

The Federal Constitution

1st Draft November 2006
Adam Killeya

2nd Draft November 2006
Merryn Pearce

3rd Draft Decemeber 2006
Adam Killeya, Merryn Pearce and Gareth Aubrey

4th Draft February 2007
Adam Killeya and Chris Nelson

5th Draft March 2007
Adam Killeya

6th Draft September 2007
Nigel Smith

Article 1: Name and Objects

Article 1:1 The name of the organisation shall be Liberal Youth.

Article 1:2 The objectives of Liberal Youth shall be to:

- a) Represent Liberal Youth members to the Party; and
- b) Promote Liberal Democrat policies amongst young people and students.
- c) Develop and train its members.

Article 1:3 Liberal Youth shall be committed to furthering the values and ideals laid down in the Preamble to the Party Constitution, with particular emphasis on issues relevant to young people and students.

Article 2: The Federal Organisation

Article 2:1 Liberal Youth shall be:

- a) A federation of those State Organisations for Youth and/or Students, who are recognised by the equivalent Party State Organisation, and who have chosen by their internal procedures to join Liberal Youth.
- b) An association of individual members under Article 4.

Article 2:2 This Constitution and Regulations made under it bind Liberal Youth and State Organisations.

Article 2:3 In all other regards, State Organisations shall be sovereign except where, in accordance with their constitution, they cede powers to the Federal Organisation.

Article 2:4 In the event of a State Organisation ceasing to exist or acting in breach of this Constitution, the Executive shall have the power, by two-thirds majority, to take on all of some or all its responsibilities and powers.

Article 2:5 Liberal Youth shall have the power to:

- a) Raise money in order to further its objectives under Articles 1.2 and 1.3.
- b) Appoint Employed Staff to further its objectives.
- c) Designate any of its elected officers as Sabbatical Officers.

These powers are not exhaustive and do not preclude other activities which further the objectives.

Article 2:6 The Federal Executive under Article 6 and all Standing and Additional Committees shall operate according to the principles of collective responsibility.

Article 2:7 Liberal Youth shall not discriminate, in any of its activities, on the grounds of race, religion, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability or HIV status except that membership of Liberal Youth may be restricted on the basis of age.

Article 3: Exercise of powers

Article 3:1 Powers of the Executive and other Committees of Liberal Youth as laid out in the Constitution may be exercised by a simple majority, except where stated herein, in:

- a) A meeting of the relevant committee or Executive where at least 50% of its voting members are present or have communicated their voting preference to the relevant Chair in advance.
- b) A vote, in which at least 50% of the members of the relevant Committee or Executive participate or express an intention to abstain.

In either case all voting members of the relevant committee or Executive must have been given due notice of the meeting or vote, or, where a particular member cannot be contacted, reasonable steps must have been made.

Article 3:2 All powers of the Executive, Office Holders and Committees of Liberal Youth shall be subject to the overturning or mandate of Liberal Youth Conference as detailed in this Constitution.

Article 4: Membership

The Federal Constitution

Adopted: October 2007

Article 4:1 Membership of Liberal Youth shall be open, on payment of an appropriate subscription determined by the Executive from time to time, to any person who broadly agrees with its objects who is:

- a) A student; or
- b) Aged under thirty.

The Executive shall have the power to seek evidence of the meeting of any of these conditions.

Article 4:2 Any member of the Party may, on payment of an appropriate subscription to be determined by the Executive from time to time, become a Registered Supporter of Liberal Youth.

Article 4:3 All members shall have the rights laid out in this Constitution and Regulations made under it. Where this is consistent with the Party Constitution this shall include the right to automatic membership of the Party for all members who are aged under twenty-six and/or a student.

Article 4:4 The Executive shall have the right, exercisable by a two-thirds majority, to refuse or revoke an individual's membership of Liberal Youth on the following grounds:

- a) Conduct which has brought or is likely to bring Liberal Youth or the Party into disrepute.
- b) Material disagreement, evidenced by conduct, with the objectives of Liberal Youth.
- c) Another reason substantiated by evidence, why their continued membership will be damaging to Liberal Youth or the Party.

Article 4:5 When considering membership under Article 4.4, the Executive shall have the power to suspend an individual's membership for a period not exceeding 30 days pending a final decision, and shall act within the judicially established standards of natural justice and, in particular, observe the requirements in Article 15.10.

Article 4:6 Appeals from any decision of the Executive on membership matters shall initially go to the Appeals Panel under Article 15.

Article 5: Branches

Article 5:1 There shall be Branches so far as desired by local members within the areas of those State Organisations under Article 2.1(a). Branches shall be overseen by their respective state organisations, except in areas reserved to the Federal Organisation.

Article 5:2 Branches formed outside the areas covered by state organisations shall be directly overseen by the Federal Executive.

Article 5:3 Branches shall operate in an open and democratic manner, and in accordance with the Federal and relevant State constitutions, but shall not, unless otherwise provided by their overseeing body, be required to have their own constitutions.

Article 5:4 Branches may be suspended by their overseeing body, in accordance with their constitution, on the following grounds:

- a) The Branch is not adhering to this Constitution, the Constitution of the State Organisation; or
- b) The branch's conduct has brought or is likely to bring Liberal Youth or the Party into disrepute.
- c) Another reason substantiated by evidence why the branch's continued operation will be damaging to Liberal Youth or the Party.

Article 5:5 Before suspending a Branch the overseeing body shall inform the Branch of the grounds on which it proposes to take action and give the Branch reasonable opportunity to answer the charges or take the necessary corrective action. The Executive shall also act within the judicially established standards of natural justice and, in particular, observe the requirements in Article 15.10.

Article 5:6 A suspended Branch shall have a right of appeal in accordance with the Constitution of the relevant State Organisation or, if its overseeing body is the Federal Executive, to the Appeals Panel under Article 15.

Article 6: The Federal Executive

Article 6:1 The Federal Organisation shall have an Executive, which will contain, as its members, the following:

- a) The Chair.
- b) The Vice-Chair (Finance).
- c) The Vice-Chair (Communications).
- d) The Vice-Chair (Membership Development).
- e) The Vice-Chair (Campaigns).
- f) Eight General Executive Members.
- g) A representative from each State Organisation to be determined by that State Organisation.

Article 6:2 The responsibilities of members of the Executive shall be as follows:

- a) The Chair shall be the Chief Spokesperson of the organisation and shall be responsible for co-ordinating its activities, ensuring communication within the Executive, and providing strategic direction for the organisation. The Chair shall also have overall responsibility for the efficient working of the Executive, and, ordinarily, for line managing staff as laid out in Article 18 below, and shall have further responsibilities for the maintenance of various registers as laid out in 6.8, 14.1 and 15.3 below.
- b) The Vice-Chair (Finance) shall be responsible for the financial affairs of the organisation, except under 8.5 below. They shall also be responsible and for drafting the Mid-Term financial report, accounts, budget and Federal Grant Submission.
- c) The Vice-Chair (Communications) shall be responsible for overseeing and developing Liberal Youth's written and electronic communication for its members, including a regular print or electronic magazine. They shall also be responsible for the Liberal Youth Website and forums.
- d) The Vice-Chair (Membership Development) shall be responsible for training and developing Liberal Youth members and, with the Vice-Chair (Campaigns), for recruitment.
- e) The Vice-Chair (Campaigns) shall be responsible for overseeing the campaigning activities of the organisation, overseeing policy development in conjunction with policy committee, and, with the Vice-Chair (Membership Development) for recruitment.
- f) General Executive Members (GEMs) shall be responsible for areas or projects designated to them by the Executive, or by persons designated as their team leader by the Executive.
- g) The Vice-Chairs shall have equal status and shall be responsible for the development and activities of particular GEMs assigned to them by the Executive for that purpose.
- h) All Executive Members under 6.1 a) – f) shall be responsible for:
 - i Promoting the organisation.

- ii Assisting with the general activities of the organisation.
- iii Assisting with the activities of the organisation at Liberal Youth and Federal Party Conferences.
- iv Liaising with other members of the Executive, and with Committees, in the course of their duties.
- v Producing a handover report for their successor(s).
- vi Submitting a report to Liberal Youth Autumn and Spring Conferences.
- vii Being familiar with, and acting within, all provisions of this constitution, particularly those that relate directly to them.

Article 6:3 The Federal Executive members shall initially take office on 1st July of the calendar year in which they are elected and shall serve for a year thereafter.

Article 6:4 No person may hold more than one position under 6.1 a) – f) at any one time. Members under 6.1 f) may hold another office under 6.1, but shall only be entitled to one vote as a member of the Executive.

Article 6:5 The Federal Executive shall be responsible, subject to this Constitution, for the day-to-day running of Liberal Youth. In particular it shall have overall responsibility for:

- a) The implementation of Conference decisions.
- b) The work of Executive Officers.
- c) The financial affairs of Liberal Youth, including the approval of the Liberal Youth Accounts and Budget and the Federal Grant Submission, and the appointment of an Auditor, as recommended by the Office Management Committee under 7.10 c) below.
- d) The employment of Liberal Youth staff.
- e) Submitting policy on behalf of Liberal Youth to the Federal Party Conference.
- f) Ensuring that Liberal Youth, its committees and state organisations, operate under its own constitution, maintaining up to date copies for this purpose.

- g) Implementing powers in accordance with Article 6.6 below.

Article 6:6 The Federal Executive shall have the power to:

- a) Set up Additional Committees and determine their remit and mode of selecting membership.
- b) Devolve any of its powers to Standing or Additional Committees.
- c) Exercise other powers as laid out in the constitution, subject to Article 11.1
- d) Initially co-opt to fill vacancies for posts under 6.1 a)-g) as laid out in 10.6a) below.
- e) Appoint the Returning Officer under 9.1 and 10.6 d) below.

Article 6:7 All members of the Executive under 6.1 shall have one vote at Executive meetings, except under 6.4 above. Job shares shall be treated as one member of the Executive for this purpose, and, where both attend and/or wish to vote, must agree in order to cast their vote. Where one part of the job share is also a member of the Executive under 6.1 h) only the job-share vote or the vote under 6.1 h) may be exercised.

Article 6:8 The Chair shall be responsible for arranging at least six quorate in-person Executive meetings a year, with no more than 3 months between meetings. The Chair shall also be responsible for informing all Executive Members and Honorary Officers at least one week in advance of these meetings, and shall have overall responsibility for the maintenance of a record of agendas and minutes, and its availability for all members, registered supporters and office holders to inspect. This provision is subject to any decisions the executive may make about restrictions minutes of sensitive business.

Article 6:9 Notwithstanding the Chair's responsibility under Article 6.8, The Executive shall retain the right to call Executive meetings.

Article 6:10 All minutes and agendas for meetings of the Executive shall be available for members to inspect, or, on payment of postage, receive by post, except under Article 6.12 below.

Article 6:11 All members of Liberal Youth, along with a representative of the Liberal Youth staff, shall be entitled to attend Executive Meetings except under 6.12 below.

Article 6:12 The Executive may, by two-thirds majority, designate an item of the agenda to be Closed Business. Closed business shall be discussed only in the presence of Members of the Executive and Honorary Officers, and minutes shall be circulated only to them.

Article 6:13 The Executive or Chair of Liberal Youth may invite non-members to meetings at their discretion.

Article 6:14 Where a part of a job share wishes to resign their office, or is suspended or deemed to have resigned, all parts of that job-share shall be treated as having resigned, been suspended, or been deemed to have resigned.

Article 6:15 Where an Executive member, or part of a job share, under 6.1 a) – f) has failed to attend two consecutive in-person meetings of the Executive without submitting apologies to the Chair or Liberal Youth Office, they shall be deemed to have resigned their post.

Article 6:16 Where the office of Chair is or becomes vacant the Executive may designate a Vice Chair to be acting Chair, until a proper appointment may be made under 10.6 a). The acting Chair shall assume all responsibilities and powers of the Chair. Where an acting Chair is not appointed the Vice-Chairs shall jointly exercise the powers and responsibilities of the Chair.

Article 6:17 Except where detailed herein The Executive shall govern their own procedure.

Article 7: Committees of Liberal Youth

Article 7:1 There shall be the following Committees of Liberal Youth:

- a) Policy Committee.
- b) Conference Committee.
- c) International Committee.
- d) Office Management Committee.
- e) Other committees established under 6.6 a).

The Federal Constitution

Adopted: October 2007

Article 7:2 Committees, except under 7.1 d), shall have the power to select their own Chair from, and distribute responsibilities between, their members. They shall also have the ability to initially co-opt members when a position for a member elected by all member ballot is vacant, and to govern their own procedure, except where detailed herein.

Article 7:3 Policy Committee shall consist of:

- a) The Vice-Chair (Campaigns).
- b) Any Liberal Youth member who is a member of the Party Federal Policy Committee subject to ratification by Police Committee.
- c) Two members appointed from and by the Executive.
- d) Four members elected by an all member ballot.
- e) A representative of International Committee as determined by that committee.

Article 7:4 The remit of the Policy Committee shall be:

- a) To maintain the Policy Book under Article 13 below, and to have it ready for publication under 11.13 below.
- b) To advise the Executive on policy matters.
- c) To co-ordinate the drafting of policy motions on behalf of the Executive for submission to the Federal Party Conference.
- d) To commission, where appropriate, working groups into Liberal Youth Policy and to determine the membership and remit of such groups. In doing so the committee must endeavour to include a wide range of experience and viewpoints.
- e) To oversee policy development, including the organisation of events for this purpose at Liberal Youth Conferences.
- f) To aid members in drafting policy.
- g) To advise the International Committee on policy submission to international organisations under 7.8e) below.
- h) To designate representatives to other committees under 7.5 f) and 7.7 e) below.
- i) Other duties as determined by the Executive or Conference.

Article 7:5 Conference Committee shall consist of:

- a) The Vice-Chair (Communications).
- b) The Vice Chair (Finance).

- c) One other member of the Federal Executive, appointed by that committee.
- d) Four members elected by an all member ballot.
- e) Any Liberal Youth member who is a member of the Federal Party Conference Committee subject to ratification by the Conference Committee.
- f) A member of Policy Committee, as determined by that Committee.

Article 7:6 The remit of the Conference Committee shall be:

- a) To organise Liberal Youth conferences.
- b) To organise Liberal Youth's activities at Federal Party conferences in agreement with the Executive.

Article 7:7 International Committee shall be comprised of:

- a) A representative from each State Organisation chosen by that organisation.
- b) Two members of the Federal Executive, appointed by that committee.
- c) Any Liberal Youth member who is a member of the Executive or equivalent body of international bodies to which Liberal Youth is affiliated.
- d) Four members elected by an all member ballot.
- e) A member of Policy Committee, as determined by that Committee.

Article 7:8 The remit of the International Committee shall be:

- a) To advise the Federal Executive in matters relating to Liberal Youth' international activities.
- b) To select Liberal Youth representatives to, and Liberal Youth sponsored candidates for elections to offices in, international organisations under 16.5 below.
- c) To promote and co-ordinate Liberal Youth' international activities.
- d) To co-ordinate the drafting and submission of policy to international organisations.
 - i) Where such policy is contained in existing Liberal Youth Policy, or is contained in existing Party Policy and is not contradicted by existing Liberal Youth Policy, the Committee shall inform the Executive and Policy Committee but does not need their approval.

- ii Where such policy does not meet the conditions under clause i) above the Committee shall require the agreement of the Executive by a simple majority.
- e) To liaise with international organisations and co-ordinate Liberal Youth relations with them, in conjunction with any other office holders designated to that task under 6.2 f) above.

Article 7:9 Office Management Committee shall consist of:

- a) The Chair of Liberal Youth, who shall chair the committee.
- b) The Vice Chair Finance.
- c) The Vice Chair (Communications).
- d) One representative of the Liberal Youth staff, chosen by them.
- e) One member of the Executive chosen by them.
- f) The Chair of Conference Committee.
- g) One Honorary Officer, selected by them.

Article 7:10 The remit of the Office Management Committee shall be to:

- a) Oversee the performance of Liberal Youth staff.
- b) Set staff priorities.
- c) To consider the Mid-Term financial report, Annual Accounts, Budget and Federal Grant Submission, as drafted by the Vice-Chair (Finance), and recommend them for approval, amendment, or rejection, to the Executive.
- d) Comply with other staff regulations under Article 18 below.

Article 7:11 Members of Committees under 7.1 a) – d) shall take office on 1st July of the calendar year in which they are elected and shall serve for a year thereafter.

Article 7:12 Chair of Committees under 7.1 a) – d) shall be responsible for ensuring that they meeting at least four times a year, either in person or electronically.

Article 7:13 All Committees under 7.1 shall be required to submit a report to Liberal Youth Autumn and Spring Conferences.

Article 8: Honorary Officers and PPERA

Article 8:1 There shall be the following Honorary Officers of Liberal Youth:

- a) An Honorary President.
- b) Six Honorary Vice-Presidents.

Article 8:2 Honorary Officers shall take office on 1st January of the calendar year following their election and shall serve for a period of two years thereafter.

Article 8:3 The Federal Executive may allocate responsibilities to Honorary Officers at its discretion, with the consent of those Honorary Officers.

Article 8:4 At the last meeting of the calendar year the Executive shall nominate, with their consent, one Honorary Officer to be Honorary Treasurer.

Article 8:5 The Honorary Treasurer shall serve for one calendar year and shall, for the purposes of the Political Parties and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA), be the person responsible for the finances of Liberal Youth.

Article 8:6 The Honorary President shall, for the purposes of PPERA, be the Chief Officer of Liberal Youth.

Article 8:7 The Honorary President and Honorary Treasurer shall, along with the Chair and VC Finance, be responsible for compliance with PPERA.

Article 8:8 Upon taking office the Honorary Officers shall collectively appoint, with their consent, one Honorary Officer to be Chair of the Appeals Panel.

Article 8:9 Honorary Officers shall be entitled to attend meetings of the Executive and receive all documents that members of the Executive receive.

Article 8:10 Honorary Officers shall, where appropriate, offer advice and support to the organisation and its members, committees and officers.

The Federal Constitution

Adopted: October 2007

Article 8:11 The Honorary Officers shall collectively co-opt to fill vacancies amongst their number.

Article 9: Elections

Article 9:1 The Liberal Youth Executive shall appoint a Returning Officer at their first meeting, or when a vacancy arises. S/he shall be a member of the Party but not a member of Liberal Youth, and may appoint and dismiss Deputy Returning Officers as s/he sees fit.

Article 9:2 Liberal Youth Autumn Conference shall, subject to this Constitution, elect:

- a) The Honorary Officers at two year intervals.
- b) Members of the Appeals Panel under Article 15 at two year intervals.
- c) Representatives to the Federal Party Conference, annually

Article 9:3 Liberal Youth shall elect by all member ballot, within two months of Spring Conference each year:

- a) The members of the Executive under 6.1 a) – f)
- b) Members of Committees under 7.3 d), 7.5 d) and 7.7 d)

Article 9:4 Elections for positions under 6.1 a) - f) above shall include RON as a candidate. If RON is elected, the Returning Officer shall call a by-election by all member ballot within 28 days of the previous election.

Article 9:5 All elections to positions under 6.1 a) – f) above shall be open to job-share by two or more members of Liberal Youth who shall be treated as one candidate for the purposes of the election.

Article 9:6 By elections to fill vacancies under 10.6 below shall take place at the earliest possible conference where election deadlines can be maintained.

Article 9:7 For elections at conference under 9.2 and 9.6 above all members shall be entitled to request and receive a postal vote before close of nomination.

Article 9:8 Posts deemed for election under Articles 16.5, or 16.6 shall take place as directed by the relevant body

Article 9:9 All Liberal Youth members shall be entitled to vote in Liberal Youth elections under 9.2, 9.3, 9.4 or 9.6 providing that their membership was valid at the close of nominations for the relevant election.

Article 9:10 Any Liberal Youth member shall be eligible to stand for election, subject to any requirements of the Party or relevant external organisation. Any member of the Party shall also be eligible to stand for the post of Honorary President or Vice-President.

Article 9:11 All elections in Liberal Youth and the State Organisations shall be conducted in the following manner:

- a) All elections shall be by secret ballot.
- b) All elections shall be conducted using the Single Transferable Vote in accordance with the current edition of Electoral Reform Society's publication 'How to Conduct an Election by the Single Transferable Vote.'

Article 9:12 The Returning Office shall be responsible for:

- a) Running the elections in accordance with this constitution and the principles of natural justice.
- b) Establishing any regulations regarding the election which s/he feels necessary, such regulations automatically lapsing when the Returning Officer ceases to hold their position.

- c) Making rulings from time to time under Article 15.1 and subject to appeal and communicating those rulings to affected parties as soon as possible.
- d) Satisfying himself or herself that any candidate is willing to serve and has consented to be nominated.
- e) Drawing up a timetable for the receipt of nominations, dispatch and return of ballot papers and counting of votes for each election, subject to the following:
 - i All members must be notified of the election(s) at least 14 days before the close of nominations.
 - ii All member ballots and postal votes shall be dispatched at least 14 days and no more than 42 days before the close of poll.
 - iii Close of polls for elections under 9.3 shall be at least 7 days after Spring conference.
 - iv Close of poll for elections under 9.2 or 9.6 shall be at Autumn Conference.
 - v Collating and distributing authorised election material for all elections.
 - vi Organising hustings at Liberal Youth Conference, in consultation with Conference Committee and the candidates for each election, for all elections except under 9.4. Candidates for each election must receive reasonable notice of such hustings.
 - vii Taking action, including disqualification before or after the result, against any candidate found to have committed an election offence under 9.15. The Returning Office shall not take such action without first offering the candidate the right to make representations and having regard to them.

Article 9:13 The Notice of Elections under 9.12 e) i) must include:

- a) The name and job description of the relevant posts.
- b) Details of the timetable and voting procedure for the election.
- c) Article 9 of the constitution and any regulations made under 9.12 b) above.

- d) The name and contact details of the Returning Officer.
- e) A nomination form.

Article 9:14 A valid nomination must contain the name, address and membership number of the prospective candidate(s).

Article 9:15 It shall be an election offence to:

- a) Obtain, release, or use any official lists of the names and/or contact details of members.
- b) Send unsolicited campaign material to any member, except where specifically permitted by the Returning Officer.
- c) Slander or libel, implicitly or explicitly, any candidate in the election or any other individual or organisation in Liberal Youth in the course of the election campaign.
- d) Threaten, bribe or impersonate the Returning Officer, Deputy Returning Officer, or any other person involved in the running of the election.
- e) Breach any provision of the Constitution or election regulations made under 9.12 b), in the course of an election.
- f) Disrupt the smooth running of the election or count.
- g) Threaten, bribe, or harass any voter, or impede their ability to vote freely or secretly.
- h) Submit false or misleading information to the Returning Officer, or his/her Deputies, or the Appeals Panel.
- i) Campaign within any area excluded by the Returning Officer or his/her Deputies.
- j) Attempt to commit any election offence.

Article 9:16 Candidates may be held responsible for the actions of their supporters if they knew such an offence was likely to be committed, or were reckless in that regard.

The Federal Constitution

Adopted: October 2007

Article 9:17 Any member may, within 21 days of any election, lodge a written allegation of an irregularity in the conduct of the election or an election offence. The complaint should be addressed to the Returning Officer and should include full details of the allegation. The Returning Officer shall make an initial ruling on the complaint, subject to the principles of natural justice and the rights of interested parties.

Article 9:18 Appeals against rulings of the Returning Officer under 9.12 b) or 9.17 must be addressed to the Appeals Panel and made within 14 days of the ruling.

Article 9:19 Where the Returning Officer feels it necessary s/he shall have the power to delay the declaration of any election until a matter is resolved under 9.12b), 9.17 or 9.18 above.

Article 10: Office Holders and Vacancies

Article 10:1 For the purpose of this constitution 'Office Holders' shall include all members of the Federal Executive, except under 6.1 g) and 7.7a), Honorary Officers, Members of Committees, Members of the Appeals Panel, representatives to external bodies under Article 16, and the Returning Officer.

Article 10:2 The Federal Executive shall have the power, exercisable on a two-thirds majority, to suspend any Office Holder within Liberal Youth for any period ending no later than the date of the next Liberal Youth Conference. This power may only be exercised on one or more of the following grounds:

- a) Conduct which has brought or is likely to bring Liberal Youth or the Party into disrepute.
- b) Material disagreement, evidenced by conduct, with the objectives of Liberal Youth or the Party.
- c) Another reason substantiated by evidence, why their continued tenure in office will be damaging to Liberal Youth or the Party.

Suspended Office Holders may perform none of the functions of their office, or represent themselves as office holders in Liberal Youth.

Article 10:3 When considering the exercise of power under Article 10.2, the Federal Executive shall act within judicially established standards of natural justice and, in particular, observe the requirements under Article 15.10. There shall be a right of appeal to the Appeals Panel.

Article 10:4 Following a suspension, the next available Liberal Youth Conference shall vote on an automatically submitted motion of no confidence in that Office Holder.

Article 10:5 All Office Holders may be removed from office after the passing, by a two-thirds majority of at Liberal Youth Conference of a valid motion of no confidence in accordance with this constitution under 12.14-12.16.

Article 10:6 Vacancies shall be filled as follows:

- a) Vacancies for members of the Executive under 6.1 a) – f) shall be initially filled under 6.6 d) above and then by by-election under 9.6 above.
- b) Vacancies for directly elected Committee Members under Article 7 shall be initially filled under 7.2 above and then by by-election under 9.6 above.
- c) Vacancies for Honorary Officers shall be filled under 8.11 above.
- d) Vacancies for Returning Officer shall be filled under 9.1 and 6.6 e) above.
- e) Vacancies for Members of the Appeals Panel shall be filled by by-election under 9.6 above.

Where vacancies are to be filled or initially filled by co-option under a), b) or d) they must be advertised online, with at least 7 days notice provided for applications.

The Federal Constitution

Adopted: October 2007

Article 10:7 The appointment, suspension, and filling of vacancies for members of the Executive under 6.1 g) and 7.7 a) shall be the responsibility of the relevant State Organisations.

Article 10:8 Where any Office Holder is given a responsibility under this constitution and choose to delegate that responsibility it remains the overall responsibility of the Office Holder specified herein.

Article 11: Liberal Youth Conference

Article 11:1 The sovereign body of Liberal Youth shall be Liberal Youth Conference, and decisions made by them shall bind the Executive, Committees and Office Holders of Liberal Youth as Conference directs, provided that they do not breach this constitution.

Article 11:2 Liberal Youth Conference shall be held at least twice a year:

- a) Spring Conference in February or March.
- b) Autumn Conference in October or November.

The dates, times and venues shall be determined by the Vice-Chair (Conventions and Events) in consultation with Conference Committee and the wider Executive.

Article 11:3 Liberal Youth Conference may be held outside the periods specified in 11.2 above if the Executive approves of the change by a two-thirds majority.

Article 11:4 The organisation of Liberal Youth Conference, including the agenda and conference mailings, shall be the responsibility of the Vice-Chair (Conventions and Events).

Article 11:5 The organisation of Conference during Conference shall be the responsibility of a Steering Committee, consisting of :

- a) The Chair and members of Conference Committee present at the Conference.

- b) The Chair of Liberal Youth.
- c) A representative of the local organisers of Conference.
- d) Up to four other members selected by Conference Committee.

except where any such individuals do not wish to serve. Steering Committee shall exist only for the duration of conference, and shall not be subject to any other regulations governing committees of Liberal Youth contained herein.

Article 11:6 Attendance at Liberal Youth Conference shall be open to any member of Liberal Youth, Registered Supporter or person approved by Conference Committee. They shall all be Members of Conference for the purpose of these rules.

Article 11:7 Voting at Liberal Youth Conference shall be limited to members of Liberal Youth under Article 4, who:

- a) Have paid an appropriate registration fee, to be set by the Conference Committee by agreement with the Executive; and
- b) Were members of Liberal Youth on the date nominations closed for the elections at the relevant Conference.

Article 11:8

- a) The quorum for passing any motion at Liberal Youth Conference shall be seventeen voting members or a number equal to half of those registered as attending conference as voting members, whichever is greater. The Chair of Conference session shall be responsible for ensuring that this is complied with.
- b) The aide shall be responsible for informing the Chair of Conference how many voting members are present at the conference for the purposes of 11.8(a). The Chair of Conference shall make any rulings or adjudications as to the quoracy of Conference and his/her decision shall be final.

Article 11:9 A Special Conference shall be called by the Conference Committee on receipt of a request from any of the following:

The Federal Constitution

Adopted: October 2007

- a) The Federal Executive.
- b) Liberal Youth Conference.
- c) The sovereign bodies, voting by simple majority, of at least 50% of State Organisations of Liberal Youth.
- d) Fifty Liberal Youth members from at least ten United Kingdom Parliamentary Constituencies.

Article 11:10A Special Conference shall be run in the same manner as an ordinary Liberal Youth Conference but shall be limited to any business specified when the request was submitted under Article 11.9 above.

Article 11:11The Conference Committee shall give at least 8 weeks notice of Autumn or Spring Conference by way of a posted calling notice, which shall include:

- a) The dates and venue of Conference.
- b) The procedure for registering for Conference.
- c) The procedure and deadline for the submission of motions to Conference under 11.15 below.

Article 11:12The Conference Committee shall give at least 3 weeks notice of a Special Liberal Youth Conference to all Liberal Youth members including the information under 11.1a) and b) above and details of the specified business.

Article 11:13The following details shall be posted online not less than 14 days before Conference:

- a) A provisional agenda for Conference, under 11.14 below.
- b) All motions thus far submitted and accepted for Conference.
- c) The Financial Reports listed under 17.1 and 17.2 below.
- d) The current version of the Policy Book.

- e) All other reports and papers for Conference which Conference Committee has received.

Article 11:14The Agenda for Conference shall include time for:

- a) All elections and hustings required under Article 9.
- b) Policy Motions, under Article 13 below.
- c) Emergency Motions, which shall be Policy Motions under Article 13 below, on an issue of substance that has arisen since the deadline under 11.15 a) below.
- d) Constitutional Amendments under Article 14 below.
- e) Reports from members of the Executive and Committees, under 6.2 h) vi) and 7.13 above.
- f) Training sessions.
- g) Motions to Overturn a Specified Action of the Executive or Specified Office Holder or Committee.

The order for debate for motions under 11.14 b), c), d) and g) shall be determined by ballot of Conference.

Article 11:15The Conference Committee shall set deadlines for the receipt of motions and amendments for conference as follows:

- a) Constitutional Amendments, not less than 42 days before the beginning of Conference
- b) Policy Motions and amendments to Constitutional Amendments at least 14 days before the beginning of Conference
- c) Emergency Motions and Motions to Overturn a Specified Action of the Executive or Specified Office Holder or Committee.
- d) Amendments to Emergency Motions not less than 18 hours after the deadline for Emergency Motions

Motions under b), c) and d) may be allowed onto the agenda after the deadline by decision of Conference Committee or Steering Committee under 11.18 a) below, or by a vote of Conference under 12.19 d) below.

The Federal Constitution

Adopted: October 2007

Article 11:16 All motions must be accompanied by the name of a proposer and seconder, who must be members of Liberal Youth.

Article 11:17 All motions under 11.14 shall require a simple majority of a quorate Liberal Youth conference to pass, except for Constitutional Amendments under Article 14 below.

Article 11:18 Conference Committee or Steering Committee shall have the power to:

- a) Accept or reject any motion not received by the appropriate deadline under 11.15 above, except under 11.15 d) where it is a Constitutional Amendment, in which case it must be rejected.
- b) Reject any motion which is incomprehensible, highly ambiguous, libellous or frivolous, or which is similar in effect to another submitted motion.
- c) Reject any Emergency Motion not relating to a matter of substance arisen since the appropriate deadline.
- d) Composite or re-draft for clarity or accuracy any motion(s), or amend them to meet the provisions of Article 14 below.
- e) Reject any motion which would contradict the Constitution, or would amend it in such a way as to leave parts of it contradictory.
- f) Amend the agenda of Conference, providing it does not remove sessions without a vote.

Article 11:19 The Chair of Conference Committee shall be responsible, in liaison with the Steering Committee, for collating the minutes of Liberal Youth Conference sessions and for passing them to the Chair, Chair of Policy Committee, and Liberal Youth Office.

Article 11:20 Smoking shall not be allowed inside the Conference Venue, except in any area specially set aside by Steering Committee for the purpose.

Article 12: Sessions of Conference

Article 12:1 A session of Conference shall be deemed to be time set aside for the discussion of Motions or Executive reports

Article 12:2 For each session Steering Committee shall ensure that there is:

- a) A Chair, responsible for the fair and proper conduct of the debate, in accordance with this constitution.
- b) An Aide, responsible for advising the Chair and keeping the speakers to time, and for other duties under this Article.
- c) A Secretary, responsible for taking minutes and recording decisions.

Article 12:3 Before any session commences the Chair shall announce the time limit(s) for speeches.

Article 12:4 Speeches shall be open to all Members of Conference under 11.6 above, and any other speakers at the discretion of the Chair.

Article 12:5 Debate on any Policy Motion, Emergency Motion, Constitutional Amendment or Motions to Overturn a Specified Action of the Executive or Specified Office Holder or Committee, shall be conducted as follows:

- a) The proposer or their nominee shall speak on the motion.
- b) Short factual questions will be taken from the floor.
- c) Amendments shall be introduced by their proposer or nominee, debated, and voted on in turn, the order being determined by the Chair.
- d) Conference shall debate the substantive motion and any votes in parts.
- e) The proposer of the motion or nominee, shall sum up the motion as a whole.
- f) Conference shall vote on any votes in parts.
- g) Conference shall vote on the substantive motion.

Article 12:6 The Chair shall select speakers in a fair and even handed manner. S/he may allow speakers to speak twice at his/her discretion.

Article 12:7 Points of Information on factual matters may be submitted to the Aide, and read out by the Chair if s/he feels them to be helpful to Conference.

Article 12:8 Any Member of Conference may rise on a Point of Order relating to the conduct of the debate or of a person present during the debate. Points of Order during a vote must relate to the conduct of the Vote, and the Chair's decision on points of order shall be final, except under 12.18a) or b).

Article 12:9 Where an ambiguity concerning this Constitution arises during and affecting a debate at Conference the Chair of the Session shall make a ruling, subject to overturning under 12.20 b) below. In any case this ruling shall only apply for that session.

Article 12:10 Any person entitled to speak in a debate may waive that right.

Article 12:11 If the proposer of a motion does not wish to continue in support of it, s/he may inform the Chair, in which case any member present may request to take up the motion. The Chair shall select one such member to become the new proposer.

Article 12:12 Reports to Conference, under 11.14 e) above, shall be conducted as follows:

- a) The Chair (who may not be a person, or member of a committee, required to submit a report) shall introduce each report.
- b) The Executive Member, Committee Chair, or a representative of them may speak on the report.
- c) Members of Conference may ask questions at the discretion of the chair.

Article 12:13 Following the submission of reports Members of Conference may submit Motions of No Confidence or Motions of Censure in any Office Holder under 10.1 above. Motions of Censure, but not of No Confidence, may be submitted in Committees as a whole.

Article 12:14 A motion of Censure shall automatically be submitted by Steering Committee in any Office Holders or Committee who has failed, in both writing and verbally, to submit a report to conference where required.

Article 12:15 Motions of No Confidence or Censure shall be debated in the following manner:

- a) The proposer or nominee shall introduce the motion.
- b) The subject of the motion, Committee Chair, or nominee, shall have the right of reply.
- c) Conference shall debate the motion.
- d) Conference shall vote on the motion.

The subject of the motion or nominee may choose to make his or her speech after 12.15 c).

Article 12:16 Motions of Censure require a simple majority to pass.

Article 12:17 Motions of No Confidence are governed by 10.5 above. Where such a motion fails Conference shall automatically vote on a motion of censure.

Article 12:18 Following the debate on any Motions of No Confidence or Censure Conference shall vote on whether to accept or reject each report.

Article 12:19 Members of Conference may propose the following procedural motions:

- a) A motion of 'No Confidence in the Chair.'
- b) A motion to 'Overturn the Ruling of the Chair.'
- c) A motion to 'Change the Agenda', other than under a decision of Conference Committee under 11.18 f)

- d) A motion to ‘Allow Debate of a Motion’ not on the agenda. This may not be used to allow debate of a Constitutional Amendment.
- e) A motion to ‘Refer’ the motion to a specified person or body, who shall then consider it and submit an appropriate motion to the following Liberal Youth conference.
- f) A motion to ‘Move to a Vote’ on the specified amendment, parts or procedural amendment, which if passed will lead to an immediate vote.
- g) A motion to ‘Move to a Vote on the Substantive’ which if passed will lead to summation of the Substantive.
- h) A motion to ‘Count the Vote Precisely’, or to ‘Recount the Vote’.
- i) A motion to ‘Take in Parts’ a specified part of the motion or amendment.

Article 12:20 Following the submission of any Procedural Motion under 12.19 a) – g) the Chair shall ask if there is any opposition. If there is none then the Procedural Motion shall automatically pass.

Article 12:21 Procedural Motions under 12.19 a) – d) requires a two thirds majority. Procedural motions under 12.19 e) – g) require a simple majority.

Article 12:22 A procedural motion under 12.19 h) shall automatically pass once, after which it shall be at the discretion of the Chair. A procedural motion under 12.19 i) shall be at the discretion of the Chair. The Chair’s discretion is subject to a motion under 12.19 b).

Article 12:23 If a procedural motion is moved under 12.19 a) or b) the Aide shall Chair the debate of that motion. If a motion under 12.19 a) is passed the Aide shall continue in the Chair.

Article 12:24 Where there is no longer anyone available to Chair a session, Steering Committee shall select a new Chair.

Article 12:25 Procedural Motions under 12.19 a) – g) shall be debated as follows:

- a) The proposer or nominee shall introduce the motion.
- b) There shall be a speech in opposition. Under 12.19 a) or b) the Chair shall have priority to speak. Under 12.19 c) or d) a representative of Steering Committee shall have priority. Under 12.18 e) – g) the proposer of the Amendment or Motion in question shall have priority.
- c) Other speeches may be allowed at the discretion of the Chair.
- d) Conference shall vote on the Procedural Motion.

Article 12:26 In order to vote Members of Conference must:

- a) Be a member of Liberal Youth.
- b) Display a valid voting card.
- c) Remain seated, except where requested by the Chair.

Article 12:27 Where a vote is to be counted exactly, at least three members selected by the Chair, must do so.

Article 12:28 The Chair of the Session shall not be allowed to vote.

Article 13: Federal Policy

Article 13:1 Liberal Youth conference shall have the power to pass policy in areas falling within the remit of the Federal Conference of the Party.

Article 13:2 Liberal Youth policy shall be made by a quorate simple majority on a motion validly submitted in accordance with this Constitution.

Article 13:3 The political beliefs arising from Liberal Youth Policy shall be maintained in the Policy Book by Policy Committee. The Committee shall be responsible for the accuracy and linguistic and political coherence of the Policy Book, subject to the decisions of Conference under 11.14 g) above.

The Federal Constitution

Adopted: October 2007

Article 13:4 All Policy Motions and Emergency Motions intended to amend the Policy Book must contain either

- a) A determination to add, remove or amend specified parts of the Policy Book, or
- b) A determination to add, remove or amend specified sentiments of the Policy Book, the precise language to be determined later by agreement of the Proposer and Policy Committee.

Policy Motions and Emergency Motions may also include other background information, statements of belief, Mandates of the Executive or other Committees, or other relevant material.

Article 13:5 Where it does not contradict current Liberal Youth Policy the Policy of the Federal Party may be included in the Policy Book and/or represented as the policy of Liberal Youth.

Article 13:6 The Executive shall have the power to make interim policy under the following restrictions:

- a) It must relate to a matter of substance arisen since the preceding Liberal Youth Conference, and respond to a particular and pressing need.
- b) It must be ratified by the Policy Committee.

It will then automatically lapse at the start of the next Liberal Youth Conference, unless submitted as a motion in the normal fashion.

Interim policy which contradicts current policy shall require a two-thirds majority of both the Executive and Policy Committees.

Article 14: The Constitution and Constitutional Amendments

Article 14:1 The Chair shall be responsible for the up to date maintenance of this Constitution and its availability for any Liberal Youth member, registered supporter or office holder to inspect.

Article 14:2 This Constitution may only be amended by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at Liberal Youth Conferences on a motion validly submitted according to the regulations herein. Where a Constitutional

Amendment is submitted after the deadline it must be rejected by Conference or Steering Committee under 11.18 a) above.

Article 14:3 Article 12.19 d) referring to the procedure for allowing debate of motions not on the agenda may not be invoked for the purposes of amending this document.

Article 14:4 Constitutional Amendments shall take effect at the close of the Liberal Youth Conference that passed them.

Article 15: Interpretations and Dispute Resolution

Article 15:1 In the event of an ambiguity arising concerning the interpretation of this Constitution, subject to the provisions of 12.10 above, the matter shall be referred for a Rule of Interpretation to the Chair or, if the ambiguity relates to an Liberal Youth election, the Returning Officer.

Article 15:2 Rules of Interpretation shall be binding in the first instance but may be overturned by a ruling of the Appeals Panel, following a properly submitted appeal under this article. In this case the Panel shall substitute their own interpretation

Article 15:3 The Chair shall be responsible for the maintenance of an up to date register of current Rules of Interpretation and its availability for any Liberal Youth member, registered support or office holder to inspect.

Article 15:4 The Appeals Panel shall consist of:

- a) The Liberal Youth Honorary Officers.
- b) Three members elected by Liberal Youth Conference who are not otherwise eligible to be members of the Appeals Panel under 15.4 (a), (c), (d) or (e).
- c) Three members elected by the Federal Executive from its membership.
- d) One member from each State Organisation chosen by that State Organisation in accordance with its internal procedures.

Article 15:5 The following may be referred to the Appeals Panel:

The Federal Constitution

Adopted: October 2007

- a) An appeal arising out of an Interpretation by the Chair or Returning Officer under this constitution.
- b) Allegations of a breach of the Constitution or Regulations by any member of Liberal Youth or by the Returning Officer.
- c) Allegations of improper procedure of an Appeals Board.
- d) Any other matter made subject to the jurisdiction of the Appeals Panel by the constitution of a State Organisation.
- e) Any other dispute of alleged relevance to Liberal Youth and appropriate for the consideration of the Appeals Panel, the determination of whether these conditions are met being the first duty of the Appeals board convened under Article 15.6.

Article 15:6 Except where he or she is excluded under 15.8 or 15.9 or chooses not to participate the Chair of the Appeals Panel, under 8.8 above, shall automatically become Chair of any Appeals Board.

Article 15:7 Where there is a vacancy for chair of the Appeals Board the Honorary Officers not excluded under 15.8 or 15.9 shall select a chair from amongst their number.

Article 15:8 In the event of a matter being referred to Appeals Panel the Chair of the Appeals Board shall as soon as possible, and in any case within 28 days, convene an Appeals Board consisting of the Chair of the Board and

- a) One further person under 15.4 (a),
- b) One person under 15.4 (b),
- c) One person under 15.4 (c),
- d) One person under 15.4 (d).

Where the Board is not convened within 28 days, or completed with 42 days, the Chair shall automatically be removed as Chair and excluded from the board.

Article 15:9 No person shall sit on an Appeals Board where he or she has a prejudicial interest in the matter. This shall ordinarily be decided by the person involved, but will automatically apply for appeals under 15.5 d) where the person sat on the original appeal. Allegations that a member has

failed to properly exclude themselves may also be made as a separate appeal under 15.5 d).

Article 15:10 The Appeals Board shall act within judicially established standards of natural justice. In particular it shall:

- a) Have regard to relevant matters only.
- b) Accept submissions from all interested parties who wish to be heard.
- c) Provide any accused individual or organisation with full details of complaints against them and offer a right to reply.
- d) Make its decisions, and the reasons for them, public and in writing, along with the details of how individual members voted.

Article 15:11 Where the Chair of the Appeals Board is unable to appoint a member under 15.8 a), b), c) or d) the panel shall proceed without a member under that clause.

Article 15:12 The Appeals Board shall decide by a simple majority of all its members where, by virtue of a tie, absence, or abstention(s) a majority cannot be reached the matter shall be referred to the appeals panel of the Party.

Article 15:13 Where the appeals panel rules under 15.5 d) that a previous Appeals Board was not properly constituted or conducted they shall also substitute their own ruling on the original matter.

Article 15:14 Determinations of the Appeals Board must be made available to all Liberal Youth Members and shall be binding on all concerned. The Appeals Board shall have the power to provide effective redress, including the reversal of relevant decisions, but may not itself remove office holders from office.

Article 16: External Affiliations, Policy and Representation

The Federal Constitution

Adopted: October 2007

Article 16:1 Liberal Youth Conference may, through passing policy, affiliate to an External Organisation. Except where specifically contradicted by existing policy Liberal Youth shall automatically affiliate to:

- a) The British Youth Council.
- b) The European Liberal Youth.
- c) The International Federation of Liberal Youth.

or their respective successor organisations.

Article 16:2 Any policy submitted on behalf of Liberal Youth to an external organisation must be approved by the International Committee, if to an international organisation, or otherwise by the Executive. Policy may not be submitted where it contradicts current Liberal Youth policy.

Article 16:3 No candidate may claim the official endorsement of Liberal Youth in any election to an external organisation, except where approved by the Executive.

Article 16:4 Any candidate wishing to claim the official endorsement of the Party in any election to an external Youth or Student organisation, must:

- a) Be a member of the party.
- b) Inform the Executive.

Permission shall automatically be granted after the next Executive meeting except where the Executive votes to withhold it.

Article 16:5 The method of selection for Liberal Youth Representatives to, and Liberal Youth sponsored candidates for positions in, international organisations shall be determined by International Committee.

Article 16:6 The method of selection for Liberal Youth Representatives to all other external organisations shall be determined by the Executive.

Article 17: Finance

Article 17:1 The Mid-term Financial Report and Annual Accounts, Budget, and Federal Grant Submission of Liberal Youth shall be prepared by the Vice-Chair (Finance), submitted to the Office Management Committee for

recommended approval, rejection, or amendment, and subjected to ratification by the Executive. They shall be included in the Financial Reports under 11.13 above.

Article 17:2 Spending by Liberal Youth must be authorised by:

- a) The relevant Office Holder where the item is specified in the Annual Budget
- b) The Executive or, where they cannot meet, the Chair and Vice-Chair (Finance) acting in agreement, where the item is not specified in the annual budget.

All expenditure under b) shall be included in the documents under 11.13 above

Article 17:3 The Financial Year of Liberal Youth shall run from 1st January – 31st December each year.

Article 18: Employed Staff

Article 18:1 Employed Staff shall be subject to a legal contract of employment drawn up by the Office Management Committee, and approved by the Executive.

Article 18:2 The contract under 18.1 shall be approved by the Executive before a post is advertised, and made available to all candidates.

Article 18:3 Variations of the contract of employment may only be made by agreement of the Executive and the Employed Staff Member.

Article 18:4 The Line Manager of all Employed Staff shall ordinarily be the Chair. Should the Chair become an Employed Staff Member his or her Line Manager shall be agreed by the Executive in consultation with the Party.

The Federal Constitution

Adopted: October 2007

Article 18:5 The Appointments Panel for prospective Employed Staff Members shall be selected by the Executive, and shall consist of :

- a) The Chair or Vice-Chair (Finance); and
- b) Two other members of the Liberal Democrats, including at least one member of Liberal Youth.

Article 18:6 The Chair shall be responsible for ensuring that all vacancies for employed staff are advertised as widely as possible.

Article 18:7 No position for employed Staff shall be created without the consent of the Executive or Conference.

Article 18:8 Liberal Youth shall be an equal opportunities employer and shall not discriminate on any basis laid out within 2.7.

Article 18:9 Where the Executive wishes to designate an elected officer to be a sabbatical, under 2.5 c), the decision must be approved by Conference, and shall not apply until the post has next come up for election or by-election for that post.

Article 19: Definitions

Article 19:1 Throughout this Constitution and any rules made pursuant to it:

- a) 'The Party' shall mean the Liberal Democrats or any valid successor organisation.
- b) 'Student' shall mean an individual embarked upon a course of study leading to a qualification recognised by the Qualifications & Curriculum Authority, or an Executive Committee member of a Student Union.

- c) Except where explicitly stated herein 'majority' shall mean a majority of those expressing an opinion for or against, and shall not include abstentions.
- d) 'International Organisations' shall mean groups external to Liberal Youth but to which Liberal Youth is affiliated and which work internationally.