereinafter referred to as the Christian Union).

2. RELATIONS WITH OTHER BODIES

- a) The society shall affiliate to external bodies only where membership of those bodies is essential to the fulfilment of the core aims, and only with the prior agreement of the Union’s Societies Exec.
- b) The Christian Union shall be affiliated to the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship (UCCF).
- c) The Christian Union shall be recognised by the University of Bristol Students’ Union.
- d) The Christian Union will engage in dialogue with other faith societies but shall not partner in any joint society event that the Executive Committee believes to compromise the Vision and Aims of the Christian Union.

3. AIM

The aim of the Christian Union shall be:

- a) To extend Christ’s Kingdom in the University,
- b) To encourage and equip Christian Students to live out and share their faith,
- c) To promote interest and participation in mission at home and abroad,
- d) To abide by the Union’s Equal Opportunities and Harassment Policies, and any other policies laid down by the Union’s Board of Trustees.

4. DOCTRINAL BASIS

The doctrinal basis of the Christian Union shall be the fundamental truths of Christianity, as revealed in Holy Scripture, including:

- a) There is one God in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- b) God is sovereign in creation, revelation, redemption and final judgement.
- c) The Bible, as originally given, is the inspired and infallible Word of God. It is the supreme authority in all matters of belief and behaviour.
- d) Since the fall, the whole of humankind is sinful and guilty, so that everyone is subject to God’s wrath and condemnation.
- e) The Lord Jesus Christ, God’s incarnate Son, is fully God; he was born of a virgin; his humanity is real and sinless; he died on the cross, was raised bodily from death and is now reigning over heaven and earth.
- f) Sinful human beings are redeemed from the guilt, penalty and power of sin only through the sacrificial death once and for all time of their representative and substitute, Jesus Christ, the only mediator between them and God.
- g) Those who believe in Christ are pardoned all their sins and accepted in God’s sight only because of the righteousness of Christ credited to them; this justification is God’s act of undeserved mercy, received solely by trust in him and not by their own efforts.
- h) The Holy Spirit alone makes the work of Christ effective to individual sinners, enabling them to turn to God from their sin and to trust in Jesus Christ.
- i) The Holy Spirit lives in all those he has regenerated. He makes them increasingly Christlike in character and behaviour and gives them power for their witness in the world.
- j) The one holy universal church is the Body of Christ, to which all true believers belong.
- k) The Lord Jesus Christ will return in person, to judge everyone, to execute God’s just condemnation on those who have not repented and to receive the redeemed to eternal glory.

5. MEMBERSHIP

- a) Full and Associate Membership shall be open to students who sign the following declaration:
“As a member of the Christian Union, I profess my faith in Jesus Christ as my Saviour, my Lord and my God; whose atoning sacrifice is the only ground for my Salvation.”
“I declare my belief in the final authority of Holy Scripture in all matters of faith and conduct.”
“As a member of the Christian union, I have committed myself to pray for God’s work in the university; and to take an active role in the life of the Christian union as part of that overall work.”
 - a. Full membership is open to all full members of the Union by application to the society.
 - b. Associate membership is open to all other persons who are associate members of the Union.
- b) Membership shall be renewable every academic year by signing of the above declaration.
- c) Not less than two-thirds of the Society members shall be full members of the Union.
- d) The secretary shall keep a list of all members, differentiating between full and associate members. The secretary shall inform the VP Activities of the membership of the society each year.
- e) There shall be no subscription fee levied for membership. If the Societies Exec demands a minimum rate, the society will pay this on behalf of its membership.
- f) The Executive Committee shall have the power to remove a member from their society if they believe them to have violated the Union’s Equal Opportunities and Harassment Policies, and any other policies laid down by the Union’s Board

of Trustees. The decision is subject to ratification by the Societies Exec. The appeals process shall be that laid down in the Union Byelaws.

6. PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

- a) Only members may sit on the committee.
- b) All categories of membership shall have equal rights of voting, attending meetings etc.

7. GENERAL MEETING

- a) There shall be an Annual General Meeting once per annum, and this shall be held in the Spring Term.
- b) Notice of such meetings must be sent to the society's membership via email with at least fourteen days (and preferably four weeks) notice. An agenda must be sent out with at least seven days notice.
- c) Quorum of such meetings shall be set at twice the Executive Committee size plus one
- d) An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called by either the Executive Committee or 5% of the membership of the Society by written application to the Executive Committee, stating the business to be submitted. An EGM shall be called as specified on the application, but at least 7 days notice must be given.

8. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- a) There shall be an Executive Committee which shall be the executive decision making body of the society.
- b) The President of the Executive Committee shall be a full member of the Union.
- c) The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the general and financial policy of the Society, subject to such rules as laid out in the Union's Constitution and Byelaws, and any rulings made by the Societies Exec.
- d) Quoracy for Executive Committee meetings shall be set at 50% of the post filled positions plus one.
- e) All Executive Committee meetings must be minuted by the secretary (or other committee member if they are unavailable) and the minutes circulated to the committee before the next committee meeting.
- f) The Executive Committee is comprised of a President and a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, an International Chair, a Prayer & Praise Chair, a Small-Group Chair, an Events Chair and a Mission Chair.
- g) The offices of the Executive Committee shall be open to all members of the Christian Union and not less than two-thirds of the committee must be members of the University of Bristol Students' Union.
- h) All nominees for the Executive Committee shall be required to sign the full doctrinal bases of the Christian Union before their nominations are announced.
- i) The Executive Committee shall be empowered to co-opt two other members whenever the circumstances so demand, such members being required to sign the full doctrinal basis of the Christian Union. Co-opted members have equal voting rights.
- j) The Executive Committee shall be elected each year at the Annual General Meeting or, in the event of vacancies occurring, at an Extraordinary General Meeting.
- k) The new Executive Committee shall come into office immediately after the Annual General Meeting at which they are elected.
- l) The Treasurer shall be a full member of the Union and their appointment shall comply with clause 12 (a).

8.1. SUB-COMMITTEES

- a. The Executive Committee shall be empowered to appoint sub-committees whenever the circumstances so demand, members of such committees being required to sign the full doctrinal basis of the Christian Union. These sub-committees exist primarily to put into action decisions made by the Executive Committee on behalf of the society and to advise the Executive Committee.
- b. There shall be a sub-committee consisting of the International Chair of the Executive Committee plus a number of Christian Union Members. This sub-committee shall be subject to all the conditions within this Constitution. The aim of this sub-Committee is to reach out to and raise awareness within the Christian Union of overseas students and their needs.
- c. There shall be a sub-committee consisting of the Events Chair of the Executive Committee plus a number of Christian Union Members. This sub-committee shall be subject to all the conditions within this Constitution. The aim of this sub-committee is to facilitate the Christian Union to put on events that will help implement provision 3 (a).
- d. There shall be a sub-committee consisting of the Prayer and Praise Chair of the Executive Committee plus a number of Christian Union Members. This sub-committee shall be subject to all the conditions within this Constitution. The aim of this sub-committee is to organise and facilitate prayer and music at CU meetings
- e. There shall be a sub-committee consisting of the Small Groups Chair of the Executive Committee plus a number of Christian Union Members. This sub-committee shall be subject to all the conditions within this Constitution. The aim of this sub-committee is to support and equip the leaders of affiliated small groups, such as Hall CUs.
- f. There shall be a sub-committee consisting of the Mission Chair plus a number of Christian Union Members. This sub-committee shall be subject to all the conditions within this Constitution. The aim of this sub-committee is to facilitate the Christian Union to organise their main times of events that will help implement provision 3 (a).

9. METHODS OF ELECTION

- a) All nominations of persons to serve on the new Executive Committee or to fill any vacant office shall be submitted by email or in writing, and shall be in the hands of the Secretary at least three weeks before election. All nominations shall be proposed and seconded by society members.
- b) Outgoing Executive Committee members will be encouraged to nominate successors in compliance with clause 9a and will seek suggestions from society members.

- c) Notice of all nominations will be sent to the society's membership via email at least seven days before the Annual General Meeting.
- d) Elections shall be held at the Annual General Meeting to elect officers of the Executive Committee for the following annual session. Officers can only be removed from their posts by an EGM or AGM.
- e) If Executive Committee positions are left unfilled after the AGM then the committee, complying with clause 8i, shall have the power to co-opt society members onto the committee to fill the vacant posts. However, co-opted committee members are not regarded as full committee members and can be removed by the committee at any time.
- f) Written absentee votes will be granted and are to be sent to the Secretary and will be counted provided they are in the hands of the Secretary before the time of the General Meeting, or at any time afterwards if they are needed to form a quorum.
- g) Voting shall be by first past the post and shall be conducted using ballot papers, issued to those voting and counted by an Executive Committee member.
- h) After the AGM the President or Secretary must submit a sheet of contact details for the new committee to the VP Activities as soon as possible.

10. REPRESENTATIVES

Representatives of affiliated groups, such as Hall CUs, and other representatives shall be responsible for the appointment of their successors in consultation with the Executive Committee. All CU representatives and Small Group Leaders shall be members of the Christian Union and hold office not exceeding a year unless re-appointed, all representatives being required to sign the full doctrinal basis of the Christian Union before being appointed. The Executive Committee shall have the power of veto in the appointment of all representatives.

11. ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- a) The aim of the Advisory Committee is to advise the Executive Committee on major decisions and on issues relating to the University. Their advice is received by ongoing communication with members of the Executive Committee, usually including a meeting once each term.
- b) The Advisory Committee shall consist of an honorary president and not more than four honorary Vice-Presidents, who shall be required to sign the full doctrinal basis of the Christian Union.
- c) The Executive Committee shall have the power subject to the approval of the Advisory Committee to fill any vacancy which may occur and invite one member to the Presidency each year.
- d) The members of the Advisory Committee shall hold office for as long as they desire, as long as they are in agreement with the full doctrinal basis of the Christian Union. Their names shall be ratified at the Annual General Meeting, although the Executive Committee may fill vacancies at other times in line with clause 11 (b).

12. FINANCE

- a) The Treasurer of the society shall be a full member of the Union and not in their final year at the University. However, if given approval by the UBU Societies Officer a final year student may take the position.
- b) The accounts of the Society shall be audited by a member of the Union's staff and submitted to the UBU Societies Officer as and when requested and at least once per annum.
- c) All financial arrangements must be made in accordance with current instructions to Society Treasurers, as set down by the Societies Exec.
- d) The VP Activities and Finance Manager shall jointly be empowered to issue financial instructions on behalf of the society if:
 - i. the society folds with outstanding financial affairs, or
 - ii. change of mandate forms are not completed, and the previous Committee are out of reasonable contact, or
 - iii. financial irregularities are found.

13. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

- a) Any amendment to this constitution shall require a two-thirds majority of the members present at a properly constituted General Meeting.
- b) All such amendments shall become valid only after approval by the Societies Exec.

14. FINALITY

This constitution annuls any previous constitutions of the Christian Union.