

Terms of Reference for Student Council

1 Purpose and Scope

The Student Council (SC) is responsible for representing the voice of the students regarding their own learning and student experience together with the wider remit of contributing to the future of the ACL by representing the student body on issues relating to education, public relations and policy. The Student Council is to act as part of the quality assurance process and will assist ACLT in the process of shaping the student learning experience but will go beyond this by having an open channel of communication between the ACL council and trainees.

2 Terms of Reference

2.1 The primary responsibilities of the Student Council are:

- a) To represent the interests of the ACL Student Body (ACL Trainee Members) to ACL Council, and the Management Board of ACL Training (ACLT)
- b) To engage with and support the activities of the ACL Council in delivering the strategic and business plans of the Association.
- c) To work with the Management Board of ACLT to monitor and feed back on the quality of study programmes, student opinions and satisfaction, and support from ACLT and ACL
- d) To encourage and facilitate communications within the Student Body, such as online groups and social events, in support of the management team at ACLT

2.2 The primary methods of achieving these responsibilities will be:

- a) Being contactable by student members at *studentcouncil@costslawyer.co.uk* to respond to queries, requests etc
- b) Representing the student body by being co-opted onto the sub committees of the main ACL council
- c) Representing the student body and any concerns thereof at ACL Council meetings and committee meetings thereof
- d) Engaging with the student body by way of social media, forum polls and feedback opportunities etc

2.3 Student Council Policy Committee Objectives:

- a) To work collaboratively with the ACL Policy Committee to further the interest of the ACL as a whole
- b) To represent the student voice of ACL members in the building and shaping over overall ACL policy decisions
- c) To represent the future of the profession in legal policy forums that the ACL is asked to provide input in

2.4 Student Council Education Committee Objectives:

- a) To work collaboratively with the ACL Education Committee to further the interests of the ACL as a whole
- b) To represent the interests of the student ACL members in ACLT decision processes and policy decisions
- c) To gather and process feedback on examination and general education issues and to work collaboratively with the ACL Education Committee

2.5 Student Council PR&Marketing Committee Objectives:

- a) To work collaboratively with the ACL PR & Marketing Committee to further the interests of the ACL as a whole
- b) To support and work alongside the ACL Education Committee in generating interest in the profession from potential future students from all walks of life
- c) To promote the profession as an alternative legal profession to young people, graduates etc.

3 Constitution

3.1 The Student Council (SC) is composed of 9 members, one of which will be elected as Chair by SC members. With three positions reserved for each year group of ACLT.

3.2 SC members must be enrolled in the ACLT Costs Lawyer course. Elections will take place within the first three months of each calendar year during which time 3 new members from the current first year of ACLT will be elected to represent their year throughout the course for three years.

3.3 At the end of each year the final year council members will resign their positions but, where possible, continue in an interim position until the next set of elections. Elections will be open to anyone from the first year of the course and, where necessary, other vacant positions will also be put up for election and open to the respective year group to which they relate.

3.4 Elections will be performed by online secret ballot.

3.5 Although student council members are elected to represent their year group throughout the three year course, council members may choose to resign their position.

3.6 A petition carrying the signatures of 5% of the full student membership is required to trigger a vote of no confidence in any one SC member, or a majority vote of ACL Council. A vote of no confidence will then be conducted in the same manner as the original election. In the alternative a 2/3 majority of the SC can also remove a member of the SC. In the event of early retirement or removal from a position, the Student Council will co-opt an interim member, if they so wish, to act on Student Council until the next election.

3.7 Once elected, the SC will elect from within itself a Chair and Vice-Chair, the former of which will be responsible for chairing SC meetings and attending ACL Council Meetings on behalf of the SC, and the latter for standing in in the Chair's absence. If necessary, an additional interim member of SC may be appointed to replace the Chair's standard SC responsibilities.

3.8 The SC will then appoint its members equally to three committees, with one member from each year group sitting on each committee, to work in conjunction with the committees of the ACL Council, namely Policy, Education and PR & Marketing.

3.9 SC will be deemed quorate if 5 or members are present or, if a 10th member is co-opted, if 5 members one of whom is the Chair are present. SC members can nominate a proxy to vote in their absence.

4 Nolan Principles

4.1 In accordance with general good practice, to ensure that the SC governance approach and processes are consistent with the ACL Council, the Student Council will adopt the Nolan Committee principles of Standards of Public Life.

4.2 The seven Nolan principles are as follows:

1. **Selflessness** - Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their families or their friends.
2. **Integrity** - Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that may influence them in the performance of their official duties.
3. **Objectivity** - In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
4. **Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
5. **Openness** - Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all their decisions and the actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
6. **Honesty** - Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
7. **Leadership** - Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example

5 Administrative Arrangements

5.1 Conduct of Meetings and Minutes will be in accordance with the procedures set out by ACLT.

5.2 The whole of the SC is required to meet, by whatever methods deemed appropriate, at least once every three months, and at least twice in person annually.

5.3 The Secretary is the Vice Chair or nominated representative (see 3.7).

5.4 Circulation of Papers (electronic format)

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All members of the Group

Persons specifically invited by the Chair to attend

5.5 Circulation of Agenda only:

ACL Council, Executive and the Head of Education