

European Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies CONSTITUTION

**(Revisions agreed on at the EACLALS Triennial Conference General Meeting in Istanbul
on Thursday, 28 April 2011 shown in italics)**

1. THE ASSOCIATION

The name of this Association is the European Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (EACLALS). It is a branch of the global Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (ACLALS).

EACLALS is referred to in this Constitution as “the Association”.

The Association is a non-profit, professional organisation.

The activities of the Association are financed by membership fees, donations and grants.

2. AIMS OF THE ASSOCIATION

a To promote teaching and research in the field of Commonwealth (Post-colonial) literatures throughout Europe and to spread knowledge about these literatures among general readers in Europe by every available means.

b To organize academic conferences and other related academic activities to promote the aims of the Association.

c To promote young academics in the field of Commonwealth (Post-colonial) literatures in Europe.

d To maintain connections with other Associations with shared interests, in particular the parent Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (ACLALS) and its regional branches overseas.

3. FINANCIAL YEAR

The financial year of the Association shall run from January 1 to December 31.

4. OFFICERS

The chief officers of the Association shall be the Chairperson, the Secretary and the Treasurer.

5. CHAIRPERSON

The chairperson of the Association shall be responsible for the following:

a the overall management of the Association;

b convening and chairing the Triennial General Meeting and meetings of the Executive Committee;

c acting as the official spokesperson for the Association;

d representing the Association on the international Executive Committee of the Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (ACLALS).

6. SECRETARY

The Secretary of the Association shall be responsible for the following:

a maintaining the membership lists of the Association;

b maintaining the records of the Association and handling its regular correspondence;

c maintaining administrative duties in assistance to the chair;

d overseeing the preparation of the Association's newsletters.

7. TREASURER

The Treasurer of the Association shall be responsible for the following:

- a collecting the membership fees of the Association;
- b preparing annual financial statements and presenting them to the Triennial General Meeting of the Association. They shall be audited by two members chosen at the General Meeting and shall be approved by the members present;
- c providing each member with the financial statement of the Association for the three financial years of the outgoing committee's term of office.

8. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee of the Association will consist of the Chairperson, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Past Chairperson.

9. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Executive Committee shall observe the following terms of reference:

- a The chief officers of the Association shall be resident in any of the countries of Europe.
- b The position of Past Chairperson is an *ex-officio* appointment and a non-voting one.
- c Each elected member of the Committee has one vote.
- d The Executive Committee shall be convened at least once *in the course of each* year by the Chairperson, who will give notice of the meeting to its members by mail, telephone *or email*.
- e An Executive Committee meeting shall always be convened during the regular Triennial Meeting of the Association as a whole.
- f All policy actions taken by the Executive Committee shall be ratified by the Triennial General Meeting.

10. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: DUTIES

The Executive Committee has the following responsibilities:

- a To authorise any expenditures necessary to the running of the Association.
- b To establish ad hoc committees to facilitate and further the activities of the Association.
- c To set membership fees.
- d *To decide on applications for membership and the exclusion of members.*
- e To delegate the organisation of the Triennial conference to a locally based member of the Association and to liaise with such persons.
- f To produce and circulate the Association's Newsletter twice a year.
- g To decide on all questions touching on the interpretation of this Constitution.

11. TERMS OF OFFICE

- a The Chairperson, the Secretary and the Treasurer shall be appointed for a term of three years. This is renewable only once.
- b Elections for all Officers of the Association shall take place at the Triennial General Meeting.
- c The official headquarters of the Association shall be the institutional address of the current Chairperson.

12. VACANCY

The position of an Officer shall be considered vacant under the following circumstances:

- a Death or incapacity.
- b Resignation, in the form of a letter to the Secretary.
- c Failure to pay membership dues to the Association.
- d Removal from the Executive Committee by a vote of three-quarters of the membership present at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Association.

13. MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to any academic, professional, university student or interested person engaged in the research, teaching or study of any Commonwealth (Post-colonial) literatures.

In order to attend the Association's Triennial Conference one must be a fully paid up member of the Association.

If membership is refused by the Executive Committee, the application for membership can be tabled at the General Meeting and decided upon by the majority of the present membership.

Membership ends with resignation effective at the end of the financial year, or exclusion.

There are four categories of membership: Ordinary, Associate, Student, Honorary.

a. *Ordinary*: Ordinary membership in the Association gives a member the right to vote, to speak, to present and support motions and to stand for election. Retired members shall pay a reduced membership fee, but are Ordinary members.

b. *Associate*: Associate membership in the Association is open to persons resident outside Europe. They have full privileges of Ordinary membership, with the right to vote, to speak, to present and support motions, but not to stand for election.

c. *Student*: All full-time or part-time students studying in the field of Commonwealth (Post-colonial) literatures are entitled to Student membership in the Association. They have the full privileges of Ordinary membership, with the right to vote, to speak, to present and support motions, and to stand for election. Student members shall pay a reduced membership fee.

d. *Honorary*: The Executive of the Association, with the voted approval of the membership, may grant Honorary membership to persons who have distinguished themselves by their scholarly achievements in the fields of Commonwealth (Post-colonial) literatures, or who have rendered outstanding service to the Association. They have the full privileges of Ordinary membership, with the right to vote, to speak, to present and support motions, but not to stand for election. Honorary members are exempt from paying membership fees.

14. PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

The Programme Committee shall consist of *at least* two officers of the Association together with the local conference organiser and his/her deputy.

a The Programme Committee shall decide which papers are to be presented at the Triennial Conference of the Association.

b In cases where the conference is hosted jointly with another organisation, a representative of that organisation shall be delegated to the Programme Committee.

c The Programme Committee shall *if possible* be reconstituted at each Triennial General Meeting and confirmed by a vote of the membership.

15. NOTICE OF ELECTIONS AND NOMINATIONS

Notice of Elections shall be sent out *by postal or electronic mail* to all current members three months before the Triennial General Meeting of the Association at which the elections are to take place.

Nominations for all positions on the Executive Committee shall be conducted in the following manner:

a The call for nominations to all Executive positions in the Association, the Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, should be included in the Notice of Elections.

b Written nominations, including the written consent of the nominee, and the supporting signatures of two paid-up members of the Association, shall be submitted to the Secretary two months before the Triennial General Meeting of the Association. *The above documents may be sent by electronic mail.*

c A full list of candidates for a prospective Executive Committee, together with the site(s) of a proposed Headquarters, shall be prepared by the outgoing Executive Committee for presentation at the Triennial General Meeting of the Association.

d The list of candidates and the submitted nominations shall be included in a mail *or email* ballot to be sent out to all members one month before the Triennial General Meeting of the Association.

f Mail ballots shall not be tabulated until the day of the election, and *email ballots shall remain strictly confidential. Neither type of ballot shall* be counted until the completion of the vote from the floor.

g *Email ballots may be sent in the body of an electronic message addressed to the Secretary, who shall ensure that the name of the voter is not disclosed at any stage in the election process.* Postal mail ballots should be submitted in a plain, sealed envelope. This envelope should then be placed inside another envelope, sealed, with the member's signature written across the sealing strip. *All* ballots shall be verified by the Secretary against the current membership **list**. The signed envelopes shall be opened by the Secretary at the appropriate point in the agenda of the Triennial General Meeting. A member of the Association approved of by the general membership present shall then record *all* ballots.

h Each member shall have one vote.

i Members who have voted by *postal or electronic* mail, but who are present at the Triennial General Meeting of the Association, shall be considered to have already cast their vote.

j Voting at all elections of the Association shall be by secret ballot.

k No member of the Executive *Committee* may stand for more than two consecutive terms.

l The new Executive Committee shall assume office at the conclusion of the Triennial General Meeting of the Association at which the elections have taken place.

16. GENERAL MEETINGS

a In order to convene a Triennial General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting, the Chairperson or the Executive Committee shall:

Give written notice to all members at least three months in advance in the case of a Triennial General Meeting and at least one month in the case of an Extraordinary General Meeting.

b A quorum shall consist of those members present at the Triennial or the Extraordinary General Meeting.

c Each member shall have one vote.

d All decisions shall be based on a majority vote.

e Notice to convene or to postpone a General Meeting shall be mailed *or emailed* to the most recent address of members in the records of the Association.

f An Extraordinary General Meeting may be convened by the Executive Committee or the Chairperson upon the receipt of a petition signed by at least twenty members, or by five *per cent* of the membership if this figure is higher.

g The Triennial General Meeting of the Association shall take place at the time and location of the Triennial Conference of the Association. Any other Extraordinary General Meeting shall take place at a time and location decided by the Executive Committee.

h The membership convened at the Triennial General Meeting constitutes the Association's highest authority.

i The order of business at the Triennial General Meeting of the Association shall proceed, where appropriate, in the following manner:

1. Report of the Chairperson

2. Report of the Secretary

3. Report of the Treasurer

4. *Approval of the Reports*

5. *Appointment of the Executive Committee*

6. Fixing of the date and place of the next Triennial General Meeting

7. *Any Other Business*

8. Adjournment

17. SIGNATURES

Except where otherwise provided for, contracts, documents, cheques or other notes made out in the name of the Association shall bear the signatures of the Chairperson, the Treasurer **or** the Secretary.

18. CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

- a Any member may propose an amendment to the Constitution. Such amendments shall require the signatures of ten current members of the Association.
- b Notice of amendment motions should be sent, with the correct number of supporting signatures, to the Secretary twelve weeks in advance of the Triennial General Meeting at which it is proposed to have these amendment proposals considered.
- c The Secretary shall circulate these motions to the membership six weeks before the Triennial General Meeting.
- d Ratification of amendment motions shall require a two-thirds vote in favour by members in good standing at the Triennial General Meeting.

19. CHANGE OF NAME, STATUS OR TERMS OF REFERENCE

- a The Association may change its name, status or terms of reference only after a referendum indicating that three-quarters of paid-up members are in favour of such a change.
- b A motion to this effect must be submitted by twenty-five members.
- c Such a motion should reach the Secretary at least three months before the date of the Triennial General Meeting at which it is proposed to consider it.
- d Approval of such a motion shall require the assent of two-thirds of the members present at that Triennial General Meeting.
- e A referendum shall then be organized by the Executive Committee between October 1 and December 31 of that year.

20. DISSOLUTION

- a The Association may be dissolved only after a referendum organized according to the same methods, procedures and time-frame covering the preceding section dealing with Change of Name, Status or Terms of Reference.
- b In the event of the dissolution of the Association, its remaining assets shall be given over to a registered charity reputed for its work in the developing countries.