

# **THE CONSTITUTION OF THE NUI GALWAY FLAC SOCIETY**

## **ARTICLE ONE – Title**

**1.1** The name of the Society shall be The Free Legal Advice Clinics Society, NUI Galway, hereinafter referred to as ‘the Society’.

**1.2** The Society may be commonly known as: FLAC.

## **ARTICLE TWO – Aims**

**2.1** The Society’s primary aim is to promote and facilitate access to justice on campus in NUI Galway. The Society will fulfil this aim by helping students who require legal information through the provision of free legal advice clinics.

**2.2** Trained law students shall work under the supervision of a qualified practitioner and distribute legal information as is required. Matters discussed at the legal advice centre clinics shall be strictly confidential in nature.

**2.3** The Society shall also promote and highlight areas where there are inequalities in accessing justice for students and for other members of society.

## **ARTICLE THREE – Membership**

**3.1** All current students and current staff of the University shall be eligible to become full members of the Society.

**3.2** Any eligible person shall become a member of the Society upon registering with the Society on any Societies' Day, or using the official societies registration procedure.

**3.3** The Auditor may, upon consultation with the Committee, award Honorary Life Membership (HLM) to any member or alumni whom they deem appropriate.

**3.3.1** An HLM is entitled to entry to Society events but is not entitled to a vote at regular meetings or Annual General Meeting (AGM) / Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM), and is also not entitled to stand for a committee position.

**3.3.2** If an HLM becomes eligible for full membership as per Article 3.1 they shall have the same rights as a full member.

**3.3.3** The Secretary shall maintain and update a list of the Society's HLMs.

## **ARTICLE FOUR – Committee**

The business of the Society shall be conducted by a committee, annually elected or appointed and shall serve from the first of July. All full members of the Society are eligible to be elected to the committee. The committee shall consist of the following permanent members:

- 1. Auditor**
- 2. Vice-Auditor**
- 3. Treasurer**
- 4. Secretary**
- 5. Social Secretary**
- 6. Public Relations Officer**
- 7. Media Officer**
- 8. Strategic Advisor**

The Committee shall have power to elect other such officers as may be deemed necessary or suitable for the carrying out of its objects.

### **4.1 Auditor**

The Auditor shall act as the head of the Society and shall maintain its aims. His or her primary duty is to preside over meetings of the society and to co-ordinate the work of committee members. The Auditor shall also represent the Society in all matters.

### **4.2 Vice-Auditor**

The Vice-Auditor must assist the Auditor in the general running of the Society. The Vice-Auditor shall assume the duties of the Auditor should the Auditor be absent or unable to fulfil his/her duties. The Vice-Auditor shall be responsible for the organisation and running of

the Society's free legal advice clinics. The Vice-Auditor may fulfil any general role as defined by the Committee.

#### **4.3 Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall be responsible for the financial affairs of the Society. This includes updating the Committee on financial details and irregularities, actively seeking funding for the Society and preparing an annual report on the financial affairs of the Society.

#### **4.4 Secretary**

The Secretary shall maintain non-financial records of the Society. They shall be responsible for taking and reading minutes at each Society meeting. The minutes must be passed by the Society and signed by the Secretary and the Auditor.

The Secretary may also be directed to enter into correspondence, and shall update the Committee of any correspondence received.

#### **4.5 Social Secretary**

The Social Secretary shall, in consultation with the committee, organise all social and external events of the Society. The Social Secretary shall also act informally as the Society's Inclusion & Diversity Officer.

#### **4.6 Public Relations Officer**

The Public Relations Officer shall be responsible for maintaining the Society's image and promoting its aims and events. This includes, but is not limited to, the management of Society advertising, mailing lists and the exercise of general public relations.

#### **4.7 Media Officer**

The Media Officer shall be responsible for producing and promoting the Society's official podcast: The FLAC-Cast. The Media Officer shall be responsible for all aspects of the podcast, and must ensure at least 4 episodes are released per semester. The Media Officer may also assist the Public Relations Officer where necessary.

#### **4.8 Strategic Advisor**

The Strategic Advisor shall be responsible for ensuring the continuity of the Society and advising the Committee on the exercise of its

powers. The Strategic Advisor must have served on a previous Committee of the Society. The Strategic Advisor may also provide external advice to the Society.

## **ARTICLE FIVE – Meetings**

**5.1** The Committee shall meet at least five times a year. Three college days' notice must be given to all Committee Members. The quorum for such meetings shall be a simple majority of members.

**5.2** Meetings of the Society shall be run in accordance with Standing Orders approved by the Committee of the Society.

### **5.3 Annual General Meeting**

The Annual General Meeting shall be held during Semester Two, at the discretion of the Committee. Members must be given five college days' notice. The Meeting must be held at least two weeks before the first examination. The quorum shall be 10% of active members.

### **5.4 Extraordinary General Meeting**

An Extraordinary Meeting may be convened by a majority decision of the committee or on foot of a petition signed by ten Society members. An Extraordinary General Meeting must be held within 14 days of the resignation of any Committee Member.

Not more than four Extraordinary General Meetings may be held, two in the first semester and two in the second semester. The quorum shall be 5% of active members. In the case of an Extra-Ordinary Meeting, four college days' notice must be given.

## **ARTICLE SIX – Elections & Voting**

**6.1** The Committee of the Society shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting, except where otherwise provided for in this Constitution.

**6.2** The Auditor shall appoint a Returning Officer for elections. The Auditor may appoint themselves as returning officer. The Returning Officer may not be a candidate in any of the elections. The Returning

Officer must not vote, but to cast a casting vote in the event of a tie. In the event of a tie, the Auditor (where they are the returning officer) receives a casting vote; in the event where they are not the returning officer, they receive no casting vote.

**6.3** All full members of the Society shall be eligible for election to the Committee.

**6.4** Candidates for each position on the Committee of the Society must be proposed and seconded by members of the Society at the AGM. The candidates may not propose themselves.

**6.5** All members of at least 30 days standing of the Society shall be entitled to vote in the election of the Committee. The Secretary must present the membership list of those eligible to vote at the election.

**6.6** The election of members of the Committee shall take place by secret ballot at the AGM. This, at the discretion of the Returning Officer with the agreement of two-thirds of the membership attending the AGM, may be changed to a show of hands. Should this be implemented it is considered to be a change confined to that specific AGM/EGM and not be deemed a change to the Constitution.

**6.8** All votes will be in line with Electoral Act 1992

## **ARTICLE SEVEN – Resignations & Vacancies**

**7.1** The resignation of any member of the Committee shall be instituted by a letter of resignation to the Secretary of the Society.

**7.1.1** In the case of the resignation of the Secretary, resignation may be instituted by a letter of resignation to the Auditor.

**7.2** In the case of resignation during term time, the resigning Committee member must handover all Society property, passwords and handover documents as per Article 12.1 to the Committee, and where practical, assist with the induction of his/her replacement.

**7.3** An Extraordinary General Meeting to fill the vacancy shall be convened within 14 days of the Secretary's receipt of any resignation. The Committee may appoint a member to the vacant position during the interim.

#### **ARTICLE EIGHT – Finances**

**8.1** The primary responsibility for managing the finances of the Society lies with the Treasurer in consultation with the committee.

#### **ARTICLE NINE – Amendments**

**9.1** Amendments to this Constitution shall be affected at the Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting and shall be subject to the Formal Approval of the University Societies Committee.

**9.2** Amendments require the affirmative vote of two thirds majority of members present at the meeting to pass

#### **ARTICLE TEN – Dissolution**

On the dissolution of the Society its assets shall be handed over to the University. The Society may be dissolved by a three quarters majority vote of its membership at a General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Society. The Society may also be dissolved by decision of the USC. The Society shall fall into abeyance where it fails to validly elect a committee for two successive years.

#### **ARTICLE ELEVEN – Interpretation**

The Interpretation of the foregoing clauses shall rest solely with the Society.