



THE CONSTITUTION OF THE DENTAL SCHOOLS COUNCIL

1. Name

The organisation shall be called the **Dental Schools Council**, referred to hereafter as DSC.

2. Purpose

As the authoritative voice of all the dental schools within universities in the United Kingdom, the DSC will

- (a) be a principal source for informed opinion and advice on all matters concerning dental education and research in dental schools in the United Kingdom, on relations between dental schools, medical schools, the National Health Service and other clinical care providers, and on relations with university dental schools and faculties in other countries;
- (b) work to improve and maintain quality in basic dental education, clinical dental training and dental research, and to facilitate sharing of experience;
- (c) be the principal source for informed opinion and advice on all matters concerning the roles and functions of staff and honorary staff of dental schools;
- (d) promote dental education and research through collaboration with Universities UK, the Higher Education Funding Bodies, the National Health Service, Government Departments, the General Dental Council, the Medical Royal Colleges, the Research Councils, dental research charities, the Association of Medical Research Charities, the Medical Schools Council, the Association of UK University Hospitals, the British Dental Associations and other organisations;
- (e) serve as a point of reference for the media;
- (f) promote equal opportunities in all aspects of dental education, research and training;
- (g) consider such other matters as the Dental Schools Council shall direct.

3. Membership

- (a) Full members of the DSC shall be the serving Heads or Deans of the Undergraduate Dental Schools who are accountable to the funding councils and to their heads of institutions for dental undergraduate education and research. They will be nominated by the heads of the subscribing university institutions in the United Kingdom which have undergraduate dental schools offering primary BDS degrees leading to registration with the GDC. The nominating institutions will include the multi-faculty colleges with dental schools and free-standing dental schools that are constituent parts of the University of London.
- (b) Associate membership (with limited voting rights) will be determined by the full members of Council and will normally be extended, *inter alia*, to the Deans of the Dental Schools in the Republic of Ireland, and to the Chairperson, or representative, of the UK Dental School Senior Officers Group.
- (c) Observers may be invited to attend meetings as representatives of other bodies associated with the work of the DSC by the agreement of the whole DSC. This may include the Chief Dental Officers of the devolved nations, the Chair of COPDEND, the Chair of the Association of Dental Hospitals and other educational providers who may share common interests in postgraduate dental education.

- (d) Attendance at meetings of the DSC will normally be restricted to those members and observers nominated and appointed in accordance with paragraphs 3a) to c) above and to any guests invited to attend. However, full members of the DSC may nominate deputies from their institutions for meetings to ensure continuity of business.
- (e) A meeting of the Council will be deemed quorate if more than half its members are present.

4. Organisation

(a) Officers of the DSC

- (i) The Officers of the DSC, all of whom for the duration of their terms of office shall be members of DSC nominated by subscribing institutions, shall be (a) the Chair (b) the Secretary/Treasurer and (c) the Chair-elect.
- (ii) All members of the DSC, including currently serving Officers, are eligible for election as Officers of the DSC.
- (iii) Members of the DSC shall elect the Chair as Chair-elect six months in advance of the commencement of his/her three-year term of office. It is not normally expected that the Chair be eligible for election for a further term of office.
- (iv) The Secretary/Treasurer shall be elected by members of the DSC from among the members of the DSC to serve for three years, from the end of the Spring Council meeting in the year following his or her election and may be re-elected for a maximum period of three years or for so long as he or she remains a member of DSC whichever is the shorter.
- (v) The Officers may not continue to hold those Offices on the DSC if they cease to be serving Heads of Dental Schools of subscribing institutions.
- (vi) Any vacant office occurring among the elected Officers of the DSC more than three months before the completion of their terms of office will be filled by postal ballot of all the members of the DSC. All ballots will be conducted using the Electoral Reform Society's electronic Single Transferable Vote system (eSTV).

(b) Executive Director

- (i) The DSC shall be supported by a salaried Executive Director who will be responsible for the administration of the DSC's activities and the appointment of supporting staff.

(c) Elections of Officers of the DSC

- (i) All Officers shall be elected by postal ballot from among those members of the DSC who are willing to serve and have been nominated and seconded formally by members of the DSC according to arrangements drawn up by the Executive Director.
- (ii) The Executive Director shall act as Returning Officer for all elections.
- (iii) An independent Scrutineer shall be appointed for all elections; this will normally be the Executive Director of the DSC or Officer of a partner organisation.
- (iv) Elections shall be conducted using the Electoral Reform Society's eSTV system. If there is more than one nomination for a post, members will be asked to rank the candidates on a ballot paper and the candidate with the proportionally largest share of the vote as calculated by the eSTV system will be elected.
- (v) Ballot papers and nomination forms should be returned by post to the Returning Officer.
- (vi) The winner of an election shall be declared by telephone to the successful candidate and by email to all members as soon as possible after the completion of the election process. The announcement will give only the names of the elected candidates, not the shares of the votes cast for each candidate.

(d) Financial Records

- (i) There shall be annual subscription for each dental school represented on the Council of such amount as the Council shall determine.
- (ii) If a dental school is in arrears and does not respond to the Executive Secretary's request for payment, the annual accounts shall include a statement to indicate that the school is in arrears with its subscription.

(iii) The Executive Director in conjunction with the Treasurer will manage the financial records for the Dental Schools Council on an agreed and timely basis with year-end on 31 July. Council will appoint external auditors/accountants and will formally approve the accounts on an annual basis.

(e) Meetings

(i) The Chairman, or in his/her absence, the Immediate Past Chairman or Chairman-Elect, shall preside at all meetings. If none is present, a Chairman shall be elected for the meeting.

(ii) The Council shall meet three times each academic year. If required, a meeting will be summoned by the Executive Secretary at the request of the Chairman.

(iii) On receipt of a written request signed by six members, the Executive Secretary shall call an extraordinary meeting within six weeks after receiving such a request and shall determine the time and place of the meeting. Any requisition to do so shall express the object of the meeting to be called.

(iv) Members wishing to introduce any business at a meeting must notify the Executive Secretary or Secretariat in advance meeting, preferably with an introductory memorandum for circulation.

(v) Matters of an urgent nature may, at the discretion of the Executive Secretary, be considered towards the end of the meeting, if they are notified to him/her before the commencement of the meeting.

(vi) The Executive Secretary shall keep a list of the names and addresses of members. S/He shall summon all meetings and give members at least fourteen days notice of any meeting. Not less than five days before each meeting, s/he shall send to each member a copy of the agenda paper. Notices shall be sent, and a member shall be deemed to have received a notice at such time as it would have reached his address, as stated in the list of members kept by the Executive Secretary. The non-receipt of a notice to any member, or the accidental omission to send a notice to him, shall not invalidate a meeting.

(vii) The Chairman of the meeting shall decide upon all points of procedure, and in the case of any disagreement or dispute on such matters his/her decision shall be final.

(viii) If a matter is put to the vote, a simple majority will suffice.

(f) Subcommittees and Working Groups

(i) The Council will work in partnership with the UK Dental School Senior Officers Group on strategies and policies of significance to dentistry in the UK.

(ii) The Council may, as appropriate, form subcommittees or working groups.

(g) Alterations to the Constitution

Any request for addition to, or alterations of the constitution, shall be specified on the agenda paper for the meeting at which they are to be considered. They shall receive a two-thirds majority of those voting members present before they are approved.

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