University of Southampton Students' Union
Constitution of: Southampton Universities Guild of Change Ringers

1 Constitution Scope and Responsibilities

1.1 All aspects of the Guild will be delivered in accordance with this constitution and the Committee is responsible for ensuring this happens.

1.2 The Committee is responsible for ensuring the Guild meets and maintains the conditions for affiliation, as defined in Rule 8 'Student Groups' in the Union's Rules.

2 Name

The association's name is Southampton Universities Guild of Change Ringers also to be known as SUGCR and from now on the 'Guild'.

3 Guild Objectives

3.1 The Objectives of the Guild are:

3.1.1 Objective one: The aims of the Guild shall be to introduce and promote the art of change ringing, and to encourage regular participation in the art.

3.1.2 Objective two: Members are encouraged to participate in the activities of the Winchester and Portsmouth Diocesan Guild, to whom this Guild is affiliated as a ringing Society.

3.2 The Guild is to be operated solely for the purpose of the above Objectives.

3.3 If an Objective becomes unlawful for any reason, then it will automatically cease to be valid and the Committee must promptly update the Objectives by following Clause 18 'Changes to the Constitution'.

4 Membership

4.1 Only the following people may be members of the Guild:

4.1.1 Full Members of the Union (as defined in the Union's Rules) may become Full Members of the Guild; and

4.1.2 Associate Members of the Union (as defined in the Union's Rules) may become Associate Members of the Guild.

4.2 Membership is not transferable.

4.3 Only Full Members may:

4.3.1 be elected to the Committee; or

4.3.2 vote at a General Meeting.

4.4 The Guild may charge a fee for admission to Membership, which may be set by a Meeting of the Committee. Different categories of membership may exist, but conflicts of interest must not result in higher or lower fees being charged to any individual member.

4.5 The Committee must keep a register of members (the 'Register') on the Student Groups Hub provided by the Students' Union at www.susu.org.

4.6 The Committee may not refuse an application for Membership unless they have demonstrated to the Union that the applicant:

4.6.1 is not eligible for Full or Associate membership;

4.6.2 is not eligible for membership following a disciplinary process conducted by the Union or the University; or

4.6.3 has been barred from membership by the Guild as per Clause 16 'Disciplinary Action'.

4.7 The Committee may limit access to some activities to make sure the student experience comes first.

4.7.1 Some activities, or types of activities, may be limited to Full Members only; or

4.7.2 Full Members may be given first access to activities, with any remaining places offered to Associate Members.

4.7.3 This may apply to activities such as sessions, classes, competitions, events, trips, or tours.

4.7.4 The Committee must apply any limits or prioritisation fairly and consistently.

4.7.5 Any change to how activities are limited or prioritised must be agreed by a vote of the Committee.

4.8 Membership ends:

4.8.1 immediately if the Member wishes to leave the Guild and gives written notice to the Committee;

4.8.2 immediately upon a Member no longer qualifying for their category of Membership; and

4.8.3 immediately when membership is revoked following a disciplinary process as per Clause 16, 'Disciplinary Action', or following a disciplinary process undertaken by the Union or the University;

5 General Meetings

5.1 The General Meeting is the Guild's highest decision-making body, as long as it follows the rules in this Constitution.

5.2 The Guild must hold an Annual General Meeting ('**AGM**') within one month of the annual Dinner in each academic year, in the period between the 1st of February and the 31st of May, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Union.

5.3 A General Meeting that is not an Annual General Meeting is called an Extraordinary General Meeting ('**EGM**').

5.4 The Committee may call an Extraordinary General Meeting at any time.

5.5 The Committee must call an Extraordinary General Meeting if requested to do so in writing by at least five Full Members of the Guild. This ensures Members can collectively challenge non-disciplinary decisions and uphold democratic accountability.

5.5.1 The Members' written request must include an agenda for the matters they wish to be raised at the requested EGM.

5.5.2 If the Committee does not announce an EGM within seven days of their receipt of the five or more Full Members' written request, the Members may proceed to hold an EGM as per Clause 6 'Proceedings of General Meetings'.

5.6 The Committee must call an Extraordinary General Meeting if the Union requests them to do so.

6 Proceedings of General Meetings

6.1 Notice:

6.1.1 The minimum period of notice required to hold an Annual General Meeting is ten calendar days. The minimum period of notice required to hold an Extraordinary General Meeting is three days.

6.1.2 The notice must specify the date, time and place of the General Meeting, and an agenda for the General Meeting.

6.1.3 If the General Meeting is an AGM, the notice must say so and must invite nominations as per Clause 9 'Appointment of the Committee'.

6.1.4 Written notice must be given to all Members and to the Committee.

6.1.5 Reasonable steps should be taken to ensure Full Members can attend and participate in person or online.

6.2 Chairing:

6.2.1 General Meetings will be chaired by the Master.

6.2.2 If the Master is not available, or is not present within fifteen minutes of the time appointed for the General Meeting:

6.2.3 if notified in writing to the Committee ahead of the General Meeting, the Master may appoint another Committee Member to act as Chair;

6.2.4 otherwise, the Committee Members present may choose a Committee Member to act as Chair;

6.2.5 otherwise, the Full Members who are present may choose a Full Member to chair.

6.3 The quorum for a General Meeting will be a simple majority or twelve, whichever is the fewer of the total number of Full Members of the Guild, including the Committee, unless otherwise agreed with the Union.

6.3.1 Associate Members may speak at General Meetings at the Chair's invitation.

6.4 Voting on matters related to the Guild:

6.4.1 Every Full Member present at a General Meeting, with the exception of the Chair, will be allowed to cast one vote upon every voting matter. In the case of an equality of votes, the Chair will have a casting vote.

6.4.2 Decisions may only be made by at least a simple majority of votes at a quorate General Meeting.

6.4.3 All votes, except for Committee elections (Clause 9), will be decided by a show of hands or secret ballot, as chosen by the Chair.

6.5 The Committee is responsible for ensuring that:

6.5.1 accurate minutes are taken of the General Meeting, including the decisions made and where appropriate the reasons for the decisions; and

6.5.2 the minutes are made available to all Members within 14 days of the General Meeting.

6.6 Reports:

6.6.1 If the General Meeting is an AGM, the Chair should invite the members of the Committee to present a report of their activities whilst in office.

6.6.2 The Treasurer must present the Guild's accounts to the Members at the AGM.

6.7 Resolutions:

6.7.1 Any Full Member may propose a decision to be discussed and voted upon at a General Meeting by giving at least one day's written notice in advance.

7 Officers and the Committee

7.1 The Committee, made up of officers appointed under Clause 9, will manage the day-to-day operation of the Guild and its property.

7.2 The Guild must have the following officers:

7.2.1 Master.
The Master is the Society's figurehead to all external interests. The Master will chair all meetings and Guild activities. Any other tasks that do not come under the jurisdiction of other Committee members will additionally be the responsibility of the Master. Whilst each Committee Member has defined responsibilities, the Master may delegate those responsibilities as and when needed. The Master will additionally serve as the Guild's Steeple Keeper.

7.2.2 Wellbeing & Inclusion Officer.
A Wellbeing & Inclusion Officer will work to create a positive, inclusive, and supportive environment across the Guild, to act as a welfare contact for the Guild in case of any concerns, and to guide Members toward the appropriate support services when needed.

7.2.3 Treasurer.
The Treasurer shall maintain the accounts of the Society, which shall be available for examination at the AGM. Any funds spent by the Society must follow SUSU regulations and be authorised by two other committee members. The accounts of the Society shall be available to the Societies Officer and the Societies Department Committee.

7.3 The Guild has the following officers in addition:

7.3.1 Vice-Master.
The Vice-Master acts as the Master's deputy, who shall run all ringing and chair all meetings in the Master's absence. The Vice-Master is also the Guild's Archivist, being responsible for upkeeping Guild records of performance pieces.

7.3.2 Secretary.
The Secretary shall keep minutes of Society meetings which shall be available to the Societies Department Committee. It is the responsibility of the Secretary to deal with all communications on behalf of the Society and its Committee. The Secretary shall produce and maintain a list of all members, including up-to-date contact details, which shall be available to the officers and Committee of the Society.

7.3.3 Social Secretary.
The Social Secretary is responsible for organising social events for the Society and deputising for the Secretary when needed. By SUSU guidance, at least one of the socials each term is recommended to be alcohol-free for all involved.

7.3.4 Webmaster.
The Webmaster is entrusted with management of the Guild's website, and any other online activities.

7.4 The number of Officers on the Committee must not be less than three. There is no maximum number. There must always be:

7.4.1 one Master;

7.4.2 one Treasurer;

7.4.3 at least one Wellbeing & Inclusion Officer

7.5 An officer of the Committee will cease to hold office:

7.5.1 immediately if they are no longer a Full Member of the Guild;

7.5.2 with effect from their resignation by written notice to the Committee;

7.5.3 with effect from being removed from office as an outcome from a disciplinary process, as per Clause 16, 'Disciplinary Action'; and

7.5.4 with effect from being removed from office as an outcome from a disciplinary process by the Union or the University.

8 Meetings of the Committee

8.1 The Committee can manage their meetings as they see fit, as long as they follow the guidance outlined in this section of the constitution and adhere to the Union's Code of Conduct (Rule 7 in the Union's Rules).

8.2 Any member of the Committee may request the Master (or the Secretary, if the Guild has one) to call a meeting of the Committee.

8.3 The Master or Secretary must call a Meeting of the Committee within 14 days if requested to do so in writing by a member of the Committee.

8.4 Meetings of the Committee will be chaired by the Master.

8.5 If the Master is not available, or is not present within fifteen minutes of the time appointed for the meeting:

8.5.1 if notified in writing to the Committee ahead of the Committee meeting, the Master may appoint another Committee Member to act as Chair; and

8.5.2 otherwise, the Committee Members present may choose a Committee Member to act as Chair.

8.6 The quorum for a meeting of the Committee will be a simple majority of the total number of members of the Committee in office.

8.7 No decision may be made by a meeting of the Committee, unless a quorum is present at the time the decision is made.

8.8 Members with a conflict of interest must not vote on the decision and must not be included when calculating the quorum for that decision.

8.9 Every member of the Committee, with the exception of the Chair, will be allowed one vote on every voting matter. In the case of an equality of votes, the Chair will have a casting vote.

8.10 All Committee decisions must be made by a simple majority of votes at a quorate meeting of the Committee by show of hands or secret ballot at the Chair's discretion.

8.11 Only Committee members present (in person or online) may vote.

8.12 Minutes must be taken of all meetings of the Committee, including the decisions made.

9 Appointment of the Committee

9.1 The Full Members of the Guild in General Meeting will appoint the officers and other members of the Committee by election before the AGM following the Dinner, unless another date is agreed in writing with the Union.

9.1.1 Elections for the Committee will be held before the Annual General Meeting. By-elections for vacant roles will be held before an Extraordinary General Meeting.
Elections will be held electronically through the Union.

9.1.2 A Single Transferrable Vote (STV) system will be used for all elections.

9.1.3 In the event that the Union's online election system is inaccessible, a First-Past-The-Post system may be used by the Guild's Committee with approval by the Union.

9.1.4 In all elections Re-Open Nominations, 'RON', will be a candidate. An election yielding a result of RON will be re-run as a by-election.

9.2 The Chair of the General Meeting will publicly announce election results and must do so accurately. If members believe the count is wrong, they can request a recount by the Union.

9.3 A member of the Committee will assume office with effect from the end of the AGM.

9.4 A member of the Committee will retire with effect at the end of the AGM, unless another date is agreed in writing with the Union.

9.5 The committee information will be updated on the Student Groups Hub provided by the Union at www.susu.org.

9.6 The retiring Committee must notify the Union within seven days if they wish to run any by-elections for unfilled positions.

9.7 If the Master role, Wellbeing & Inclusion Officer role, and/or Treasurer role is vacant following the committee election (AGM), this automatically means a by-election (EGM) should be run.

9.8 If the Master, Wellbeing & Inclusion Officer, or Treasurer for the following academic year is not appointed before the AGM window has closed, or after one by-election has been held within the AGM window, the Guild will disaffiliate from the Union (in line with Rule 8 'Student Groups' of the Union's Rules).

9.9 A retiring Committee member must give all relevant information and documents to their successor or the incoming Master within twenty-one days of stepping down.

9.10 A Member may not be appointed a member of the Committee if they have been barred from becoming a member of the Committee following a disciplinary procedure by the Guild as per Clause 16 'Disciplinary Action' or following disciplinary action by the Union or the University.

10 Honorary Positions

10.1 The Committee shall have the right to nominate an Honorary President, to be known from now on as the 'President', from amongst those holding Full Membership, those who have held Full Membership in the past, and those holding Associate Membership. The President shall be nominated for a three year term.

10.2 The President shall not be considered a member of the Committee and does not hold a Committee role, nor do they possess the rights or responsibilities of Committee Members. The President's role is ceremonial, and their duties are to officiate the Dinner. Appointment as President does not confer SUSU Full or Associate membership or any rights reserved to Full or Associate Members, however, the President is expected to abide by the SUSU Code of Conduct.

10.3 The Guild may, with a simple majority of its Full Members at an AGM or an EGM, decide to remove the President for, violation of the SUSU Code of Conduct, treason, or other high crimes and misdemeanours.

11 Financial Management

11.1 The Committee shares responsibility for managing the Guild's finances properly.

11.2 The Guild's finances will be run through the Union's digital Money Hub system. The Guild may not hold a bank account with an external bank or building society.

11.3 All income and property must be used only to support the Guild's Objectives.

11.4 Committee members can be reimbursed for reasonable expenses they incur while working for the Guild but should get approval from the Treasurer beforehand whenever possible.

12 Irregularities and Saving Provisions

12.1 Committee decisions remain valid provided that, at the time the decision was made, a sufficient number of votes were cast by members who were eligible to vote.

12.2 Any vote cast by a person who, at the time of voting, was:

12.2.1 disqualified from holding office;

12.2.2 retired or required to step down;

12.2.3 not allowed to vote due to conflict of interest

must be disregarded and does not count towards the decision.

12.3 Members can challenge a Committee or General Meeting decision through a Point of Order only if a procedural error clearly harmed a member of the Guild.

13 Ringing

13.1 Performances:

13.1.1 Peals and half peals may be credited to the Society if rung by a band comprised of any combination of: Full Members; those who have held Full Membership in the past; those who hold Associate Membership whilst being a student at either the University of Southampton or Southampton Solent University, or who have met this criteria in the past; or Honorary Members. Peals not conforming to these rules but wishing to be associated with the Society may instead be credited to the 'Society of Hartley Youths'.

13.1.2 Quarter peals may be credited to the Society if rung by a band comprising 50% or more of any combination of Full Members, those who have held Full Membership in the past, Associate Members, or Honorary Members. Quarter peals and half peals not conforming to these rules but wishing to be associated with the Society may instead be credited to the 'Society of Hartley Youths'.

13.2 The conductor shall be responsible for providing the Archivist with details of performances to be credited to the Society.

13.3 Ruling from the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers shall be adhered to with respect to peals.

13.4 The Guild is not obliged to accept quarter peals where they offend general ringing principles in the opinion of the Master, Vice-Master, and Secretary.

14 Guild Assets

14.1 The Guild maintains various assets for which it is responsible. These include, but are not limited to:

14.1.1 The Guild's 'Home Tower', which is recognised to be Lodge Road for the purpose of all external interests, for as long as Lodge Road are in agreement with this.

14.1.2 A set of twenty-seven handbells, with their storage location to be determined at each AGM.

14.1.3 The Hartley Twelve Mini Ring, which is permanently situated at St Mary's, South Stoneham.

14.1.4 'Ting', a singular bell, which is to be kept with the current Master.

14.1.5 The Felstead Cup Trophy, which is to be kept with the current Master.

14.1.6 The Founders' Cup, which is to be kept with the winner for that year.

14.1.7 The Derek Jackson Trophy, which is to be kept with the winner for that year.

14.1.8 The Guild's Mascot, '8-Spliced', who is to be looked after by members of the Committee.

14.1.9 The Guild's Records, which are to be kept with either, the Master, the Vice-Master, or the Secretary.

15 Conflicts of Interests and Conflicts of Loyalties

15.1 A Member of the Committee must:

15.1.1 declare any personal interest in decisions or transactions that hasn't already been disclosed.

15.1.2 step away from discussions where a conflict between their duty and personal interest might arise.

15.1.3 not vote on, or be counted in the quorum for, a decision connected to their conflict of interest.

16 Disciplinary Action

16.1 The Committee cannot commence disciplinary action without approval from the Union.

16.2 The Committee may take disciplinary action against any Member of the Guild as a consequence of conduct by the Member which is:

16.2.1 detrimental to the reputation of the Guild and/or the Students' Union and/or the University.

16.2.2 incompatible with the Objectives of the Guild (see Clause 3, 'Guild Objectives');

16.2.3 in contravention of any provision of this Constitution; and/or

16.2.4 in breach of the Union's Code of Conduct (Rule 7 in the Union's Rules).

16.3 Any disciplinary hearing must be conducted in an impartial, balanced, and fair manner, considering all relevant representations on the matter. The Committee must follow the Union's disciplinary action and processes guidelines for Groups throughout the process.

16.4 Members subject to disciplinary action by the committee have the right of appeal to the Union. The appeals process is set out in the disciplinary guidelines.

16.5 A full report of all disciplinary action taken by the Guild in the previous year must be presented at the AGM. The preparation and presentation of this report must follow the Union's disciplinary guidelines.

16.6 The outcome of any disciplinary action must be shared with the Union within 7 days of the Committee's decision.

17 Affiliation to External Organisations

17.1 The Guild can become an affiliate of an external organisation if:

17.1.1 the aims of that organisation are in line with and relevant to the Objectives of the Guild;

17.1.2 the Members derive a material benefit from the affiliation;

17.1.3 no Policy of the Union or law is breached by the affiliation; and

17.1.4 a decision to affiliate is passed by the Members in General Meeting.

17.2 The Guild's affiliation to an external organisation will end immediately:

17.2.1 at the conclusion of each Annual General Meeting after affiliation, unless the Members in General Meeting agree to re-affiliate at each AGM as per sub-clause (17.1); or

17.2.2 if a decision to disaffiliate is passed by the Members in General Meeting.

17.3 All external affiliations and disaffiliations must be reported to the Union within seven days.

17.4 The Union reserves the right to reject external affiliations that don't meet the requirements under 17.1, or if the affiliation brings, or risks bringing, the Union or the University into disrepute and/or that are incompatible with the Union's charitable objectives. The Guild must obtain the Union's prior approval before voting on affiliation with an external organisation.

17.5 For the avoidance of doubt, the Union and the University are not external organisations for the purposes of this Clause 17.

18 Changes to the Constitution

18.1 The Guild may make changes to this Constitution provided that changes:

18.1.1 are provisionally agreed to by the Union in writing in advance of the changes being put to a General Meeting for approval;

18.1.2 do not change the Objectives in a way that undermines or works against the previous objectives of the Guild;

18.1.3 do not invalidate any prior decision of the Members in General Meeting or a Meeting of the Committee;

18.1.4 are agreed to by at least a two-thirds majority of the Full Members present at a quorate General Meeting;

18.1.5 receive final formal approval by the Union.

18.2 The rules of this Constitution will be subordinate to those of the Union's Articles, Rules, and Policies.

18.3 The Committee and the Union will retain a copy of this Constitution, which the Committee must make available to Members upon request.

19 Dissolution and Disaffiliation

19.1 An affiliated student group may dissolve or disaffiliate from SUSU at any time and for any reason as long as their members have voted to approve this.

19.2 Dissolution or disaffiliation could happen in the following ways:

19.2.1 The Guild agrees to dissolve. This means the Guild will cease to exist.

19.2.2 The Guild agrees to disaffiliate from the Union. This means the Guild continues to exist as an unaffiliated student group.

19.2.3 The Union disaffiliates the Guild because of a disciplinary decision, or because it no longer meets the Union's affiliation requirements.

19.3 If the Guild is dissolved or disaffiliated, the Committee stays in charge until all of the Guild's affairs are properly wrapped up.

19.4 To dissolve the Guild or to disaffiliate the Guild from the Union (19.2.1 or 19.2.2), at least two-thirds of the Full Members at a General Meeting must agree.

19.5 The Committee must gather all the Guild's assets and make sure all debts and obligations are paid.

19.6 Following dissolution of the Guild, any leftover money must,

19.6.1 if possible, be used for the Guild's original purpose, or

19.6.2 be transferred to another group within the Union with similar aims, or

19.6.3 be used in another way agreed in writing with the Union.

19.7 Following dissolution of the Guild, any leftover property must,

19.7.1 if possible, be used for the Guild's original purpose, or

19.7.2 be transferred to another group within the Union with similar aims, or

19.7.3 be transferred to the Hartley Youths, or

19.7.4 be transferred to the Southampton City Ringers, or

19.7.5 be used in another way agreed in writing with the Union.

19.8 Following disaffiliation of the Guild, any leftover money must,

19.8.1 if possible, be used for the Guild's original purpose, or

19.8.2 be transferred to another group within the Union with similar aims, or

19.8.3 be used in another way agreed in writing with the Union.

19.9 Following disaffiliation of the Guild, any leftover property must,

19.9.1 remain with the Guild and not be transferred to any other party.

19.10 Members can decide (before or at the time of dissolution) how the remaining assets should be used, as long as it follows the rules above. The Committee must follow that decision.

19.11 Members cannot receive any of the leftover money or assets personally.

19.12 The Committee must securely destroy the Guild's register and all other data when the Guild is dissolved.

19.13 The Committee must inform the Activities Team within seven days that the Guild has been dissolved or disaffiliated. If required, they must also send the Union the Guild's final accounts for the last accounting period.

20 Interpretation

In this Constitution:

20.1 '**Committee**' means the officers of the Guild who are appointed per Clause 9.

20.2 **'The University'** means 'the University of Southampton'.

20.3 **'University term'** and '**academic year**' have the definitions set out in the University Calendar and Almanac.

20.4 '**Financial Benefit**' means a benefit, direct or indirect, which is either money or has a monetary value.

20.5 The '**Union**' means 'The University of Southampton Students' Union', operating as '**SUSU'**.

20.6 **'Articles'**, or '**Articles of the Students' Union**' mean the Students' Union's Articles of Association, accessible on the Students' Union's website.

20.7 '**Union's Rules**' and '**Policies**' have the definitions set out in the Articles, accessible on the Students' Union's website.

20.8 **'Simple Majority'** means more than half of the individuals referenced.

21 Declaration

The Members of the Guild in General Meeting Adopted this Constitution:

Date: 22/09/2026	**Master Signature:** R.P.McGrane **Treasurer Signature:** Hannah Read

The Union will approve this Constitution by accepting its upload on the Student Groups Hub provided by the Students' Union at www.susu.org.