UNISON
the public service union

UNISON Rulebook
As amended at the 2022 conference

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A Introductory

1 Name of the Union

The name of the Union shall be UNISON – The Public Service Union, hereafter referred to as “the Union”. In Cymru Wales Region the union is also to be known by the Welsh name “UNSAIN”.

2 Interpretation of Rules

1 These rules shall, except where the contrary is stated, be interpreted in accordance with the definitions of certain expressions contained in Rule Q below.

2 In the event of any question arising as to the interpretation of these rules, the question shall be referred to the National Executive Council, whose decision shall be conclusive and binding.

3 Anti-Discrimination Policy

The Union shall seek to ensure that discriminatory acts are not committed against any persons by the Union, or by its organs, members, or officers, on grounds such as race, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, age, creed or social class.

B Aims and objectives

1 **At work and in the community**

1 To organise all those employed, directly or indirectly, within those areas of employment which provide services to the public whether in the public, private or voluntary sectors of the economy.
2 To seek to ensure equality of treatment and fair representation for all members and to work for the elimination of discrimination on grounds of race, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, age or creed.
3 To seek to protect the rights of all members to be treated with dignity and respect irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, age or creed.
4 To improve the pay and conditions of members and promote their interests.
5 To establish good relations between members and their employers, to secure the settlement of disputes arising from members' employment, and to participate in joint negotiating machinery.
6 To promote and improve the health, safety and welfare of members in the workplace.
7 To promote trade unionism.
8 To work to achieve equal access to public services for all and to ensure that all users of public services are treated with dignity and respect, irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, age or creed.
9 To promote greater employee, consumer and user involvement and representation in the delivery of public services, irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, age or creed.
10 To work with all other interested parties, individuals and organisations to maintain and improve the quality of services to the public.
11 To liaise with the United Kingdom Government, devolved administrations and all other levels of government on public services and related matters and to promote and monitor legislation for the benefit of members and the public.
12 To promote and pursue environmental sustainability in all our work.

2 **Union democracy**

1 To promote, safeguard and improve the interests and status of members and the Union as a whole.
2 To promote and establish a member-led union and to carry out and fulfil decisions made by members in a spirit of unity and accountability.
3 To promote fair representation in all the Union's structures for women, members of all grades, black members, disabled members and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus (LGBT+) members.
4 To encourage solidarity and an effective working partnership between members, activists, representatives, officers and all staff in the service of the Union and its agreed policies.
5 To promote and safeguard the rights of members to have an adequate opportunity to participate in the initiation and development of policy making, through meetings, conferences, delegations or ballots, and to encourage the maximum democratic debate, together with the right to campaign to change policy, while at all times acting within the rules and agreed policy.
6 To foster good industrial relations with the Union's employees through their trade unions, to encourage and maintain good employment practices and to promote equal opportunities

for all employees irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, age or creed.
7 To devolve to regions policy making responsibility in relation to devolved administrations while maintaining the integrity and unity of the union in accordance with the Protocol issued under Rule D.2.11.5.

3 Service to members

1 To provide minimum guaranteed standards of advice, representation and service.
2 To provide information and publications about the Union and its work on a regular basis and in language and design that can easily be understood, including languages other than English where appropriate.
3 To make provision for certain benefits to members as provided in these Rules.
4 To provide and maintain educational facilities and to encourage members to participate in them.
5 To promote, maintain and contribute to schemes and/or funds for the financial, physical and social welfare of members and their dependants.

4 General

1 To maintain a political fund and the relationships which reflect the traditions of COHSE, NALGO and NUPE.
2 To assist and support other unions, organisations, charities or individuals as deemed appropriate locally, nationally and internationally.
3 To participate in international trade union activities and to foster appropriate international links.
4 To arrange amalgamations or transfers of engagements with other trade unions.
5 To perform such other duties and engage in such other business as a trade union may lawfully undertake.
6 To seek to ensure that members, activists, representatives and staff are treated with dignity and respect at all times when participating in the Union's democratic structures. Also that members, activists, representatives and staff seeking the Union's services provided by external suppliers are treated similarly by the providers of those services.

C* Membership

1 Scope of Representation

1 The Union shall seek to represent:

1.1 those employed by any body, authority, company or corporation which has a public, charitable, educational, or statutory function, including those employed in the local government service, the health services, the electricity supply industry, the gas, transport and water industries, the education services, the police and justice sectors and in the voluntary and community sectors.

1.2 those employed in such other areas of work and such other persons as may be provided for in these Rules, and as the National Executive Council may from time to time determine.

2 Categories of membership

2.1 Membership shall be open to any person employed in the provision of public services and in such other employment as may come within the meaning of Rule C.1 above.

2.2 Subscriptions

According to their category of membership as set out below, members shall pay subscriptions as provided in Schedule A. Schedule A may be changed from time to time by the National Delegate Conference in accordance with Rule N. In addition members shall pay any local levy fixed by their branch in accordance with Rule H.

2.3 Full membership

2.3.1 Full members shall be eligible for full rights and benefits.

2.3.2 Membership shall extend to persons who have previously been members of the Union in employment within the meaning of Rule C.1 and who are currently:

1 On unpaid maternity, paternity, adoption, medically approved compassionate leave or other unpaid leave from their employment.

2 On strike or locked out from their employment.

2.3.3 Eligibility for full membership shall extend to persons whether or not previously members of the Union who are undertaking a course of training or study whether full-time or part-time designed to lead to becoming employed within the scope of Rule C.1.

2.4 Unemployed members

2.4.1 Members dismissed, made redundant, having accepted a compromise agreement or having resigned as an alternative to dismissal from employment within the meaning of C.1 who notify the branch secretary in writing within six months of their loss of employment may achieve unemployed membership for two years from the date of dismissal, redundancy, agreement or resignation. This entitles them to retain benefits from the union for up to two years after they leave, provided they remain unemployed.

2.4.2* Unemployed members shall be entitled to attend branch meetings and to vote on issues not relating to pay and conditions of members in employment. They are not entitled to hold office in the union unless otherwise decided by the National Executive Council providing they have not been dismissed from employment for any act of discrimination or harassment as defined in Rule I 2.3 (i) and (ii).

2.5 Members in education

2.5.1 This category of membership shall extend to persons not falling within Rule 2.3.3 above who are undertaking a

course of education and were members of the Union in employment immediately prior to undertaking the course.

2.5.2 Persons in this category of membership shall not be entitled to hold any office in the Union.

2.6 Retired members

2.6.1 A member may apply at any time for retired membership if she/he has had at least two years' continuous membership immediately prior to their retirement from employment within those areas of work set out in Rule C.1 and who are retired.

2.6.2 Retired members who return to paid employment, which falls within the scope of Rule C.1, will be obliged to pay the appropriate subscription rate to remain in UNISON membership. Such members will be able to resume retired member status on ceasing paid employment.
Retired members, who return to paid employment, which falls outside the scope of Rule C.1 will cease holding retired member status. Such members may apply to resume UNISON retired member status when they cease paid employment.

2.6.3 Retired members shall be entitled to attend branch meetings and to vote on issues not relating to the pay and conditions of members in employment. They will be entitled to stand for office and vote only for positions in the Retired Members' Organisation unless otherwise determined by the National Executive Council or as otherwise provided for in these Rules.

2.7 Honorary life members

2.7.1 Existing full members of the Union may be awarded honorary life membership in recognition of their service to the Union upon cessation of their normal membership. Such honorary life members must be nominated by their branch or by the National Executive Council, which body must approve all awards.

2.7.2 Honorary life members shall be entitled to participate in the Retired Members' Organisation and be eligible for the same rights and benefits as retired members. They will not be required to pay the fee for retired members set out in Schedule A(6).

2.7.3 Existing life members of COHSE and NUPE and honorary members of NALGO shall become honorary life members of UNISON on Vesting Day.

2.8 Honorary members

2.8.1 A person is eligible to be an honorary member who is not otherwise eligible to be a member and who has rendered outstanding service to the Union, the Trade Union Movement, or society in general. Nominations will be considered and determined by the National Executive Council.

2.8.2 An honorary member shall not be required to pay any subscription, and shall hold the membership for life, unless she/he resigns the membership or is deprived of it in accordance with Rule I or in such cases where a Rule I investigation is either impracticable or inappropriate, the National Executive Council shall have the power to revoke the Honorary Membership.

2.8.3 Honorary members are not entitled to hold any office, to act as delegate or representative on behalf of any branch, group or body of the Union, are not entitled to any benefit, and are not entitled to any vote.

2.8.4 Honorary members of COHSE, NALGO and NUPE at Vesting Day shall be honorary members of the Union.

2.9 Employees of the union

2.9.1 This category of membership shall extend to employees of the Union who shall pay contributions as provided in

Schedule A(1). A central register of such members shall be maintained at Head Office. Except as specified below all such members shall be eligible for all the rights and benefits of membership.

2.9.2 Members in this category shall be excluded from eligibility to:

1 seek or hold office in any lay structure of the Union

2 be in membership of any branch or of any Group or of any Region

3 participate as a delegate in any policy-making forum of the Union

4 participate as a member in any policy-making processes of the Union (excepting as set out below) or to vote for any lay member of the National Executive Council or any lay member of any Service Group Executive Committee

5 be recognised for the purposes of collective bargaining with the National Executive Council.

2.9.3 Members in this category shall have the right to vote in any political fund ballot.

3 Allocation to categories

In the event of uncertainty as to which category of membership it is appropriate for a member or members to belong, the National Executive Council may allocate the member(s) to the category it deems most appropriate.

4 Members' benefits

4.1 Subject to Rule C7.2 below a member is eligible for benefits in accordance with her/his category of membership, provided that she/he has paid the contributions required of her/him under these Rules.

4.2 Details of members' respective eligibility to benefits are set out in Schedule B.

5 Becoming a member

5.1 Every person wishing to become a member shall complete and sign a prescribed form of application for membership or by using the prescribed on-line system for joining, using her or his full name and giving her or his address, and shall return it either to the branch secretary of the appropriate branch or to the office specified on the form. Membership shall commence on the date details of membership are entered into the membership records system.

5.2 A member of a political party or organisation, whose constitution, aims or objectives is/are expressly or impliedly contrary to the equality objectives of UNISON set out in Rules A.3 and/or B1.2 and/or B1.3 of the UNISON Rule Book, shall not be eligible for membership of the Union. This specifically includes the British National Party, the National Front and similar parties or organisations as decided from time to time by the National Executive Council.

5.3 Members shall be entitled to vote in statutory elections from the date of inclusion in the Union's central membership register or from the qualifying date for participation in an election as specified in regulations made by the National Executive Council.

5.4 No person shall be a member of more than one branch of the Union at any one time.

5.5 Where the branch has reason to believe an applicant may be ineligible for membership, the applicant shall be given notice in writing by the branch secretary of the proposal to exclude or expel him/her and the reasons for that proposal; the individual will be given a fair opportunity to make representations in respect of that proposal, and those representations will be considered fairly.

5.6 Any person whose application for membership or transfer has been rejected has the right of appeal to a regional appeals committee against the decision of the Branch. The procedure to be adopted will be the same as in the case of a disciplinary hearing.

6 Obligations of membership

6.1 Every member shall observe all the Rules of the Union.

6.2 Details of where the rulebook may be downloaded from the UNISON website will be provided to each new member when they join. Hard copies of the rulebook may be requested.

6.3 Every member who changes her/his address shall notify the Union of the change in the prescribed way.

6.4 It is the obligation of the member to ensure that her/his subscription is paid to the Union at the correct rate as set out in Schedule A, and on the date on which it is due. Payment may be made in cash or by cheque (to the member's Branch Secretary or to a Union Office as directed); by standing order; by direct debit; by check-off arrangements made through the member's employer; or by any other method acceptable to the National Executive Council.

7 Ceasing to be a member

7.1 Loss of eligibility

Any member ceasing to be eligible for membership within Rule C.1, and who does not fall within the classes of membership set out at Rule C.2, shall automatically cease to be a member unless:

7.1.1 the National Executive Council decides otherwise; or

7.1.2 she or he intends to be absent from the employment defined in Rule C.1 for a temporary period only, in which case she or he may be allowed by decision of her or his branch to retain membership.

7.2 Arrears of subscriptions

7.2.1 Any person owing more than three months' subscriptions shall cease to be a member of the Union (unless the National Executive Council decides otherwise) and shall forfeit all that she or he has paid to the Union.

7.2.2 Such a person may rejoin the Union. The National Executive Council shall require such a person to pay outstanding subscriptions or such other amount that it may determine.

7.3 Resignation

Any member may at any time resign her or his membership by submitting a written resignation to her/his Branch Secretary or to the General Secretary. Upon resigning, that member will forfeit any right to receive or continue to receive benefits or privileges of membership, and shall forfeit all that she or he has paid to the Union.

7.4 Suspension

7.4.1 The National Executive Council shall have the power in exceptional circumstances to suspend a member from office for a period of not more than 60 days (unless such a period is extended by agreement between the parties) if the member faces disciplinary charges under Rule I and the National Executive Council considers it appropriate in the interests of her or his branch or of the Union generally that she/he should be suspended until the charges are determined.

7.4.2 In cases of alleged financial irregularitiesbrought under Rule I and the member faces disciplinary charges related to such allegations arising from a Rule I investigation, the National

Executive Council may suspend the member(s) from holding office until the conclusion of the disciplinary investigation, hearing or appeal.

7.5 Expulsion

A member may be expelled from membership in accordance with the disciplinary procedure set out in Rule I. In such a case the member will forthwith forfeit any right to receive (or to continue to receive) the benefits and privileges of membership.

7.6 Termination

Notwithstanding anything in these Rules the National Executive Council may, by giving six weeks' notice in writing, terminate the membership of any member, if necessary, in order to comply with a decision of the Disputes Committee of the Trades Union Congress.

8 The Union's annual membership audit

8.1 The Union's membership system shall be audited each year by an Assurer.

8.2 The Assurer will be a qualified professional body of either financial auditors or membership scrutineers.

8.3 The Assurer will be appointed by the National Executive Council who thereafter shall continue to hold office until replaced by the National Delegate Conference.

8.4 An Assurer must be re-appointed for the following reporting period unless:

1 A resolution has been passed by the National Delegate Conference expressly stating that they are not to be re-appointed or appointing someone else instead.

2 The Assurer has given notice that they do not wish to be re-appointed.

3 They no longer meet the qualifications for appointment.

4 They are no longer able to act as an Assurer due to incapacity.

8.5 The Assurer will provide a membership audit certificate for the previous financial year to the National Executive Council for approval and adoption.

D* Structure of the union at national level

1 National Delegate Conference

1.1 The supreme government of the Union shall be vested in the National Delegate Conference, which shall meet annually for four days at such time and place as the National Executive Council shall determine.

1.2 Special Delegate Conference

1.2.1 A Special Delegate Conference may be convened by the National Executive Council.

1.2.2 A Special Delegate Conference shall be convened on receipt by the General Secretary, within any two-month period, of requisitions to that effect, stating the business to be transacted, from branches representing not less than 25% of the Union's membership.

1.3 Composition

The basis of representation by branches at the Conference shall be in accordance with a scheme to be drawn up by the National Executive Council and implemented by the Regional Committee and providing as follows:

1.3.1 Where a branch's membership includes all the Union's members who are employed by a single authority in local government or the health service or at appropriate levels in other sectors of the Union membership (referred to here as a "lead employer branch"), the branch shall be represented by one delegate for every 1000 members or part thereof as at 30 September in the year preceding the conference.

1.3.2 Branches which are not "lead employer branches" shall be grouped for purposes of Conference representation so that the joint membership of such branches shall be represented by one delegate per 1000 members or part thereof as at 30 September in the year preceding the conference.

1 Branches may not be grouped across service group boundaries (other than branches with members in more than one service group).

1.3.3.1 Branches failing to submit annual returns in accordance with Rule G.10 shall not be entitled to attend National Delegate Conference and Service Group Conferences for the remainder of the financial year following the year to which the financial return applies, unless otherwise determined by the National Executive Council.

2 The National Executive Council shall determine procedures for considering appeals by branches who are disqualified under Rule D.1.3.3.(i) from attending National Delegate and National Group Conferences.

3 Branches which fail to submit annual returns by 15 March in the year following the financial year to which such returns apply may be subject to financial penalty under procedures determined by the National Executive Council.

4 Branches which are subject to a financial penalty under D.1.3.3 shall have a right of appeal in accordance with Rule H.5.

1.3.4 No branch delegate may attend and speak at the Conference as a person in any of the categories set out in Rule D.1.7.

1.4 Proportionality and fair representation

The principles of proportionality and fair representation shall be observed in the election of delegates in accordance with guidelines drawn up by the National Executive Council.

1.5 Representation of young members

Where a branch is represented by

four or more delegates, branches shall strive to ensure that at least one is a young member.

1.6 Shared delegates

Where a branch or grouped branches have the right to be represented by only one delegate, the branch or grouped branches may, in order to promote proportionality, fair representation or equal opportunities elect two members to share the delegation between them. Where a branch or grouped branches have the right to be represented by more than one delegate, the branch or grouped branches may, in order to further promote proportionality, fair representation, or equal opportunities, elect two members to share one delegate seat allocated to the branch or grouped branches. The branch or the grouped branches shall be responsible for any extra costs of this arrangement.

1.7 The right to attend and speak

The following persons shall have the right to attend the Conference and to speak, but not to vote, in not more than one of the following categories:

1.7.1 all members of the National Executive Council (subject in the case of the three members who are also members of the Standing Orders Committee to the rules of that Committee below)

1.7.2 the General Secretary, Assistant General Secretaries and such other staff as the National Executive Council or General Secretary may determine

1.7.3 two representatives of each Regional Council

1.7.4 two representatives of each Self-Organised Group at the national level

1.7.5 two representatives of each Service Group

1.7.6 two representatives of the Private Contractors National Forum at the national level.

1.7.7 two representatives from the National Young Members' Forum and one representative from each of the Regional Young Members' Forums.

1.7.8 14 Representatives of the Retired members' organisation (two from the National Committee and one from each of the Regional Committees), each representative appointed by the appropriate committees

1.7.9 one representative from each professional and sectional body formally associated with the Union and recognised for this purpose by the National Executive Council

1.7.10 the chairperson of the Standing Orders Committee.

1.8 Standing orders committee

1.8.1 The Standing Orders Committee shall be present at the Conference but shall take no part in its proceedings and shall comprise

1 one representative of each Regional Council, not being a member of the National Executive Council; and

2 three members of the National Executive Council.

1.8.2 The functions of the Standing Orders Committee shall be as contained in Rule P.

1.9 Conference timetable

Before a National Delegate Conference, the National Executive Council shall adopt and publish within the Union a detailed timetable enabling the following steps to be taken not later than the time stated:

Procedure: Weeks before the first day of Conference

1 Submission of motions: 16 weeks

2 Publication of preliminary agenda: 13 weeks

3 Submission of amendments: 8 weeks

4 Publication of final agenda: 4 weeks

1.10 Conference quorum and procedure

1.10.1 The quorum of the National Delegate Conference shall be one-third of the delegates registered to attend and vote.

1.10.2 All motions and amendments for the agenda shall be of relevance to the Union as a whole rather than a Service Group.

1.10.3 The National Executive Council shall have the right to submit to the National Delegate Conference reports, statements, motions, amendments to motions and amendments to Rule (including emergency motions and amendments).

1.10.4 Each Branch may submit motions, amendments to motions and amendments to Rule. A Regional Council, the Private Contractors National Forum, a Self-organised Group, the National Young Members' Forum and the Retired Members' Organisation may each submit a total of two motions and/or amendments to Rule. A Regional Council, the Private Contractors National Forum, a Self-Organised group, the National Young Members' Forum and the Retired Members' Organisation may also each submit a total of two amendments to motions.

1.10.5 The rules of procedure for the National Delegate Conference shall be those contained in Rule P.

2 National Executive Council

2.1 Functions and authority

The general management and control of the Union between National Delegate Conferences shall be vested in the National Executive Council, which shall comprise representatives elected from the Regions and Service Groups plus four national black members' seats, two young members' seats and two disabled members' seats. It shall have full power and authority to act on behalf of the Union in every respect and for every purpose falling within the objects of the Union. It shall not do anything that is inconsistent with these Rules or the policy of the Union as laid down by the National Delegate Conference.

2.2 Regional representatives

Each Region shall be a constituency for the election of part of the National Executive Council, conducted in accordance with the Electoral Rules set out at Rule D.8 and Schedule C below.

2.2.1 Each Region shall elect representatives according to the following table:

Regional membership

Less than 100,000
2 representatives + 1 low pay reserved seat (see Rule Q Definitions)
Conditions: 1 female, 1 male

100,000 or more and less than 150,000
3 representatives + 1 low pay reserved seat (see Rule Q Definitions)
Conditions: 2 female, 1 male

150,000 or more
4 representatives + 1 low pay reserved seat (see Rule Q Definitions)
Conditions: At least 2 female, 1 male

2.2.2 Only full members within the Region shall be eligible to vote in respect of seats in the Region.

2.2.3 No member shall be a candidate unless she/he has been nominated by at least two branches within her/his Region. No member is entitled to be a candidate for election in a Region other than that of which she/he is a member.

2.2.4 Any member elected to the National Executive Council shall remain in office only for the period for which she/he meets the requirements of the seat

to which she/he was elected unless otherwise provided for in these Rules.

2.3 Service group representatives

2.3.1 The members of each Service Group shall each constitute a separate section of the Union for the purpose of balloting for the National Executive Council and shall elect representatives according to the following table:

Service Group membership

Less than 25,000
1 representative
Conditions: none

25,000 or more and less than 100,000
2 representatives
Conditions: At least one female

100,000 or more and less than 300,000
3 representatives
Conditions: see below

300,000 or more
4 representatives
Conditions: see below

Such minimum number of female members as shall be determined in advance of the election by the National Executive Council in order to apply the principle of proportionality.

2.3.2 Only full members of a Service Group shall be eligible to vote for seats for that Service Group.

2.3.3 No member may be a candidate for election in respect of a Service Group unless she/he has been nominated by at least two branches from within that Service Group.

2.3.4 No member may be a candidate in any Service Group other than that of which she/he is a member.

2.3.5 No member may hold a Regional Seat and a Service Group Seat at the same time.

2.4 Black members' seats

There will be an additional four representatives (one male, two female and one reserved seat), elected from a national constituency of all Regions. No member shall be a candidate for election to the additional seats unless she/he has been nominated by at least 2 branches or regional self-organised groups. The period of office shall be two years.

2.5 Young members' seats

There will be an additional two representatives, at least one of whom must be a woman for young members elected from a national constituency of young members in all regions.
No member shall be a candidate for election to the young members' seats unless she/he:
1 will be aged 26 or under when the period of office ends as set out at Rule D.2.7.1
2 has received two nominations from any branches, or regional young members' forums or National Young Members' Forum.

2.6 Disabled members' seats

There will be an additional two representatives, reserved for disabled members, one female, and one general, elected from a national constituency of all regions. No member shall be a candidate for election to the disabled members' seats unless she/he has been nominated by at least two branches or a regional disabled members self-organised group. The period of office will be two years.

2.7 Elections

2.7.1 The period of office of every representative shall be from the close of National Delegate Conference immediately following the declaration of the result of the election to the close of

the National Delegate Conference two years later.

2.7.2 Any intermediate vacancy arising more than six months prior to the general election of representatives of the category in which the vacancy arises shall be filled by a ballot of the appropriate electorate.

2.8 Frequency of meetings

The National Executive Council shall meet at least four times in every calendar year.

2.9.1* Committees

The National Executive Council shall have the right to appoint such Committees from amongst its membership as it shall see fit, and shall have the power to delegate to such Committees any of its functions as it considers appropriate.

2.9.2* The election of chairs and vice-chairs of the committees shall occur in accordance with the union's commitment to fair representation as set out in Rule D 2.14.3 and in particular the proportion of posts held by Black members shall be at least equal to the proportion of Black members on the National Executive Council.

2.10 Meetings

Meetings of the National Executive Council shall take place, so far as is reasonably practicable, in venues which are accessible to all members eligible to attend.

2.11 Powers

As part of its general power in Rule D.2.1 above, and without limiting the scope of that power, the National Executive Council shall have the following powers:

2.11.1 to provide for any case in which the Rules are silent;

2.11.2 to augment the Rules by making regulations subject to their approval by Annual Conference;

2.11.3 to interpret the Rules in event of doubt, conflict or dispute;

2.11.4 to bring or defend legal proceedings of any type;

2.11.5 to issue a protocol on devolved administration and union governance;

2.11.6 to give directions to the Trustees of the Union as to their management of the funds and property of the Union, including the power to give directions binding on the Trustees that, in the execution of any investment policy, the Trustees should have regard to considerations of Union policy irrespective of conflict with possible financial return;

2.11.7 to affiliate to any other appropriate body or council;

2.11.8 to approve the formal association with the Union of appropriate professional and sectional bodies;

2.11.9 to convene meetings, and in particular Delegate Conference meetings, if it should appear to the National Executive Council that there is a need;

2.11.10 to open or close any branch of the Union following consultation with the appropriate Regional Council, Service Group, branch or branches;

2.11.11 to allocate branches to appropriate Service Groups and Regions;

2.11.12 to issue a Code of Good Branch Practice;

2.11.13* to issue model procedures for 'on-line' or 'virtual' meetings to all national committees to improve efficiency, participation and the environment;

2.11.14 to enter into, and approve, reciprocal membership arrangements with appropriate trade unions within the European Union;

2.11.15 to enter into a transfer of engagements from other organisations to the union and to make such arrangements as may be necessary for this purpose;

2.11.16 to take all such action as shall seem to

them to be necessary to ensure that the income, property and funds of the Union are safeguarded, and the objects and purposes of the Union achieved.

2.12 Employment of staff

2.12.1 The National Executive Council (or the General Secretary acting on its behalf) shall have the power to engage or dismiss such staff as may be required for the conduct of the business of the Union.

2.12.2 The National Executive Council shall determine the pay and conditions of service of staff. The General Secretary shall be responsible to the National Executive Council for all remaining staffing matters.

2.13 Power to act between meetings

2.13.1 The General Secretary shall have the power to act on behalf of the National Executive Council and its committees between meetings, where appropriate in consultation with the President or Chairperson of the relevant committee, and shall seek the endorsement of the National Executive Council or committee upon any exercise of that power.

2.14 Proportionality and fair representation

2.14.1 The National Executive Council shall have the power to monitor, review and implement the principles of proportionality and fair representation throughout the Union.

2.14.2 "Proportionality" is the representation of women and men in fair proportion to the relevant number of female and male members comprising the electorate.

2.14.3 "Fair representation" is the broad balance of representation of members of the electorate, taking into account such factors as age and low pay,the balance between full time and part time workers, manual and non-manual workers, different occupations, skills, race, sexual orientation, disability and gender identity.

3 Service groups

3.1.1 There shall be the following Service Groups within the Union:
- Community
- Energy
- Health Care
- Higher Education
- Local Government
- Police and Justice
- Water, Environment and Transport.

3.1.2 The National Executive Council shall have power to decide which sections of the membership of the union fall within the scope of each Service Group of the Union, and, amongst other matters, may take into account:
1 the employer of those members and the service delivered by that employer
2 the collective bargaining arrangements
3 the occupational and industrial boundaries of the work of those members
4 the work group to which those members belong.

3.1.3 The National Executive Council shall have the power to authorise the creation of additional Service Groups or to vary the allocation of members to Service Groups, but shall do so only after consultation with the Service Group or Groups concerned.

3.1.4 Each Service Group shall have autonomy, on behalf of its members, to:
1 determine the Group's general policy
2 negotiate:
  1 pay and conditions of service
  2 professional and occupational rules, standards, conditions and policy
3 industrial and other relations with employers and to represent its members and participate in any joint negotiating machinery with powers in

these matters
4 the settlement of any disputes arising from the employment of its members.

3.1.5 The policies and activities of a Service Group shall at all times be subject to and consistent with the policy of the Union as laid down by the Union's National Delegate Conference or as applied by the National Executive Council and within the Rules of the Union.

3.2 Membership

Every member of the Union shall be a member of a Service Group, subject to the power of the National Executive Council in accordance with these rules to decide which is the appropriate Service Group in any case of doubt or dispute.

3.3 National structures

In each Service Group there shall be a Service Group Conference and a Service Group Executive.

3.4 Service group conference

3.4.1 Each Service Group shall hold a Conference annually, for a period not exceeding three days.

3.4.2 The policies of a Service Group shall be determined by the Group's Conference.

3.4.3 Arrangements for the Conference shall be made by the Group's Executive in accordance with the Standing Orders.

3.4.4 Each Service Group shall have a Standing Orders Committee comprising either a panel of members of the Standing Orders Committee of the National Delegate Conference or two representatives from and nominated by the members of the Standing Orders Committee of the National Delegate Conference, together with representatives from the Service Group.

3.4.5 Delegates to the Conference shall be elected annually in accordance with a scheme to be drawn up by the Group's Executive and approved by the Group Conference.

3.4.6 The following members shall have the right to attend the Conference and to speak, but not to vote:
1 All members of the Group's Executive (subject, in the case of the members who are also members of the Standing Orders Committee, to the rules of that committee).
2 The General Secretary, head of group and such other staff as the National Executive Council, General Secretary, Group Executive, or head of group may determine.
3 One representative from each professional and sectional body.
4 The chairperson of the Group's Standing Orders Committee.
5 Two representatives of each Service Group Regional Committee.
6 Two representatives (being members of branches in the relevant service group) of the Private Contractors National Forum at national level.
7 Two representatives (being members of branches in the relevant Service Group) of each Self-Organised Group at national level.
8 Two representatives (being members of branches in the relevant Service Group) of the National Young Members' Forum.

3.4.7 The Group's Standing Orders Committee shall be present at the Conference but, except as provided for, shall take no part in the Conference proceedings.

3.4.8 In accordance with the rules of procedure each branch represented within the Service Group may submit motions and amendments to the Group's National Conference or any special conferences.

3.4.9 The Private Contractors National Forum may submit up to two motions and amendments to the Group's

National Conference.

3.4.10 Each Self-Organised Group at the national level may submit a total of two motions and two amendments to the Group's National Conference.

3.4.11 The National Young Members' Forum may submit up to two motions and two amendments to the Group's National Conference.

3.4.12 A special service group conference shall be convened on receipt, by the head of the service group, within any two month period, of requisitions to that effect, stating the business to be transacted, from branches representing not less than 25% of the service group membership.

3.5 Service group executive

3.5.1 Subject to the powers of the Group Conference, the overall control of the Group's policy, budget and the direction of the Group's operations shall be the responsibility of the Group Executive.

3.5.2 The Group's Executive shall meet at least quarterly.

3.5.3 The majority of members of the Group's Executive shall, except as provided below, be elected biennially by individual secret ballot of the members of the Group, voting in Regional constituencies.

3.5.4 Where the National Executive Council has decided that a Service Group shall be organised on a non-Regional basis, the members of the Group's Executive shall be elected on that basis.

3.5.5 Where a scheme for sector representation is established for a Group, representatives of the sector shall sit on the Group Executive up to an agreed maximum determined by the Group Executive and the Group Conference.

3.5.6 Any intermediate vacancy arising more than six months prior to the general election of representatives of the category in which the vacancy arises shall be filled by a ballot of the appropriate electorate.

3.5.7 Any member elected to a Group Executive shall remain in office only for the period for which (s)he meets the requirements of the seat to which (s)he was elected unless otherwise provided for in these Rules.

3.5.8 No member who holds a seat on the National Executive Council as a service group representative under Rule D.2.3 can hold any other seat on a service group executive at the same time. She/he may stand as a candidate in an election or by-election for a seat on a Service Group Executive, subject to Rule D.2.3.4. If elected, she/he will be deemed to have resigned from the National Executive Council from the commencement of the period of office for the Service Group Executive seat they have been elected to.

3.5.9 Those members of the National Executive Council who are elected representatives of a Service Group shall be additional members of their Group Executive.

3.5.10 No member who holds a seat on a Service Group Executive can hold a seat on the National Executive Council as a service group representative under Rule D.2.3 at the same time. She/he may stand as a candidate in an election or by-election for a seat on the National Executive Council as a service group representative under Rule D.2.3. If elected, she/he will be a member of the Service Group Executive as defined by Rule D.3.5.9 and will be deemed to have resigned their previous seat on the Service Group Executive from the commencement of the period of office for the National Executive Council seat they have been elected to.

3.5.11 The maximum size of the Group Executive shall be decided by the National Executive Council, in consultation (except in the case where

a Group's Executive has not yet been formed) with the Group's Executive.

3.5.12 The Chairperson and Vice-chairperson of the Group Executive shall be elected by the Executive at its first meeting, and thereafter on an annual basis, from among its members excluding the National Executive Committee representatives. They shall hold office until their successors are elected.

3.5.13 The Chairperson of the Group Executive, or in her/his absence the Vicechairperson, shall preside at meetings of the Executive and may preside at the Group's Conference.

3.5.14 No member may be a candidate for election in respect of a Service Group unless she/he has been nominated by at least one branch from within the Regional Service Group or by a Regional Self Organised Group.

3.6 Regional structure

3.6.1 Except where the Service Group is organised on a non-Regional basis, or where the Service Group's Executive decides otherwise, there shall in each Region of the Union be a Service Group Regional Committee, elected in accordance with a scheme for representation adopted by the Service Group Executive.

3.6.2 The Service Group Regional Committee shall, subject to the national policies of the Union and of the Service Group, be responsible for representing the members of the Service Group in the region in respect of those matters that are within the functions of the Service Group.

3.6.3 Elected members of the Service Group Regional Committee shall serve for a one year period.

3.6.4 Those members of the Service Group Executive who are from the Region shall be additional members of the Service Group Regional Committee.

3.6.5 The Chairperson and Vice-chairperson of the Group's Regional Committee shall be elected by the Committee at its first meeting and thereafter on an annual basis, from among its membership, excluding the Service Group Executive representatives (unless the Service Group Executive representatives are also branch delegates).

3.6.6 The principles of proportionality and fair representation as defined by these Rules shall apply to all elections held in relation to Service Groups.

3.7 Sectors

3.7.1 Subject to D.3.7.4 below, a Service Group has power (but is not required) to establish service sectors as the basis for policy formation, collective bargaining, and the representation of occupational and professional interests.

3.7.2 The organisation and structure of each sector shall be determined by the Service Group.

3.7.3 Any sector committee established shall be directly or indirectly elected according to the scheme of representation determined by the Service Group for the sector in question.

3.7.4 The National Executive Council shall have the power to establish cross service sectors representing members in two or more service groups as the basis for policy formation, collective bargaining and the representation of occupational and professional issues.

1 The organisation and scheme of representation for cross service group sectors shall be determined by the National Executive Council, after consultation with the service groups concerned.

3.8 Policy formulation

The following principles shall be observed for policy formulation:

3.8.1 Routine motions which a branch wishes to raise shall in the first instance be submitted to the appropriate Service

Group's Regional Officer, who shall deal with the matter as follows:
1 If the issue relates exclusively to functions of the Service Group, it shall be referred to the Service Group's Regional Committee and if necessary to the Service Group's Executive.
2 If the issue relates to functions of the Service Group but also has implications for other parts of the Union, it shall be referred to the Service Group's Regional Committee and it shall also be sent to the Union's Regional Council or Regional Committee for information or action as may be appropriate.
3 If the issue does not relate to functions of the Service Group, it shall be referred for action to the Regional Council or Regional Committee, and it shall also be sent for information to the Service Group's Regional Committee.

3.8.2 The National Executive Council shall issue guidelines covering these matters, and any dispute arising as to the application of these principles shall be resolved by the National Executive Council or on the National Executive Council's behalf by the General Secretary.

4 Private contractors national forum

4.1 A Private Contractors National Forum shall be established consisting of up to two representatives from each of the Private Contractors National Company Forums.
2 The Private Contractors National Forum may, subject to the Union's rules, send up to two delegates and two motions to the National Delegate Conference, each National Service Group Conference.
3 The activities of the Private Contractors National Forum will be reported to the NEC.
4 The National Executive Council shall give the Private Contractors National Forum financial support within the union's guidelines.

5 Self-organised groups

5.1 The Union shall promote opportunities for the following groups to organise activities to meet the purposes set out below:
1 women members
2 black members
3 disabled members
4 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus (LGBT+) members.

5.2 The purposes of self-organisation shall be, within the framework of the Rules of the Union, to assist the union to:
1 promote the union's equalities and bargaining agenda
2 defend jobs, terms and conditions and services
3 build its density and have a strong and dynamic presence in the workplace.

5.3 To this end, self-organised groups shall:
1 meet to share concerns and aspirations, and establish their own priorities
2 elect their own representatives to other levels of self-organisation and to other appropriate levels of the Union's organisation
3 have adequate and agreed funding and other resources, including education and training access, publicity and communications
4 work within a flexible structure to build confidence and encourage participation and provide opportunities for the fuller involvement of disadvantaged members
5 work within the establised policies, rules and constitutional provisions of the Union.

5.4 To further these purposes:
1 The National Executive Council shall provide guidelines setting out the basis for operation of the self-organised

groups and their representation, which guidelines shall include
(a) the procedure by which the existence of particular groups may be recognised at branch, regional or national level
(b) provision for a recognised group to receive funding at the appropriate level.

5.5 Where such recognised groups exist at branch level:
1 they may elect representatives to the branch committee in accordance with branch rules
2 they may formulate proposals, motions and other initiatives for branch meetings or the branch committee
3 reports on their activities shall be included in the annual report of the branch
4 the branch shall give them financial support within the Union's guidelines.

5.6 Where such recognised groups exist at regional level:
1 a regional committee for each group may be created, consisting of representatives of each relevant group at branch level, and the regional women's committee shall also include women members of the Regional Committee
2 a regional group may formulate proposals, motions or other initiatives to the Regional Council and Regional Committee
3 a regional group shall be represented on the Regional Committee by a representative with full voting rights
4 a regional group shall appoint one or more delegates to the Regional Council as may be approved by the National Executive Council
5 a report on a regional group's activities shall be made to the annual meeting of the Regional Council
6 the Regional Council shall give a regional group financial support within the Union's guidelines.

5.7 Where such a recognised group exists at national level:
1 the group may establish a national committee, as well as a national conference or national meeting of representatives from branch and regional groups
2 a group's national committee shall consist of no more than two representatives per region, except where the distribution of members merits an additional representative
3 the National Executive Council shall have the right to send women members of the National Executive Council to the national women's committee and conference
4 a national committee or national conference may send motions, proposals or initiatives to the National Executive Council
5 the group may, subject to the Union's rules, send delegates and motions to the National Delegate Conference and to each Service Group's National Conference
6 the group shall provide an annual report of its activities to its Conference and the National Executive Council
7 the National Executive Council shall give a national group financial support within the Union's guidelines.

5.8 The arrangements for self-organisation shall be regularly reviewed by the National Executive Council in consultation with the group concerned. In particular, the National Executive Council shall seek to promote the involvement of members and representatives of the groups in the activities of the Union, in the light of the principles of fair representation and proportionality.

6 Young members' organisation

6.1 A Regional Young Members' Forum shall be created, consisting of representatives from branch level.

1 A Regional Young Members' Forum may formulate proposals, motions or other proposals to the appropriate Regional Council or Regional Committee.
2 A Regional Young Members' Forum shall be represented on the appropriate Regional Committee by a representative with full voting rights.
3 A Regional Young Members' Forum shall be eligible to send delegates to the appropriate Regional Council, or as otherwise determined by the National Executive Council.
4 A report on the Regional Young Members' Forum's activities shall be made to the annual meeting of the appropriate Regional Council.
5 The Regional Council shall give their Regional Young Members' Forum financial support within the Union's guidelines.

6.2 A National Young Members' Forum shall be established consisting of up to two representatives per region and the members elected to the young members' seats on the National Executive Council.
1 The National Young Members' Forum may send motions or proposals to the National Executive Council
2 The National Young Members' Forum may, subject to the Union's rules, send up to two delegates and two motions to the National Delegate Conference, each National Service Group Conference and each Self Organised Group's Conference.
3 The activities of the National Young Members' Forum will be reported to the NEC.
4 The National Executive Council shall give the National Young Members' Forum financial support within the union's guidelines.
5 The National Young Members Forum may establish a national conference of young members from branch and regional groups.

7 Retired members' organisation

7.1 A retired member as defined in Rule C.2.6 may belong, at the member's option,either to the last branch of which she/he was a member or the branch which is based closest to her/his place of residence.

7.2 The retired members in a branch may form a retired members' section within the branch and elect annually a retired members' secretary and such other retired members' officers as may be determined by them and also elect representatives to other levels of the retired members' organisation.

7.3 Such Retired Members' sections may formulate motions and proposals to the Branch Committee and the Regional Retired Members' Committee.

7.4 Such Retired Members' sections shall have adequate and agreed funding for retired member activity and access to other resources subject to union guidelines.

7.5 The Branch Retired Members' Secretary may attend and speak at all meetings of the Branch Committee as determined by the Branch Committee rules, and may vote on any issue or matter other than one which concerns the pay and conditions of work of members of the Union in employment.

7.6 The retired members of a Region shall be entitled to form a Regional Retired Members' Committee and elect a representative to attend and speak at all meetings of the Regional Council, and shall be entitled to vote on any issue or matter other than one which concerns the pay and conditions of work of members of the Union in employment.

7.7 The Regional Retired Members' Committee may formulate proposals, motions or other proposals to the appropriate Regional Council and Regional Committee. Such proposals or motions may be on any issue or matter

other than one which concerns the pay and conditions of work of members of the union in employment.

7.8 The National Executive Council shall establish a Retired Members' National Committee composed of representatives of Regional Retired Members' Organisations which may hold an annual conference of retired members and may elect two representatives to attend the National Delegate Conference. The National Retired Members' Organisation may submit two motions to the National Delegate Conference. The National Retired Members' Organisation may send two representatives of relevant retired members to each National Self-Organised Group Conference, with the right to speak but not to vote.

7.9 The retired member delegates to the National Delegate Conference shall be entitled to speak on any issue which does not concern the pay and conditions of work of members of the Union in employment.

8 Elections

All elections required to be held under these rules shall be conducted in accordance with Schedule C and any regulations made by the National Executive Council.

E Principal Officers

1 President

1.1 There shall be a President of the Union, who shall be the Senior Honorary Official of the Union.

1.2 The President shall be elected for a term of one year by the National Executive Council, from amongst the members of the National Executive Council.

1.3 The President will chair meetings of the National Executive Council, and will preside over the National Delegate Conference of the Union.

2 Vice-presidents

2.1 There shall be two Vice-Presidents, who shall be Honorary Officials of the Union.

2.2 The Vice-Presidents will hold office for one year, and will be elected by the National Executive Council, from amongst the members of the National Executive Council.

2.3 In the absence of the President, the Vice-Presidents will in rotation (one day at a time) chair the National Executive Council or National Delegate Conference, as the need arises.

2.4 The National Executive Council shall elect the President and Vice-Presidents at the same time provided that two of the three shall be women.

3 General secretary

There shall be a General Secretary of the Union who shall be the principal officer of the Union.

3.1 The General Secretary shall have the right to attend and speak at Conferences of the Union, meetings of the National Executive Council and meetings of national Service Group Executives. The General Secretary shall have duties, rights, powers and responsibilities commensurate with the post of principal officer, as approved by the National Executive Council. The General Secretary shall act under the direction of the National Executive Council.

3.2 The General Secretary shall be elected and shall hold office for the maximum period of time prescribed by law. Any candidate for the post of General Secretary must either have been a member of the Union or one of the predecessor Unions for at least five years, or have been employed by the Union or one of the predecessor Unions for at least five years immediately preceding her/his candidature, and be nominated by the National Executive Council, or by at least two national Service Group Executives, or by at least two Regional Councils, or by at least 25 branches.

3.3 The ballot for the post of General Secretary shall be a secret postal ballot of the membership, which shall include retired members, conducted by a Returning Officer independent of the Union. The electoral rules in Rule D.8 and Schedule C shall apply to such elections.