



CONSTITUTION OF THE YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF BRITAIN

Updated at the 51st Congress August 2023

“The League member shall be a lover of freedom and an enemy of oppression and believe that real freedom is possible only under Socialism.

The League member shall serve and celebrate the working peoples of Britain selflessly as a true patriot and reject all chauvinistic and prejudicial ideologies.

The League member shall believe in the international fraternity of humankind and the common interests of all youth, and devote his or her energy to forging the unity of youth in the struggle for a better future.

The League member shall regard him or herself as part of the British labour movement, which has been built by the struggle and unselfish efforts of the working people of past and present generations.

The League member shall be a foremost fighter for social justice for youth, for all those things that are the right of young people and that go to make life worthwhile.

The League member shall at all times strive to a set a personal example of working class moral steadfastness, courage, and strength of character”

- Article IV, Principles

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I. Name and Basis of the Organisation

- a) The organisation shall be known as the Young Communist League of Britain (referred to hereafter as “*the League*”).
- b) The League is a revolutionary youth organisation, which operates on the basis of the creative application of Marxism-Leninism.
- c) The League is organisationally independent; it decides its own policy, controls its own finances and elects its own structures. It is the youth organisation of the Communist Party of Britain (hereafter referred to as “the Communist Party”).
- d) The organisation is based on the principle of democratic centralism.
- e) The emblem of the organisation shall be a red roundel with a thick black outline in which it shall read PEACE, JOBS AND SOCIALISM in curved white text. In the foreground of the red roundel there shall be depicted a silhouette of a young man and woman bearing a white flag with the hammer and sickle, symbol of the international working class, and the letters YCL in red within it

II. Aims

The Aims of the League To fight for peace, democracy and Socialism in accordance with the strategy set out in the Communist Party’s programme Britain’s Road to Socialism, and to build mass support for this strategy among young people.

III. Principles

- a) The League member shall be a lover of freedom and an enemy of oppression and believe that real freedom is possible only under Socialism.
- b) The League member shall serve and celebrate the working peoples of Britain selflessly as a true patriot and reject all chauvinistic and prejudicial ideologies.
- c) The League member shall believe in the international fraternity of humankind and the common interests of all youth, and devote his or her energy to forging the unity of youth in the struggle for a better

future.

d) The League member shall regard him or herself as part of the British labour movement, which has been built by the struggle and unselfish efforts of the working people of past and present generations.

e) The League member shall be a foremost fighter for social justice for youth, for all those things that are the right of young people and that go to make life worthwhile.

f) The League member shall at all times strive to set a personal example of working class moral steadfastness, courage, and strength of character

IV. Mottos

The Mottos and fighting slogans of the League shall be:

- *“Peace, Jobs and Socialism in our Lifetime”* and
- *“Conquer Your Future”*

V. Pledge

In accordance with these Aims and Principles the new member shall upon entry to full membership of the League take the following Pledge:

“In taking my place in the ranks of the Young Communist League, I pledge that I shall at all times strive to be worthy of the League. I will carry out conscientiously my duties as set forth in the Aims and Principles of the League. If by any word or deed I bring discredit to the League, may I be regarded as unworthy of my place in its ranks”

VI. Structure

a) The sovereign body of the League shall be the Congress.

b) Between Congresses the sovereign body shall be the Central Committee (hereafter referred to as “the CC”).

c) The CC shall be elected by Congress.

d) The branch shall be the basic democratic unit of the League.

VII. Membership

- a)** Membership is open to all within the age limit that support the aims of the League and abide by this constitution.
- b)** The upper age limit shall be 29 and membership shall terminate at the end of the year in which members reach their 29th birthday. There shall be a lower age limit of 12. Dispensation may be granted by the CC to members over the age of 29 years who wish to continue in League membership.
- c)** Branches may refuse admission to the League for a period not exceeding two months from an application to join, subject to the next CC meeting.
- d)** Members shall pay their dues by an annual subscription.
- e)** Members shall be expected to:
 - Sell, read and encourage other young people to read Challenge and other League publications, and contribute to them.
 - Members shall be encouraged to read and support the Morning Star.
 - Participate in the work of the League.
 - Belong to their student or trade union and help to develop these organisations.
 - Play an active, helpful and constructive and democratic part in other campaigning organisations.
 - Improve their political knowledge and understanding of Marxism-Leninism, take part in the discussion and formulation of League policy.
 - Win support for the aims of the League, and win new members to it.
 - Join the Communist Party wherever possible.
 - Vote in elections in which they are entitled.
- f)** All new members shall be subject to a period of candidate

membership of at least 3 months commencing from the point at which their admission as such is accepted by the branch. During the period of candidate membership individuals will:

- i. Be required to demonstrate their ability perform the membership duties set out in Subsection e) above and adhere to the principles of the League;
- ii. Not have the right, set out in Article VIII subsection c) below, to vote or stand in elections in the League or to serve on Commissions or Advisory Groups; and,
- iii. Be required to pay membership dues as set out in Subsection d) above.

At the end of a successful completion of the period of candidate membership, individuals will be admitted to full membership of the League which shall be confirmed by the branch secretary in writing. Should it be necessary and appropriate in the view of the branch, the period of candidate membership may be extended by a further 3 months with the consent of the branch. Where an individual fails to successfully complete a period of candidate membership, their candidate status will be withdrawn and they will not be admitted into full membership of the League. The CC shall be notified of all individuals who fail to successfully complete their candidate membership. Individuals who are refused full membership of the League by the branch shall have the right to appeal to the CC. Individuals who have previously failed to successfully complete a period of candidate membership shall not be precluded from applying for membership of the League again in future.

VIII. Internal Democracy

- a) Congress decides policy for the whole League.
- b) The CC shall work for the implementation of all decisions of Congress. It shall encourage all League bodies and members to

carry out the decisions of Congress and of the CC. The CC shall be accountable to Congress.

c) All League members shall have the right to vote and stand as candidates in elections provided for in accordance with this constitution.

d) All decisions at League meetings shall be made on the basis of a simple majority vote except where otherwise stated in this constitution. The chairperson shall participate in the vote. In the case of a tied vote, the amendment or proposal shall fall.

IX. Congress

a) The Congress shall be convened by the CC biennially. It shall decide League policy.

b) Congress shall be composed of delegates elected by the branches. Delegates' entitlement shall be allocated by the CC on the basis of representation in proportion to membership. Branches shall discuss the Congress at specially convened meetings for which all members shall, by absolute majority vote, make nominations for the CC, and by simple majority vote, submit resolutions and amendments to draft resolutions and elect delegates to Congress.

c) The Congress shall form a Congress Working Committee to assist with the practical and organisational side of its activity.

d) After the Congress, the old CC shall be responsible for the implementation of Congress decisions until the first meeting of the new CC. It shall organise the first meeting of the new CC, at a date no later than two months after the Congress.

e) Branches shall convene a report-back meeting no later than two months after the Congress for which all members must receive at least ten days' notice.

f) Full details of Congress procedures shall be explained in the Congress Standing Orders.

g) The CC shall have powers to convene a Special Congress.

h) The CC must convene a Special Congress at the request of not less than one third of branches.

X. The Central Committee

- a)** The CC shall meet monthly and shall meet if a majority of CC members demand it.
- b)** Between Congress, the CC shall have the power to decide on new policy matters when events make this necessary, whenever possible consulting branches and initiating discussion beforehand.
- c)** Any CC member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings without submitting a written apology shall be automatically deemed to have resigned from the CC, unless a satisfactory reason can be established after discussion with the CC member.
- d)** The CC shall carry out the policy of the League in line with the decisions of the Congress, and assist the work of branches.
- e)** The CC shall elect such office bearers as are necessary to conduct the work of the League and the editorial team of Challenge. This shall include, but shall not be limited to, the General Secretary, Chair, Treasurer, Membership Officer and Communications Officer. The CC shall also elect an Executive Committee (“EC”) from among its own members.
- f)** The EC shall have the responsibility for giving prompt and effective leadership in between meetings of the CC. The work of the EC shall be subject to control by the CC.
- g)** Where possible, the CC shall establish Commissions and Advisory Groups to undertake specific areas of work; these will not be policy-making bodies. Commissions and Advisory Groups are formed by the CC, which appoints a convenor from each Commission or Advisory Group (who may or may not be an CC member). Convenors should submit a report of work of their Commission to each CC meeting. League members should attend their respective Commissions whenever possible.
- h)** The CC shall be responsible for the production of Challenge and other League publications.

- i) The CC may co-opt members to form not more than one third of the CC's full membership.
- j) The CC shall manage the central funds of the League.
- k) District or Nation Committees shall be entitled to elect a standing observer delegate to meetings of the CC. The delegate shall not have voting rights.
- l) District or Nation Committees shall be entitled to submit items and proposals to the agenda of the CC for consideration

XI. Nations

- a) League members shall be enrolled in an English District ("District"), Scotland or Wales-Cymru ("Nations") on the basis of their branch or place of residence.
- b) Where a District or Nation is properly constituted by the CC, they shall organise a District or Nation structure to support and coordinate the work of branches in the area.
- c) In each constituted District or Nation a congress shall be convened every two years. This congress shall be composed of delegates from branches in the District or Nation, in accordance with their numerical strength, on a basis to be determined by the District or National Committee in consultation with the CC. The standing orders for District and Nation Congresses shall be issued by the CC and updated in consultation with District and Nation Committees.
- d) The District or Nation congress shall discuss and take decisions on the implementation of national policy in the District or Nation.
- e) The Scottish and Welsh Congresses in addition shall also discuss, take decisions and formulate policies for Scotland and Wales-Cymru in accordance with the general lines of policy decided at the All-Britain Congress.
- f) The District or Nation congress shall elect from nominations made by branches a District or Nation Committee.
- g) The District or Nation Committee shall, on the basis of national policy and the decisions of the District or Nation Congress, guide and

improve the work of the League organisations in the District or Nation and manage the District or Nation funds of the League.

h) The District or Nation Committee, at its first meeting after election, shall elect a District Secretary, Chair, Treasurer and other relevant officers.

l) The District or Nation Congress shall also elect a District or National Organiser from nominations made by branches. Where the District or Nation structure is not yet properly constituted, the National Organiser shall be elected either by an aggregate of all League members in the area or shall be appointed by the CC, as determined appropriate by the CC. The District or National Organiser shall be responsible for supporting the work of the District or Nation Committee and coordinating the work of members and branches in the area. The District or National Organiser shall be accountable to the District or Nation Committee. Where a District or Nation Organiser resigns, is removed by the District or Nation Committee or the position otherwise becomes vacant, the District or Nation Committee may appoint a member of the District or Nation Committee to the position on an interim basis until the next District or Nation Congress.

j) The District or Nation Committee and Organiser shall submit regular written reports in advance of each meeting of the CC. The CC shall regularly review the development of the League in all Districts and Nations.

XII. Branches

a) Members shall be organised in branches, which are constituted by the CC.

b) A branch may be formed by at least three League members on the basis of territory, workplace or campus. It elects a branch secretary.

c) All branches must be kept informed of League activity and policy.

d) Each branch shall convene an Annual General Meeting to which all members must receive at least ten days' written notice. The AGM shall elect such officers as it deems necessary and where necessary a branch

committee.

e) Branches shall be expected to:

- Organise League activities in their area, workplace or place of study.
- Produce a programme of political, educational, social and cultural activity.
- Organise the widest possible distribution of Challenge and other League publications. Critical discussions of and contributions to these publications should be encouraged inside the branch.
- Use all available means to publicise League activities locally.
- Work in conjunction with other progressive organisations wherever possible in local campaigns.
- Ensure that all members receive their card, arrange the branch funds and ensure that members' subscriptions and the branch's financial commitments are paid.

f) Branches shall be entitled to submit items and proposals to the agenda of their District or Nation Committee for consideration.

g) Branches shall submit regular written reports in advance of each meeting of their District or Nation Committee.

XIII. Conduct

Members shall:

a) Accept and publicly support the aims, decisions and policies of the League as outlined in our Constitution and our programme Britain's Road to Socialism. To participate in the work of the League, the formulation of its policies and its democratic structures.

b) Serve the interests of the League, the Communist Party and the working people above any personal interests. Learn from the people and take on board their demands and opinions. Make clear any personal views in public discussions.

c) Be honest and committed to the League, its structures and members, while practising criticism and self-criticism with a view to helping the organisation and improving individual and collective work.

- d)** Behave in the League as they would in their school, community or workplace. Treat all members as they would wish to be treated, with mutual respect, politeness and understanding for the different experiences and perspectives of young people.
- e)** Strive to cultivate comradely relations between members in order to develop and renew the fraternal spirit and effective working relationships within the League.
- f)** Practise an inclusive and developmental attitude towards the needs and sensibilities of each member, especially new members, younger members and women members.
- g)** Refrain from undermining any member or League structure in public, while challenging anything that you believe to be incorrect in private in the first instance and raising issues to a higher level if necessary.
- h)** Refrain from demonstrating any form of disrespectful or derogatory behaviour towards others. Refrain from excessive, irrelevant and personal communications with others when this contact may be unwanted.
- i)** Refrain from making public posts that undermine the ethics and public image of the League. Such actions may constitute using slurs or calling for violence against people with protected characteristics, bullying, harassment, intimidation or posting hateful content

XIV. Discipline

- a)** Any member who breaches this constitution or brings the League into disrepute may be disciplined by their branch in the following ways:
 - By vote of censure.
 - By disqualification from office for a period not exceeding six months.
 - By suspension from membership for a period not exceeding six months.
 - By being recommended to the CC for expulsion.
- b)** The CC may expel a member from the League.
- c)** The rules and procedures for implementing any disciplinary measure

or expulsion under Subsections a) and b) shall be set out in a Disciplinary Protocol issued by the CC and updated from time to time

d) All disciplinary actions must be reported in writing to the CC.

e) Once disciplinary actions have been taken against a member they must be taken into account by any League organisation considering the member for any position.

f) Members shall be entitled to raise a grievance according to the Grievance Protocol issued by the CC and updated from time to time.

g) Safeguarding and child protection procedures shall be set out in a Safeguarding Policy issued by the CC and updated from time to time.

XV. Appeals

a) Members wishing to appeal against any disciplinary action taken against them by the branch may appeal to the CC.

b) Members wishing to appeal against any disciplinary action taken against them by the CC may appeal to the Congress at which the CC must convene a Congress Appeals Committee. This shall comprise a delegate from each branch with the exception of the member's branch. No CC member may be a member of the Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee shall make its recommendation to the Congress.

XVI. Changes to the Constitution

a) This constitution may be altered only at Congress. Proposals for amendments to the Constitution or standing orders must be submitted to the CC in time to be sent to all branches as part of the Congress discussion period. The CC is authorised to decide any questions not specifically covered by it.

b) The CC shall notify all branches of procedure to change the constitution prior to each Congress.

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- Article V, Pledge



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