## CONSTITUTION

of the

NEW ZEALAND UNION OF STUDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS INCORPORATED

November 2020

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## PART ONE: FOUNDATION

1. Name
1.1. The name of the association will be "The New Zealand Union of Students' Associations Incorporated". It will more commonly be referred to as "NZUSA".

## 2. Interpretation

2.1. "Act" means the Incorporated Societies Act 1908 and any subsequent amendments or statute passed in substitution therefore and/or regulations passed under such legislation
2.2. "Association" means the New Zealand Union of Students' Association (Incorporated).
2.3. "Association Year", "Calendar Year", "Financial Year" or "Year" are used interchangeably and means the period commencing 1 January and continuing until 31 December of the same year.
2.4. "Board" means the NZUSA Board in office from time to time.
2.5. "Casting Vote" means a vote cast by the Chair where the votes for and the votes against a motion are equal in number.
2.6. "Chairperson" or "Chair" means the National President or such other person as may be in the Chair.
2.7. "EFTS" means Equivalent Full-Time Student, as provided by the Ministry of Education.
2.8. "Member" or "Members" means any full member or associate member.
2.9. "Motion" means a proposition beginning with the word 'that', which has been both moved and seconded by members entitled to do so or by the Chair.
2.10. "National Council" means the NZUSA National Council in office from time to time.
2.11. "National President" means the President of the Association or the President of NZUSA.
2.12. "Notice" means notice in writing to the National President and all members by email.
2.13. "NZUSA" means the New Zealand Union of Students' Associations (Incorporated).
2.14. "NZUSA Congress" or "Congress" means the Annual conference in which the Annual General Meeting of Members is held.
2.15. "Objects" means the objects of NZUSA set out in rule 3.1.
2.16. "Ordinary Resolution" or "Resolution" means a motion carried by a simple majority of the total number of votes exercised by those Members entitled to vote, whether exercised in person, by email vote, or by proxy (except as otherwise expressly provided).
2.17. "Rules" or "Constitution" means the rules of NZUSA herein contained and includes the Schedule to these Rules.
2.18. "Special Resolution" means a motion carried by a two-third majority of the total number of votes exercised by those Members entitled to vote, whether exercised in person, by email vote, or by proxy (except as otherwise expressly provided).
2.19. "Student" means any person enrolled as a student at any tertiary institution in New Zealand.
2.20. "Tauira Pasifika" means the National Pasifika Students' Association.
2.21. "TMĀ" or "Te Mana Ākonga" means the National Māori Tertiary Students' Association.
2.22. "Total number of votes exercisable" means the total possible number of votes that could be cast in respect of the motion if all voting Members were present at the General Meeting and voting on the motion in question (but does not include any casting votes of the Chairperson, where applicable).
2.23. "Total number of votes exercised" means the total votes that are cast either for or against a motion (including any casting vote of the Chairperson, where applicable).
2.24. "Voting Member" means all Full Members, and any Associate Member that the National Council has granted voting rights to.

## 3. Objects and Powers

3.1. Any income, benefit or advantage must be used within New Zealand for the following charitable objects of the Association to:
3.1.1. Ensure tertiary students are well represented and supported across the tertiary sector by NZUSA and local students' organisations, who are influential, visible, principled, well-resourced and informed;
3.1.2. Encourage world-class learning and teaching practices;
3.1.3. Promote outstanding student experiences and learning environments;
3.1.4. Develop adequate levels of student support;
3.1.5. Ensure there are no unfair barriers to education;
3.1.6. Promote equitable access and support for achievement; and
3.1.7. Ensure students are valued members of an academic community that contributes to the creation and dissemination of knowledge.
3.2. The vision of NZUSA is to be an influential and inclusive national voice for students.
3.3. The mission of NZUSA is to exist to fight for a barrier-free education for all.
3.4. NZUSA shall act consistently with Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
3.5. NZUSA has the widest possible powers to do all lawful things that it considers necessary in the pursuit of its Objects.
3.6. NZUSA has the power to borrow or raise money by any means and upon such conditions as to security or otherwise as the General Meeting considers necessary.

## 4. Recognition of Parallel Representative Organisations

4.1. NZUSA recognises:
4.1.1. Te Mana Ākonga as the autonomous and parallel representative organisation for Māori tertiary students;
4.1.2. Tauira Pasifika as the autonomous and parallel representative organisation for Pasifika tertiary students;
4.1.3. New Zealand International Students' Association as the autonomous and parallel representative organisation for international tertiary students; and
4.1.4. Thursdays in Black as a campaign within NZUSA that is directed by the Thursdays in Black National Council.

## 5. Membership

5.1. NZUSA has the following classes of membership:
5.1.1. Full Membership;
5.1.2. Associate Membership;
5.1.3. Affiliate Membership; and
5.1.4. Honorary Life Membership.
5.2. A Full Member is a recognised body of students:
5.2.1. That applies in writing to the National President for Full Membership;
5.2.2. Whose membership is approved by the National Council;
5.2.3. That pays a membership fee, from a levies structure, set by the National Council; and
5.2.4. Whose membership will automatically be renewed annually.
5.3. An Associate Member is a recognised body of students:
5.3.1. That applies in writing to the National President for Associate Membership;
5.3.2. Whose membership is approved by the National Council;
5.3.3. That pays a membership fee, set by the National Council;
5.3.4. Whose membership will automatically be renewed annually; and
5.3.5. Whose membership reflects the financial stability of their organisation.
5.4. An NZUSA Affiliate is an organisation that:
5.4.1. Represents a defined portion of students nationally;
5.4.2. Has objects consistent with the Objects of NZUSA;
5.4.3. Is recognised by a two-thirds majority vote of the National Council;
5.4.4. Has the right to attend and speak at all NZUSA General and National Council Meetings and propose policy and actions on issues relevant to the students they represent, provided such policy and actions are consistent with the Objects of this Constitution.
5.5. The following are Honorary Life Members of NZUSA:
5.5.1. All National Presidents upon relinquishment of office as such, provided that such office is held for a full term; and
5.5.2. Any person provided a motion at a General Meeting is passed by the majority of the total number of exercisable votes.
5.6. Any Membership may be terminated if:
5.6.1. The member can demonstrate to the National Council a mandate from students to leave NZUSA; and
5.6.2. Following such a mandate to leave NZUSA, the Member gives 12 months' notice in writing to the National President and discharges all financial obligations to NZUSA within that 12-month notice period; or
5.6.3. A motion is put forward at a General Meeting to terminate a Membership and is carried by two third majority vote of the total number of votes exercisable by Members at a General Meeting (other than the Member being voted on).

## PART TWO: MEETINGS AND ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

## 6. Elected Representatives

6.1. The following are elected representatives of NZUSA:
6.1.1. National President;
6.1.2. National Vice President;
6.1.3. National Education Officer;
6.1.4. National Welfare Officer;
6.1.5. National Rainbow Representative; and
6.1.6. National Thursdays in Black Representative.
6.2. The National President and National Vice-President of NZUSA will:
6.2.1. Be elected at NZUSA Congress or a SGM;
6.2.2. Have voting rights on the Board and National Council; and
6.2.3. Be paid an honorarium as outlined in the relevant job description.
6.3. The National Education Officer, National Welfare Officer, and National Rainbow Representative will:
6.3.1. Be elected in accordance with NZUSA's internal policies; and
6.3.2. Be paid an honorarium as outlined in the relevant job description.
6.4. The National Thursdays in Black Representative will:
6.4.1. Be elected at NZUSA Congress or a SGM; and
6.4.2. Be paid an honorarium as outlined in the relevant job description.

## 7. Responsibilities of Elected Representatives

7.1. National President's Responsibilities:
7.1.1. Convene and chair Board and General Meetings;
7.1.2. Be NZUSA's primary spokesperson;
7.1.3. Enhance NZUSA's profile and represent NZUSA's interests; and
7.1.4. Fulfil NZUSA's core goal of achieving a barrier free education for all.
7.2. National Vice President's Responsibilities:
7.2.1. Fulfil the responsibilities of the National President in their absence; and
7.2.2. Ensure NZUSA can achieve its core goals by leading the operations of the Association.
7.3. National Education Officer's Responsibilities:
7.3.1. Represent NZUSA on a range of education-related external boards and committees; and
7.3.2. Convene and chair the National Education Committee.
7.4. National Welfare Officer's Responsibilities:
7.4.1. Represent NZUSA on a range of welfare-related external boards and committees; and
7.4.2. Convene and chair the National Welfare Committee.
7.5. National Rainbow Representative's Responsibilities:
7.5.1. Represent rainbow students and leading campaigns on rainbow student issues; and
7.5.2. Convene and chair the National Rainbow Students' Committee.
7.6. National Thursdays in Black Representative Responsibilities:
7.6.1. Be the lead on any tertiary sexual violence issues; and
7.6.2. Convene and chair the Thursdays in Black National Council.

## 8. NZUSA National Council

8.1. The representative body of NZUSA shall be the National Council whose members shall be:
8.1.1. National President;
8.1.2. National Vice President;
8.1.3. Te Mana Ākonga Tumuaki or their nominee;
8.1.4. Tauira Pasifika National President or their nominee;
8.1.5. All Member (Full and Associate) Presidents or their nominees;
8.1.6. National Rainbow Representative;
8.1.7. Up to five further people appointed by the National Council to represent underrepresented student communities; and

### 8.1.8. National President Elect.

8.2. The National Council shall elect a Chair from among its Members set out in clause 8.1.5, excluding anyone who is a member of the Board.
8.3. In addition to the National Council, people holding the following roles may attend and speak at National Council meetings:
8.3.1. All NZUSA Elected Representatives;
8.3.2. All Member (Full and Associate) Presidents Elect;
8.3.3. Presidents of Affiliate Members or Recognised Representative Organisations, or their nominee;
8.3.4. Any other person granted permission by the National Council.

## 9. Proceedings of the National Council

9.1. The National Council shall meet at least five (5) times per year, at such time and place as the National Council from time to time determines.
9.2. Seven (7) working days' notice of a National Council meeting shall be given to all National Council members by the Chair.
9.3. The Chair of the National Council shall be the member elected under clause 8.2.
9.4. The National Council may regulate its own procedure, subject to the provisions of this Constitution.
9.5. The quorum for a meeting of the National Council shall be more than half of the National Council members. No business shall be transacted unless a quorum is present.
9.6. The National Council has the power to:
9.6.1. Set the strategic direction of NZUSA and approve any strategic or annual plans;
9.6.2. Decide on and guide the direction of any campaigns, partnerships or any other projects;
9.6.3. Set policy and political positions on matters external to NZUSA, which must be consistent with the Objects;
9.6.4. Create and oversee sub-committees, working groups or project teams that seek to achieve goals or Objects of NZUSA;
9.6.5. Appoint representatives to sub-committees, working groups or project teams for such purposes as determined by the National Council;
9.6.6. Make recommendations to the NZUSA Congress, including recommendations on annual levies, the annual budget and any constitutional amendments;
9.6.7. Establish criteria for categories of membership;
9.6.8. Take all steps and proceedings and do all acts and things it may consider necessary or advisable for carrying into effect the Objects;
9.6.9. Delegate any of these powers to the Board, or any specified elected representative, employee, or sub-committee.
9.7. The National Council has the following powers that cannot be delegated:
9.7.1. Approving the terms of any deed;
9.7.2. Executing any deed of other document required to be executed under the Common Seal; and
9.7.3. Entering into contracts with a term greater than 12 months.
10.1. The governing body of NZUSA shall be the Board, whose members shall be:
10.1.1. National President (Chair);
10.1.2. National Vice President;
10.1.3. Te Mana Ākonga Tumuaki, or their nominee;
10.1.4. Tauira Pasifika National President, or their nominee;
10.1.5. One University Member President, elected at Congress;
10.1.6. One Institute of Technology/Polytechnic Member President, elected at Congress;
10.1.7. Two Member Presidents, elected at Congress;
10.1.8. Two further people, appointed by the National Council upon recommendation of the Board; and
10.1.9. National President Elect.
10.2. In addition to the Board, people holding the following roles may attend and speak at Board meetings:
10.2.1. All NZUSA Elected Representatives;
10.2.2. All Member (Full and Associate) Presidents;
10.2.3. All members of the National Council;
10.2.4. Presidents of Affiliate Members or Recognised Representative Organisations, or their nominee; and
10.2.5. Any other person granted permission by the Board.
10.3. Where a vacancy occurs under 10.1.5, 10.1.6, 10.1.7 or 10.1 .8 after Congress, a replacement representative shall be elected by the National Council.
10.4. Where more than one person fills any role listed in 10.1.1, 10.1.2, 10.1.3, 10.1.4 they may all attend Board meetings but shall share one vote.
10.5. The Board will adopt a co-chair model if requested by Te Mana Ākonga.

## 11. Proceedings of the Board

11.1. The Board shall meet at least five (5) times per year, at such time and place as the Board from time to time determines.
11.2. Seven (7) working days' notice of a Board meeting shall be given to all Board members by the Chair.
11.3. The Chair of the Board shall be the President or their nominee who must also be a member of the Board.
11.4. The Board may regulate its own procedure, subject to the provisions of this Constitution.
11.5. The quorum for a meeting of the Board shall be more than half of all Board members. No business shall be transacted unless a quorum is present.
11.6. The Board has the following powers:
11.6.1. Manage and maintain financial oversight of NZUSA;
11.6.2. Recommend and maintain internal policies, in accordance with the NZUSA Constitution and Objects;
11.6.3. Track compliance and progress with all NZUSA strategic and annual plans;
11.6.4. Monitor and oversee the health, safety, and wellbeing of all elected representatives, staff and contractors of NZUSA;
11.6.5. Create and lead a strong health, safety, and wellbeing culture at NZUSA;
11.6.6. Create and lead an empowering and positive organisational culture at NZUSA; and 11.6.7. Any other power delegated to the Board by the National Council.
11.7. The Board also has the following powers, which must be exercised in accordance with the direction or guidance of the National Council:
11.7.1. Manage and control all of NZUSA's property, real and personal, and the affairs of NZUSA;
11.7.2. Manage any funds of NZUSA in accordance with NZUSA's policies, and budget, as set by the NZUSA Congress;
11.7.3. Borrow or raise money and give security for payment of the same;
11.7.4. Establish any trust, the objects of which are consistent with NZUSA's goals and Objects;
11.7.5. Appoint or employ staff;
11.7.6. Instigate, conduct, defend, or abandon any legal proceedings by or against NZUSA; and
11.7.7. Delegate any of these powers to any specified elected representative, employee, or sub-committee.

## 12. Common Seal

12.1. The Common Seal must be affixed to any:
12.1.1. Deeds entered into by the Association;
12.1.2. Memorandum of Understandings held by the Association; and
12.1.3. Official copies of these Rules.
12.2. The affixing of the Common Seal to a document must first be authorised by Resolution of the National Council.
12.3. The President shall be responsible for the safe custody of the common seal.
12.4. The common seal shall only be used with the authority of the National Council.
12.5. Every document to which the common seal is affixed shall be signed and dated by the National President or the National Vice President.

## 13. E-Voting

13.1. A Member may send the text of a motion, along with the name of the seconder, to the National President. The National President shall then send a copy of the motion to all Members. Notice shall be deemed to take effect from the date on which the notice is sent.
13.2. Members shall have five (5) working-days after the effective date of the notice to advise, by email, the National President how they vote on the motion. If no vote is received from a Member by 5pm on the fifth day, that Member is deemed to have abstained from voting.
13.3. A motion carried by e-vote shall be ratified to the next National Council or Board Meeting and must be recorded in the minutes of that meeting.

## 14. General Meetings

14.1. Quorum for any General Meeting is two thirds of all Members.
14.2. Other than NZUSA Congress, which is held annually, a General Meeting can be called if:
14.2.1. National Council calls for one;
14.2.2. At least one third of Members make a written request, with the reasoning, to the President to hold a Special General Meeting; or
14.2.3. There is a motion of no-confidence.
14.3. All General Meetings need to provide members with notice no later than thirty (30) days before the meeting. This must include the time, date, location and reason.
14.4. The National President will be the Chairperson of any General Meeting unless the National Council appoints someone else.
14.5. Proxy votes for any motion can be received by the Chairperson at least 24 hours in advance with the exception of any unforeseen circumstances.
14.6. The Chairperson will have the casting vote at General Meetings.

## 15. Congress

15.1. Congress will be held annually to:
15.1.1. Receive and consider the Annual Report of the National Council;
15.1.2. Receive and consider the financial statements for the year;
15.1.3. Elect the representatives for the next calendar year in accordance with this Constitution;
15.1.4. Consider any motions on policy, or constitutional amendments, put forward by the National Council, NZUSA workshops and Members;
15.1.5. Set the annual levy for Full Members as recommended by the National Council;
15.1.6. Set the annual budget as recommended by the National Council; and
15.1.7. Consider any other business as may be accepted by all the Members present at the NZUSA Congress.
15.2. National Council will recommend the following to Congress for approval:
15.2.1. The following years levies;
15.2.2. A budget for the next calendar year; and
15.2.3. Any constitutional changes.

## PART THREE: ELECTIONS

## 16. Election

16.1. The Election of the following representatives must be held each year by secret ballot at NZUSA Congress:
16.1.1. National President;
16.1.2. National Vice President; and
16.1.3. National Thursdays in Black Representative.
16.2. Any person may stand to be an elected representative of NZUSA.
16.3. A candidate for National President may only be elected if they receive a two-third majority of the total number of votes exercised by Members at a General Meeting.
16.4. A candidate for any other elected position may only be elected if they receive a simple majority of the total number of votes exercised by Members at a General Meeting.
16.5. If no candidate is elected, there may be a second ballot. If no candidate is elected on the second ballot, there may be a third ballot. If no candidate is elected on a third ballot, then that election shall be terminated, and a new election must be held and nominations must be reopened.

## 17. Returning Officer

17.1. At least sixty (60) days prior to the date of the proposed election, the National Council shall appoint a returning officer who will be responsible for the conduct of the election ('Returning Officer').
17.2. The Returning Officer may not be a candidate in the election.
17.3. The Returning Officer may generally do all things they consider necessary, expedient or advisable for the proper conduct of the election (including as to the application process), consistent with these rules.
17.4. The Returning Officer shall:
17.4.1. Give at least thirty (30) days' notice of an election to each Member and call for nominations.
17.4.2. Advise the time, date and place for close of nominations.
17.4.3. Remain fair and consistent throughout the elections.
17.4.4. Inform all Members of the names of all the candidates at least seven (7) days before the election.
17.5. Any Member may complain in writing to the NZUSA National Council about any of the decisions of the Returning Officer.
17.5.1. On receipt of a complaint, the National Council must appoint three disinterested people to enquire into and investigate the causes of the compliant. The three appointed persons shall act as arbitrators. The decision of the arbitrators must be final and there shall be no appeal from their decision.

## 18. Dismissal of an Elected Representative

18.1. Any elected representative may be dismissed following a vote of no-confidence passed at a General Meeting.
18.2. No Confidence Motion Proceedings:
18.2.1. The Member or elected representative proposing the motion must speak to the motion for up to five minutes;
18.2.2. The person being taken to a vote of No Confidence has up to 7 minutes for right of reply;
18.2.3. Anyone further may speak; and
18.2.4. Vote will go to all Members.
18.3. A motion of no-confidence may only be passed if it receives a two-third majority of the total number of votes exercised by Members present at a General Meeting.

## 19. Voting

19.1. The following voting allocations apply to votes at General Meetings and elections held per clause 16.
19.2. The voting rights for each Member shall be based on the number of EFTS who were enrolled at the Member's tertiary institution within the previous calendar year that the vote takes place.
19.3. Full Members shall have the following votes:

| EFTS | Votes |
| :--- | :---: |
| $0-9,999$ | 3 |
| $10,000-19,999$ | 4 |
| $20,000-29,999$ | 5 |
| $30,000+$ | 6 |

19.4. Associate Members shall have one (1) less vote than Full Members, as outlined in clause 19.3 above.
19.5. Te Mana Ākonga and Tauira Pasifika shall have two votes each at all General Meetings and elections held per clause 16.

## 20. Proxy voting

20.1. A Member may exercise the right to vote either by being present in person or by proxy. A proxy must be appointed by notice in writing, and such notice must state whether the appointment is for a particular meeting or a specified term.
20.2. No proxy is effective in relation to a General Meeting unless a copy of the notice of appointment is given to the President at least 24 hours before the start of a General Meeting, and a further copy is produced before the start of the General Meeting, with the exception of any unforeseen circumstances.

## PART FOUR: ADMINISTRATION

## 21. Finance and Levies

21.1. All funds, income and property of NZUSA must be applied towards the promotion and achievement of the Objects and mission of NZUSA.
21.2. The Annual Accounts must be:
21.2.1. Presented to the Annual General Meeting by the President; and
21.2.2. Audited or reviewed if required under any applicable law, by NZUSA's auditor or reviewer, who must be a chartered accountant.
21.3. NZUSA must reserve an amount of funds exclusively for use in unforeseen situations. The amount of reserved funds is to be no less than six (6) months of the budgeted operational expenses for NZUSA for that year. The reserved funds will be noted in the Annual Accounts.

## 22. Alterations of the Constitution

22.1. The Constitution may be altered:
22.1.1. If notice of a motion to alter the Constitution is sent to the National President thirty (30) days before a General Meeting, and the motion is carried by a two-third majority of the total number of votes exercisable by Members at the General Meeting; or
22.1.2. By unanimous vote of the total number of votes exercisable by Members at a General Meeting.
22.2. Before a motion to alter the Constitution can be confirmed, the National President needs to produce a letter from a solicitor to certify the proposed amendment is consistent with these rules.

## 23. Non-compliance with the Constitution

23.1. Where the Constitution has been breached, or when a breach is inevitable for any reason, it is the responsibility of the National Council to call a Special General Meeting and report the breach or likelihood of the prospective breach. The Members as represented at the Special General Meeting may determine to remedy the breach (or prospective breach) by either:
23.1.1. Validation of the breach (or prospective breach) through Special Resolution; or
23.1.2. Determining the appropriate course of action, where such action is be consistent with the Constitution.

## 24. Validation

24.1. If any part of this Constitution is breached, or when a breach is inevitable for any reason, the Members as represented at the Special General Meeting may validate the breach where the Members are satisfied that:
24.1.1. The breach was in pursuit of the Objects;
24.1.2. The breach could not have reasonably been (and/or cannot be reasonably) avoided in light of the information known at the time;
24.1.3. The breach has not materially affected, and/or will not foreseeably materially affect, the rights or interests of any person; and
24.1.4. There has nonetheless been substantial compliance with the Constitution.
24.2. It will not be a breach of the Constitution to use reserved funds where Members at the Special General Meeting, by a Special Resolution, resolve to use the reserved funds where the Members are satisfied that:
24.2.1. The use of the reserved funds will be in pursuit of the Objects;
24.2.2. There exists no reasonable alternative to the use of the reserved funds; and
24.2.3. The use of the reserved funds as proposed is otherwise consistent with this Constitution.

## 25. Winding Up

25.1. In the event of the winding up or dissolution of NZUSA, not less than thirty (30) days' notice must be given to the Members of any Motion resolving NZUSA be wound up, and any such Ordinary Resolution when carried by a General Meeting must be confirmed (again by Ordinary Resolution) at a subsequent General Meeting called together for that purpose and held not earlier than thirty (30) days after the date on which the Ordinary Resolution to be confirmed was carried.
25.2. In the event of the winding up or dissolution of NZUSA, all property both real and personal must after payment of all costs, debts and liabilities vest in trustees to be appointed by the General Meeting. The trustees will hold such property on trust pending transfer to any association having objects comparable to the Objects of NZUSA. The trustees must be specified before the winding up or dissolution takes effect.

