

# The Constitution of Labour Students

## 1. Name

- (a) The organisation shall be called Labour Students and shall be affiliated to the Labour Party.
- (b) Clubs at the institutional level shall be called Constituent Labour Clubs when affiliated to Labour Students.

## 2. Aims and Values

- (a) Labour Students is a democratic socialist organisation. We believe 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 and 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.
- (b) To secure support for the Labour Party among students and in institutions of higher and further education.
- (c) To advise the Labour Party on Student organisation, educational matters, and student opinion on matters concerning the Labour Party.
- (d) To co-operate with Young Labour in promoting democratic socialism and the cause of the Labour Party in the student movement and elsewhere.
- (e) To assist in the formation and development of Constituent Labour Clubs and to encourage their work with Young Labour and Constituency Labour Parties.
- (f) To promote the liberation of Women, BAME, LGBT+, and Disabled students.
- (g) To secure support for Labour Student candidates standing in Students' Union and National Union of Students Elections

### **3. Membership and Constituent Labour Clubs**

- (a) Membership shall be open to all recognised students that study in institutions of higher or further education and that support the aims and values of the Labour Party and Labour Students.
- (b) Individual membership shall also be open to Labour Students Executive Officers, Sabbatical Officers, and Labour Students NUS NEC members. They shall be members of their last Constituent Labour Club or of the NUS Group.
- (c) Membership of a Constituent Labour Club will be open to all recognised students who are in agreement with the aims and values of Labour Students.
- (d) The National Chair shall have the power to waive 3.C where adherence is not possible due to conditions placed on the Constituent Labour Club by the governing institute.
- (e) A recognised student for the purposes of this constitution shall be defined as someone studying at a recognised Further or Higher education institute who is either:
  - I. A full-time student
  - II. A part-time student
  - III. A part or full time apprentice
  - IV. A student on a placement as part of their degree
  - V. A student remitting a year of their degree
  - VI. A full time Students' Union Sabbatical Officer
- (f) The National Campaigns and Membership Officer shall be responsible for approving the membership status of a Constituent Labour Club.
- (g) In order to participate in the democratic processes of Labour Students the Constituent Labour Club of a member's institution must be affiliated nationally and they must undertake to conform to this constitution.
- (h) In order to affiliate to Labour Students nationally a Constituent Labour Club must meet the following conditions:
  - I. Have a minimum of ten individual members of Labour Students

- II. Have registered their Club with the campaigns and membership officer for that academic year
  - III. Have accepted to undertake to conform to this constitution and the rules of Labour Students
  - IV. Any affiliation must have been accepted prior to participation in any event or procedure for which affiliation is required
- (i) Only persons who are individual members of Labour Students shall be eligible to be officers of a Constituent Labour Club.
  - (j) The National Chair shall have the power to waive requirement 3.H.(I) or 3.H.(III) where adherence is not possible due to conditions placed on the society by the governing institute.
  - (k) Internal Constituent Labour Club matters not covered by this constitution are a matter for the relevant Students' union, or institution.

#### **4. National Committee**

- a) There shall be an Executive Committee of Labour Students comprising:
  - National Chair
  - National Secretary
  - National Campaigns and Membership Officer
- b) There shall be a National Committee of Labour Students comprising:

#### **VOTING MEMBERS**

- National Chair
- National Secretary
- National Campaigns and Membership Officer
- Vice Chair (Events and Communications)
- Vice Chair (Campaigns and Policy)

- International Officer
- Women's Officer
- BAME Officer
- LGBT+ Officer
- Disabled Students Officer
- Regional Coordinator (One per Labour Party Region)
- Further Education Representative
- Chair of Scottish Labour Students
- Chair of Welsh Labour Students

### **NON-VOTING MEMBERS**

- National Policy Forum Representative
- National Executive Committee Youth Representative
- National Union of Students Group Leader

- c) The National Committee shall serve for a one year term starting on the date that the National Executive takes up their roles.
- d) The National Committee shall meet at least once per academic term, and in advance of national events, at meetings chaired by the National Chair; minutes will be taken by the National Secretary and made available to members.
- e) The National Committee shall present a termly report on their activities to the membership.
- f) In the event of a vacancy on the National Committee the duties of the vacant position will fall to another member of the National Committee appointed by the National Chair.

## 5. Elections

- (a) Elections for the following positions on the national committee will be conducted using single transferable vote in a ballot of all members at Constituent Labour Clubs.
- I. National Chair
  - II. National Secretary
  - III. National Campaigns and Membership Officer
  - IV. Vice Chair (Campaigns and Policy)
  - V. Vice Chair (Events and Communications)
  - VI. National Policy Forum Representative
  - VII. International Officer
- (b) Candidates for Executive Committee positions must be nominated by ten Constituent Labour Clubs and candidates for other positions named in 5.A must receive five nominations from Constituent Labour Clubs.
- (c) Constituent Labour Clubs may nominate up to one candidate for each of the roles named in 5.A and up to one candidate for their regions regional coordinator.
- (d) At least one of the executive officer roles will be filled by a self-defining woman, as will at least one of the two vice chair roles. In the event that this requirement cannot be met the advice of the Labour Party compliance unit will be sought by the elections committee.
- (e) Elections for the Regional Coordinator positions shall be conducted using single transferable vote by a ballot of all members whose affiliated Constituent Labour Club is in that region.
- (f) Candidates for Regional Coordinator must be nominated by two Constituent Labour Clubs in the region they are seeking election in.
- (g) Regional Coordinators must be students at an institution within the region they're seeking election for.
- (h) Seats for each regional coordinator will be reserved each alternating year for a self-defining woman.

- (i) All ballots will be administered and overseen by an independent organisation.
- (j) The election of the Further Education Rep will take place at National Conference via a ballot of FE delegates and will be overseen by the elections committee.
- (k) Elections for Policy Committee and Elections Committee will take place via a ballot of delegates at National Conference to be overseen by the Elections Committee.
- (l) Liberation Officers will be elected via a ballot of self-defining members at an annual liberation conference.
- (m) "Re-Open Nominations" will be a candidate in all elections outlined in this constitution.
- (n) The National Secretary working with the Elections Committee will send all relevant information about the process of standing for elections and the code of conduct to all members.
- (o) Candidates for positions listed under 4.A of this constitution will be invited to attend a live hustings to be broadcast online for members.
- (p) A spending limit, to be decided annually, will apply in all positions elected via all member votes.
- (q) All candidates will be invited to submit a manifesto which will be available to all members via official elections communication from Labour Students. The manifesto's shall be no more than:
  - I. Up to eight sides of A4 for full time officer candidates
  - II. Up to two sides of A4 for other named positions
  - III. Up to one side of A4 for regional coordinators

## **6. Finances**

- a) The cost of membership of Labour Students shall be £1 per member, per year.
- b) The National Secretary shall be the treasurer of the organisation and will present an overview report on the finances of Labour Students to National Conference.

## **7. Liberation Campaigns**

- a) There shall be four liberation campaigns with autonomy over their own affairs and convened by the relevant liberation officer on the Labour Students National Committee. They are:
  - a. Women
  - b. BAME
  - c. LGBT+
  - d. Disabled Students
- b) At least one of the liberation officers will be appointed as safeguarding officer at all Labour Students events.
- c) The executive will make funding available at the request of liberation officers for use in undertaking their role.
- d) Constituent Labour Clubs are encouraged to have positions for all four liberation positions on their clubs committee.

## **8. The National Union of Students Group**

- a) There shall be an NUS Group made up of members of Labour Students elected as Labour Students to the structures of the NUS.
- b) The group will be co-convened by the National Chair and an NUS Group Leader appointed by the National Chair.
- c) Candidates wishing to stand as a Labour Students Candidate must submit an application and sit in front of an interview panel comprising the NUS Group leadership or their nominees before being approved
- d) Any candidate standing for a liberation officer position in NUS must only be interviewed by self-defining members of that campaign

- e) Endorsement shall be subject to agreement by Labour Students Liberation Conference or National Conference

## **9. Policy Committee**

- a) The Campaigns and Membership Officer shall be a member of and chair the policy Committee
- b) In addition, National Conference shall elect five members of the policy committee.
- c) At least half of the committee must be made up of self-defining women; this quota includes the Campaigns and Membership Officer as chair.
- d) The purpose of the committee will be to create action plans for policy passed at National Conference.
- e) Policy Committee shall be responsible for overseeing the administration of the priority ballot for National Conference

## **10. Elections Committee**

- a) The National Secretary shall be a member of and Chair the Elections Committee
- b) In addition, National Conference shall elect four members of the elections committee.
- c) At least half of the committee must be made up of self-defining women; this quota includes the National Secretary as chair of the committee.
- d) The elections committee shall approve the timetable and spending limits for National Committee elections.
- e) The elections committee shall approve the independent organisation that conducts the ballot.
- f) The elections committee shall be required to organise a hustings event to be live streamed to members during the formal campaign period of the election.



## 11. National Conference

- a) The work of Labour Students shall be under the direction of the National Conference which itself will be subject to this constitution.
- b) Each Constituent Labour Club may elect up to four delegates to National Conference of which at least two must be self-defining women members.
- c) The NUS Group may elect up to two delegates to National Conference, at least one of which must be a woman.
- d) Every delegate must be both an individual member of Labour Students and the Labour Party.
- e) Only delegates accredited by the National Secretary may vote at National Conference.
- f) Members of the National Committee shall not have voting rights at conference unless they are also duly elected as delegates for their Constituent Labour Club.
- g) The National Executive may call an Extraordinary National Conference with 30 calendar days' notice.
- h) No person may act as a delegate for more than one organisation.
- i) The policy committee and the National Secretary shall outline a timetable for the submission of motions allowing for:
  - i. Three weeks to submit motions
  - ii. One week to submit amendments
  - iii. One week to discuss the final motions
- j) The National Secretary shall be responsible for compositing of motions in conjunction with the proposers of the motions in question.
- k) All voting shall be conducted via a show of hands unless a secret ballot is called for under procedural motion 12.E.(III)
- l) The quorum for National Conference shall be half of the accredited delegates plus one
- m) Conference shall be chaired by the National Chair or their nominee and that person shall have a casting vote only

- n) Policy passed at National Conference shall be deemed current for a period of three years and the National Secretary shall notify Conference of lapsing policy.

## **12. National Conference Rules**

- a) Motions must be submitted on behalf of a constituent Labour Club following either a society general meeting or a society committee meeting to approve those motions.
- b) Constituent Labour Clubs and the NUS Group may submit up to three motions falling into one of the following three categories:
- I. Submission to the National Policy Forum
  - II. Labour Students Internal Policy
  - III. NUS Group Policy
- c) Constituent Labour Clubs and the NUS Group may submit up to three amendments to motions in advance of National Conference in line with the timetable agreed by the Policy Committee.
- d) Unless the chair of the debate considers it to be an infringement of reasonable debate any delegate may move a procedural motion at any time.
- e) The following procedural motions may be moved in the following descending order of precedence:
- I. That these rules be suspended
  - II. That the chair make a ruling
  - III. That a secret ballot be conducted
  - IV. That an additional round of speeches is heard
  - V. That the question be taken in parts
  - VI. That the question now be put
  - VII. That the question not be put
- f) All procedural motions except E.(I) and E.(III) require a simple majority to pass. Procedural Motions E.(I) and E.(III) require two thirds of delegates in order to pass.

- g) Speeches will be no more than two minutes for or against, with a one minute summation speech property of the Constituent Labour Club that proposed the motion.

### **13. Liberation Conference**

- a) Liberation officers shall be elected at this event to serve a one year term starting from seven days after this conference.
- b) The agenda for this conference shall be agreed by the four liberation officers and the executive committee.
- c) Any member shall be entitled to attend this event but only members that self-define into one of the four liberation campaigns may vote in their relevant officer election.

### **14. Other Events**

- a) There shall be two further national events in addition to those already set out in this constitution

### **15. Friends of Labour Students**

- a) Friends of Labour Students shall be the alumni group of the organisation with membership open to all Labour Party members who support Labour Students aims and values.
- b) There shall be an honorary president of Friends of Labour Students appointed by the Executive Committee of Labour Students.
- c) The National Committee shall be responsible for a quarterly newsletter sent out to all supporters of Friends of Labour Students.

## **16. Labour Party Annual Conference**

- a) The Chair of Labour Students and one other member of the executive committee shall act as delegates for the organisation to Labour Party Annual Conference.
- b) At least one of the Labour Students delegate positions must be held by a woman.

## **17. Discipline**

- a) A code of conduct will apply at all Labour Students events.
- b) Anyone found to be in breach of this code will be asked to leave the event.
- c) The Labour Students code of conduct can be found in Appendix A of this constitution.
- d) Any breaches of this code of conduct shall be reported to the next meeting of the National Committee for further consideration and action where required.
- e) Any member found by the Executive Committee to be in breach of the aims and values of Labour Students or for bringing Labour Students into disrepute may be suspended.
- f) In the most serious circumstances the National Committee may suspend the status of a Constituent Labour Club for grave breaches of this constitution or for bringing Labour Students into disrepute.
- g) Any individual member who is suspended or Constituent Labour Club which is suspended shall lose any rights conferred by individual membership or affiliation.
- h) Any individual member who is suspended or Constituent Labour Club which is suspended may apply to have their suspension lifted no earlier than three months from the date of the suspension and no earlier than six months from the date of any previous application.

## **18. Scottish and Welsh Labour Students**

- a) Scottish and Welsh Labour Students shall have independent structures from Labour Students.
- b) The constitutions of Scottish and Welsh Labour Students shall be superseded by that of Labour Students.

## **19. Amendments**

- a) Amendments to this constitution must pass through two successive National Conferences and are subject to approval by the General Secretary of the Labour Party.
- b) Amendments to the code of conduct (appendix A) may be passed by a simple majority vote of the National Committee.

## **20. Commencement**

- a) This constitution will take effect five calendar days after its ratification.

## **Appendix A**

### Labour Students Code of Conduct

*'Labour Students operates a safe space policy at all of its events. Sexist, Racist, anti-Semitic, Islamophobic, Homophobic, Transphobic, ableist, or harassing comments will not be tolerated and will result in you being removed from the event. By registering for our events you agree to this code of conduct both at this event and on any online platforms'*