

The  
Constitution  
Of  
Aberdeen University  
Fencing Club

## Declaration of Acceptance

On the 4<sup>th</sup> of May 2012 at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Aberdeen University Fencing Club's (AUFC) 2011-2012 term, 20 members voted on agenda item number 3: The notion to pass the AUFC Constitution.

A majority vote of all AUFC persons present and by proxy during the AGM was needed to pass the AUFC Constitution. When asked to vote on the notion, 20 out of 49 AUFC persons voted, of whom all 18 present persons at the meeting and 2 persons by proxy voted. Using a secret ballot, each present member had to write their vote on scrap paper and place it in a hat. Proxy voters sent text messages declaring their vote to an entrusted present person at the meeting before being written on scrap paper and placed in the hat by that present person on their behalf. The votes were then emptied onto a desk by the mediator and laid out for all to see. The votes were 17 votes for the notion, 3 votes of abstinence and no votes against the notion.

From the successful vote on the notion to pass the AUFC Constitution, the voting itself conducted within constitutional grounds, acceptance of the AUFC Constitution as AUFC's upmost binding contractual documentation was declared.

This declaration of acceptance marks the beginning of a new era in the clubs history. The agreed standards of the club may now be told by ink on paper, a medium of longevity and permanence in comparison to the word of mouth.

While in times to come the standards may change, so long as the medium is preserved, the nature of the documents bind upon the clubs personhood shall forever pertain. Of the future personhood of AUFC it is to the work of your hands these standards be trusted just as it has been by our hands the creation of the founding standards of the AUFC's Constitution have been trusted.

To all those whom shall pass through the doors of AUFC and stand beneath its banners as fencers and as friends you are bid well wishes for your time in this club and by the standards set forth by this constitution may you be granted those wishes from your first days at AUFC to your last.



Scott Chalmers,  
Club Captain of AUFC (2011-2012) and Drafter of the AUFC Constitution

## Constitution of Aberdeen University Fencing Club

### **1. Organisation**

1.1. **Club Name:** The official name of the club is foremost 'Aberdeen University Fencing Club' but can also be abbreviated to 'AU Fencing Club' or 'AUFC' in affiliation with 'Aberdeen University Sports Union (Sports Union)', 'Scottish Fencing', 'Scottish Student Sport (SSS)' and 'British University and College Sports (BUCS)'. Also recognised by 'British Fencing Association (BFA)' and The 'British Academy of Fencing (BAF)'. 'The Club' and 'Scaberdeen' are also recognised unofficial names of AUFC.

### **2. Membership**

2.1. **Full Membership Entitlement:** Full membership entitles the member to restricted use of AUFC equipment and facilities as laid out by the Armourer and Safety Officer, as acknowledged by the Club Captain. Restrictions must be determined and notification made to AUFC at the beginning of the University term.

2.2. **Full Membership Eligibility:** The full, aka standard membership is open to all and only members of 'Aberdeen University Sports Union'. Eligibility is also based on all of any up-to-date Sports Union Membership limiting criteria to join any Sports Union affiliated Aberdeen University Sports Clubs. Information available from the Sports Union. No further restrictions apply.

2.3. **Full Membership Qualifiers:** Membership is qualified on a two part basis. Members must complete the sign up form possessed by a committee member which are available from the Sports Union (Appendix A), in its entirety, by the applicant and signed by a committee member AND the applicant must pay the membership fee to the fullest extent required at the point of application.

2.4. **Optimisation of Membership:** As a primary source of AUFC income and due to the esteem of high club populations from the Sports Union, membership rates must be optimised as best as possible. Past strategies are available (Appendix B).

2.5. **Membership purchasing guideline and default:** As a guideline, payment is charged per half session per year, payable only in cash to the AUFC Treasurer (First half session: Week beginning Fresher's week in September of the first term to week ending before Re-fresher's week in January. Second half session: Week beginning Re-fresher's week to week ending university summer term).

Also, membership bought in the first half session must amount to two half session charges. Membership bought in the second half session must amount to one half session charge. Cost should be adjusted in sympathy to article 2.4.

**2.6. New Comers guideline and default:** As a guideline, new comers must purchase an 'Aberdeen University Sports Union Membership' before any of AUFC's facilities (fencing equipment, safety equipment) and any facilities AUFC is utilising (training halls, armoury store) can be used, unless otherwise stated by the Sports Union. As a default, new comers are entitled to one free training session unless a membership optimising strategy supersedes this default. Full membership must be made to continue this usage after that point. Adjusting new comer access should be made with sympathy to article 2.4.

**2.7 Members Obligations:** AUFC Full members are obliged to adhere to the current AUFC: Safety code, the constitution, the authorities of the club (the governing committee and the staff) and all of any Sports Union legislation and authorities as well as staff in training facilities and in any other affiliated governing bodies. AUFC full members are expected to be aware of these obligations following direction to them by the AUFC committee. The AUFC committee and staff must respect and enforce adherence to these obligations. Failure to adhere to these obligations may result in membership being revoked.

**2.8 Revoking, Denying and Conceding Membership:** Membership can only be revoked or denied based on the violation of the constitution. The criteria for automatically revoking or denying membership indefinitely includes:

- The demand of any of the Sports Union governing authorities (The Sports President or the Sports Union Committee) without a successful appeal by the Club Captain to that governing body.

The criteria for consideration of revoking or denying membership indefinitely On constitutional grounds include:

- A minor strong vote (see 4.5) by the AUFC Committee.
- By the wishes of any AUFC staff.
- By the wishes of the Armoury and Safety Officer on safety grounds.

It is the responsibility of the Club Captain to revoke or deny membership. Membership cannot be revoked or denied by the wishes of the Club Captain or any other committee member alone apart from the Armourer and Safety Officer. A revoked or denied membership must be acknowledged in the minutes of the next committee meeting.

Membership can be conceded at any time unless that person is a member of the AUFC committee (see 4.9) or if they are on the BUCS team (see). Separate

criteria pertains for these circumstances. Notification must be made to a committee member and the concession must be acknowledged in the minutes of the next committee meeting following that concession. No refund of membership fees can be given for any concession of membership.

**2.9 Reinstating and Granting Membership:** Membership can be reinstated or granted provided that none of the automated or considerations of membership revoking or denying criteria in 2.8 currently stand. It is the responsibility of the Club Captain to reinstate or grant membership. Membership cannot be reinstated or granted by the wishes of the Club Captain alone.

**2.10 Honorary Membership:** Honorary Members may be granted if the following criteria are met:

- They have not been denied membership of any sort in AUFC.
- They have not had membership of any sort revoked in AUFC.
- By a minor general vote (see 4.5) of the committee.
- That the applicant will accept article 2.7 of the AUFC constitution.
- That the applicant agrees to offer and contribute a minimal service to AUFC deemed equal to or greater than the second qualifier in article 2.3 by the voting committee granting the honorary membership and that this service is written and signed by the applicant and all the voting committee.

Honorary membership should be treated as a full membership in every respect except for article 2.3. Honorary membership can be revoked or denied on the same basis of those criteria in article 2.8. Additionally, honorary membership must be automatically revoked following automated revoking criteria for full membership is met. Honorary membership must be considered for revoking following a violation of the criteria granting honorary membership or criteria for considering revoking full membership is met.

Honorary members are eligible for the BUCS team following they fulfil the criteria for joining the team set forth in article. Honorary members are not permitted to join the committee.

### **3 AUFC Constitution**

**3.1 Binding Assurances:** The constitution is the binding authority over all members of the club and is in place to assure, ensure and insure, in order of priority:

- To protect the mental and physical wellbeing of its members during fencing practice.

- To protect all AUFC's associated persons such as its members, committee, staff, Sports Union members and any others from personal prejudices, antagonisms and malpractices from all those persons and to protect and uphold the personal fencing endeavours of all those persons within AUFC for AUFC.
- To uphold a transparent democratic government of AUFC.
- To uphold the duties and responsibilities of all its persons, in particular its highest authorities, to provide and maintain the integrity of AUFC and enrich AUFC to the fullest extent of their authority. The development and expansion of AUFC is as integral of AUFC as its maintenance.
- To provide a professional and social network connecting its members to the wider international fencing and Aberdeen University sporting community.

Any articles in the constitution that is deemed redundant or in violation of these Binding Assurances must be subject to exclusion or amendment.

**3.2 Exclusions, Inclusions, Amendments and Rejection:** Any article in the AUFC constitution can be excluded, amended or included so long as those exclusions or amendments do not amount to the violation or redundancy of any other article. In which case those articles must be considered for exclusion or amendment also. Articles must first be considered for amendment before being considered for exclusion. To amend an article a Major Strong vote (see 4.5) by the committee must be obtained in favour of its finalised form. Articles cannot be amended without the finalised form of the amended article.

To exclude an article a Major Strong vote (see 4.5) by the committee must be obtained.

To include an article a Major Strong vote (see 4.5) by the committee must be obtained in favour of its finalised form.

The AUFC Constitution itself can be rejected. In the case of rejection a Major Absolute vote (see 4.5) by the committee must be obtained. The AUFC Constitution cannot be rejected unless another constitution in its finalised form is first voted into place of the AUFC Constitution. Until that time the AUFC Constitution will still remain in operation even if the vote of rejection is complete. Once rejected, the AUFC Constitution will no longer have any authority over AUFC.

While all decisions are subject to appeal as laid out in article 4.6, if the new constitution is accepted and the current one rejected then the appeal process is nullified.

**3.3 AUFC Constitution Purpose:** The purpose of the AUFC Constitution is to act as the leading authority over all AUFC management and direction. Though the

constitution is subject to exclusion, inclusion and amendment of articles and rejection of the entire constitution, by the AUFC committee, the rules laid out in this constitution supersedes the rulings of all people in AUFC. The constitution ultimately is in place to uphold the binding assurances of article 3.1.

#### 4 **AUFC Governing Committee, Staff and Voting**

**4.1 AUFC Governing Committee's Purpose:** The purpose of the AUFC Governing committee (shortened to committee) is to maintain and develop the integrity of AUFC to the fullest extent of their authority and to uphold the constitutions binding assurances in article 3.1.

**4.2 Committee Positions:** There is no maximum limit to the number of committee positions that can be generated but all members of that committee must be necessary and active members of that committee., otherwise the position must be removed. A committee must contain at least a Club Captain, A Secretary and a Treasurer. To add or remove a committee position it must be agreed by a major general vote (see 4.5) of the committee.

**4.3 Criteria For Bearing Office:** Office bearers (or committee members) must fulfil the following criteria:

- Obtain full membership of AUFC.
- Be able to commit the appropriate time and effort as a capable, as well as available, officer to their position as specified by their job description (Appendix C).
- Members can only fulfil one committee position in any one term of office.
- Must complete one full term of office unless their office is revoked, denied or conceded (see 4.9).
- Be voted in by a minor general vote (see 4.5) of AUFC members at an Annual General Meeting or Emergency General Meeting.
- Are not Honorary members of AUFC.

**4.4 Term of Office:** The term of office is one full standard undergraduate academic year running from the start of the Autumn term September to the end of summer term in June.

**4.5 Voting:** Each committee position entitles its office bearer one vote in committee meetings. The committee position entitles its office bearer no votes in Annual General Meetings or Emergency General Meeting beyond the criteria allowed by their AUFC membership in those meetings. All committee members are allowed to vote on all elections presented by the Club Captain at each meeting. Different decisions require different strengths of agreement in order to fulfil acceptance. These strengths are laid out below.

For committee decisions, Committees must vote for only one option presented or vote to withhold decision. Abstinance from the vote is not the same as voting to withhold decision. Abstinance is to withhold voting all together.

If two thirds of the committee must be present to vote on any one decision then this is called a minor vote. If all of the committee members are required for a decision then this is called a major vote.

- Minor General vote: A majority vote must be made for any one option. In the event of a tie the Club Captain must choose between one of the tied options.
- Minor Strong vote: A two thirds vote must be made for any one option. No tie is possible.
- Minor Absolute vote: All members must vote for any one option. No tie is possible.
- Major General vote: A majority vote is made for any one option. In the event of a tie the Club Captain must choose between one of the tied options.
- Major Strong vote: A two thirds vote is made for any one option. No tie is possible.
- Major Absolute vote: All members must vote for any one option. No tie is possible.

Any decision that is not stated in the constitution as having a strength of agreement must provisionally obtain a Minor General vote.

For decisions at Annual General Meetings and Emergency General Meetings, members must vote for only one option presented or vote to withhold decision. Abstinance from the vote is not the same as voting to withhold decision. Abstinance is to withhold voting all together.

If two thirds of AUFC active persons (see 4.11) must be present to vote on any one decision then this is called a minor vote. If all of the active persons are required for a decision then this is called a major vote.

- Minor General vote: A majority vote is made for any one option. In the event of a tie at revote must be made to choose between one of the tied options.
- Minor Strong vote: A two thirds vote is made for any one option. No tie is possible.

- Minor Absolute vote: All members must vote for any one option. No tie is possible.
- Major General vote: A majority vote is made for any one option. In the event of a tie at revote must be made to choose between one of the tied options.
- Major Strong vote: A two thirds vote is made for any one option. No tie is possible.
- Major Absolute vote: All members must vote for any one option. No tie is possible.

Any decision that is not stated in the constitution as having a strength of agreement must provisionally obtain a Minor General vote.

#### **4.6 Appealing**

For any decision made by the vote of the AUFC committee, or by vote at the Annual General Meeting or an Emergency General Meeting, an appeal can be made if the decision is in violation of the constitution. Appealing a decision reverses the decision made. Any person of AUFC can appeal a decision. To appeal a decision, the appeal has to be given in writing to the Club Captain with one other person seconding the appeal as written and signed by them. The Club Captain then has to arrange an Emergency General meeting where the decision to accept the decision or to reverse it can be made. In any circumstances where the decision cannot be reversed then an option considered agreeable to the club captain and the appealing party may be presented in place of the reverse. No other options may be presented. If a new option is being proposed then a new decision requiring a vote will be necessary. A new decision which includes the reverse of the previous decision is not an appeal unless the appeal process, as stated above, has been followed. Any member may request the decision to be reversed, at the discretion of the Club captain, without an appeal being necessary.

**4.7 Refreshing Officer Placement:** Following office being officially revoked or conceded, a new officer fulfilling article 4.3 can be elected by a minor general vote (see 4.5) at an Emergency General Meeting. Office must be considered for a refreshing officer placement as opposed to a temporary officer placement if applicable.

**4.8 Temporary Officer Placement:** Following office being officially revoked or conceded, a new officer fulfilling article 4.3 points 1,2 5 and 6 can be found. Temporary officer placement must be agreed by a minor general vote (see 4.5) by the committee and only allows placement for a two week period, then a minor general vote (see 4.5) by the committee must be made to extend the placement for a further two weeks. After this time a refreshing officer must be found or a

different member, fulfilling article 4.3 points 1, 2, 5 and 6 must be found for temporary officer placement. Temporary officers can only serve two two week terms per terms of office.

Current committee members can become temporary officer of a different office while obtaining their own office.

**4.9 Revoking, Denying and Conceding Office:** The criteria for automatic revoking or denying of office indefinitely includes:

- By demand from any of all Sports Union governing authorities (The Sports President or the Sports Union Committee) without a successful appeal.
- Following that officer's full AUFC membership being revoked.

The criteria for consideration of revoking or denying office indefinitely on constitutional grounds include:

- A minor strong vote (see 4.5) by the AUFC committee.
- By any AUFC staff.
- By the Armoury and Safety officer.
- By failure to adhere to 2.7 specifically.
- Failure to participate in BUCS team events following the wishes of the Men's Captain or Women's Captain.
- The members conduct is in violation of any of AUFC's constitution articles.
- Failing to uphold 3.1 specifically.
- Failing to complete any one of their primary duties (Appendix C).
- Failing to complete any three of their secondary duties (Appendix C).

It is the responsibility of the Club Captain to revoke or deny office.

Membership cannot be revoked or denied by the wishes of the Club Captain alone. Following a revoked or denied office where a suitable temporary office bearer cannot be found all other committee members are required to collectively carry out the duties of that office by request of the Club Captain.

Revoked or denied office placements do not necessitate but require consideration of a temporary or refreshing officer to obtain office unless that office is the Club Captain, Secretary or Treasurer.

Office can only be conceded following an agreement by a major strong vote (see 4.5) by the committee or unless unforeseen circumstances violates point two of article 4.3, as decided as justified by the Club Captain alone and acknowledged by the committee at the next meeting. Concession of office is not official until the acknowledgment by the committee is met. Conceded office does not require concession of membership.

**4.10 Reinstating and Granting Office:** Office can be reinstated or granted provided

that none of the automating or considering office revoking or denying criteria in 4.9 currently stand. It is the responsibility of the Club Captain to reinstate or grant office.

**4.11 AUFC Staff:** Staff can be enrolled to AUFC so long as their presence is deemed constitutional. Staff must hold appropriate certification for their role and be approved by the Sports Union including registration with them (information available at the Sports Union). Staff may purchase an AUFC membership and sit on the governing committee. The conditions of the staffs enrolment must be approved by a minor strong vote (see 4.5) by the committee. The same vote is necessary to expel staff. It is the responsibility of the Club captain to enrol or expel staff. Expulsion as staff does not necessitate revoking membership.

**4.12 Active Membership:** In the event of an AGM or EGM, considering all persons of AUFC are entitled to their say but not always willing to contribute, only the active persons are necessary to attend an AGM or EGM. The active persons are the total accumulated population of:

- The AUFC committee
- AUFC staff
- All members that have been present at any AUFC event two weeks prior to the AGM or EGM
- Those members that attend the AGM or EGM itself and all those who agree in the 'Call of Activity'.

The Call of Activity is where, via email or the AUFC Members Fencing Forum or any other communication that reaches all AUFC persons, members are asked if they acknowledge their membership as active. If they agree then they count as an active member. The call must be made at the latest, two weeks before the AGM or EGM and responses are valid up until the AGM or EGM. Two thirds of the active members are needed to host an AGM or EGM (see 4.5).

## **5 Events and Training**

**5.1 Training:** The training schedule for the year must be decided with the Sports Union by the Club Captain before the beginning of the year. Information is available with the Sports Union. The training exercises must be discussed and approved by the staff working with AUFC. Notification about training schedules and training exercises must be made at least 48 hours before training takes place. The training schedule can be deviated from if continued practice would be inappropriate or in violation of any constitutional articles.

**5.2 Events:** As well as training, AUFC engages in events to fulfil AUFC's binding

Assurances (see 3.1). These events include, BUCS, SSS, BFA and independent fencing competitions, coaching courses, first aid training, charity events, fresher's and refreshers fayres. All members are expected attend these events if applicable.

## **6 BUCS and SSS Team**

**6.1 Duties of the Men's and Women's Captains:** The BUCS and SSS men's teams must be organised, selected and trained by the Men's Captain. The BUCS and SSS women's teams must be organised, selected and trained by the Women's Captain. The team's captain must select 3 travelling and 1 non-travelling team members. Another team member can be selected to travel.

**6.2 Selection criteria of the BUCS and SSS Team:** The criteria for the BUCS and SSS teams selection must abide by the BUCS rules (found in the up-to-date BUCS handbook), the SSS rules (found on their website or with the SSS fencing coordinator) and the Sports Union rules (available with the Sports Union) respectively. AUFC has no other selection criteria other than that it is the duty of the Men's and Women's Captain to create their own criteria of selection for each team so long as the criteria does not violate the constitution. Each team must be announced at least one month before they are due to compete otherwise article 6.3 will not be valid.

**6.3 Duties of the BUCS and SSS Team Membership:** Unless invalidated (see 6.2), the duties of the BUCS team is as follows.

- To acknowledge their team membership from the onset of their selection by the team captain.
- To compete in each team event they agree to compete in with their respective team Captain. The team member will be informed 1 month before they are due to compete and will have 1 week from then to agree or disagree to compete. After such time their team membership cannot be guaranteed by the club captain. Should the team member violate this agreement then they are liable to lose their club membership.

## **7 Safety and Equipment**

**7.1 Safety Code:** The club Armourer and Safety Officer is responsible for developing the safety code of AUFC so it is at least conforms with the minimum safety standards of the British Fencing Association (details on their website) and the Sports Union (details available from the Sports Union.) Any changes to the safety code must be approved by a major strong vote (see 4.5) by the AUFC committee. All changes must be acknowledged by the club members. A copy of the safety

code must be kept by the Sports Union, the Armourer and Safety Officer and be available to all members via communication which is accessible at all training night.

**7.2 Safety Responsibility:** It is the responsibility of all members and staff to make themselves aware of the articles laid out in the safety code and to abide by those articles (also see 2.7). All AUFC staff and committee members must ensure these articles are being abided by all the members within training times and at any times when AUFC equipment is being used. Failure of any AUFC staff or committee members to intervene in any act that is prohibited by the safety code or undermines the safety and wellbeing of any AUFC members will be seen as failing to uphold their constitutional duties. That AUFC staff or committee member risks losing their office and membership while the member engaging in the prohibited act risk losing their membership at the discretion of the Armourer and Safety Officer.

**7.3 Equipment and Facility Responsibilities:** It is the responsibility of the Armourer and Safety Officer to decide any allowances of equipment and facilities that may be give to AUFC members and staff. All equipment and facilities not formally made free to use by the Armourer and Safety Officer, as acknowledged by the Club Captain, is restricted for use (see 2.1).

The Armourer and Safety Officer is responsible for ensuring all equipment and facilities being used by AUFC meets the standards of the AUFC safety code and that all those using the equipment and facilities is made aware of how it operates. So long as the equipment and facilities being used by AUFC member meets the safety code standards, is approved for use for that member and that the member knows how it operates then that member is deemed responsible for its safe use whilst in their possession. Failure to use the equipment and facilities safely at the discretion of any AUFC committee or staff members may be immediately forced to return it to AUFC. At the discretion of the Armourer and Safety Officer the member failing to meet its safe use may be restricted from the use of any AUFC equipment and facilities, and may lose their membership (see 2.8).

**7.4 Breakages and loses of Equipment and Facilities:** So long as the equipment and facilities meets all the criteria of article 7.3 for the AUFC member to safely use it then it is the responsibility of the AUFC member to ensure the safe keeping of that equipment and facilities also. If any lose or breakage of the equipment is incurred whilst in that AUFC member's possession then they are responsible for its replacement. Replacement can be made by payment to AUFC or by replacement of equivalent parts as laid out by the Armourer and Safety Officer.

It is the discretion of the Armourer and Safety Officer to as to whether replacement for lose or breakage must be made. Failure to replace the equipment as fully agreed between the responsible member and the Armourer and Safety Officer, as laid out by the Armourer and Safety Officer, may lose their membership. If no agreement can be made then the responsible member may lose their membership at the discretion of the Armourer and Safety Officer (see 2.8).

If the equipment and facilities do not meet all the criteria of 7.3 or no AUFC members are responsible for the breakage or lose of the equipment then it is the responsibility of AUFC to replace the equipment if applicable.

## **8 Duties of Communication**

**8.1 Duties of Communication:** It is the duty of all members to check for information given by the AUFC committee and staff via the three means of communication: Email, announcements at training nights and on the AUFC Members Fencing Forum on Facebook. Members are expected to check these means daily, if applicable, but it is the duty of the AUFC committee and staff to make updates, at the latest, 48 hours before any information is considered club-wide acknowledged. After 48 hours of information being posted every member is assumed to have received and acknowledged the information which may include scheduled events that will take place, at the earliest, 48 hours after the information being posted.

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