

TamilStudiesUK

Constitution

V2.0



www.tamilstudiesuk.org

Contents

CHANGE HISTORY	3
AIMS	4
OBJECTIVES	4
ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE	5
Founders Group	5
Roles.....	5
Responsibilities.....	5
Eligibility.....	5
Term.....	5
Patrons Group.....	6
Roles.....	6
Eligibility.....	6
Term.....	6
Executive Council	6
Roles.....	6
Responsibilities.....	6
Eligibility.....	7
Election Process.....	7
Term.....	8
Advisory Group	8
Eligibility:.....	8
Selection	9
Roles:.....	9
Responsibilities:.....	9
Term:.....	9
Supporting Groups/Committees	9
Roles.....	9
Term.....	9
ORGANISATION MEMBERSHIP	10

Membership	10
Full Membership	10
Eligibility	10
Benefits	10
Associate Membership	10
Eligibility	10
Benefits	10
Nominal Membership	10
Eligibility	10
Benefits	11
CHARTERS	11
Charter – Executive Council	11
Charter – Money Matters	11
Charter - Constitution	12
Amendment Process	12
ANNEXURE 1	12
ANNEXURE 2	12

Change History

Version	Changes	Date approved by Executive Council	Comments if any
1.2	Initial version of the constitution	20 MARCH 2018	
2.0	Updated by the new executive council (2019-2020)	26 MAY 2020	

Aims

1. To establish a department of Tamil Studies in a prominent UK University.
2. To act as a hub providing access to Tamil language education at further and higher University level.
3. To enable the awarding of UCAS points to the students that elect Tamil language at A Level.
4. Support digitisation of Tamil palm-leaf manuscripts, rare books and other historic materials, and make them available to research communities.

Objectives

1. To set up a department of Tamil at SOAS, University of London.
2. To run a fundraising campaign to co-fund the establishment and functioning of the department of Tamil at SOAS, University of London.
 - a. To raise a fund of Ten million GBP. (Six Million for the departmental activities and Four Million for scholarships.)
 - b. The corpus collected will be kept in an endowment fund and only the proceeds (income/interest) of that fund will be used for the functioning of the Department of Tamil.
 - c. The proceeds from the above mentioned endowment fund will be used only for the Department of Tamil at SOAS.
 - d. If the proceeds are not used in part or full for a particular year, the unused portion gets added to the corpus of the endowment fund.
 - e. A fixed percentage of the annual proceeds generated will be added into the corpus fund to increase the capital over time and thereby to generate more proceeds in the long run.
3. The Department of Tamil formed at SOAS, with the funds raised by TamilStudiesUK will implement the following Minimum Value Programs (MVPs):
 - a. To recruit the human resources required to run the department.
 - b. To offer full time courses in Tamil at the bachelors, masters and research levels.
 1. Set up necessary scholarships.
 2. Establish necessary Research Fellowship.
 - c. To offer Tamil as a separate module as elective ancillaries for the students of other disciplines from SOAS, as well as the other institutions under the University of London.

- d. To digitise the palm leaf manuscripts and rare books from UK, starting from the ones available at SOAS, and make them available.
 - e. To come up with a syllabus for the Tamil language for the Tamil Schools in UK from Year 1 to GCSE and A level. .
 - f. To construct a curriculum framework for the Tamil Language examination. This will cover the basic, preliminary and intermediate levels as well as the 'A' Level examination to be used in all Tamil Schools in the United Kingdom. Each examination level will be awarded UCAS points.
 - g. To encourage and invite professors and scholars in Tamil from various Universities around the world.
4. Based on the above Aims and Objectives, agree a "Memorandum of Understanding" with SOAS, University of London.

Organisational Structure

The TamilStudiesUK will be managed by the Executive Council supported by a set of committees.

The organisation will have the following groups or committees:

FOUNDERS GROUP

The founders group comprises the original founders of this organisation.

Roles

The only role in this group is "Founder Members".

Responsibilities

There are no defined responsibilities for the founder members. This group is an honorary group and members only hold honorary positions with no responsibilities unless they are members of any other groups.

Eligibility

People who originally founded this organisation and started the campaign.

Term

The members of this group will hold this honorary positions for their lifetime.

PATRONS GROUP

A person of high and honourable position in the Society that will support TamilStudiesUK.

Roles

The only role in this group is “Patrons”.

Eligibility

The Executive Council will invite a person to be a patron.

Term

The members of this group will remain as patrons until they resign or the EC decides their services are no more needed.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The set of people that run the organisation and manage other groups and members.

Roles

The following are the roles in the Executive Council:

1. President
2. Vice President
3. Secretary
4. Vice Secretary
5. Treasurer
6. Vice Treasurer
7. Up to five Executive Members

Responsibilities

1. Core operations of the organisation.
2. Spearheading the campaign.
3. Appoint or remove members of other groups/committees (except the founders group), including the coordinator.
4. Coordination with the other groups
5. Liaison with SOAS, University of London.
6. Frame the strategies for the organisation.
7. Approve, monitor and moderate the activities of other groups, such as events organisation, events participation, running campaigns etc.
8. Authorise amendments to the constitution.

Eligibility

The members of the Executive Council are elected by members of the organisation. Only members that have at least two continuous years of paid membership or lifetime paid membership can file nominations or cast votes.

Note: To ensure continuity, it is important that some of the members of the council of a particular term remain in the council during the following term as well. In other words, the situation is to be avoided where completely new members are elected for all the posts.

This will be achieved by conducting the election for the posts of

- President, Secretary, Treasurer and the (up to) five Executive members on every “odd” year, and
- Vice President, Vice Secretary and Vice Treasurer on every “even” year.
- If a person in a “Vice Post” is nominated for the “Main Post”, then election for that “Vice Post” will be conducted in the same year.
- If any council member resigns before the end of the two year period, an ad hoc election will be conducted.
- While maintaining continuity, this method will also ensure no member enjoys a term of more than two years without an election.
- In order to bring about this process, the current President, Secretary, Treasurer and the (up to) five executive members will have an initial term of three years and these posts will have an election conducted in 2023. After that, the term for those posts will be for two years only and the election will be conducted in every odd year.

Election Process

1. One month before the end of each two-year period, the secretary will invite nominations for the posts falling vacant in that year, by giving one month notice before the election.
2. The members (that have two years of continuous paid membership or lifetime paid membership) have two weeks to file their nominations. All nominations must be filed two weeks before the election date.
3. Any withdrawal of a nomination must be done at least one week before the election date.
4. On the day of the election, the posts that have received only one nomination will have been elected unanimously. Any posts that have received more than one nomination will go for the poll. The person that receives the maximum votes will be elected for the given post.
5. Only members that have at least two years of continuous paid membership or lifetime paid membership, from UK, are eligible to cast their vote. One member can cast only one vote to a post.

6. After the election, the new office bearers will take charge from the outgoing members.
7. The new secretary will record the election information including the nominations, and results in the “Annexure 1” to the constitution and publish the same to the members of the organisation.
8. The new Executive Council after the election of the “odd” year would immediately appoint new members or reappoint existing members to the supporting groups/committees for a period of two years.
9. Outgoing members of the council will do a proper hand over to the incoming members for the respective posts. The handover would include the status of the ongoing activities, documentation and any other relevant information.
10. Election could be conducted within a two year period if any post falls vacant due to any reason.
11. Membership fee shall be paid on or before the AGM date to qualify for the voting rights at the AGM.

Term

Normally the Executive Council members are elected for a period of two years. The only exception to this rule is for the President, Secretary, Treasurer and five executive members that got elected during Jan 2020. These people will enjoy a term of three years only during this term. This is to ensure the continuity as explained above.

1. The council members will remain in the elected post for the elected period of two years.
2. The member can resign before the two year period ends.
3. If the member acts with a conflict of interest, he can be removed from the council if the majority of the council approves it. First, the member should be given a verbal warning, followed by a written warning. If the member continues his actions in the same manner, then he or she could be removed before his term is completed.

Note: If a post in the executive council becomes vacant, the council will appoint another paid member of the organisation as an interim solution. Then the election for that post is carried out to replace the interim appointee with the elected person. This election will have to be called for and carried out within a period of three months. If the situation demands, this period could be extended for a further period of another three months.

ADVISORY GROUP

Eligibility:

The advisory group would comprises of people

- That have held posts in EC in the past but want to take a back end role, going forward.

- With expertise in specific fields such as legal, financial, auditing, academics etc such that such expertise could be utilised for the cause of the organisation.
- From the SOAS, University of London, that could help with the campaign.
- That hold important positions in society such as an officer of a government body.
- That need not be a paid member and can be from any country.

Selection

The advisory group members would be appointed by the Executive Council.

Roles:

- Advisors (There shall be no coordinators in this group).

Responsibilities:

- Offer advice in their area of expertise.
- Provide help and guidance when asked for by other members of the organisation.

Term:

- Until the person resigns or the EC decides their services are no more needed.

SUPPORTING GROUPS/COMMITTEES

The other groups/committees in the organisation are as follows:

1. Tamil Schools Group
2. UK Students Group
3. Corporate Fundraising Group
4. Government Communication Group
5. TamilStudiesUK – Country groups such as India Group, Singapore Group, Malaysia Group etc.
6. Constitution Group

Roles

1. Group Coordinator
2. Group Member

Term

The Executive Council appoints the coordinator and members of a group for a period of 2 years.

The Executive Council can remove a member from these groups before the end of the 2 year term, if his/her services are no longer needed or if his/her activities work against the cause of the organisation.

Organisation Membership

The membership to the organisation is open but at the discretion of the Executive Council.

The memberships are categorised as follows and all new members are to be approved by the Executive Council:

MEMBERSHIP

Full Membership

Eligibility

- Should be a resident of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
- A stipulated membership form needs to be filled up.
- Must be proposed and seconded by full members.
- A standard membership fee of twelve GBP per annum should be paid while joining and again in January every year. Alternatively, a life membership fee of one hundred and fifty GBP could be paid as a single payment while joining and can remain as a member for life.

Benefits

- If two years of continuous paid membership or lifetime paid membership is held, the member is eligible to be nominated for a post in the Executive Council when an election is announced.
- If two years of continuous paid membership or lifetime paid membership is held, the member is eligible to vote in the Executive Council election.
- Can be appointed as a member of a supporting committee.

Associate Membership

Eligibility

- Could be from any country other than the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
- A standard membership form needs to be filled up.
- A membership fee of twelve GBP per annum should be paid while joining and again in January every year.

Benefits

- Can be appointed as a member of a supporting committee in their respective country.

Nominal Membership

Eligibility

- Could be from any country
- No need to pay any fee.

Benefits

Can be appointed as a member of a supporting committee in the country in which they are a resident.

Charters

CHARTER – EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

1. Council members will not have any conflicting interests and should disclose in advance and seek prior approval from the council
2. Each member will carry responsibility for a designated function and would pledge to fulfil that function by contributing efforts and resources to a reasonably agreed minimum level.

CHARTER – MONEY MATTERS

1. A suitable Clubs and Societies or Community or Associations category bank account to hold all the Society's funds. The bank account shall be opened with any and upto three committee members.
2. The income into the Society's bank account may comprise any of the following sources:
 1. Membership fees.
 2. Any sponsorship money towards the administration cost.
 3. Any monies given by SOAS towards the administration of the campaign.
3. The expenditure from the Society's bank account will be primarily towards the administration cost of the campaign.
4. The cash donations obtained for the campaign will not be deposited in this account but will be directly given to SOAS.
5. The approved modes of raising funds will be as follows:
 - a. Direct Debits or BACS payment
 - b. Cheques or demand drafts addressed to "SOAS University of London" with a note saying that the donation is to support Tamil Studies.
 - c. Authorized campaign pages set up either by the University partner or this society.
 - d. Cash donation. The process of cash handling is explained in detail in "Annexure 2".
6. The accounting year shall be from the 1st of April till the 31st of March.
7. An accountant's report shall be presented each year at the AGM.
8. Approval needed for any spending is tabulated below:

Amount	Approving Body
Upto 300 GBP	President & Treasurer of the EC
300 to 500 GBP	President, Secretary & Treasurer of the EC

More than 500 GBP	Majority of the EC.
-------------------	---------------------

CHARTER - CONSTITUTION

1. The Society will be governed as per this constitution and in due course, if necessary, in addition adapt the Model Articles of Association prescribed by the Charity Commission for Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and modified as required
2. Until such time this constitution will be the governing document.
3. If there arises a situation that cannot be handled by this constitution document, then guidance will be taken from the CIO Association Model mentioned in - https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/562468/Association_Model_Constitution.pdf
4. The working model of this organisation would be based on the best practices of Research Councils UK, Charitable Educational Trusts such as Wellcome Trust and Learned Societies such as Royal Society of Arts.

Amendment Process

Any amendments to the constitution will be executed following the procedure enumerated below:

1. Any member can suggest changes to the Executive Council.
2. If it finds the suggestions valid, apt and necessary, the EC will direct the suggestions to the constitution committee.
3. The constitution committee will discuss these suggestions and draft the amendments in the respective sections of the constitution.
4. The EC will either approve the amendments or send it back to the constitution committee with recommended alterations.

Annexure 1

The details of the office members so far, will appear here, for every term.

Annexure 2

Cash handling charter will appear here.