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**The Buddhist Students Association of Sydney University**

**1. NAME**

1.1 The name of the Society shall be “The Buddhist Association of Sydney University”, hereafter referred to as ‘UNIBODHI’.

1.2 For the purpose of this Constitution, the following terms shall mean:

- i) University – The University of Sydney
- ii) Union – The University of Sydney Union
- iii) Executive Committee – The Exco of UNIBODHI
- iv) Member – Member of UNIBODHI
- v) The Society - UNIBODHI

**2. AIMS**

2.1 The aims of the Society shall be to:

- i) to stimulate an interest in Buddhism within the University.
- ii) to foster friendships among members.
- iii) to promote a better understanding of the Dharma from various schools of Buddhism.
- iv) to supplement other Buddhist associations in the spreading of Dharma.

2.2 The Society will undertake the following activities to achieve its aims:

- i) Dharma talks, discussions and study sessions.
- ii) social activities and outings, on-campus and off-campus.
- iii) joint activities, events and/or meetings with members of Buddhist associations from other universities, youth and community Buddhist groups.

**3. MEMBERSHIP**

3.1 The classes of annual membership shall be:

- i) **Ordinary Membership**  
All members of the University of Sydney Union shall be eligible for *Ordinary Membership* of the Society. Any *Ordinary Member* shall hold one vote at all meetings and elections of the Society at which they are present.
- ii) **Associate Membership**  
Persons other than those who qualify for *Ordinary Membership* may have *Associate Membership* conferred upon them by an Ordinary Meeting of the Society. *Associate Members* are not eligible to hold Executive positions, vote in elections or vote at meetings of the Society.

iii) **Honorary Membership**

*Honorary Membership* can be granted to any person by a two-thirds majority vote at a General Meeting. *Honorary Membership* may be terminated by a two-thirds majority vote at a General Meeting. *Honorary Members* are only eligible to hold Executive positions, vote in elections or vote at meetings of the Society if they qualify for *Ordinary Membership* of the Society.

iv) **Patron**

The Society shall appoint no more than two (2) Venerables (Buddhist monks or nuns) as *Patron(s)*. In the event that two *Patrons* are appointed, they must be from two different schools of Buddhism. The *Patron(s)* will act as advisors on matters affecting the Society. The tenure of the position shall be one (1) year to coincide with the term of office of the Executive Committee. The *Patron(s)* may be reappointed by the succeeding Executive Committee. The *Patron(s)* shall be invited to all activities and events of the Society. The *Patron(s)* is/are not eligible to vote at meetings of the Society.

3.2 Application of membership shall be made via a membership form issued by the Society. The payment of any subscription fee (if applicable) shall be forwarded together with the application.

3.3 Upon payment of a subscription fee, a person shall be deemed an *Ordinary Member* or *Associate Member* of the Society and henceforth be bound by this Constitution.

3.4 The subscription fees for membership shall be decided each year by the Executive Committee. *Patron(s)* shall be exempt from membership subscription.

3.5 Renewal of the membership must be accompanied by a membership form and payment of any subscription fees (if applicable).

3.6 *Ordinary Membership* shall be terminated in any of the following cases:

- i) members whose annual subscription has expired and have failed to renew their membership as set out in Clause 3.2.
- ii) by resignation submitted in writing to the Executive Committee.
- iii) members found to be violating the Constitution without explanation acceptable to the Executive Committee.
- iv) upon member's decease.

#### **4. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

4.1 The Society shall have an Executive Committee consisting of:

- i) a President
- ii) a Vice President (and a second Vice President if deemed necessary at the Annual General Meeting)
- iii) a Treasurer
- iv) a Secretary

- v) a Dharma Officer (and a second Dharma Officer if deemed necessary at the Annual General Meeting)
  - vi) all other positions, to be decided upon at the Annual General Meeting to be held in accordance with Clause 8, or decided upon by the Executive Committee prior to the Annual General Meeting
- 4.2 The Executive Committee shall have power to manage the Society in accordance with the Constitution.
- 4.3 Attendance of *Executive Members* at Ordinary and General Meetings is obligatory. Any Executive Member who does not attend three consecutive meetings without leave can be dismissed from the Executive by a two-thirds majority vote of those *Ordinary Members* and *Honorary Members* who would otherwise be eligible for *Ordinary Membership* in attendance at an Ordinary Meeting.

## 5. DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

### 5.1 The President shall:

- i) Plan the Society's activities in consultation with the Executive Committee.
- ii) Liaise with the Executive Committee and any Committees formed by the Society.
- iii) Ensure an adequate handover, including any documents and materials, to the following Executive.

### 5.2 The Vice-President(s) shall:

- i) Deputise for the President.

### 5.3 The Treasurer shall:

- i) Maintain the Society's finances in accordance with the Treasurer's Handbook produced by the Clubs and Societies Office of the University of Sydney Union.
- ii) Present to the Annual General Meeting of the Society a report detailing the financial activity and status of the Society.
- iii) Ensure an adequate handover, including any documents and materials, to the following Executive.

### 5.4 The Secretary shall:

- i) Conduct the correspondence of the Society.
- ii) Book meeting rooms for the Society.
- iii) Keep minutes of the proceedings of all the Society's meetings.
- iv) Maintain the records and documents of the Society.
- v) Maintain a list of current Members, in accordance with University of Sydney Union Guidelines.
- vi) Maintain the Society's registration with the University of Sydney Union.

### 5.5 The Dharma Officer(s) shall:

- i) Organise and run the Dharma session/s.

ii) Invite speaker/s for the Dharma sessions/s from various schools of Buddhism.

5.5 All other Executive portfolios shall be assigned by the Executive Committee at the Annual General Meeting.

## **6. ORDINARY/EXECUTIVE MEETINGS**

6.1 The Society shall hold at least 3 Ordinary/Executive Meetings during semester (teaching period, Weeks 1-13).

6.2 Ordinary/Executive Meetings shall be called by the President, Secretary or Vice-President, or by the Secretary forthwith upon receipt of the written application of at least twenty percent (20%) of the *Ordinary Members* of the Society.

6.3 At least seventy-two (72) hours notice of the time and place of an Ordinary/Executive Meeting shall be given in one of the recognised publications of the University of Sydney Union and, if possible, the Society notice board and, if possible, by a mail-out to all members. (A mail-out is understood to include communication by e-mail.)

6.4 The President shall chair Ordinary/Executive Meetings. In the absence of the President, another *Executive Member* shall chair the Meeting.

6.5 Quorum at Ordinary/Executive Meetings shall be five (5) *Ordinary Members* if the Society's current membership is no greater than seventy (70) *Ordinary Members*, or ten (10) *Ordinary Members* if the Society's membership is greater than seventy (70) *Ordinary Members*. Quorum must include not less than three (3) *Executive Members*.

6.6 The agenda for an Ordinary/Executive Meeting shall include:

1. Apologies and leaves of absence
2. Minutes of the previous meeting
3. Correspondence
4. Reports of *Executive Members*
5. General Business

6.7 An Ordinary/Executive Meeting of the Society has power to carry motions relating to the affairs of the Society by a simple majority vote of those members present and voting, including:

- i) giving direction to the Executive.
- ii) determining the use of the finances and other assets of the Society.
- iii) instituting Committees for any purpose of the Society and co-opting Society members onto any Committee.
- iv) dismissing *Executive Members* under 4.3 of the Constitution.

## **7. GENERAL MEETINGS**

7.1 The Society shall hold General Meetings as required during semester (teaching period, Weeks 1-13).

- 7.2 The Secretary may at any time, for any worthy purpose, call a General Meeting, and shall do so forthwith upon receipt of the written application of twenty percent (20%) of *Ordinary Members* of the Society stating the purposes for which the meeting is called. The business debated at a General Meeting shall be confined to the purposes named in the notice.
- 7.3 Except as provided in Clause 9, the Secretary shall give at least seven (7) days notice of the time and place of a General Meeting through one of the recognised publications of the University of Sydney Union and, if possible, the Society's notice board and, if possible, by a mail-out to all members. (A mail-out is understood to include communication by e-mail.)
- 7.4 Quorum at General Meetings shall be the lesser of one-third of the *Ordinary Members* or fifteen (15) *Ordinary Members*. If within thirty minutes from the time appointed for the meeting a quorum is not present, the meeting, if convened upon the requisition of members, shall be dissolved. In any other case, the meeting shall stand adjourned until the same day in the next week, at the same time and place. If, at such an adjourned meeting a quorum is not present, those members who are present shall be a quorum and may transact the business for which the meeting was called. The Secretary shall give fresh notice of such an adjourned meeting.
- 7.5 The procedure at all meetings shall follow the normal rules of debate.
- 7.6 The agenda for a General Meeting shall include:
1. Opening and welcome
  2. Apologies and leaves of absence
  3. Minutes of the previous meeting
  4. Business arising from the minutes
  5. Correspondence
  6. Motions on notice
  7. Reports of *Executive Members*.
  8. Other reports
  9. General business
  10. Date of the next meeting
- 7.7 A General Meeting of the Society has the same powers as an Ordinary/Executive Meeting, and may also carry the following motions on notice relating to the affairs of the Society by a two-thirds majority vote of those members present and voting:
- i) granting *Honorary Membership*.
  - ii) filling vacancies on the Executive Committee.
  - iii) repealing motions and the effect of motions carried at an Ordinary Meeting.
  - iv) amending the Constitution.
  - v) dismissing *Executive Members* for reasons other than that in 4.3 of the Constitution, provided that the *Executive Member* is given reasonable right of reply.
  - vi) dissolving the Society.

## **8. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

8.1 The Society shall hold an Annual General Meeting annually in the month of October.

8.2 The Annual General Meeting shall be convened for the following purposes:

- i) to receive a report and statement of accounts for the preceding financial period.
- ii) to elect an Executive Committee for the ensuing term.
- iii) to transact any other business, notice of which shall be duly submitted to the Secretary.

8.3 The Secretary shall give at least fourteen (14) days notice of the time and place of the Annual General Meeting in one of the recognised publications of the University of Sydney Union and, if possible, the Society's notice board and, if possible, by a mail-out to all members. (A mail-out is understood to include communication by e-mail.)

8.4 The Annual General Meeting shall be held between 9am and 9pm at a place on a campus of the University of Sydney during semester (teaching period, Weeks 1-13). The Annual General Meeting shall be chaired by the President or an *Executive Member* not standing for election to any position.

8.5 Quorum at the Annual General Meeting shall be the lesser of one-third of the *Ordinary Members* or fifteen (15) *Ordinary Members*.

8.6 The agenda for the Annual General Meeting shall include:

1. Opening and welcome
2. Apologies and leaves of absence
3. Minutes of the previous meeting
4. Business arising from the minutes
5. Correspondence
6. Motions on notice
7. Annual Reports
  - 7.1 President
  - 7.2 Treasurer
  - 7.3 Secretary
  - 7.4 Other Executive Members
8. Election of the Executive Committee
9. General business

## **9. ELECTIONS**

9.1 The Executive Committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting in the month of October each year.

9.2 Only *Ordinary Members*, and *Honorary Members* who would otherwise be eligible for *Ordinary Membership*, shall be eligible to be candidates for election or to vote in the election.

- 9.3 The term of the Executive shall commence immediately following the close of the Annual Election Meeting and conclude at the close of the Annual Election Meeting in the following year.
- 9.4 The Secretary shall give at least fourteen (14) days notice of the time and place of the annual elections in one of the recognised publications of the University of Sydney Union and, if possible, the Society's notice board and, if possible, by a mail-out to all members. (A mail-out is understood to include communication by e-mail.). The notice shall state:
- i) the day on which nominations open, which day shall be at least fourteen (14) days before the day of the elections;
  - ii) the day and time on which nominations close, which shall be no later than the time of the meeting at which the elections are to occur;
  - iii) the time, date and venue of the election;
  - iv) that only *Ordinary Members*, and *Honorary Members* who would otherwise be eligible for *Ordinary Membership*, shall be eligible to be candidates for election or to vote.
- 9.5 In order to stand for election, nominees must accept nomination.
- 9.6 Before an election the Executive Committee shall nominate a suitable person, not being a candidate for election, to act as Returning Officer. The Returning Officer shall be charged with the conduct of the election, and may appoint suitable persons, not being candidates for election, as Deputy Returning Officers.
- 9.7 The Clubs and Societies Programme Coordinator shall serve as Electoral Arbiter and shall receive any appeals against the decisions of the Returning Officer.
- 9.8 Voting shall be carried out by a show of hands unless otherwise decided by those present at the General Meeting
- 9.9 The General Body of the Society may, in a General Meeting, elect any *Ordinary Member* of the Society to fill any casual vacancy that may occur in the Executive. (A casual vacancy occurs when an Executive Member is dismissed from the Executive or resigns before the term of office has expired.)

## **10. ALTERATION TO THE CONSTITUTION**

- 10.1 This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of those *Ordinary Members* and *Honorary Members* who would otherwise be eligible for *Ordinary Membership* in attendance at any General Meeting, provided that:
- i) written notice of proposed changes has been given to the Secretary not less than seven (7) days before such a meeting,
  - ii) the said changes do not contravene University of Sydney or University of Sydney Union guidelines,
  - iii) the Secretary has given notice of those proposed changes to all members through one of the recognized publications of the University of Sydney Union and, if possible, the Society's notice board and, if possible, by a mail-out to all members (A mail-out is understood to include communication by e-mail.),

- iv) a copy of the amended constitution, and minutes of the meeting at which the amendments were made, are presented to the Clubs and Societies Programme Coordinator of the University of Sydney Union within fourteen (14) days of the meeting,
- v) the amendments are approved by the Clubs and Societies Committee and ratified by the Board of the University of Sydney Union.

10.2 Constitutional amendments do not become effective until approved by the Clubs and Societies Committee and ratified by the Board of the University of Sydney Union.

## **11. PROPERTY AND FINANCES**

11.1 All property of the Society shall be vested in the Executive Committee, and shall be dealt with in such manner as directed by the Society in an Ordinary Meeting.

11.2 The Society shall maintain a bank account.

11.3 All payments of the Society shall be by cheque, signed by at least two members of the Executive, one of whom must be the Treasurer.

## **12. DISSOLUTION**

12.1 The Society may be dissolved by resolution of a two-thirds majority vote of those members present and voting at a General Meeting. If on the dissolution there remain any monies or property, they shall, with the consent of the Clubs and Societies Office, be transferred to a cultural, charitable or educational organization as the Society in a General Meeting may resolve.

12.2 The Secretary shall give at least fourteen (14) days notice of the time and place of such a General Meeting through one of the recognized publications of the University of Sydney Union and, if possible, the Society's notice board and, if possible, by a mail-out to all members. (A mail-out is understood to include communication by e-mail.)

## **13. INACTIVITY**

13.1 The Society shall be deemed inactive after any continuous six month period in which the Society does not hold any events or engage in financial activity. If upon inactivity there remains any monies or properties, the C&S Auditor and the C&S Manager shall become signatories of the Club account and the Clubs and Societies Office shall control such properties and held in trust. After a further six month period, all money will be deposited into a USU-administered trust account, and will be returned to the club should it reform. After a total of eighteen months inactivity, all club funds will be transferred to the USU general account.

## 14. OTHER

### 14.1 Regarding awards:

- i) All awards must be nominated, seconded and approved by the Executive Committee. The nominee(s) may be nominated and seconded by any *Ordinary, Associate* or *Honorary* member of the Society. A written submission outlining the achievements of the nominee must be forwards to the Executive Committee for consideration.
- ii) Different awards may be created periodically ad a provisional guideline for the award must be drawn up by the Executive Committee in such circumstances.

14.2 The Society shall not identify itself exclusively with any particular school of Buddhism.

14.3 Should any ambiguity arise from word choice or phrasing in this Constitution, the Executive Committee shall provide interpretation.

14.4 Any member intending to assist the Society shall inform the Executive Committee before carrying out the action.

### 14.5 With regard to committees and subcommittees:

- i) Committee(s) and/or subcommittee(s) may be set up for a particular activity. The Vice-President shall be informed of the progress of the activity by the chairperson(s) of the committee(s) and/or subcommittee(s).
- ii) A financial statement of the activity/activities carried out by the committee(s) and/or subcommittee(s) shall be prepared by the chairperson(s) at the conclusion of the activity. The financial statement shall be presented to the Executive Committee for review.

## 15. RECOGNITION

15.1 UNIBODHI shall comply with all requirements of the University of Sydney and the University of Sydney Union for recognition as a registered society of the University of Sydney Union.

This Constitution was adopted on the 24th day of October, 2008.

President's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary's Signature \_\_\_\_\_