



**GALWAY-MAYO INSTITUTE
OF TECHNOLOGY**

**STUDENTS' UNION
CONSTITUTION**

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ARTICLE 1: NAME.

The name of the organisation shall be *Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology Students' Union*, hereinafter referred to as *the Union*.

ARTICLE 2: BASIC PRINCIPLE OF THE UNION.

The basic principle of the Union shall be the defence and promotion of the fundamental educational, economic, political, social, cultural and welfare rights of its members.

ARTICLE 3: OBJECTIVES OF THE UNION.

The objectives of the Union shall be;

1. To promote the collective and individual participation of the membership in a democratic framework of participation and representation.
2. To be the representative voice of the students of GMIT in all dealings with college authorities and any relevant outside groups.
3. To provide such services as are needed by the membership, be they financial, social, cultural, educational, or welfare.

ARTICLE 4: MEMBERSHIP.

1. The Union shall have the two categories of membership:
 - a. Ordinary member
 - b. Honorary member
2. An *ordinary member* of the Union shall be a full time student of GMIT. Full time officers of the Union shall also be ordinary members of the Union.
3. The Class Rep Council may, by simple majority, confer lifetime honorary membership on any person. Honorary members shall not confer any rights or privileges on that person save those granted elsewhere in this constitution.

ARTICLE 5: STRUCTURE AND AUTHORITY.

1. The structure of the elected representatives of the Union shall be:
 - a. The President
 - b. The Executive
 - c. The Class Representative Council
2. The ordinary members of the Union voting in a referendum or Annual General Meeting shall be the supreme governing authority of the Union. Decisions and policies created by a AGM cannot be overruled except by a

later AGM or referendum. Decisions and policies created by a referendum cannot be overruled except by a later referendum.

ARTICLE 6: THE CLASS REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL.

1. The Class Representative Council shall be constituted as follows:
 - a. All class representatives as defined in this constitution, regardless of which campus they serve.
 - b. All Members of the executive.
2. The President or Nominee of the President shall chair the Class Rep Council.
3. The Class Rep Council has the power to mandate the executive on an area of work.
4. The Class Rep Council shall communicate the views of the members to the executive and shall also communicate the views and the work of the executive to the members.
5. The Class Rep Council shall meet at least twice per term and not later than the last week in October in the first term.
6. One third of the Class Rep Council representatives shall be present to constitute a quorum. Quorum shall only be required for such time as a vote is to be called

ARTICLE 7: THE EXECUTIVE.

1. Subject to the provisions of the constitution, the executive power of the Union shall be vested in the Executive, who shall act at all times in accordance with Union policy.
2. The following shall be the executive positions:
 - The President
 - The Deputy President for Education
 - The Vice President for Welfare
 - The Vice President for the Mayo Campus
 - The Head Class Rep from the Letterfrack Campus
 - The Head Class Rep for the Department of Art & Design
 - The Head Class Rep for the Department of Film & Documentary
 - The Head Class Rep for the School of Business
 - The Head Class Rep for the School of Science
 - The Head Class Rep for the School of Engineering
 - The Head Class Rep for the Department of Heritage
 - The Head Class Rep for the Department of Hotel Operations & Management
 - The Welfare Officer for the Mayo Campus
 - The Irish Language & Culture Officer

- The Mature Students Officer
 - The International Students Officer
 - The LGBT Rights Officer
 - The Events & Entertainments Officer
3. **The President, the Deputy President and both Vice Presidents** shall be full-time and receive remuneration and expenses as decided by the Board of Trustees. The other officers of the Executive shall serve on a part-time basis and shall receive only such reasonable expenses as the Board of Trustees may decide. No person shall be eligible for election to a full time officer position if they have served two terms in that position already, or if they have already served three terms in full time positions in total.
4. Subject to the general executive, the Class Rep Council and the AGM:
- a) **The President** shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Union and shall have overall responsibility for the affairs of the Union on every campus in GMIT including Galway, Letterfrack, Mayo, Cluain Mhuire and Mountbellew. Subject to the provisions of the constitution s/he may allocate areas of work to the elected officers and staff. The President shall have overall responsibility to oversee the workings of the Students' Union business.
 - b) **The Deputy President for Education** shall be the overall Deputy President of the Union and s/he shall actively assist the President in the carrying out of his/her duties and shall deputise for him/her where necessary. In case of unavailability of the President the Deputy President shall be the principal officer of the Union. S/he shall be elected by the students in all campuses. S/he is responsible for the academic policies of the Union and the provision of the adequate education support services to members.
 - c) **The Vice President for Welfare** shall be responsible for student services in Galway, Cluain Mhuire, Letterfrack and Mountbellew in particular the provision of the adequate welfare information services to these members. S/he is responsible for the equality and disability campaigns of the Union.
 - d) **The Vice President for the Mayo Campus also known as the Mayo Campus Site President** shall be based on the Mayo campus and shall carry out all aspects of Union policy in Mayo. S/he shall be the principal officer on the Mayo campus in the absence of the President and shall represent the views of the Mayo members to the Union however financial statements will be reviewed monthly with the President. The Vice President for the Mayo Campus may

appoint or organise for the election of such other part-time unpaid officers as they see fit.

- e) **The Welfare Officer for the Mayo Campus** shall be based in the Mayo Campus and shall be responsible for student services in Mayo in particular the provision of adequate welfare information services to the members of Mayo. S/he shall also act as a liaison between campuses with the Vice President for Welfare.
- f) **The Irish Language Officer** shall be responsible for the promotion and upkeep of the Irish Language within the Union. The officer must have a relative fluency in the language. S/he is responsible for the translation of union material including press releases and publications to the Irish speaking members of the Union.
- g) **The Mature Students Officer** shall be responsible for representing the views and concerns of the mature members of the union. Mature Students shall be defined as 'any full-time student who was aged 23 years or more in the first year of their college course'.
- h) **The International Students Officer** shall represent the needs and views of the international students, provide support as may be necessary and organise events and campaigns.
- i) **The LGBT Rights Officer** shall represent the needs and views of LGBT students, provide support as may be necessary, raise awareness and organise LGBT events and campaigns.
- j) **Events & Entertainments Officer** shall assist with the promotion and organisation of SU events on and off campus throughout the year and lead a team of helpers which will support the promotion and running of SU entertainment events in a manner to be decided by the President or the Class Rep Council.
- k) **The Head Class Reps** shall be elected by the class reps in their school/college/department or in a manner as decided by the President and agreed by the Class Rep Council. No Class rep shall be allowed to vote in two separate elections for Head Class Rep. They shall represent the students in their school/college/department at SU meetings and meetings with the college, bring issues of importance raised by reps within their School or Campus to the full-time Officers of the Union, and inform reps and students in their school/college/department about ongoing Union developments and activities

The Election of the Executive shall be carried out in a manner prescribed in Schedule 1 of this constitution.

ARTICLE 8: RESIGNATIONS AND EXPULSIONS.

1. Any elected member may resign by tendering his/her resignation in writing to the President. In the case of the President s/he may resign by tendering his/her resignation to the Board of Trustees.
2. Any Class Rep member who fails to attend or send apologies to two consecutive class meetings will be deemed to have resigned.
3. Any officer who has missed two consecutive class rep meetings will be deemed to have resigned.
4. A Class Rep member may be impeached only by a motion put to the class s/he represents.
5. An officer may be impeached only by a quorum Emergency General Meeting of the Union. This does not apply to autonomously elected officers.
6. In all cases where a post becomes vacant a by-election will occur.

ARTICLE 9: GENERAL MEETINGS

1. The Annual General Meeting shall be the supreme governing body of the Union subject to a referendum.
2. The Annual General Meeting, AGM, shall be held in the last term.
3. An Emergency General Meeting must be held within five college days of the receipt of the written request of one of the following:
 - A. The executive Committee
 - B. Any 200 full members of the Union

Such a meeting must discuss only the business for which it has been called which must be clearly specified by written request.

4. At least five-college days notice must be given of the AGM. There must be at least two days notice of an EGM.
5. There must be a quorum of 200 for EGMs and 200 for the AGM.
6. All general meetings shall be held in accordance with the Standing Orders as outlined in schedule 3.

ARTICLE 10: REFERENDUMS

1. A referendum shall be called by the President or the Executive:
 - a. To approve, repeal or amend any part, or parts or the whole constitution or standing orders.
 - b. To decide upon any extraordinary matter of Union policy if requested to do so by the President, a simple majority of the AGM or the Class Rep Council.
2. The President shall give one week's notice to all Union members before the date of the referendum.
3. For a proposal to succeed in a referendum it shall be necessary to have:
 - a. Of all votes cast there must be a simple majority in favour
 - b. It shall be voted on by at least 10% of the Voting Members
4. Objections to any part of the referendum process or to the result must be lodged in writing with the Returning Officer within 24 hours of the result being declared.

ARTICLE 11: COMMITTEES

1. The Class Rep Council may establish ad-hoc committees with such powers and duties, as it shall from time to time decide.
2. The President of the Union, at his/her discretion shall, ex-officio, be a member of all committees.
3. Subject to the provisions of this constitution and its schedules, each committee shall decide its own rules and procedures, as approved by the Class Rep Council.

ARTICLE 12: FINANCE

1. The President shall be responsible to the Union for the keeping of accounts and shall exercise supervision over all Union finances.
2. The President shall present a breakdown of the accounts quarterly to the executive and to the Class Rep Council.
3. The President shall present audited accounts to the A.G.M.

ARTICLE 13: BOARD OF TRUSTEES, RETURNING OFFICER & STAFF

1. There shall be a Board of Trustees of the Union which shall comprise of;
 - The Honorary Chairperson, who shall be a former GMIT staff member.
 - The Executive Chairperson, who shall be a current GMIT staff member.
 - The President
 - The Deputy President
 - The Vice President for the Mayo Campus
 - The General Manager of the Union
 - A professional from a legal background
 - A business person from the Galway/Mayo area.
2. The President, the Deputy President and the Executive Chairperson shall comprise the voting members of the Board.
3. The members of the Board of Trustees of the Union shall be nominated by the President and ratified by simple majority of the Class Rep Council.
4. The trustees, by majority decision, shall have the power to expend or invest the funds of the Union and incur liabilities on behalf of the Union for any purpose that they deem beneficial to the Union or the Union's objectives.
5. They shall serve for a period of three years, unless removed by majority vote at a AGM or by resignation.
6. They shall be entitled to inspect the Union's accounts upon request.
7. They shall act as an appeals body for any dispute within the Union.
8. The trustees shall have the power to appoint, pay and dismiss, either directly or through agents, such servants as they see fit.
9. The returning officer of the Union shall be nominated by the President and ratified by simple majority of the Class Rep Council.

ARTICLE 14: CONSTITUTION & AMENDMENTS

1. Articles of this constitution may only be changed by referenda. Schedules may be changed by the Class Rep Council or AGM/EGM voting by two thirds majority.

2. In any event of a dispute as to the interpretation of any part of this constitution the ruling Returning Officer shall be sought. This ruling shall stand unless and until it is successfully challenged at a duly constituted general meeting, on a simple majority.
3. All previous constitutions of the Union are hereby revoked.

Schedule 1

Elections

SECTION A: FOR ALL ELECTIONS INCLUDING BY – ELECTIONS

1. The term of office of the Union Officers shall be from the start of the final full week in May to the 31st of May of the following year.
2. The election of the Sabbatical Officers shall take place no later than one week before the end of the second term. The election of the part-time officers shall take place in a manner as decided by the President and agreed by the Class Rep Council.
3. The Returning Officer or his/her nominee shall have cause to post on all notice boards notice of the election regulations at least two weeks prior to the elections.
4. Nominations for all posts must be received by the Returning Officer by 1pm on the Friday before elections are due to take place. Candidates must be nominated and seconded by 25 members of the Union. Candidates must be registered full time students.
5. All ordinary members of the Union are entitled to vote in Union elections, except for the autonomous elections, on production of a current GMIT membership card. Full time officers of the Union shall also have a vote in all Officer elections.
6. There shall be two autonomous elections
 - a. Only ordinary members of the Union based in the Mayo Campus shall elect the Vice President for the Mayo Campus and Welfare Officer for the Mayo Campus.
7. Votes shall be cast in sealed ballot boxes.
8. The system of election shall be proportional representation with the single transferable vote in accordance with the 1923 Electoral Act.
9. If any of the posts fall vacant the Returning Officer shall call a by-election. The relevant clauses shall apply.

10. The by-election shall occur within fifteen college days of the post becoming vacant.

SECTION B: THE ELECTION OF THE CLASS REP COUNCIL

1. Elections to Class Rep Council shall take place annually on a normal teaching day before the 31st of October.
2. Each class not exceeding 25 students shall be entitled to one representative. If the number in class exceeds 25 the class shall be entitled to a second representative.
3. A member of the union may only receive a nomination and/or cast a vote in his/her own class. His/her proposers and seconders shall be voting members of the class in which the candidates propose to stand.
4. The period of membership of the members of the Class Rep Council elected under this section of this schedule, shall be from the date of the election to the end of the second full week of the following June.

SECTION C: ELECTION REGULATIONS

All candidates must abide by the following:

1. No candidate is permitted to start canvassing before the date specified by the Returning Officer. Any breach of this regulation will lead to disqualification.
2. Campaigning is not permitted in the following areas:
 - Any business or service operated by the Students' Union
 - The Reading Library/Learning Centre
 - In any classroom during a class, without the permission of the Lecturer
 - In any building or land not owned or operated by the Institute or the SU
3. Volunteers for campaigns are bound by the same rules as the candidates. It is the candidate's responsibility to inform his or her volunteers of election rules. Candidates are responsible for the actions of their volunteers.
4. No candidate shall spend in excess of €600.00 on his or her election campaign. If a candidate is seen to be in breach of this, disqualification will be

implemented. A candidate is required to keep an expense report, with all receipts, which must be submitted to the Returning Officer.

5. A budget of €100.00 for the SU is available to all candidates.
6. No candidate shall obtain any form of sponsorship to support or aid his or her campaign.
7. All campaign materials must be approved by the SU prior to use e.g. flyers, posters etc.
8. Under no circumstances are candidates allowed to use, free of charge, the facilities of GMIT SU for production of their campaign materials.
9. No candidate may use their official position within the Union to gain advantage with public media
10. The constituency for the election of GMIT SU President comprises of the registered students of the Institute (all campuses).
11. The constituency for the election of GMIT SU Vice-President for Welfare comprises of the registered students of the Dublin Road, Cluain Mhuire, Letterfrack and Mountbellew campuses
12. The constituency for the election of GMIT SU Vice President for the Mayo Campus comprises of the registered students at the Mayo Campus
13. In relation to poster and flyer distribution:
 - Posters may only be displayed in the designated areas
 - No posters or flyers are to be distributed around the College Campuses.
 - All posters must be taken down no later than 1 day after the election
 - Candidates should be careful not to apply tape (e.g. cellotape) to windows, wall's etc
14. On the day of polling there shall be no canvassing or campaigning within the marked areas of each station
15. Ballot counting will begin at 5.30pm on the day of voting. Candidates may provide 2 scrutineers during ballot counting.

Disciplinary

If any of the above are breached the candidate in question will be reprimanded as such:

- 1st offence - an informal warning will be issued to desist from such practices.
- 2nd offence - the candidate will be warned formally in writing.

- 3rd offence – the candidate will have their campaign suspended for a day
- 4th offence – the candidate may be disqualified

If the Returning Officer deems the offence to be of such severity he/she may bypass any of above sanctions and issue an automatic disqualification.

SCHEDULE 2

STANDING ORDERS

1. Standing Orders shall apply to all AGMs and EGMs of the Union.
2. Only full members of the Union may speak and vote at general meetings. Other members may speak but not vote at general meetings.
3. The President or his/her nominee shall be responsible for the production of minutes of all meetings.
4. All Annual General Meetings shall be convened by the President in accordance with the constitution.

AGENDA

5. The business of meetings shall be taken in the following order:
 - Minutes of the previous meetings.
 - Matters arising
 - Reports, statements and motions submitted and published in notices convening the meeting.
 - Any other business

THE CHAIR

6. The Chairperson of the Class Rep Council shall take the chair at AGMs and EGMs. If s/he is absent or relinquishes the chair it shall be taken by another member of the Class Rep Council elected by the meeting.
7. The Chairperson shall be responsible for keeping the meeting in order. S/he shall not otherwise participate in debate. When the chairperson speaks all other members shall be silent.
8. Members wishing to speak shall rise and address the Chair. The Chairperson shall decide right of priority in speaking.
9. No member may speak more than once on the same motion except with the express permission of the meeting or:
 - a. To answer questions on a report
 - b. As indicated in Standing Order 13.

VOTING

10. Each member shall have one vote. The Chairperson shall have a single vote and shall use it only in the event of a tie.
11. No votes shall be recorded on behalf of any member not present.

MOTIONS

12. Every motion shall have a proposer and a seconder. The proposer shall move the motion, it shall thereafter be open for discussion and may be withdrawn only with the consent of the meeting.
13. The proposer of any motion shall have the right to sum up on the debate immediately before the vote is taken.
14. There shall be no new information or points of information during the summing up speech.
15. Emergency motions may be moved if and only if they deal with matters, which have arisen since the date for submission of motions, and if a two-thirds majority vote for the discussion of the motion. Emergency motions may only be discussed if all properly submitted motions have been discussed.
16. In the absence of any discussion, the Chairperson, shall ask if there be any further speeches, and if not shall put the motion to a vote.
17. All amendments to motions must be handed to the Chairperson in writing, 24 hours before the start of the meeting with a proposer and seconder.
18. There shall be only one motion or amendment before the meeting at any one time. The first amendment to a motion shall be proposed immediately after the motion has been proposed.
19. The proposer of the amendments shall have the right to sum up before a vote is taken on it.
20. In the event of any amendment being carried, which was not accepted by the proposer of the original motion, the amended motion shall become the substantive motion, and the proposer of the amendment shall become the holder of that substantive motion.
21. When all amendments have been voted upon, the substantive motion shall be debated.

PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

The following procedural motions may be put:

- a. A vote of no confidence in the Chairperson.
 - b. A challenge to the Chairpersons ruling.
 - c. That the motion be not put.
 - d. That the motion be now put.
 - e. That standing order be temporarily suspended.
 - f. That the meeting be temporarily adjourned for a specific time.
 - g. That the matters be discussed but not voted upon
 - h. That the motion be remitted to the appropriate Union Committee.
 - i. That the motion be referred back for investigation or re-examination.
 - j. That the meeting be adjourned.
 - k. That the motion be voted on in parts.
22. Procedural motions shall have a proposer and a seconder.
23. Procedural motions shall be debated in the order of priority in Standing Orders.
24. Procedural motions **a, b, d, e, f,** and **j** should be moved on a point of order. All other procedural motions may only be moved by a member called to speak by the Chairperson.
25. If procedural items **a** or **b** are put, the Chairperson shall hand the chair to another member of the executive. The proposer shall state his/her case, the person who has just vacated the chair shall reply, and the matter shall be put straight to a vote. In the event of procedural motion **a**, being carried s/he shall not resume the chair during the meeting.
26. If procedural motion **d** or **k** is put, the meeting shall vote immediately on the procedural motion. If **d** is carried, the mover of the motion under discussion shall sum up immediately.

GENERAL RULES

27. Points of information may be raised by any member providing that the speaker occupying the floor signifies their intention to give way.
28. Point of order, which take precedence over any other business and upon which there shall be no discussion, may be raised by any member.
29. Motions shall require a simple majority except where otherwise specified in the constitution.
30. Any suspension of standing orders shall apply for the duration of the matter under discussion only.
31. In the event of any situation arising not being covered by standing orders then the chairperson shall rule on the procedure to be adopted. Such ruling shall be subject of any challenge under procedural motion **b** above.