



The

Constitution

of

the **Muslim Society** of

the **University of Greenwich**

يَتَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ
لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقْوَاهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

"O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous. And God has full Knowledge and is well-acquainted (with all things)." (Quran 49:13)

18th of October 2002 Revision

In the name of God the Merciful the Compassionate

Preamble

[the preamble is not part of the constitution document proper]

The Muslim Society was formed on the Greenwich Maritime campus in the 1999-2000 academic year after the failure of individual efforts to secure prayer space. The Society succeeded in securing a prayer room that relieved Muslims from the distress of searching for a concealed and safe place to pray. We went on to organise Ramadan *Iftar*, *Eid* events, seminars and regular sporting events. Society membership rapidly expanded and today we are a well-established student society that is certainly the most ethnically diverse in the University. In conjunction with the University's Muslim Staff Association we run the Friday congregational (*Jummah*) prayer at both the Greenwich Maritime and Medway Campuses. Additionally, we are beginning to attract speakers of international status.

Despite these achievements, the University environment is still far from amicable to Muslims. University sanitary-ware is both unsafe and inconvenient for Muslim usage. Prayer facilities are small and congested. Timetables disregard our *Jummah* prayer. Some staff are unsympathetic to Muslim rights, and ignorant of Islam. The University has still not introduced an anonymous coursework marking system. These are key concerns for Muslims.

Many factors work in our favour. Demographic change is but one factor. The number of Muslims climbed to over 1100 during the 2001-2002 academic year. Another is that the University is committed to actualising equity, pluralism, diversity, and religious accommodation. More importantly, it is, ultimately, in the interest of the University to cater for the welfare of Muslim students and, hence, support the Muslim Society. The Muslim Society is a critical vehicle for the University to tap into both the home and international Muslim markets. We understand the needs of Muslims and we can deliver the God-conscious environment that they are attracted to. Not every one in the University appreciates this and therein lays a challenge for us. We have to articulate and disseminate our vision to a wider audience, present Islam in its true balanced form and unify Muslim action. This revision of our constitution is a step on that road *inshAllah*. It aims to:

- Extend the Society's ability to serve on multiple campuses.
- Strengthen the Society's ability at collective action.
- Cope with the rapid expansion of membership and services.

Constitutional Sub-committee
Muslim Society

[End Preamble]

We, the members of the Muslim Society of the University of Greenwich, adopt the present written constitution.

ARTICLE 1: Mission and Aims

SECTION 1.

The mission of the Society is to discharge the collective obligations (*ḥard kifāha*) of Muslim students at the University of Greenwich. Towards this end, the Society shall:

- 1. Arrange for an environment in which Muslims can practice Islam, specifically:**
 - **Facilitate daily prayers and hold congregational prayers at the appropriate times (*Iqamat alSalah*)**
 - **Facilitate the Ramadan fast (*Siam Ramadan*)**
- 2. Raise the awareness and improve understanding of Islam**
- 3. Promote brotherhood (*ikhwa*) and unity amongst all Muslims at the university**
- 4. Promote friendly relations (*albir*) between Muslims and all others who are not hostile to Muslims.**
- 5. Promote equality (*musawa*), justice (*adl*) and religious freedom (*la ikrah fi aldin*) and encourage the university in realising these universal values in its actions.**

SECTION 2.

The Society is an independent organisation that adopts the majority mainstream interpretation of the *ummah* of Islam in its actions without denying the minority the right of expression.

ARTICLE 2: Affiliation

SECTION 1.

The Society shall be affiliated with the **Student Union** of the **University of Greenwich**.

SECTION 2.

The Society shall be affiliated with the **Federation of Student Islamic Societies (FOSIS)**.

SECTION 3.

The Society shall not affiliate with any other organisation without the approval of the General Body.

ARTICLE 3: Membership

SECTION 1.

The membership of the Society shall consist of "members" and "associate members"

SECTION 2.

A **member** shall be any student of the **University of Greenwich** who wishes to be a member of the Society, agrees to obey the constitution and norms of the Society and agrees to pay the membership fee.

SECTION 3.

An **associate member** shall be any student of the University who wishes to be a member of the Society, and agrees to obey the constitution and norms of the Society. An associate member shall not be eligible to vote in elections.

ARTICLE 4: The Executive Committee

SECTION 1.

The Executive Committee shall consist of five elected members. One without an office and four officers: President, Communications Director, General Secretary and Treasurer. The Executive Committee is the agent of the Society's General Body.

SECTION 2.

The decision on every matter in an Executive Committee meeting is valid only if reached in a parliamentary way (*ijma* of *alsawad alazam*), with each member of the Executive Committee enjoying an equal vote.

SECTION 3.

Only the Executive Committee is accountable to the General Body. The Executive Committee may invite anyone to an Executive Committee meeting in order to know the history of past decisions or to seek their advice on items on the agenda. However, none of the invitees shall have the right to vote on any Executive Committee decision.

SECTION 4.

The **President** shall be responsible for:

- a. The general management of all the activities of the Society.
- b. Establishing an efficient link between the Society and both the Student Union and FOSIS. As well as renewing the Society registration with both.

- c. Calling and presiding over meetings of the Executive Committee and the General Body.
- d. Maintaining a close link with the University's **Muslim Staff Association** and the **University Chaplaincy**.
- e. Controlling funds and expenses of the Society.
- f. Presenting written reports on the state of the Society to the annual meeting.
- g. Consulting with the **Board of Advisors** on matters that may have legal, *fiqh*, constitutional, or political implications before the Executive Committee decides.
- h. Being the spokesman, representative and correspondent for the Society in external activities.

SECTION 5.

The **Communications Director** shall be responsible for:

- a. Informing Society members, the Muslim community and the University community about the time, place and details of Society events.
- b. Presenting web site content changes, notices, articles, mass mailing messages – any publications - before the Executive Committee for its approval.
- c. Directing the activities of the Webmaster, and all those involved in the mass communications function.
- d. Maintaining the web site registration.
- e. Editing and publishing literature on behalf of the Society.

SECTION 6.

The **General Secretary** shall be responsible for:

- a. Preparing and circulating the minutes of Executive, General Body and joint Executive-Board meetings.
- b. Preparing and circulating the agenda for Executive, General Body and joint Executive-Board meetings.
- c. Circulating the agenda and minutes of all Executive Committee and General Body meetings to the Advisory Board
- d. Maintaining the list of members and associate members of the Society.
- e. Presenting at the beginning of every meeting the minutes of the previous meeting for approval.

SECTION 7.

The **Treasurer** shall be responsible for:

- a. Maintaining the record of all financial transactions of the Society.
- b. Liaising with the Student Union on matters of finance
- c. Collecting and depositing funds received on behalf of the Society.
- d. Preparing, on being elected, the annual budget of the Society for the next academic year in consultation with the newly elected Executive Committee
- e. Presenting before the Executive Committee, upon request, a report on the status of the Society's financial affairs.

SECTION 8

The term of the Executive Committee shall be one academic year.

ARTICLE 5: Appointed Officials

SECTION 1.

The Executive Committee shall appoint members to **campus specific** offices: Campus Representative, Facilities Manager, Social Secretary, Sisters Co-ordinator, Sports Co-ordinators.

SECTION 2.

The Executive Committee shall appoint **Campus Representatives** at campuses other than the Executive Committee's home campus. They are responsible for:

- a. liaising between the Executive Committee and members of the Society at their campus.
- b. managing the activities of other appointed officers at their campus. That is, leading the **Campus Management Team**

SECTION 3.

The Executive Committee may appoint **Facilities Managers** to look after non-financial assets in the care of the Society. The responsibilities of the Facilities Managers shall include the following:

- a. Keeping the prayer space and mats clean and tidy
- b. Reporting the abuse of prayer space or ablution facilities to the Executive Committee.

- c. Reporting any health or safety hazards to the Executive Committee
- d. Arranging *Juma* prayer space
- e. Exercising appropriate security measures.
- f. Keeping records of Society library books and other assets.

SECTION 4.

The Executive Committee shall appoint a **Social Secretary**. The **Social Secretary** shall be responsible for:

- a. Directing arrangements for all events that do not have a project manager

SECTION 5.

The Executive Committee may appoint a **Sisters Co-ordinator**. She shall be responsible for:

- a. Co-ordinating women-only activities
- b. Acting as a liaison between the Executive Committee and the sister members of the Society if there are no sisters on the Executive.

SECTION 6.

The Executive Committee shall appoint **Sports Co-ordinators**. They are responsible for co-ordinating recreational sporting activities at their campus.

ARTICLE 6: Board of Advisors

SECTION 1.

The responsibilities of the Board are to: provide **advice** (*nasiha*), **mediate** (*suluh*) in disputes, **conduct** elections and **monitor** (*murakaba*) that Executive Committee decisions are within the constitutional framework.

SECTION 2.

The Board of Advisors shall consist of five persons associated with the University. Advisors should be either fit to lead a *Jummah* prayer or are well known for their good character and able to offer advice in management, local politics, law, communications *or fiqh*. None of them shall be a member of the Executive Committee or an auditor during his/her tenure.

SECTION 3.

The Chairman of the Board of Advisors shall be elected every year by the Advisors.

SECTION 4.

The term of an advisor shall be two years, after which he/she can be re-nominated. The term of the first advisors under this constitution will be staggered to maximise continuity.

Section 5.

The Board, at the expiration of a Board Member's term, shall nominate a person who will be confirmed after approval by the Executive Committee.

SECTION 6.

The **Chairperson** of the Board of Advisors shall be responsible for calling and chairing Board meetings and Joint Board-Executive meetings.

The **Campus Advisor** shall be responsible for advising the Society's campus management team, in addition to the Executive Committee.

The **Secretary** of the Board shall be responsible for collating and maintaining all Board records.

ARTICLE 7: Projects

SECTION 1.

The Executive Committee may appoint a **Project Manager** in order to carry out an assignment.

The terms of reference for a Project shall be defined in a memorandum from the Executive Committee.

A Project Manager must act only within his delegated authority.

ARTICLE 8: Sub- Committees

SECTION 1.

The Executive Committee may appoint a Sub-Committee in order to carry out an ongoing function.

SECTION 2.

The terms of reference for a Sub-Committee shall be defined in a memorandum from the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE 9: Meetings

SECTION 1.

The Society shall have at least one General Body meeting during an academic year.

SECTION 2.

An emergency meeting of the General Body may be called by a petition signed by 12 members. Such a meeting shall be held within three weeks after the written petition is presented to the President.

SECTION 3.

The Executive should notify all members of a General Body meeting at least 5 days before the date of the meeting – 3 days if it coincides with a *Jummah* congregation.

SECTION 4.

The Executive Committee shall meet regularly at such a time and place as is most convenient to most of the Committee members.

SECTION 5.

The President may call Executive Committee meetings in addition to any the regular meeting whenever he/she considers it necessary.

SECTION 6.

There shall be at least one joint meeting of the Executive Committee and the Board Advisors every month - at least one advisor must participate.

SECTION 7.

The presence of at least 50% of the members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum for an Executive Committee decision.

ARTICLE 10: Amendments

SECTION 1.

A proposal for a constitutional amendment(s) shall be signed by 12 members and submitted to the General Secretary who shall email the proposal to the members and arrange for its consideration by the General Body within 3 months.

SECTION 2.

The condition for *ijma* is higher for amendments. An affirmative vote by 2/3 of members is necessary for the adoption of all constitutional amendments.

ARTICLE 11: Judiciary Procedures

SECTION 1.

Charge(s) of misdemeanour, misappropriation of funds, fraud, corruption, violation of the constitution, *fitna* or cover-up of such offences can be brought against a member or a group of members by any member petition signed by at least 3 members. The petition shall be handed over to the President and a copy shall be sent to the Chairperson of the Board of Advisors.

SECTION 2.

The Board of Advisors and the Executive Committee shall meet within two weeks of receipt of the petition in order to set up a panel to hear the charge(s) and deal with the matter.

SECTION 3.

The panel shall submit a report on their findings and actions to the General Body.

ARTICLE 12: Elections

SECTION 1.

Annual elections shall normally be held in April, in order to elect the Executive Committee for the following year.

SECTION 2.

The elections shall be conducted by the Board of Advisors

SECTION 3.

The nominators as well as the seconders of the nominations shall be members of the Society.

SECTION 4.

Only members shall have the right to vote in an election.

ARTICLE 13: Miscellaneous

The quorum requirement for a General Body meeting and its deliberations shall be one-third of total members of the Society. It shall be the responsibility of the person presiding over a General Body meeting to check the quorum requirement before beginning the meeting. At any time during the meeting if it is pointed out by a member that a quorum requirement is not met, the meeting shall be adjourned.

SECTION 2.

If the quorum requirement as specified in Section 1 in this Article is not fulfilled, another General Body meeting shall be called for the same purpose within a month in which case there shall be no quorum requirement for voting on matters which were to be voted on in the previous meeting.

SECTION 3.

The person presiding over an Executive Committee meeting or General Body meeting shall have no right to vote on any issue in the meeting except in the case of a tie.

SECTION 4.

An Executive Committee member who fails to attend three consecutive Executive Committee meetings or is negligent in some other way of his/her duty shall give the Executive Committee explanation. If the Committee does not find the explanation satisfactory, it may recommend dismissal from office. The Board of Advisors shall decide an action based on the recommendation of the Executive Committee.

SECTION 5.

In case of ambiguity regarding the interpretation of any sections of the constitution or possible conflict between two or more sections, the interpretation of the Board of Advisors shall be final.

SECTION 6.

If a member of the Executive Committee resigns, moves away from the area or is dismissed, the Executive Committee with the consent of the Board of Advisors shall co-opt a member to fill the vacated office.

SECTION 7.

The Society may not undertake any activity that violates the Islamic standards of this constitution. In the case of any such violation, reported by 5 or more members, the Board of Advisors will mediate. If a solution is not reached, the Board of Advisors may dissolve the Executive Committee and supervise a new election.

SECTION 8.

Any one who desires to talk to the *Jama'a* after a *fard* prayer shall seek the consent of the **Imam**, preferably, one week before he/she intends to do so.

SECTION 9.

Each member shall attempt to avoid discussion of controversial issues that may hurt the feelings of a member or group of members as well as exercise tolerance and respect for the right of other members to their opinions.

ARTICLE 14: Finances

SECTION 1.

The Executive Committee may accept contributions from any source, consistent with the mission and aims of the Society.

SECTION 2.

The President can not authorise expenditure of more than 20 pounds on a single expense without the approval of the Executive Committee.

SECTION 3.

The Executive Committee shall appoint an **auditor** - a member who has basic understanding of audit procedures. The auditors shall audit the Society accounts continuously and submit to the Executive Committee reports upon request.

ARTICLE 15: Constitution Adoption and Enforcement

SECTION 1.

This Constitution shall be adopted and in force, effective immediately after it is approved by a simple majority of the total members the Society.

ARTICLE 16: Dissolution

SECTION 1.

If a situation arises which makes the dissolution of the Society inevitable, then the Board of Advisors shall handle dissolution.