

University of London Chamber Choir Governing Document

1. Name

- 1.1. The name of the Society referred to in this constitution shall be: "UL Chamber Choir" (ULCC) hereinafter referred to as "The Choir".

2. Objectives

- 2.1. To promote and encourage students and graduates of London universities to engage in choral singing.
- 2.2. To provide students and recent graduates of London universities with opportunities to sing in concerts and other events.

3. Membership

- 3.1. Membership shall be restricted to current undergraduate and postgraduate students of the universities of London, and recent graduates of the aforementioned universities who are within the membership grace period specified under section 3.3.
- 3.2. In order to join The Choir, members must be enrolled as a student of a London university in the September of the academic year they join The Choir.
- 3.3. There is a graduate grace period of three years thereby allowing members who have graduated to remain in the Choir for a maximum of three years. This period will begin on 1 September after a member has graduated from a London University and end after three academic years.
- 3.4. A **London university** is defined as a university or Higher Education Institution with a campus within the boundary of the M25.
- 3.5. An **academic year** is defined as running from 1 September to 31 August of the following year.
- 3.6. Auditions are open to all current undergraduate and postgraduate students at London universities, with membership subject to a successful audition conducted by The Choir's committee.
- 3.7. Membership to The Choir shall be confirmed upon payment of the annual membership fee and completion of member registration.
- 3.8. The Choir welcomes former members as well as public figures to become patrons of the choir free of charge. Patrons are non-members who have an interest in promoting The Choir within the context of its wider outreach and partnerships as well as supporting the choir financially. As a gesture of gratitude The Choir publishes the names of patrons on its website and concert programmes.

4. Rehearsals, Concerts and other events

- 4.1. The Choir currently rehearses once a week on Tuesday evenings from 18:30 till 20:30 during university term time (including reading weeks) and all rehearsal dates for that academic year are published in advance at the beginning of the academic year. The Choir currently rehearses at St Mary Le Strand, WC2R 1ES.

- 4.2. The Choir operates three terms a year which will run as 1 September - 31 December, 1 January - 31 March, 1 April - 31 June. Rehearsals may fall at any time during these terms.
- 4.3. The Choir holds public concerts at the end of each term, dates for which are published in advance. Currently, concerts are held at St Mary Le Strand, WC2R 1ES.
- 4.4. The Choir also aims to organise a number of “enrichment” performance opportunities, including but not limited to day trips to sing in other Churches and Cathedrals in London and other UK cities, longer residential tours, recordings and broadcasts.
- 4.5. The Choir has a well established program of social events which run on a weekly basis after rehearsals. These may include but are not limited to concert trips, sports tournaments, restaurant meals and picnics. The Choir is not required to finance these social events.

5. Attendance

- 5.1. Rehearsals and concerts are compulsory. All members should attend every rehearsal unless they are given authorised absence via a communication method set out by the President at the beginning of the year (at least 24 hours prior to the start of the rehearsal in question) with the President or vice-President.
- 5.2. Participation in monthly Sunday evensongs at St Mary Le Strand is also compulsory on an as required basis. Members are required to attend a minimum of two evensongs a term, unless under exceptional circumstances agreed to by either the President or vice-President.
- 5.3. Enrichment and social events are a voluntary commitment.
- 5.4. Members are considered late if they arrive at the rehearsal more than five minutes after 18:30 without prior communication with the President or vice-President or an emergency/travel disruption having occurred.
- 5.5. In the case of an emergency or travel disruptions members should make every effort to inform the President or vice-President as soon as possible and will not be penalised.
- 5.6. Authorised absence from a rehearsal can be granted in the case of a valid excuse via communication (at least 24 hours prior to the start of the rehearsal in question) with the President or vice-President. An authorised absence may include but is not limited to: illness, university commitments and family gatherings but all final decisions are at the discretion of the President. Members are expected to catch up with missed rehearsals by communicating with the President, Conductor or their section leads.
- 5.7. If a member fails to attend a rehearsal without communicating with the President or vice-President in advance, they will be marked as “unauthorised absence”. If a member gains two or more unauthorised absences in a term, their ability to perform with the choir in the concert is at the conductor's discretion.
- 5.8. The minimum number of rehearsals that should be attended in a term is seven out of the ten. If a member misses any more than three rehearsals, either authorised or unauthorised, then their ability to perform with the choir in the concert is at the conductor's discretion.

- 5.9. Exams: Members may only miss a rehearsal if they have an exam on a Tuesday afternoon or the following Wednesday morning. If members have exams at other times, they are expected to attend as normal. Again, communication with the President or vice-President is required at least 24 hours prior to the start of the rehearsal in question.

6. Administration

- 6.1. Administration of The Choir is vested in the Committee which consists of i.) President, ii.) Vice-President, iii.) Secretary iv.) Treasurer and any other roles elected by The Choir. All members of the Committee must be current members of The Choir as set out under sections 3.1 - 3.7.
- 6.2. At the end of each academic year, current committee members retire and are replaced by a new committee, all of whom are elected at a General Meeting held earlier in the year as specified under section 7.2. The new committee may consist of or contain one or more of the retiring committee members.
- 6.3. Committee roles may be shared between a maximum of two persons.
- 6.4. The President shall:
- 6.4.1. Be responsible for the constitutional running of the Choir.
 - 6.4.2. Be the primary point of contact between The Choir, its wider outreach and partnerships, and members of the public.
 - 6.4.3. Attend and chair all meetings of the Committee.
 - 6.4.4. Be directly responsible for the overall running of The Choir.
 - 6.4.5. Take on the responsibilities of any role which cannot be filled.
 - 6.4.6. Be a point of contact for any member of the Choir to raise safety or welfare concerns.
 - 6.4.7. Be responsible for ensuring any concerns or complaints raised by members of The Choir are dealt with.
 - 6.4.8. Undertake other tasks as dictated by the needs of the job.
- 6.5. The vice-President shall:
- 6.5.1. Be responsible for supporting the President in all aspects of running the choir particularly with regards to promoting The Choir, its concerts and events.
 - 6.5.2. Be responsible for delegating all tasks within the Committee and helping to organise General Meetings.
 - 6.5.3. Oversee any rehearsals or evensongs which the President cannot attend.
 - 6.5.4. Support the President in taking on the responsibilities of any role which cannot be filled.
 - 6.5.5. Be a point of contact for any member of the Choir to raise safety or welfare concerns.
 - 6.5.6. Undertake other tasks as dictated by the needs of the job.
- 6.6. The Treasurer shall:
- 6.6.1. Be responsible for The Choir's yearly budget plan.
 - 6.6.2. Oversee all transactions via The Choir's NatWest bank account.
 - 6.6.3. Keep adequate records of The Choir's finances.
 - 6.6.4. Ensure all invoices are paid within the time frame specified on the invoice or within a month, whichever comes first.

- 6.6.5. Be responsible for paying the artistic director as agreed by them when they fall under section 6.9.1.
- 6.6.6. Undertake other tasks as dictated by the needs of the job.
- 6.7. The Secretary shall:
 - 6.7.1. Be responsible for keeping a list of all members and their contact details, and supplying a copy to the President.
 - 6.7.2. Keep a record of committee meetings and ensure copies of all paperwork related to the running of The Choir are maintained and in good order.
 - 6.7.3. Be a point of contact for any member of the Choir to raise safety or welfare concerns.
 - 6.7.4. Undertake other tasks as dictated by the needs of the job.
- 6.8. The Committee members named above are responsible for appointing an Artistic Director for the group, and negotiating any potential fees regarding conducting.
- 6.9. The “Artistic Director” is the conductor of the choir.
 - 6.9.1. Where the Artistic Director is an independent person employed by The Choir, they do not need to fulfil the requirements of membership or be a member of The Choir. In this case the Artistic Director can attend Committee meetings, but is not able to hold any role or position within the Committee. The Artistic Director cannot vote in any General Meetings or Committee meetings.
 - 6.9.2. Where the Artistic Director fulfils the requirements of membership, is a member of The Choir and is not employed by The Choir, the Artistic Director will be treated as a member of the committee and will be able to vote in Committee meetings and General Meetings.
- 6.10. Committee members are responsible for securing a rehearsal venue or concert venue and negotiating any potential fees regarding venue hire.
- 6.11. Committee members may be removed following a two thirds majority vote at a General Meeting which fulfils the requirement of section 7.6.
- 6.12. If a Committee member steps down or is removed at any point during the academic year, a General Meeting will be called within three weeks to appoint a new Committee member to the role.
- 6.13. Committee members are responsible for amending and updating this constitution, and supporting the President in upholding this constitution. Any changes that are made to this constitution must be approved by a two thirds majority vote at a General Meeting.
- 6.14. The Committee members named above and any others elected by The Choir have a responsibility individually and collectively to ensure the proper running of The Choir as set out under section 6.

7. Annual General Meetings

- 7.1. General Meetings, at which all members of The Choir may be present and may vote, may result in alteration, reversal, or ratification of any decision of the Committee.
- 7.2. At least one General Meeting should be held once a year during the second term as specified under section 4.2 in order to approve annual accounts and elect the new committee for the following academic year.
- 7.3. General Meetings may also be called at the discretion of the Committee and by members of the choir according to a greater than half majority vote.

- 7.4. The Committee shall be responsible for advertising the agenda to the members of any General Meeting at least one week before it is to be held.
- 7.5. Minutes of all General Meetings shall be kept by the Secretary and be freely available to all members.
- 7.6. Quorum of the general meeting shall be no less than 50% of members or 15 persons, whichever is the greater number.

8. Voting

- 8.1. The election for the new committee should be the first point on the agenda so that votes can be counted during the meeting.
- 8.2. If the outgoing committee should prefer an independent person to oversee the election, this can be arranged by the Vice-President.
- 8.3. Voting shall usually be by ballot, and counted by a non-Committee member(s) of The Choir who is a candidate for a position on the new Committee. It is also acceptable for the Artistic Director to count the ballots where the Artistic Director falls under section 6.9.1.
- 8.4. Each member of The Choir shall have one vote.
- 8.5. Proxy votes are not permitted in any General Meeting election or Committee meeting election.
- 8.6. Candidates for the new Committee must achieve a majority vote over other candidates, or where no other candidates are running must achieve over 50% of votes in order to successfully take on the role.

9. Amendments

- 9.1. This Constitution must be approved by a two thirds majority vote at a General Meeting which must fulfil section 7.6. No change shall take effect unless and until it has been approved by The Choir.

10. Policies specific to the operation of the choir as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

- 10.1. Risk management: *the choir conducts a termly risk assessment of its rehearsal venue which includes actions to mitigate the hazards of slippery floors and uneven steps. For visits to new or alternative venues, additional risk assessments are carried out. The choir also maintains an accident reporting form.*
- 10.2. Investment: **NA**
- 10.3. Safeguarding vulnerable beneficiaries: **NA**
- 10.4. Conflicting interests: **NA**
- 10.5. Volunteer management: **NA**
- 10.6. Complaints handling: *complaints are to be directed to the relevant committee member(s), assessed by President and trustees and an appropriate response is to be communicated and an action plan put in place if necessary.*
- 10.7. Paying staff: **NA**

- 10.8. Internal charity financial controls policy and procedures:
- *Subscriptions: Subscription fee to be determined by the treasurer (in liaison with the President and trustees) on reviewing the accounts. Subscriptions to be paid in full directly to the choir's NatWest bank account within 2 weeks of the first rehearsal/admission to the choir*
 - *Ticket sales: The majority of public performance tickets are to be sold in advance via Ticketsource which is linked to the choir's NatWest account. For on the door tickets, payment can be taken via card using the choir's SumUp card reader and app account, linked to the Choir's NatWest account. Cash payment can also be accepted for which it is then the responsibility of the treasurer and President to jointly count any money collected and pay this in at the nearest opportunity.*
 - *Donations: The choir accepts public donations at any time including at concerts or public performances. Donations can be made by direct bank transfer to the choir's NatWest account, via the choir's SumUp card reader or in cash as described above.*
 - *Budgeting: It is the responsibility of the treasurer to draft and formalise a budget plan for the academic year each September in liaison with the President. The setting of the subscription fee is informed by this budget.*
 - *Accounts processing: It is the responsibility of the treasurer to process and record (in detail) all incoming and outgoing funds including keeping records of all invoices. The treasurer is also responsible for ensuring that the budget plan is updated regularly and that the balance of the choir's NatWest bank account remains in line with this.*
 - *Reimbursement claims: In order for a member of committee/trustee board to claim reimbursement for an expense they must send a PDF/JPEG/JPG copy of the receipt/invoice in question to the treasurer via email.*
- 10.9. Safeguarding policy and procedures: **NA** (as we don't accept members under 18?)
- 10.10. Financial reserves policy and procedures: *any financial reserves remaining from the previous year are to be firstly put towards the costs of venue hire for auditions in the new academic year and secondly towards the costs of purchasing new music, folders and other equipment.*
- 10.11. Complaints policy and procedures: **As Above**
- 10.12. Serious incident reporting policy and procedures: *the choir maintains a serious incident reporting form which is filled out in the case of a serious incident and reviewed by the committee board of trustees who will put in place an appropriate action plan.*
- 10.13. Internal risk management policy and procedures: **As Above**
- 10.14. Trustee expenses policy and procedures: *any expenditure to be approved by the President in liaison with the treasurer and processed as above by submission of receipts/invoices in PDF/JPEG/JPG format by email.*
- 10.15. Trustee conflicts of interest policy and procedures: *The trustees declare no conflict of interest*
- 10.16. Investing charity funds policy and procedures: **NA**
- 10.17. Campaigns and political activity policy and procedures: *the choir makes use of social media as part of its recruitment strategy and to promote public concerts and events, however, maintains a policy of non-engagement with political activity.*
- 10.18. Bullying and harassment policy and procedures: *members of the choir are encouraged to speak to any approachable committee member to express their*

concerns. In the case of an incident of harassment or bullying, these concerns are to be relayed in strict confidence to the President who is responsible for taking appropriate action in liaison with the board of trustees.

- 10.19. Social media policy and procedures: *social media content is to be created solely by the social media secretary and approved by the President before posting. Only the President and social media secretary are to have access to the social media accounts.*
- 10.20. Engaging external speakers (conductors) at charity events policy and procedures: *engagement of external speakers or conductors is to be approved by the board of trustees to ensure that the external speaker reflects the public image of the choir appropriately.*