

Section 1: Introductory

1. Name of the Union

The full name of the Union shall be the "Association of Professional Ambulance Personnel" hereinafter referred to in these Rules as the 'Union'.

2. Interpretation of Rules

2.1 These rules shall, except where the contrary is stated, be interpreted in accordance with definitions of certain expressions contained Section 21.

2.2 In the event of any question arising as to the interpretation of these rules, the question shall be referred to the Management Board, whose decision shall be conclusive and binding.

3. Anti-Discrimination Policy

The Union shall seek to ensure that discriminatory acts are not committed against any persons by the Union, or by its members or officers, on grounds of race, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, age or creed or social class.

Section 2: Registered Office

The Head Office of the Union shall be at:-

6 The Old Brewery,
The Charlton Estate,
Shepton Mallet,
Somerset,
BA4 5QE.

Section 3: Aims & Objectives

The Aims & Objectives of the Union shall be: -

- 3.1 To seek to ensure equality of treatment and fair representation for all members and to work for the elimination of discrimination on grounds of race, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, age or creed
- 3.2 To organise all those employed, directly or indirectly within those areas of the ambulance service which provide services to the public, whether in the public, private or voluntary sectors of the economy.
- 3.3 To improve the pay and conditions of members and promote their interests.
- 3.4 To seek to protect the rights of all members to be treated with dignity and respect irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, age or creed.
- 3.5 To foster fair relations between its members and their employers, to secure the settlement of disputes arising from members employment, and to participate in joint negotiating machinery.
- 3.6 To promote and improve the health, safety and welfare of members in the workplace.
- 3.7 Gain and preserve recognition of the professional status of its members and to work with member's employers to improve the service provided to the public by promoting and improving patient care irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, age or creed.
- 3.8 To promote greater employee, consumer and user involvement and representation in the delivery of patient health care irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, age or creed.
- 3.9 Promote the advancement and spreading of knowledge for the betterment of members in education and training within their profession.
- 3.10 To work with all other interested parties, individuals and organisations to maintain and improve the quality of service to the public.
- 3.11 To liaise with the United Kingdom Government, devolved administrations and all other levels of government on ambulance service related matters and to promote and monitor legislation for the benefit of members and the public.
- 3.12 To promote, safeguard and improve the interests and status of members and the Union as a whole.
- 3.13 To promote and establish a member-led union and to carry out and fulfil decisions made by members in a spirit of unity and accountability.
- 3.14 To promote fair representation in all the Union's structures for women, black members, disabled members, gender and sexuality what ever their grade.
- 3.15 To encourage solidarity and an effective working partnership between members, representatives, officers and all staff in the service of the Union and its agreed policies.

- 3.16 To promote and safeguard the rights of members to have an adequate opportunity to participate in the initiation and development of policy making through meetings, conferences, delegations or ballots, and to encourage the maximum democratic debate, together with the right to campaign to change policy, while at all times acting within the rules and agreed policy.
- 3.17 To foster good industrial relations with the Union's employees, to encourage and maintain good employment practices and to promote equal opportunities for all employees, irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, age or creed.
- 3.18 To devolve to regions policy making responsibility in relation to devolved administrations while maintaining the integrity and unity of the union in accordance with the rules and agreed policy.
- 3.19 To maintain and provide educational facilities and to encourage members to participate in them.
- 3.20 To indemnify fully subscribed members, to the level of cover held by the union for that purpose in respect of liability incurred in the exercise of their professional duties.
- 3.21 To provide minimum guaranteed standards of advice, representation and service.
- 3.22 To promote, maintain and contribute to schemes and/funds for the financial, physical and social welfare of members and their dependants.
- 3.23 To provide information and publications about the Union and its work on a regular basis and in language and design that can easily be understood.
- 3.24 Provide and maintain such services or duties for the benefit of members as may be approved by the National Governing Council (NGC) as a trade union may lawfully undertake.
- 3.25 To seek to ensure that members, representatives and staff are treated with dignity and respect at all times when participating in the Union's business. Also that members, representatives and staff seeking the Union's services provided by external suppliers are treated similarly by the providers of those services.
- 3.26 Protect and promote the interests of its members and to provide minimum guaranteed standards of advice, representation and service.
- 3.27 Maintain and administer funds for the purpose of the pursuance of the above said purposes
- 3.28 The Union shall not distribute any surplus of income over expenditure to its members or any other party except in the event of cessation of activities.

Section 4: Membership

4.1 Membership of the Union shall be in the following categories:-

4.1.1 **Full Member** - open to all Officers, Ambulance Staff and Control Room Assistants employed in Ambulance Services within the British Isles and elsewhere and such other individuals and categories of individuals associated thereto as the NGC may determine from time to time

4.1.2 **Founder Member** - individuals who donated the sum of £3 towards the setting-up of the Union and who shall be entitled to use the letters FMAPAP after their name. As a Full Member they shall pay the normal subscription as set down by Conference from time to time.

4.1.3 **Honorary Life Member** - individuals from within or without the Union recommended by the NGC in recognition of conspicuous services to the Union and may be awarded posthumously. Honorary members are precluded from holding national office within the Association and from voting at AGM's or Conferences.

4.1.4 **Retired Member** - individuals of the Union who have retired from work as ambulance staff either at the determined retirement age, or through ill health. They shall make a payment, the amount of which shall be determined by the Finance sub-committee from time to time

4.1.5 **Student Member** - individuals undertaking a course of study as a Paramedic Student not holding a contract of employment with an ambulance service or trust. They shall pay an annual subscription, the amount of which shall be determined by the Finance sub-committee from time to time.

4.1.6 **Voluntary Sector Member** - individuals who carry out ambulance duties on a voluntary basis.

4.2 Full membership shall commence on the date of registration by the Union. Applications shall be made at anytime through Head Office on a form provided for the purpose

4.3 Persons holding office with employers associations, other trade unions or representing such organisations are precluded from holding office with the Union or voting at AGM's or Conferences.

4.4 Full membership of the Union and receipt of benefits shall cease:

4.4.1 on receipt by the Union of a written notice of resignation and cancellation of any authority to deduct subscriptions.

4.4.2 when subscriptions have remained unpaid for three months.

4.4.3 when expelled from the Union through disciplinary means laid down by these Rules.

4.4.4 at cessation of their employment within an ambulance service except under Section 22 (Legal Assistance)

4.5 Any member owing more than 3 months subscriptions shall forfeit all rights to benefit through the Union and shall be precluded from voting at AGM's and Conferences except where dispensation is made by the NGC.

4.6 The Union reserves the right to refuse an application for membership, subject to NGC approval so to do.

Section 5: Subscriptions

These shall be fixed by the National Governing Council, and ratified by the Annual Delegate Conference.

5.1 The subscription rate shall be reviewed every year

5.2 The preferred method of payment shall be by Bank Automatic Clearing System (BACS), or by Deduction Of Contribution At Source (DOCAS), or by annual cash payment.

Section 6: National Governing Council

The National Governing Council (NGC) shall be the principle executive committee of the Union.

6.1 The primary objectives of the NGC shall be:-

6.1.1 to promote the policies of the Union and ensure that all members comply with the Rules of the Union. to appoint and transfer Officers, and to dismiss any Officer found guilty of fraud, gross neglect of duty or other such serious charge

6.1.2 to ensure that the funds of the Union are devoted to the purposes set forth in these Rules and, prevent any extravagant expenditure.

6.1.3 to rent office accommodation or purchase land or buildings in the name of the Union and may sell, let, exchange or mortgage said land or properties.

6.1.4 to have the power to raise funds by borrowing money on any real or personal property of the Union, or by bank overdraft.

6.1.5 to instruct the General Secretary to conduct prosecutions against any persons for misapplying or withholding any money or property of the Union.

6.1.6 to remove from office any Officer who fails to carry out their duties and, shall make prompt arrangements for their replacement.

6.1.7 to ensure that any member who has been found guilty of misapplying or withholding any money or property of the Union, as stated above, shall not be elected to any other office of the Union.

6.1.8 to suspend or expel any member of the Union, who in the opinion of the NGC, has acted in a manner contrary to the interests of the Union.

6.1.9 to conduct Disciplinary Hearings in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure as laid down in these Rules

6.1.10 to have the power to open or close any Chapter of the Union, appoint delegates to attend any meetings or conferences and determine the expenses to be paid to them

6.1.11 empowered to convene meetings or conferences as the need arises.

6.1.12 to present an annual written report of their activities and produce a statement of accounts

6.1.13 to have the power to select and appoint sub-committees as the need arises to undertake specific tasks

6.1.14 shall appoint from within the NGC at the pre-Conference meeting, a person to act as Deputy Chairman for the duration of the Conference.

6.2 The nationally elected Officers of the NGC must have served at least six months on the NGC prior to their election and shall be the:-

Chairman (3 years)

General Secretary (5 years)

Assistant General Secretary (3 years)

Finance Officer (5 years)

Assistant Finance Officer (3 years)

Administrative Officer (3 years)

6.2.1 **Chairman** who shall:-

- (a) act as a trustee of the Union.
- (b) take the Chair at all meetings of the NGC, Management Board and, Annual Delegates Conference
- (c) maintain order and see that the Rules are observed
- (d) sign the Minutes and any other such documents as required.
- (e) have a casting vote only at the meetings mentioned in 6.2.1(b) above.
- (f) have the right to attend and speak at any Regional or Chapter meetings of the Union but not to vote.
be empowered to make executive decisions, with the consent of the NGC, relating to the well-being of the Union.

6.2.2 **General Secretary** who shall:-

- (a) act as a trustee of the Union.
- (b) attend all meetings of the NGC and Management Board and shall have the right to speak and vote on any Union business.
- (c) prepare reports and present them to the NGC, Management Board or Annual Delegates Conference
- (d) be the day-to-day manager of the Union and its employees and, as such shall be answerable to the NGC for his actions.
- (e) be empowered to make executive decisions relating to the designation of specific tasks to Officers, who in his opinion meet the criteria for the specific task.
- (f) be empowered to make executive decisions with the consent of the NGC relating to the appointment of Lay Field Officers and to supervise their training.
- (g) be empowered to make executive decisions with the consent of the NGC relating to the spending of monies for the benefit of the Union.
- (h) be empowered to make executive decisions, with the consent of the NGC, relating to the well-being of the Union.

6.2.3 Assistant General Secretary who shall:-

- (a) undertake specific duties as assigned by the General Secretary.
- (b) shall attend meetings of the NGC and shall have the right to speak and vote.
- (c) shall attend any other meeting as directed by the General Secretary in an observation capacity.
- (d) at the discretion of the NGC, shall act-up for the General Secretary only for long periods of absence.
- (e) in the event of having to act-up for the General Secretary, will become a temporary trustee of the Union for that specific period.

6.2.4 Finance Officer who shall:-

- (a) act as a trustee of the Union.
- (b) keep the accounts of the Union, make payments as necessary and see that all monies received are regularly paid into the bank.
- (c) keep such books, vouchers, documents and receipts as are required and, prepare statements for all meetings of the NGC.
- (d) prepare and present to the membership at the end of each financial year a statement of income and expenditure of the Union and give such assistance to the Auditors as required
- (e) be empowered to make executive decisions, with the consent of the NGC relating to the income and expenditure of finances for the benefit of the Union
- (f) prepare and transmit to the Certification Officer all Returns required by Acts of Parliament or the Regulations.
- (g) attend all meetings of the NGC, Management Board and the Annual Delegates Conference and shall have the right to speak and vote.

6.2.5 Assistant Finance Officer who shall:-

- (a) undertake specific duties as assigned by the Finance Officer.
- (b) shall attend meetings of the NGC and shall have the right to speak and vote.
- (c) shall attend any other meeting as directed by the General Secretary in an observation capacity.
- (d) at the discretion of the NGC, shall act-up for the Finance Officer only for long periods of absence.
- (e) in the event of having to act-up for the Finance Officer, will become a temporary trustee of the Union for that specific period.

6.2.6 Administrative Officer who shall:-

- (a) be responsible for the recording and distribution of Minutes at all NGC and Management Board meetings
- (b) co-ordinate, but not necessarily attend any sub-committee meeting of the NGC in an advisory capacity.
- (c) be responsible for the procedure for the conduct of national or local ballots in accordance with current legislation.
- (d) ensure that these Rules and other specified documents are kept up-to-date, making necessary amendments as dictated by the NGC, Conference or Act of Parliament.
- (e) chair the Conference Organising Team (COT) and the Standing Orders Committee (SOC) before and during Conference
- (f) undertake any special duties delegated by the General Secretary

6.3. The other elected members of the NGC for two year tenure shall be:-

- (a) 11 Regional Representatives from England (see Appendix 1).
- (b) 3 Regional Representatives from Scotland
- (c) 2 Regional Representatives from Wales.
- (d) 1 Regional Representative from Northern Ireland.
- (e) 1 Regional Representative from the Channel Islands.
- (f) 2 Officer Representatives.
- (g) 2 Control Room Assistant Representatives.
- (h) 2 Patient Care Services Representatives
- (i) 1 Other to represent any administrative or technical grades
- (j) 1 Representative from the Private Sector.

6.4 Other Officers may be required to attend the NGC from time to time, either in a consultative capacity or to give reports, and may include:-

- (a) Publication editors.
- (b) Chairman, Health & Safety Sub-committee
- (c) Industrial Relations consultant.
- (d) Press Officer
- (e) Justice & Advocacy Representative
- (f) Welfare consultant.
- (g) Lay Field Officers

Section 7: Sub-committees

The NGC shall instigate the formation of sub-committees to expedite and enhance the duties of the NGC.

The current sub-committees are the:-

- Finance
- Health & Safety
- Officers & Control Room Assistants
- Conference Organising/Standing Orders
- Patient Transport Services
- Private Sector Members

7.1 The **Finance sub-committee** shall comprise of the:-

- Finance Officer,
- General Secretary,
- Assistant Finance Officer and
- 2 members elected by the NGC from the NGC.

7.1.1 They may elect from their membership the following positions:-

- Chairman
- Secretary

7.1.2 The sub-committee shall meet on day prior to the NGC and at the discretion of the Finance Officer.

7.2 The **Health & Safety sub-committee** shall comprise of:-

the Health & Safety consultant, and appointed members, one from the existing 14 Regions of the Union.

7.2.1 They shall elect from their membership the following positions:-

- Chairman who shall have a seat (non-voting) on the NGC.
- Secretary

7.2.2 They shall assemble at the Conference venue and only in part or in whole on other occasions at the discretion of the sub-committee Chairman.

7.3. The **Officers & Control Room Assistants committee** shall comprise of:-

1 Officer from each of the 4 representing countries and Channel Islands within the Union.

1 Control Room Assistant from each of the 4 representing countries and Channel Islands within the Union.

7.3.1 They shall elect from their membership the following positions:-

Chairman

Secretary

2 Officers and 2 CRA's who shall have seats on the NGC.

7.3.2 They shall assemble at the Conference venue and only in part or in whole on other occasions at the discretion of the sub-committee Chairman.

7.4 The **Conference Organising Team (COT)** shall comprise of:-

(a) the Administrative Officer who shall act as Chairman,

(b) a member of the Finance sub-committee, and

(c) 2 members of the local Region or Chapter where Conference of that year is being held.

(d) any other member attending Conference as may be requested by the Administrative Officer.

7.5 The **Patient Transport Services** sub-committee shall comprise of: -

1 member from each of the 4 representing countries and the Channel Islands within the Union.

7.5.1 they shall elect from their membership the following positions: -

Chairman who shall have a seat on the NGC.

Secretary

7.5.2 they shall assemble at the Conference venue and only in part or whole on other occasions at the discretion of the sub-committee Chairman.

7.6 The **Private Sector Members** sub-committee should be representative of all Private Ambulance Services, with a seat being available for 1 representative from each Private Company with three or more members: -

7.6.1 they shall elect from their membership the following positions: -

Chairman who shall have a seat on the NGC.

Secretary

7.6.2 they shall assemble at the Conference venue and only in part or whole on other occasions at the discretion of the sub-committee Chairman.

Section 8: Management Board

8.1 The Management Board of the Union shall consist of the:-

Chairman,
General Secretary,
Finance Officer,
Administrative Officer in a non-voting capacity and,
2 members from the NGC, elected every 2 years by the NGC.

- 8.1.1 It shall execute policy as decreed at the Annual Delegates Conference and by the National Governing Council to maintain the creditability of the Union.
- 8.1.2 It shall be responsible for the legal and lawful function of the Union.
- 8.1.3 It shall meet at least three times per year at which at least two trustees shall be present.
- 8.1.4 It may request any member of the Union or third party to provide a report or attend a meeting of the Management Board for a specific purpose
- 8.1.5 It shall have the right to make executive decisions on the day-to-day running of the Union

Section 9: Regional Councils

Regional Councils shall be established in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Channel Islands and in England, having due respect for either geographical or employing authority boundaries.

9.1 If a Regional Council is established, it shall consist of:-

- (a) a Chairman and Secretary who shall be elected bi-annually by ballot from the membership within the Region.
- (b) representatives of each constituent Chapter Council up to a maximum of three.

9.2 Each Chairman (or in their absence, the Secretary) shall have a seat on the National Governing Council.

9.2.1 in the absence of a Regional Council, the Regional Representative shall be elected bi-annually by ballot from the membership within the region.

9.2.2 in the event of only one person being nominated for the position of Regional Representative, no ballot is required.

9.3 The Regional Council shall have the power to co-opt members having due respect to its function and the representation of members within.

9.4 The Regional Council shall be responsible for:-

- (a) overseeing the Chapters in their Region,
- (b) ensuring that the said Chapters are administered correctly,
- (c) acting as a central 'court' for any necessary hearings
- (d) any other matters requested by a constituent Chapter, and
- (e) in the event of a matter not being resolved at Regional level, referring it to the General Secretary.

9.5 The dates of the meetings should be notified to Head Office and a record kept in the form of Minutes of any business undertaken. A copy of the Minutes should be sent to Head Office as soon as practicable.

9.6 All costs incurred by Regional Councils will be paid in full from the Head Office, when expense forms and receipts are received by the Finance Officer from the said Regional Council members

Section 10: Chapter Councils

10.1 Chapter Councils consist of a number of members in an area. This area shall be determined either by geographical or employing authority boundaries. Each Chapter shall establish a Chapter Council consisting of:-

Chairman
Secretary
1 Station Representative from each constituent Station

10.2 Officials of a Chapter Council, except Station Representatives, shall be elected bi-annually by ballot from the membership within the Chapter's area

10.3 It shall be the responsibility of the sitting Chairman, or in the case of a new Chapter being formed, the Administrative Officer, to ensure that the ballot is carried out in a democratic manner.

10.4 The ballot shall be conducted in such a way as the result shall be known at the Chapter's Annual General Meeting.

10.5 Where possible, an Annual General Meeting shall be held prior to the National AGM each year for the adoption of previously circulated written reports, the conduct of relevant business and where applicable, the announcement of ballot results.

10.6 The need for an Annual General Meeting shall be incumbent on at least 25% of the Chapter agreeing to be present, so that matters requiring a show of hands, an acceptable cross section of the members are present

10.7 The Chapter Council shall:-

10.7.1 co-ordinate local negotiations conducted by the Station Representatives in its area.

10.7.2 establish and maintain adequate representation for its members in each of their work places.

10.7.3 keep the Station Representatives informed of any matters relating to or concerning the staff they represent

10.7.4 maintain a record of all members showing the places of work and the type of work they are employed in.

10.7.5 hold meetings as the need arises.

10.7.6 be responsible for the day-to-day running and welfare of the Chapter

10.7.7 shall send to Head Office all reports relating to Disciplinary and Grievance cases that have been handled by the Chapter

Section 11: Station Representatives

11.1 In Stations where the membership is three or more, members shall elect a representative and a deputy.

11.2 Those elected shall serve for one year and may stand for re-election each year.

11.3 The elected member's names, places of work and membership numbers must be notified to Head Office through a Chapter official, who will verify the member's credentials.

11.4 Station Representatives shall:-

11.4.1 represent the interest of all members on the Station at any Disciplinary or Grievance hearing, dispute or negotiation at local level.

11.4.2 attend meetings of the Chapter Council and report in full all things affecting the members they represent.

11.4.3 seek advice from higher authority within the Chapter on any matter they feel they cannot handle and refer all reports to the Chapter Council.

Section 12: Annual Delegate Conference

The Annual Delegate Conference (ADC) shall be the supreme policy making body of the Union.

12.1 The ADC shall be made up from:-

12.1.1 all members of the National Governing Council

12.1.2 delegates from all Chapters on a ratio of one delegate per 100 members, to a maximum of three delegates

12.2 The Annual Delegate Conference (ADC), under the direction of the NGC, shall be organised by the Conference Organising Team (COT). The ADC shall take place in the month February or no more than 1 year and 1 month from the preceding ADC.

12.3 The location of the ADC will be negotiated with a group or chain of hotels.

12.4 Tenders to host the ADC will be sought by the COT.

Section 13: Disciplinary Procedure

13.1 Any member of the Union can be subject to a charge brought against them either by an individual, Chapter, Region or the National Governing Council. The allegation must be in the written form, addressed to the Management Board and, may include:-

- Acting outside the remit or authority of their position
- Discredit
- Financial jeopardy
- Libel/Slander
- Theft
- Misrepresentation
- Incompetence
- Failure to follow directions
- Deliberate racist or sexist act towards a third party.

This list is not complete and may be added to or amended.

13.2 Upon receipt of such a charge, the following Disciplinary Procedure shall be enacted:-

13.3 Stage 1 – Investigation

13.3.1 One member of the National Governing Council of the Union shall be appointed to carry out an initial investigation of the charge.

13.3.2 If they agree there are sufficient grounds of complaint, then Stage 2 shall then be enacted by the Administrative Officer

13.4 Stage 2 – Hearing

13.4.1 The member concerned shall then be informed within 7 days in writing that a charge of misconduct has been brought against them.

13.4.2 A disciplinary panel shall be appointed consisting of:-

- a trustee, who will Chair the panel,
- a member of the National Governing Council, and
- an officer of the Association who is not known to the member being investigated.

13.4.3 A suitable venue shall be selected at which to carry out the Disciplinary Hearing and should be within practical travelling distance for all parties involved.

13.4.4 The member under investigation shall have the right to be represented by another member of the Association at the Hearing

13.4.5 The Hearing shall be held within 14 days from the Administrative Officer's decision to proceed with the Hearing unless an extension is mutually agreed by both parties.

13.4.6 If the member fails to attend the Disciplinary Hearing, the panel may proceed to deal with the matter in the member's absence

13.4.7 The member shall be notified in writing within 7 days of the Disciplinary Panel's decision.

13.5 Stage 3 – Appeal

13.5.1 Any member against whom formal disciplinary action has been taken shall have the right of appeal, which must be submitted in writing to the Management Board within 10 days from the Hearing.

13.5.2 An Appeal Panel shall be appointed consisting of:-

a Trustee (not the Disciplinary Hearing Officer)
a member of the National Governing Council (not involved at Stage 2)
an officer of the Association (not involved at Stage 2)

13.5.3 A suitable venue shall be selected at which to carry out the Appeal Hearing and should be within practical travelling distance for all parties concerned

13.5.4 The member shall have only one appeal, the result of which shall be binding on all members.

13.5.5 In the event of the member failing to turn up at the Appeal Hearing, the member will be deemed to have abandoned the appeal unless exceptional circumstances prevail.

13.6 The only penalties which may be imposed at any stage of the disciplinary procedure are:-

13.6.1 Reprimand.

13.6.2 Suspension from holding any office or representative position within the Union for a stated period.

13.6.3 Debarment from election to an office or representative position within the Union

13.3.4 Expulsion from the Union.

13.7 As a result of a Disciplinary Hearing, the National Governing Council may instruct the General Secretary to initiate legal proceedings on behalf of the Union.

13.8 In the event of one or more members of the Management Board being investigated, the National Governing Council will initiate a special Disciplinary Committee consisting of four members from the NGC

13.9 The special Disciplinary Committee will be initiated by the Chairpersons of the NGC sub-committees.

13.10 At all times, the disciplinary procedure will operate within the guidelines as set out above and, in line with the interests of natural justice

13.11 All members are requested to assist in an investigation without let or hindrance.

Section 14: Grievance Procedure

14.1 Any fully paid up member of the Union may lodge a grievance with the Administrative Officer in the first instance.

14.2 It shall be the responsibility of the Administrative Officer to consider the nature of the grievance and, if thought appropriate, delegate to the Chapter Secretary, Regional Representative or other appropriate person of the member evoking the grievance for investigation.

14.3 If a matter is not resolved at either Chapter or Regional level, it shall be referred back to the Administrative Officer with a full written report. An officer of the Union shall then be appointed to further investigate the matter.

14.4 If the matter is of such significance that the Administrative Officer deems that the investigation should be initiated at national level, a trustee/officer shall be appointed to investigate.

14.5 At the conclusion of an investigation the grievance shall be placed before the Management Board for a decision.

14.6 In all matters the Management Board's decision shall be final.

Section 15: Auditors

The NGC shall appoint a firm of Chartered Accountants, to be ratified at the Annual Delegate Conference each year.

15.1 They shall: -

15.1.1 audit the accounts of the Union once a year and at any other such time as requested by the NGC.

15.1.2 prepare the Annual Balance Sheet and Statement of Accounts

15.1.3 also carry out any other duty, inspection or inquiry which the NGC may request from time to time.

Section 16: Ballots

Full postal ballots of the membership shall be undertaken when:-

16.1 The election of nationally elected Officers is required.

16.2 National industrial action is called for. Any form of industrial action can only be taken after a full postal ballot of the membership and must be at least 60% of the ballot returns.

16.3 Local industrial action is called for. Any form of industrial action can only be taken after a full postal ballot of the membership and must be at least 60% of the ballot returns

16.4 If the opinion of its members is required and shall only be carried out at the discretion of the Management Board.

16.5 It is deemed necessary to dissolve the Union.

Section 17: Quorum

In all matters, this Union recognises a quorum as being one more than half of those in post and entitled to vote.

Section 18: Affiliation to and of Other Bodies

The Union shall have no affiliations with any body that infringes its independence, or makes the Union tied to any rule or action not approved by the Annual Delegate Conference. This Union may make loose associations with other organisations for mutual benefits.

Section 19: Political Fund

The Union shall have no political fund, or contribute as a donation, any monies into any political organisation.

Section 20: Alteration to Rules

These Rules may only be altered or added to by resolution of the Annual Delegate Conference.

20.1 The NGC may make a temporary alteration to the Rules in order to comply with new legislation etc.; however, ratification must be sought at the next Annual Delegate Conference after the temporary alteration

Section 21: Interpretation to Rules

In all matters relating to the interpretation to the above Rules, confirmation must be sought from the principal officers of the Union and their decision will be final.

Except where the context indicates to the contrary, all words denoting one gender shall be deemed to include the other gender and all words denoting the singular number shall be deemed to include the plural, and vice versa, and the following expressions shall have the following meanings:

ADDRESS means the usual place at which a member is expected to receive postal communication.

FAIR REPRESENTATION is the broad balance of representation of members of the electorate, taking into account such factors as age and low pay, the balance between full time and part time workers, manual and non-manual workers, different occupations, skills, race, sexual orientation, disability and gender identity.

FINANCIAL YEAR means the period from 1 January to 31 December in any calendar year.

HEAD OFFICE means that office designated by the National Executive Council as the principal administrative office of the Union in respect of any particular member.

INDUSTRIAL ACTION shall have the meaning attributed to it under the Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act 1978 or any statutory successor of that Act.

LAY MEMBER means a member who is not also an employee of the Union.

MEMBER means a person falling within any of the categories of membership set out in Section 4.

MEMBER'S PARTNER is a person cohabiting with a member where the home of the partnership comprises a single family unit.

PROFESSIONAL AND SECTIONAL BODY means a body recognised as such by the National Governing Council.

PROPORTIONALITY means the representation of women and men in fair proportion to the relevant number of female and male members comprising the electorate.

Section 22: Legal Assistance

The National Governing Council shall have the power to grant legal assistance to all members who qualify under 22.1 below arising out of, or in the course of their employment, or in proceeding to and from their place of employment, or whilst on Union business.

22.1 The following qualifications shall apply:-

22.1.1 Continuous membership for at least 13 weeks prior to the member knowing that they are In need of assistance.

22.1.2 No arrears of contributions.

22.1.3 In other exceptional circumstances, the NGC will have absolute discretion to grant assistance

22.2 The following conditions shall apply:-

22.2.1 The member seeking legal assistance must make application through the Union's Head Office on the appropriate form(s) designed for that purpose.

22.2.2 The member must not assume that their legal assistance has been approved until they receive written confirmation from a principal officer of the Union.

22.2.3 The member must continue to pay their subscriptions whilst their case is proceeding, unless special dispensation has been applied for and granted in writing.

22.2.4 Advice and/or assistance may be provided by a lay officer or consultant of the Union, or by a solicitor and counsel appointed through the Union, at the absolute discretion of the NGC

22.2.5 The Union shall not be held accountable for any costs, charges or other payments in connection with legal action or advice either incurred or made on behalf of the Union without consent from the NGC.

22.3 The Union reserves the right to withdraw legal assistance from a member whose case would, on advice from the Union's legal advisors, have little or no chance of success, or would seem to be vexatious or frivolous.

22.3 The Union reserves the right to withdraw all benefits from a member who has transgressed the above Rules

Section 23: Publications

23.1 The Union's news publications shall be supplied to its members by post. Other copies may be sent direct to individuals or groups upon request or at the discretion of Head Office staff.

23.2 The Editors of news publications shall be appointed by the NGC, and be responsible to the General Secretary.

23.3 The Editors shall be allowed to attend general meetings of the NGC, to make reports and report items from it.

23.4 Editors must absence themselves from any meetings of the Union if requested to do so by the presiding Chairman

23.5 The Editorial staff shall have editorial freedom to report the news, and to be critical of the Union when it is felt constructively necessary.

23.6 Editors may be removed from office by the General Secretary if they bring the Union into disrepute or for some other substantial reason to be ratified by the NGC.

23.7 Editors may lodge a Grievance under Section 14.

Section 24: Dissolution

The Union shall be dissolved if a majority of 80% of the members voting by secret ballot so determine. Any assets remaining after all liabilities have been settled shall be disposed of as the majority of members present and voting at a Conference of the Union called for that purpose may decide.

Regional Representatives - England

Each Region shall elect a Chairman and a Secretary from its membership. Each Chairman (or in their absence, the Secretary) shall have a seat on the National Governing Council as the Regional Representative.

1.	North East	2.	North West
3.	Yorkshire	4.	East Midlands
5.	West Midlands	6.	East of England
7.	London	8.	South East Coast
9.	South Central	10.	Great Western
11.	South Western		