

# **Socialist Students National Constitution**

## **1. Name**

Socialist Students.

## **2. Aims**

- 2.1** Socialist Students is a democratic organisation of students striving for a socialist transformation of society and removal of capitalism, based on meeting the needs of all, not the profits of a few.
- 2.2** Socialist Students aims to build support for socialist ideas in schools, colleges and universities by holding meetings, debates and other events. In every aspect of student life, Socialist Students aims to point to the need for a socialist transformation of society. Using socialist ideas as a guide to action, Socialist Students aims to organise campaigns for improvements to students' lives, which can demonstrate the relevance of socialist ideas in practice and help to increase the confidence of students to organise in pursuit of a socialist future.
- 2.3** Socialist Students aims to relate to wider movements of students and young people by offering a clear socialist way forward, seeking to organise students in support of a commonly understood programme and plan of action for that movement.
- 2.4** In accordance with its socialist principles, Socialist Students aims to organise in solidarity and build links with trade unions and the wider workers' movement, including encouraging members to join and participate in a trade union where possible.

## **3. Programme**

- 3.1** In order to help fulfil its Aims, Socialist Students should produce and maintain a set of demands, or a 'programme', which proceeds from different issues facing students, young people and the working class and points towards a socialist solution. A programme is a guide to action. It is the starting point for all Socialist Students campaigns, and a means of convincing other students in practice that a socialist alternative is both achievable and necessary.
- 3.2** Socialist Students national programme is decided by the National Conference and should be published on the Socialist Students website.
- 3.3** National programme shall be reflected in nationally produced campaign materials and publications.

## **4. Membership**

- 4.1.** Any person who agrees with the Aims of Socialist Students is eligible to be a Member and may join or establish a Socialist Students Society in their school, college or university.
- 4.2.** All Members have a right to participate fully in Socialist Students activities and should not be restricted from participation on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or any other discriminatory grounds. The utmost effort must be put in to make members feel as welcome as possible and to encourage maximum participation wherever possible.
- 4.3.** A Member may hold membership in other political organisations, provided this does not prevent the Member from organising in accordance with the Aims of Socialist Students.

## **5. Societies**

- 5.1** A Society is the basic unit of Socialist Students, comprising at least three Members based in an educational institution who are striving to carry out the Aims of Socialist Students. Its activities shall be democratically decided by its Members in line with the regulations in this Constitution. Societies will be encouraged to coordinate activities such as campaigns with other Socialist Students Societies, student societies affiliated to Socialist Students, and other societies on campus, as a means of raising the profile and influence of Socialist Students as a national organisation.
- 5.2** A Society shall be free to elect any internal positions (e.g., Secretary, Chair, Treasurer etc.) at its own discretion and according to its own democratic procedures, taking into account local institutional regulations where relevant (e.g., Student Union registration requirements).
- 5.3** Societies are expected to strive for maximum inclusivity as laid out in item 4.2 of this Constitution. Any Member with a complaint about the conduct of their Society shall have the right to appeal to the National Steering Committee, which reserves the right to set up an inquiry into the complaint.
- 5.4** All Societies or Members intending to establish a Society have the right to access nationally produced Socialist Students campaign materials and publications, to assist in the activities of their Society, and to facilitate coordination with other Societies.
- 5.5** A newly established Socialist Students Society should formally register with the Socialist Students National Secretary by emailing the following information to [socialiststudents@gmail.com](mailto:socialiststudents@gmail.com):
  - a. The name of the Society
  - b. The name of the educational institution in which the Society is based
  - c. Links to any public social media profiles belonging to the Society

- d. The name and contact details (phone number, email address and term-time address) of at least one Member who consents to being a point of contact for receiving updates and material from the Socialist Students National Officers.
- e. Affiliation to any other institutions or organisations (e.g. an SU, a political party)

**5.6** The National Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining an internal register of Societies to ensure no Society is left out of the activities of Socialist Students as a national organisation. The National Secretary should aim to maintain regular communication with Steering Committee representatives at each educational institution. Once per year, usually in the autumn term, the National Secretary will aim to carry out an internal survey of Societies for the purpose of maintaining an up-to-date register.

**5.7** Student societies of other organisations shall have the right to affiliate to Socialist Students and participate in its national structures, subject to agreement with the Aims of Socialist Students, by formally registering with the National Secretary along the lines of Item 5.5 of this Constitution. An individual belonging to a Society affiliating in this way shall be a Member as defined in this Constitution.

## **6. National Conference**

**6.1.** The National Conference is the highest democratic decision-making body of Socialist Students and is responsible for agreeing matters relating to Socialist Students as a national organisation.

**6.2.** The National Steering Committee shall be responsible for convening a National Conference each year, unless the Steering Committee deems that as a result of exceptional circumstances the conference should be postponed.

**6.3.** Attendance at the National Conference is open to all Members as well as supportive visitors who wish to observe the conference. Only Members shall have voting rights at the National Conference.

**6.4.** Decisions on all questions at the National Conference will be adopted by a simple majority vote.

**6.5.** The Steering Committee may submit resolutions or statements for the conference, which must be sent to Societies in advance of the conference. Societies have the right to submit amendments to Steering Committee resolutions or statements in accordance with a conference timetable set out by the Steering Committee.

**6.6.** Additionally, all Societies have the right to submit motions relating to the activity of Socialist Students on a national level (e.g. campaigns, programme, media etc.). Motions must be submitted in accordance with the conference

timetable set out by the Steering Committee. Societies and the Steering Committee have the right to submit amendments to motions in accordance with the conference timetable.

- 6.7.** The conference timetable must be sent to Societies no less than four weeks before the conference, allowing sufficient time for Societies to arrange the necessary pre-conference discussions.
- 6.8.** The Steering Committee shall elect from its ranks a Presidium responsible for running the Conference for its duration. At the beginning of the Conference, a representative from the Presidium will move a draft agenda, which should as far as possible reflect all resolutions, statements, motions and amendments submitted to the Conference. If the agenda is rejected by the National Conference, the Presidium is responsible for proposing a new agenda until one is accepted.
- 6.9.** The National Conference shall elect a team of National Officers with specific responsibilities that are key to the running of Socialist Students as a national organisation. This should include but is not limited to:
  - a. A National Secretary
  - b. A National Chair
  - c. A National Treasurer

## **7. National Steering Committee**

- 7.1.** The National Steering Committee shall serve as the national leadership body of Socialist Students from one National Conference to the next.
- 7.2.** Every Society shall have the right to elect from itself one Member to sit on the National Steering Committee along with the National Officers. Once announced at the National Conference, the National Steering Committee will remain in place until the commencement of the next National Conference.
- 7.3.** The National Steering Committee should aim to meet at least once every six weeks, either online or in-person, and shall aim to reach decisions via consensus, allowing for all trends on the body to be represented through collective discussion and debate.
- 7.4.** The National Steering Committee may from time to time invite Members to attend its meetings as visitors.
- 7.5.** Between Conferences, a newly established or newly affiliated Society may, upon formally registering with the National Secretary, elect from itself one Member to sit on the National Steering Committee until the next National Conference. Existing Societies shall also have the right to replace their National Steering Committee representative with a different Member between National Conferences.

- 7.6.** While collectively overseeing the implementation of decisions agreed by the National Conference, the National Steering Committee is responsible for continually assessing and assisting the progress of Socialist Students towards its Aims.
- 7.7.** The National Steering Committee is a political leadership. It must be prepared to collectively propose new national campaigns and initiatives between National Conferences, by responding to political events domestically and internationally, and developing a shared perspective for future developments in order to best prepare for opportunities and challenges ahead.
- 7.8.** The National Steering Committee will produce nationally available materials and publications both physically and online, as a means of cohering Socialist Students as a national organisation.

## **8. Funding**

- 8.1.** There are costs associated with running Socialist Students as a national organisation. Socialist Students shall aim to cover costs entirely through its own activities.
- 8.2.** The main fundraising unit of Socialist Students is the Society, which will be expected to raise funds to cover its own costs at a local level, as well as once a year paying an affiliation fee to the Socialist Students national bank account in order to help cover national costs. The affiliation fee is not fixed and will be negotiated year-to-year via discussion between the Steering Committee and individual Societies.
- 8.3.** Money raised through the sale of nationally produced Socialist Students material (e.g. the magazine) should be paid in full via bank transfer to the Socialist Students national bank account. Details for paying into the Socialist Students national bank account should be clearly visible to Members on the Socialist Students website, or otherwise available on request from the National Treasurer.
- 8.4.** For each National Conference, the National Treasurer shall produce a report detailing national income and expenditure for that year.

## **9. Amendments to the Constitution**

Amendments to the Constitution can be proposed by the Steering Committee or any Society and may be adopted by the National Conference by a simple majority vote. Constitutional amendments must be sent to the national Steering Committee in reasonable time so as to give Societies at least four weeks' notice of any proposed amendment once circulated.