



**RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE STAFF UNION**  
*(The actual Rules can be modified at any time by the Staff Assembly)*  
**Final version, adopted by the Extraordinary Assembly on 29 October 2015**

**PREAMBLE**

**RULE I: Field of application**

These Rules of Procedure, established in pursuance of Article XV of the Constitution of the Staff Union, shall determine:

- (a) the functioning of the organs of the Union;
- (b) the method of electing members of the Council and the Executive Bureau;
- (c) the procedure to be followed in the event of elections being challenged;
- (d) the procedure for the organization of referendums;
- (e) the procedure for the revision of the Constitution.

**STAFF ASSEMBLY**

**RULE II: Sessions**

1. The Staff Assembly shall meet in ordinary session, in accordance with Article VIII of the Constitution, when convened by the Executive Bureau, within the first quarter of every year.
2. The Staff Assembly shall meet in extraordinary session in the circumstances specified in Article VIII.4 of the Constitution.
3. The Executive Bureau shall fix the dates for the convening of sessions of the Staff Assembly. When the Staff Assembly meets in extraordinary session in the circumstances specified in Article VIII.4 of the Constitution, the date of convocation may not be more than six working days later than the date on which the request reached the Executive Bureau.

**RULE III: Agenda**

1. The provisional agenda for ordinary sessions of the Staff Assembly shall be drawn up by the Executive Bureau. It shall include the following items:
  - (a) election of the President of the Staff Assembly;
  - (b) election of tellers;
  - (c) annual report of the Executive Bureau;
  - (d) annual financial report of the Secretary-General.

The provisional agenda shall also include all items proposed by the Executive Bureau and the Council of the Union. Any member of the Union may also, not less than four days before the date fixed for the ordinary session, request the inclusion of additional items in the agenda. These items shall then appear on a supplementary list, circulated at least one working day before the opening of the session.

2. The provisional agenda of an extraordinary session of the Staff Assembly shall include all items proposed by the Staff Assembly, the Executive Bureau, the Council with a two-third majority, or at the request in writing at least 20% of the members of the Union.

3. The provisional agenda and the reports which the Staff Assembly is required to examine at an ordinary session shall be circulated to members of the Union at least eight working days before the date fixed for the session. In the case of an extraordinary session, this shall be done at least one working day before the session.

#### **RULE IV: Quorum**

At all sessions of the Staff Assembly, the presence of 50 members working at Headquarters shall constitute a quorum. If there is no quorum, the President of the Union may adjourn the meeting for ten minutes. No quorum shall be required for the resumption of the meeting.

#### **RULE V: Conduct of business**

1. At each session, the Staff Assembly shall elect a President, who shall not be a member of the Council.

2. The President shall direct the discussions and ensure observance of these Rules. He or she shall put questions to the vote, announce decisions and declare the closure of the meeting, subject to the present Rules.

3. Meetings of the Staff Assembly shall be held in public. Associate members and Friends of the Union may speak but are not entitled to vote. The Staff Assembly may also authorize non-members of the Union to speak.

4. The President shall call upon speakers in the order in which they indicate their desire to speak. The President of the Union and any other member of the Executive Bureau shall be entitled to speak whenever he or she deems this useful.

5. Any motion or proposal must be seconded before being put to discussion.

6. In the course of a debate, any member of the Union may raise a point of order, and such point of order shall be immediately decided by the President. Any member of the Union may appeal against the President's ruling. The appeal shall be put to the vote immediately and the President's ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority of the members present and voting.

7. The President or any member of the Union may at any time move:

- (a) the closure of the debate on the item under discussion;
- (b) the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion;
- (c) the suspension of the meeting;
- (d) the adjournment of the session.

Only one speaker may then speak against the motion, after which it shall be immediately put to the vote.

#### **RULE VI: Tellers**

At each of its ordinary sessions, the Staff Assembly shall elect a maximum of ten tellers who shall remain in office until the next ordinary session of the Staff Assembly. The tellers shall be responsible for counting the votes when a vote is taken at the Staff Assembly and during elections and referendums. They may not run a polling station.

#### **RULE VII: Voting at the Staff Assembly**

1. Each member of the Union shall have one vote. Decisions of the Staff Assembly shall be taken by a simple majority of the members present and voting, except in the cases where a two-thirds majority is required by the Constitution or by these Rules.

2. If a vote is equally divided, the proposal shall be considered as lost.

3. A proposal may be divided into parts. The parts of the proposals which have been adopted shall then all be put to the vote together.

4. When an amendment to a proposal is moved, the amendment shall be voted on first. When two or more amendments to a proposal are moved, the Staff Assembly shall first vote on the text deemed by the President to be furthest removed in substance from the original proposal.

5. If there are several proposals on the same subject, the Staff Assembly shall, unless it decides otherwise, vote on these proposals in the order in which they were submitted. After each vote, the Staff Assembly may decide whether to vote on the following proposal.

6. The Staff Assembly shall vote by a show of hands, unless it decides otherwise.

#### **RULE VIII: Records**

The record of meetings of the Staff Assembly shall be drawn up by the Secretariat of the Union and circulated to all members.

### **COUNCIL**

#### **RULE IX: Composition and election**

1. The Council shall consist of fifteen councillors elected by universal suffrage.

2. The Secretary-General fixes the date of the elections of the councillors and announces the elections four weeks before they are to be held. The procedure for holding the elections is set out in the annex to these Rules. Nominations shall be filed with the Secretariat of the Union not later than two weeks prior to the election. Each nomination must be signed by at least six members of the Union; it must be accompanied by a signed statement by the candidate to the effect that he or she will serve if elected.

3. An alphabetical list of candidates shall be published at least ten days before the election, specifying the nationality of each candidate, their grade and the unit to which they belong. A short presentation submitted by each candidate shall be published on this occasion.

4. Voting shall be by ballot papers, which shall be placed in ballot boxes made available in the halls of the UNESCO Headquarters buildings from 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., unless the Staff Assembly decides otherwise. Members of the Union working away from Headquarters and at the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), and members working at Headquarters but absent on the day of the election may vote by correspondence.

5. The counting of votes shall take place under the supervision of the tellers referred to in Rule VI of these Rules. In case of doubt, the tellers shall rule on the validity of ballot papers by a simple majority.

6. Subject to paragraph 2 of Article X of the Constitution, the candidates obtaining the greatest number of votes shall be declared elected until all the seats are filled. If two candidates receive the same number of votes, the election shall be decided by the drawing of lots organized by the tellers. The term of office of each member shall begin immediately upon his or her election and shall end on the election of his or her successor. Candidates may not be poll clerks or tellers for elections in which they are standing.

#### **RULE X: Local sections away from Headquarters**

1. A local section of the Union may be formed away from Headquarters whenever five members of the Union working at the same duty station so request the Secretary-General. Each local section with more than fifteen members, or two or more local sections which decide to group themselves together in order to reach this number, may elect a representative to the Council.

2. The local sections shall meet as often as necessary. They shall appoint from among their members an officer responsible for liaison with the Union at Headquarters. This officer, when visiting Headquarters, shall be fully entitled to attend meetings of the Council. Subject

to the agreement of the Secretary-General, the local sections may establish working relations with local sections of the staff associations of other international organizations.

**RULE XI: Re-election or election in the event of a vacancy**

1. If a vacancy occurs in the Council, and less than twelve members remain, the vacant posts shall be filled within two months through by-elections. The new members of the Council shall remain in office for the remainder of the term of office.
2. However, if a vacancy occurs less than three months before the elections to the Council, such a vacancy shall not give rise to by-elections.

**RULE XII: Functioning**

1. The Council shall meet at least once a month and whenever the Executive Bureau or one third of the councillors so request.
2. Meetings of the Council shall be held in public unless the Council decides otherwise. The Council may authorize any other person to take part and speak.
3. The provisional agenda of the Council shall be drawn up by the Secretary-General and circulated to councillors at least two working days before the meeting.
4. At each meeting, the Council shall elect from among its members the person who shall direct the discussions.
5. No quorum is required for meetings of the Council.
6. The conduct of business and voting shall be governed by Rules V and VII of these Rules.
7. Except where otherwise stipulated by these Rules, decisions shall be taken by simple majority of the members present and voting.
8. The members of the Union shall be informed of the Council's decisions by email.
9. The records of the meetings of the Council shall be drawn up by the Secretariat of the Union and circulated to all members.
10. The Council submits his annual report to the Ordinary Staff Assembly, based on the annual report of the Executive Bureau.

**RULE XIII: Working groups**

1. In accordance with Article XI.7 of the Constitution, the Executive Bureau shall establish such working groups as it deems necessary.
2. The terms of reference of each working group shall be defined by the Executive Bureau.
3. Each working group shall be composed of members of the Union. Each working group may call on associate members, as needed.
4. A member of the Executive Bureau shall preside *ex officio* over the work of working groups.
5. The first meeting of each working group shall be convened by the Secretary-General.
6. Working groups may enter into contact with the representatives of the Administration only through the intermediary of the President of the Union.

**EXECUTIVE BUREAU**

**RULE XIV: Election**

1. The Council shall elect by secret ballot, from among its members, the Executive Bureau, composed of at least five and no more than eight persons among whom the Council shall designate a President and a Secretary-General, who may not be of the same nationality. The other members of the Executive Bureau shall hold the title of chargé de mission and the Council shall determine their mandate, which may be modified as necessary.

2. At any time, the Council may redefine the mandates of the members of the Executive Bureau and, if necessary, modify the composition of the Executive Bureau.
3. Elections for the members of the Executive Bureau shall take place by secret ballot on the first working day following the election of the Council.
4. If a vacancy occurs in the Executive Bureau, the Council shall elect a new member by secret ballot.

#### **RULE XV: Functioning of the Executive Bureau**

1. The Executive Bureau shall meet when convened by the Secretary-General.
2. The Executive Bureau shall determine the frequency of its meetings and decide upon its methods of work.
3. Meetings of the Executive Bureau shall be open to members of the Council and the record of such meetings, once approved by the Executive Bureau, shall be sent to all Councillors.
4. The President, together with at least one other member of the Council, shall represent the Union at meetings and negotiations with the representatives of the Director-General. He or she shall make on behalf of the Executive Bureau an annual activity report which is submitted to the Council. The President shall also be the editor-in-chief of the Union's publications.
5. The Secretary-General shall be responsible for the proper functioning of the Union and may at any moment replace the President. He or she shall be responsible of the good administrative and financial functioning of the Union, especially of the Permanent Secretariat of the Union. He or she shall submit a written financial report to the Staff Assembly at each ordinary session.
6. In the event that the President or the Secretary-General is absent or unable to attend, any other member of the Executive Bureau may replace them temporarily.
7. The records of the meetings of the Executive Bureau shall be drawn up by the Permanent Secretariat of the Union and circulated to all members before the next meeting.

### **ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**

#### **RULE XVI: Associate members**

In order to maintain contact between members and associate members, a commission known as the Associate Members Commission (AMC) shall be established and shall be responsible, in close cooperation with the Secretary-General, for:

- (a) ensuring that associate members are informed of all activities that may concern them, by sending them all the publications of the Union;
- (b) studying, at the request of the Secretary-General, any questions affecting in the short or long term the collective or individual rights and interests of former staff members of UNESCO holding a retirement or disability pension;
- (c) encouraging associate members to participate in the Union's activities, both as beneficiaries and as organizers;
- (d) organizing activities that may be considered to be of special interest to associate members.

### **CHALLENGING OF ELECTIONS**

#### **RULE XVII: Challenging of elections**

1. During the two weeks following the publication of the results of an election to the Council, any member of the Union may contest the regularity of the election in a written document addressed to the Secretary-General and indicating their grounds for so doing.
2. The Secretary-General shall transmit the written challenge to the Council, which shall set up a Committee of Inquiry, composed of three members of the Union not belonging to the

Council, to give a ruling on the matter. The three members may not be elected from among the tellers and poll clerks having participated in the elections being challenged.

3. The Committee of Inquiry shall elect its chairperson and establish its rules of procedure.
4. The Committee of Inquiry shall hear the person challenging the election, if he or she so requests, and shall then submit a report to the Council within one month.
5. On the report of the Committee of Inquiry, the Council shall decide whether to validate or cancel the disputed election.
6. During the inquiry, the member whose election has been challenged shall continue in office.
7. If the election is cancelled, a new election shall take place as in the case of a vacancy.

## **REFERENDUM**

### **RULE XVIII: Referendum**

1. The referendum shall be held by secret ballot.
2. Voting shall be by ballot papers, which shall be placed in ballot boxes made available in the halls of the UNESCO Headquarters buildings from 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. unless the Staff Assembly or Council decides otherwise. Members of the Union working away from Headquarters and at IIEP, and members working at Headquarters but absent on the day of the ballot may vote by correspondence.
3. Nevertheless, the Staff Assembly or the Council may decide by a two-thirds majority that only members of the Union present at Headquarters shall be consulted if the urgency of the problem makes it impossible to organize voting by correspondence or if the matter under consideration does not concern members of the Union working away from Headquarters and at IIEP.
4. The Secretary-General shall announce the elections. The procedure for holding the elections is set out in the annex to these Rules. Voting shall take place not less than two weeks after the publication of the questions on which the referendum is to be held. However, when it has been decided by virtue of the preceding paragraph to restrict the consultation to members of the Union present at Headquarters, voting may take place at any time after the first day following the publication of the questions covered by the referendum.
5. The counting of votes shall take place under the supervision of the tellers referred to in Rule VI of these Rules. In case of doubt, the tellers shall rule on the validity of ballot papers by a simple majority.
6. Decisions shall be adopted by simple majority of the votes cast.

## **FAILURE TO PAY MEMBERSHIP FEES**

### **RULE XIX: Failure to pay membership fees**

1. Any member or associate member or Friend of the Union who has not paid their membership fees shall be regarded as having resigned from the Union two months after receiving a reminder from the Executive Bureau.
2. The member or associate member or Friend of the Union considered as having resigned in accordance with the preceding paragraph shall be restored to full membership after paying their membership fees for the current year.

## **REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION**

### **RULE XX: Revision of the Constitution**

1. Proposals for amendments to the Constitution shall be submitted in writing in the two working languages. The text of such proposals shall be sent to all members of the Union not

less than two weeks before the session of the Staff Assembly at which the proposals are to be discussed.

2. Any member of the Union may submit, in writing, amendments to such proposals not less than one week before the Staff Assembly. The text of these amendments shall be sent to all members of the Union in the two working languages at least two working days before the Staff Assembly.

3. Any such proposed amendment approved by the Staff Assembly by a two-thirds majority shall be submitted, within the following week, for ratification by the members of the Union by referendum. Amendments to the Constitution shall be adopted if ratified by a simple majority of the members voting.

## **WORKING LANGUAGES**

### **RULE XXI: Working languages**

1. The working languages of the Union are English and French.

2. At meetings of the Staff Assembly, any member of the Union may ask for a draft resolution under discussion to be translated into the other language.

3. The Constitution, the Rules of Procedure and Financial Regulations of the Union and any amendments thereto, the resolutions of the Staff Assembly and the decisions of the Council, decisions adopted by referendum and the annual report of the Executive Bureau shall be published in the two working languages. Except when the Executive Bureau decides otherwise, all other texts and reports shall be published in only one of the working languages.