

The AHS is governed by its Constitution, which forms section 13 of the BHA's Byelaws. All AHS personnel are bound by the Constitution and as such should familiarise themselves with it.

13 Constitution of the National Federation of Atheist, Humanist and Secular Student Societies

Name, Status, Aims

13.1 NAME

13.1.1 *The name of the association shall be 'The National Federation of Atheist, Humanist and Secular Student Societies'.*

13.1.2 *The association shall be referred to as 'The AHS'.*

13.2 STATUS

13.2.1 *The AHS shall be an association of atheist, Humanist and secular student societies, facilitated and supported by the British Humanist Association.*

13.3 AIMS

13.3.1 *The vision of the AHS is to see a thriving atheist, humanist or secular student society in every institute of Higher Education in the UK and Republic of Ireland, networked together, with a shared voice in public life, whose members can contribute to and be part of the wider national and international movement.*

13.3.2 *As a means of achieving its vision the AHS aims to:*

- i. build, support and represent atheist, humanist and secular student societies,*
- ii. facilitate communication between them,*
- iii. encourage joint actions and ensure that their members have opportunities to be part of the wider national and international movement.*

Organisation

13.4 THE CAUCUS

13.4.1 *There shall be a Caucus which, except where otherwise stated, shall be the sovereign body of the AHS, consisting of:*

- i. The President/Chair or otherwise titled leader (or their appointed representative) of each Member, who must be a permanent student at a UK institution of higher education listed by the UK or Republic of Ireland government as providing courses that lead to the awarding of a recognised degree.*
- ii. One additional representative of each Member elected for that purpose by the Member, who must be a permanent student at a UK or Republic of Ireland institution of higher education listed by the UK or Republic of Ireland government as providing courses that lead to the awarding of a recognised degree.*

- iii. *The Executive.*
- iv. *The Board.*

13.4.2 *Any member of the Caucus under 13.4.1.i or 13.4.1.ii can propose a resolution calling on the Executive to take certain actions, which if seconded by a member of the Caucus under 13.4.1.i or 13.4.1.ii representing another Member, shall be debated and voted on.*

13.4.3 *Any member of the Caucus under 13.4.1.i or 13.4.1.ii may propose a vote of no confidence in a member of the Executive which must be seconded by another member of the Caucus representing another Member. The Caucus must then vote, and a two-thirds majority will see the removal of the member of the Executive. The member of the Executive has a right of reply before the vote is taken.*

13.5 THE EXECUTIVE

13.5.1 *There shall be an Executive, which shall pursue the aims of the AHS, consisting of:*

- i. *The President, who shall be chief executive officer of the AHS and shall chair the Executive and the Caucus.*
- ii. *The Treasurer, who shall be the chief financial officer of the AHS and shall be responsible for presenting the financial situation of the AHS to any Member Society and at meetings of the Executive or the Caucus.*
- iii. *The Secretary, who shall be the chief administrative officer of the AHS and be responsible for recording the happenings at any meeting of the Executive or the Caucus.*
- iv. *The Head of Membership who shall be the chief officer for administration of member societies of the AHS and be responsible for making sure exec actions reflect AHS member needs and interests.*

13.5.2 *The Executive shall:*

- i. *be responsible for the organisation of the Annual General Meeting and any Extraordinary General Meeting.*
- ii. *be responsible for organising activities in pursuit of the aims under Clause 13.3.*
- iii. *be responsible for the management of the affairs of the AHS, except where otherwise stated.*
- iv. *attend the Annual General Meeting and additional meetings of the Caucus.*

13.5.3 *Election of members of the Executive shall be made by simple majority at the Annual General Meeting or any Extraordinary General Meeting.*

13.5.4 *All members of the Executive must be of at least 18 years of age and be a permanent student at a UK institution of higher education listed by the UK government as providing courses that lead to the awarding of a recognised degree, on the day of their election.*

13.6 THE BOARD

- 13.6.1 *There shall be a Board which shall elect its own chair and which shall have ultimate management responsibility for the AHS, reporting to the Trustees of the British Humanist Association, consisting of:*
- i. Up to four members appointed by the Executive*
 - ii. Up to three members appointed by the Trustees of the British Humanist Association*
 - iii. The President of the AHS*
 - iv. The Chief Executive of the BHA*
- 13.6.2 *The appointment of members under 13.6.1.i shall be subject to ratification by a vote of the members of the Caucus listed under 13.4.1.i or 13.4.1.ii.*
- i. The Executive may at any time propose to remove a member of the Board appointed under 13.6.1.i. The member of the Board in question shall have the right of reply. A vote resulting in a two-thirds majority of members of the Caucus listed under 13.4.1.i and 13.4.1.ii is required to remove the Board member.*
 - ii. The Trustees of the BHA may at any time remove a member of the Board appointed under 13.6.1.ii.*
 - iii. A member of the Board appointed under 13.6.1.i may resign in writing to the Executive.*
 - iv. A member of the Board appointed under 13.6.1.ii may resign in writing to the Trustees of the British Humanist Association.*
 - v. No member of the Caucus under 13.4.1.i and 13.4.1.ii, Executive, or Officer may be appointed as a member of the Board under 13.6.1.i or 13.6.1.ii and no Board member under 13.6.1.i or 13.6.1.ii may be a member of the Caucus under 13.4.1.i and 13.4.1.ii, Executive nor an Officer.*
- 13.6.3 *The Board shall have management responsibility for the financial state of the AHS, including any budget delegated by the trustees of the British Humanist Association.*

13.7 OFFICERS

- 13.7.1 *The Executive may appoint Officers, who need not be permanent students, as necessary.*
- 13.7.2 *These Officers shall carry out duties as defined by the Executive for a period of time as defined by a resolution of the Executive, but shall not be members of the Executive.*
- 13.7.3 *Removal of Officers shall occur where a unanimous resolution by the Executive is ratified by simple majority of the Board.*
- 13.7.4 *Officers shall attend meetings of the Caucus in a non-voting capacity.*

Membership

13.8 MEMBERSHIP

- 13.8.1 *Membership shall be open to all constituted societies, groups or collections of students based primarily in the United Kingdom or Republic of Ireland that specifically cater to some or all of the following individuals (or any individuals that subscribe in part to the principles of any listed group):*
- i. *Agnostics, atheists, freethinkers, Humanists, non-theists, rationalists, secularists, skeptics.*
- 13.8.2 *Member Societies are obliged to abide by the Constitution of the AHS and are requested to contribute to the fulfillment of the aims under clause 13.3.*
- 13.8.3 *Member Societies are obliged to pay any annual subscription set by the Executive from time to time, and ratified by the Caucus.*
- 13.8.4 *Applications for membership shall be made to the Executive. The Executive shall make enquiries and investigations as it thinks fit and may accept such application or reject it subject only to the criteria under clause 13.8.1.*
- 13.8.5 *All applications that are accepted by the Executive shall be deemed to be ratified by the Caucus in the absence of objections following seven days' notice of the accepted application by email. In the event of objection, the application must be ratified by simple majority of the Caucus.*

Expulsion, Suspension and Withdrawal from Membership

13.9 SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

- 13.9.1 *Any Member that contravenes their obligations under clause 13.8, or no longer meets the criteria for membership under clause 13.8, is liable to suspension and expulsion.*
- 13.9.2 *The Executive may, by a simple majority, suspend a Member under 13.9.1 for a period no longer than the date of the next AGM where, unless a resolution to expel the Member or continue the suspension is carried by a two-thirds majority of the AGM, the Member is reinstated.*
- 13.9.3 *A Member previously expelled may reapply for membership subject to the provisions of clause 13.8 at any time from one year after their expulsion.*

13.10 WITHDRAWAL FROM MEMBERSHIP

- 13.10.1 *Withdrawal from Membership shall occur if the Member submits in writing to the Executive their request for withdrawal. Membership shall cease on receipt of the request and the Member shall forfeit any subscriptions or other dues paid.*

General Meetings

13.11 GENERAL MEETINGS

- 13.11.1 *An Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held once every year between 1 February and 31 March.*

13.11.2 Any additional General Meeting shall follow the regulations of the AGM except where explicitly stated otherwise.

13.11.3 The AGM shall have the following powers:

- i. To elect members to the Executive.
- ii. To pass any resolutions proposed.
- iii. To ratify any policy made by the Executive requiring ratification.

13.11.4 All individual members of the Caucus shall have the right to speak and have one vote each at the AGM, except the President who shall chair and have a casting vote only.

13.11.5 The Election of the Executive shall occur as laid down by the Chair of the AGM so long as:

- i. Each candidate shall be entered into the minutes.
- ii. The candidates may speak for no longer than five minutes regarding their election.
- iii. The election shall then take place by secret ballot.
- iv. The election shall be carried out by a returning officer appointed by the AGM.

13.11.6 Members of the Executive shall take office from 1 July and handover for members of the Executive shall occur intensively before they take office with handover support continuing for as long as is reasonably necessary.

13.11.7 Minutes of the AGM shall be taken by the Secretary and must be ratified by simple majority at the next AGM.

13.11.8 Notice of the AGM to all Members and to the Board shall be given by the Executive and the period of notice shall be as follows:

- i. Notice of the AGM shall be 28 days.
- ii. Notice of an ordinary GM shall be 14 days.

The British Humanist Association

13.12 THE BRITISH HUMANIST ASSOCIATION

13.12.1 The British Humanist Association (BHA) will maintain a restricted fund for the AHS, which can be accessed by the Board at the request of the Executive.

13.12.2 The British Humanist Association will assist the Executive in the discharging of its duties through the provision of administrative resources, either at the office of the AHS (which shall also be that of the BHA) or remotely.

13.12.3 This administrative provision is to include but not be limited to the editing and finishing of resources and documentation, the storage and upkeep of records, and the provision of communications and IT support.

Affiliation

13.13 AFFILIATION

13.13.1 The AHS shall be affiliated with any organisation that furthers the aims of the AHS by majority resolution of the Caucus and agreement of the Trustees of the British Humanist Association.

13.14 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND DISSOLUTION

13.14.1 This constitution may only be amended or the AHS dissolved by a two-thirds majority of the Caucus and a two-thirds majority of the Trustees of the British Humanist Association.