



**MAYNOOTH
FLAC SOCIETY**

**Maynooth University
National University of Ireland, Maynooth**

**FLAC
Society Constitution**



1. Name of Society:

1.1. The name of the club society shall be the Maynooth FLAC Society

2. Aims and Objectives:

2.1. The aims and objectives of the society shall be as follows:

2.1.1. To provide free legal advice to the Students of Maynooth University, St. Patrick's College Maynooth and the Froebel College of Education Maynooth, through clinics staffed by voluntary, qualified Solicitors or Barristers, fortnightly or at such intervals as the committee shall think fit.

2.1.2. To provide free basic legal information to Students of Maynooth University, St. Patrick's College Maynooth and the Froebel College of Education Maynooth through clinics staffed by law students and supervised by qualified Solicitors or Barristers, at such intervals as the committee shall think fit.

2.1.3. To provide training in information provision to student members wishing to volunteer at legal information clinics.

2.1.4. To promote awareness of legal issues relevant to the student community in Maynooth through talks, newspaper articles, pamphlets and other media.

2.1.5. To campaign on issues of social justice, law reform and equality in the law in association with Free Legal Advice Centres Limited.

2.1.6. To conduct research in the areas of Landlord and Tenant Law, Social Welfare Law, Employment Law and Public Interest Law generally for the benefit of Free Legal Advice Centres Limited or PILA (Public Interest Law Alliance) or other relevant organisations having similar aims.

2.1.7. To do such other things as are incidental to or conducive to the attainment of these aims and objectives.

3. Members:

3.1. Membership of the society shall be open to all students, staff and graduates of the college.

3.2. Membership shall be obtained by paying the appropriate fee and signing the Roll of Members for the current academic year.

3.3. The Society recognises the importance that graduates and former students of Maynooth University can play in the development of a society. It shall

Therefore, endeavour to maintain contact with such former members as wish to retain their connection with the society

- 3.4. Graduate Membership shall be open to former members of the society who are no longer students of Maynooth University . It shall not be a requirement of associate membership that such members should hold a degree or any other academic award given by Maynooth University
- 3.5. Associate Members shall pay an annual membership fee to the society. The amount of this fee shall be determined by the Governing Executive Committee, but may be altered by a majority vote at a general meeting of the society. The associate membership fee shall not be less than the ordinary membership fee and no more than 10 times the ordinary membership fee.
- 3.6. Associate Members shall be ineligible for election to the society's governing committee
- 3.7. Associate Members shall be entitled to attend all general meetings of the club / society. Voting rights of associate members at general meetings shall be determined by the Governing Executive Committee and may be altered by a majority vote at a general meeting of the society.
- 3.8. Other rights of Associate Members shall be determined by the Governing Executive Committee but may also be granted or revoked by a majority vote at a general meeting of the society.
- 3.9. The rights of an Associate Member shall not exceed those of an ordinary member of the society.
- 3.10. All members shall be bound by this constitution.

4. Governing Executive Committee

- 4.1. The Society shall have a Governing Executive Committee (The Committee).
- 4.2. The Committee shall run the society on behalf of its members and in accordance with the aims and objectives.
- 4.3. Although decisions should be arrived at by the consensus of the committee (where possible), committee decisions shall be decided by majority voting.
- 4.4. A quorum shall be two thirds of committee members.
- 4.5. The Committee shall consist of:
 - 4.5.1. President
 - 4.5.2. Vice-President
 - 4.5.3. Secretary
 - 4.5.4. Treasurer
 - 4.5.5. Public Relations Officer

- 4.5.6. Events Officer
- 4.5.7. Clinic Officer
- 4.5.8. Editorial Officer No.1
- 4.5.9. Editorial Officer No.2
- 4.5.10. 1st Year Liaison Officer
- 4.5.11. Moot Court Convenor

4.6. The Legal Advisor of the Society Conor Duff BL, shall be a non-executive member of the Committee.

4.7. The Term of Office of these elected officers shall be one academic year.

4.8. A person shall not hold the same office for more than 2 successive years.

5. Election of the Governing Committee

5.1. The committee members shall be democratically elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) or at an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting (EGM).

5.2. To seek election to the committee, each candidate must have 2 nominations by current members of the society.

5.3. Non-members or members who join the society less than one semester period prior to the holding of an AGM are not eligible for election.

5.3.1. To run for election, the member must also have paid their membership fee in full.

5.3.2. Elections held in the first semester of an academic year are not subject to the same membership requirements. Instead, members wishing to run for election in the first semester of an academic year need only be a fully paid-up member on or before the day of election.

6. Duties of Governing Committee

6.1. The President shall be the chief officer of the society whose functions include chairing all meetings of the committee and officiating at meetings of the society.

6.1.1. The Chair of any meeting shall have an ordinary vote at committee meetings and meetings of the society and in the event of a tied vote on any matter shall have the casting vote.

6.1.2. The Vice-President, shall assist the President in all their duties.

- 6.1.3. The Vice-President shall assume the duties of the President (unless otherwise directed by a general meeting of the society) in the event that the President is absent or is unable to perform their duties.
- 6.1.4. The Secretary's function shall be to deal with all correspondence and records of the society.
- 6.1.5. The Secretary keep minutes of all committee meetings, of all general meetings, of the Annual General Meeting or any other meetings relating to the business of the society when requested by the committee.
- 6.1.6. The Secretary may keep a record of authorisation of expenditure.
- 6.1.7. The Secretary shall give notice to all members of the society's meetings, events and functions.
- 6.1.8. The Secretary shall assist the Public Relations Officer to organise fund raising events and sponsorship where necessary.
- 6.1.9. The Treasurer's function shall be to administer the funds of the society and to maintain accounts and budgets.
- 6.1.10. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the maintenance of accounts subject to the decisions of the committee in compliance with the regulations set down by the Capitation Committee.
- 6.1.11. The Treasurer shall keep full records of income and expenditure of the society. The Treasurer shall also keep a record of who authorised various expenditures and shall issue receipts.
- 6.1.12. The Treasurer shall sign all cheques and withdrawals forms from the Society's bank account.
- 6.1.13. Where the Treasurer is decreed as unavailable, another designated person may sign cheques and withdrawal forms for the society on consultation with the Capitation Committee.
- 6.1.14. The Public Relations Officer (along with the Secretary) shall be responsible for the advertising of all functions of the society through all means possible.
- 6.1.15. The Public Relations Officer (along with the Secretary) shall deal with external correspondence and maintain records of the contribution outside bodies have had for the society and to give notice to all members of these contributions.
- 6.1.16. The Events officer's function is to organise functions and events for the society. These may include social outings, EGMs, AGMs and the societies participation in maynooth Society Fairs.
- 6.1.17. All proposals made by the Events Officer must go through the committee. This includes the advertisement of the event.
- 6.1.18. The Clinic Officer's duties is that of the running of the Flac Clinics. The Clinic officer will overview that all necessities are in

place for the running of the Clinic.

- 6.1.19. In addition, the Clinic Officer may also assist the Events Officer in the running of EGMS and AGMS
- 6.1.20. Both Editorial officers hold the duty of complying the legal rights booklet which the Society endeavours to publish/amend annually. These duties include but not limited to:
 - 6.1.20.1. Updating from the previous published booklet to ensure all information sated is up to date.
 - 6.1.20.2. To hold the plagiarism policy established by the Maynooth Law Department, to cite all work not original.
 - 6.1.20.3. To hold open communication with the committee on the process of the booklet and to bring attention to any errors present.
 - 6.1.20.4. To have a legal professional (Barrister or Solicitor) to review the booklet to ensure that all information cited is correct and to have to have written approval from the professional.
 - 6.1.20.5. To assist the society and committee in other matters outside of the booklet if available to do so.
 - 6.1.20.6. To acknowledge, that the final publishing of the booklet must receive the approval of the: President, Vice – President and Sectary which will be referred to as the Core Three in this instance.
 - 6.1.20.7. If upon review amendments are directed by the above that they do so accordingly.
 - 6.1.20.8. If both Editorial Officers believe that the critiques made by the Core Three are incorrect and will damage the society they may seek an over- rule by majority from the committee which will allow the issue to be present to the society's members.
 - 6.1.20.9. In such case if a majority vote is achieved it must seek the approval of members of the society. This approval can be obtained if at least 1/3 of active society members are present and a majority vote is achieved.
 - 6.1.20.10. If this is achieved the critique or amendment proposed by Core Three will be invalid.
- 6.1.21. The legal rights booklet shall be published following a majority vote of the Governing Committee following review by a legal professional.
- 6.1.22. The Moot Court Convenor shall be responsible for organising the annual Johanna Airey Moot Court Competition in conjunction with the Events Officer. This shall include venue, location and catering.
- 6.1.23. Alternatively, if the competition is to take place online the Moot Court Convenor shall be responsible for the organisation of the

online platform.

6.1.24. The Moot Court Convenor shall organise timekeepers for the competition. This shall include training the timekeepers and organising a timekeeping instruction booklet.

6.1.25. The Moot Court Convenor shall organise the competition prizes.

6.1.26. The Moot Court Convenor shall oversee the creation and distribution of the question and question pack.

7. Dismissal and Resignation of Committee Members

7.1. No member of the committee shall be dismissed from office unless:

7.2. Written notice of a resolution to seek such a dismissal, signed by 10% of the members of the society is received 4 working days prior to a general meeting at which such a resolution shall be debated.

7.3. 2/3s of the Governing Committee may also call a meeting to debate the dismissal of another committee member.

7.4. A resolution to dismiss a committee member shall be passed by a simple majority voting at the relevant and quorate meeting.

7.5. A committee member wishing to resign must submit a letter in writing declaring that intention to resign to the Secretary, who will immediately inform the committee as a whole. The responsibilities of that person shall be delegated to other committee members(s) until a by-election can held to re-elect a new person to the position.

8. Meetings

8.1. There shall be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) held twice an academic year.

8.1.1. A End of year AGM and,

8.1.2. A beginning of the Year AGM

8.2. The End of Year AGM shall be held no later than in the final month of the Academic year where the main committee members will be elected (where possible).

8.3. Elections for the offices of the Governing Executive Committee shall take place at this meeting.

8.4. A quorum of the meeting shall be 3 Governing Executive Committee members and 10% of the ordinary membership

8.5. The business of the AGM shall include elections of relevant Governing Committee as well as annual reports from the outgoing Governing Executive Committee (which should include a Treasurer's

- report on the finances of the society).
- 8.6. An Extra-ordinary General Meeting (EGM) shall be convened if:
 - 8.6.1. 10% of the ordinary membership of the society request such a meeting in writing.
 - 8.6.2. A quorum of the Governing Executive Committee requests such a meeting in writing.
 - 8.6.3. A vacancy on the current committee occurs and there is a need to elect a replacement.
 - 8.7. Elections for the offices of the Governing Committee shall take place at the AGM or EGM (where relevant).
 - 8.8. Notice of all meetings shall be given to the membership at least 5 working days prior to the date of the meeting.
 - 8.9. At a meeting, a member may propose a resolution relating to the business of the club / society. The resolution shall be voted on by a show of hands and a declaration of the President that the resolution is carried (unless a secret ballot is demanded by any 5 members) shall be conclusive evidence that the resolution has passed or failed.
 - 8.10. In the event that the President's resolution (8.9) is challenged, a recount of the votes will be administered in which a number of appropriate people will be appointed by the committee as "tellers" to count the votes. The result will be announced by the President or the Vice-President (where requested by the general meeting).
 - 8.11. No resolution may contravene Maynooth University policy or Capitation Committee policy.

9. General

- 9.1. There shall be an Honorary President of the Club / Society who shall be a staff member in compliance with the regulations set down by the Capitation Committee.
- 9.2. The membership fee for the society shall be in compliance with the conditions set down by the Capitation Committee
- 9.3. Each member of the society shall be entitled to receive a copy of this Constitution, on demand, free of charge.
- 9.4. In the event of a clash with the Capitation Committee rule and regulations, the Capitation Committee rules and regulations shall take precedence above this constitution and is subject to Capitation Committee Policy at all times.
- 9.5. At the close of each academic year, the president of the society may give the award of honorary lifetime membership to any member based on the merit of their contribution to the society.
 - 9.5.1. These members shall hold the office of Special Advisory Council Member

- 9.6. At the close of each academic year, the executive committee, excluding the president, may choose to award the serving president with an honorary lifetime presidency.
 - 9.6.1. Any person who receives an honorary lifetime presidency shall;
 - 9.6.1.1. Hold the office of Special Advisory Council Member.
 - 9.6.1.2. Serve as an ex-officio member of the committee under the title of 'Ethics Officer'
 - 9.6.1.3. Be invited to partake in any and all society events.
- 9.7. In joining the society, members agree to be bound by the rules and regulations of the society as laid down in this constitution and by the Governing Executive Committee. Members violating these rules and regulations shall be answerable to the committee and may have their membership revoked and no monies refunded, for persistent breaches or extremely serious breaches, as deemed by a majority of the committee. In the event that the committee cannot resolve a dispute with a member(s), the Capitation Committee shall rule on the matter and it's decision shall be final.

10. Special Advisory Council

- 10.1. The Special Advisory Council shall be made up of alumni who previously served on the society committee for at least one academic year.
- 10.2. The council shall have the deciding vote in any matter which faced a tied vote in a committee meeting.
- 10.3. Council votes shall be decided by a rotating committee of 3 individuals, based on the number serving at the time.
- 10.4. These positions will be appointed by the executive committee.
- 10.5. Members of this council shall have their membership fees waived by the society.
- 10.6. The Special Advisory Council shall have the power to instate a member to any committee position in the event that the position has (a) not been filled at an AGM or EGM, or (b) has been vacated during an academic year.

11. Amendments to this Constitution

- 11.1. Notice of a proposal to seek an amendment to this Constitution shall be given to the members at least 4 working days prior to the meeting at which such a proposal shall be considered
- 11.2. A proposal to amend this Constitution must receive the approval of two thirds of the members present and entitled to vote at the relevant meeting.