



VENUSTIA PSO

Constitution



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1. ETHOS

Venustia is a Private Student Organization of Stellenbosch University. Established in 2008 with the slogan, Beauty Through Strength, we aim to create an environment where each member can shine as they embarks on their Stellenbosch University life.

Venustia is led and guided by the values of the House, namely, Respect, Integrity, Compassion, Inclusivity & Equality. Moreover, Venustia presents each member a place to call their "second home". All members of Venustia take pride as "the Swans" signified by the Crest of our House which entails strength and beauty that shines from within.

2. DEFINITIONS

- a) The definitions as listed below are regarded as the meaning of these specific words/ phrases within the whole of this Constitution.
- b) Values:
 - i) **Respect**: Acting in a way which shows care for other's feelings and well being. Have due regard for other's opinions, wishes and rights. Venustia believes in having respect for yourself, others and the environment.
 - ii) **Integrity**: Venustia believes in having integrity through consistency of actions, values, methods, measures, principles, expectations and outcomes, regarded as the honesty and truthfulness of one's actions.
 - iii) **Compassion**: Compassion in the sense of both trying to understand another's pain, as well as the desire to somehow mitigate that pain, regardless of knowledge (or the lack thereof) of their current standing. Venustia believes in having compassion for others, as well as for yourself.
 - iv) **Inclusivity**: Venustia believes that inclusivity stems deeper than mere "accommodation" and therefore intend on incorporating people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalised into our community. Venustia believes in including all different types of people and treating them all fairly and equally.
 - v) **Equality**: Venustia believes in substantive equality, not formal equality. Venustia aims to give everyone what they need to grow and be successful, as we acknowledge that not everyone starts at the same place, and not everyone has the same needs. Venustia strives for eventual equality, while understanding the reality that we can only reach that goal through

substantive equality.

- c) PSO: Private Student Organisation: A private Student Organisation (PSO) is an organisation of students who do not live in official University accommodation for the purpose of organisational and community-driven purposes. Such PSOs have a student leadership structure, and private students are allocated into one per the University Placement Policy.
- d) Venustia: A Private Student Organisation of the University founded 2008.
- e) University: Stellenbosch University.
- f) Members of Venustia PSO/ Venustia PSO Membership:
 - i) A student will be deemed a member of Venustia PSO if allocated to the PSO per placement policy of Stellenbosch University.
 - ii) Membership is as a result of registration as a student.
 - iii) Active membership lapses:
 - A) When the member ceases to be a registered student at the University.
 - B) In event student moves into University residence.
 - iv) Alumni remain non-paying members of Venustia PSO and may attend alumni-specific events.
- g) Alumni: Any student who was allocated to Venustia PSO either per the Placement Policy of Stellenbosch University, or after moving out of a University Residence, and has subsequently graduated from Stellenbosch University in their undergraduate degree.
- h) Quorum: 40 members of Venustia PSO, unless otherwise specified.
 - i) HK Quorum: two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$), rounded up to the nearest whole number, of the House Committee currently in term.
- i) House Committee/ HK/ HC: Students appointed as the leaders of the PSO, each holding a number of portfolios. They aim to enrich the student community within the PSO.
- j) Primaria/ Prim/ Primarius: The head of the House Committee and acts as a mediator between the external communities and the PSO, bringing information to the house from external meetings. They act as a guide for the House Committee.
- k) Prim Committee/ PK: A bi-weekly forum for all the Prims of PSOs and residences.
- l) Vice-Primaria/ Vice-Prim: They assist the Primaria and act as a mediator between

the House Committee and the Primaria.

- m) Head Mentor: They oversee the mentors and act as a guide and assists on training for the mentors. They act as a mediator between the House Committee and the mentors and provide feedback for either party. They ensure that the mentors do their duties to the best of their abilities per the contracts mentors sign initiating their employment to the University.
- n) Financial Manager: They are in charge of budgeting, setting up internal control policies, as well as the influx or efflux of money affecting the PSO.
- o) Leaders: All house committee members, mentors, seniors committee, second years committee, first years committee, and any other members of committees approved by the relevant individuals on the house committee.
- p) Democratic- & Value-Driven Leadership: Conscious commitment by all Venustia leaders to lead in accordance to the values defined in section 2(b), as well as in accordance with the principle of representative democracy.
 - i) The house committee will be democratically elected.
 - ii) Democratic votes by the members of the PSO will take place on matters which has a direct and significant impact on the members of Venustia.
 - iii) The house committee will use a democratic voting system in all substantive decision-making, with each member of the house committee being entitled to one (1) vote, unless otherwise specified.
- q) Days: Calendar days.
- r) Constitution: The Constitution of Venustia PSO as most recently amended.
- s) HK House/ HC House/ House Committee House: The physical space where most (or all) of the House Committee (but not limited to House Committee members) resides, and where most of the activities during Welcoming occurs. It acts as a clear meeting point for any Venustia member who wishes to see a member of the House Committee or ask questions.

3. PREAMBLE

- a) The document is to be referred to as the Constitution of Venustia PSO, followed by the year of the latest amendment (for example: “the Constitution of Venustia PSO, 2018” reflects the document as it read directly after the amendments which took place in 2018).

- b) All actions, conduct, decisions, elections, motions, rules, regulations and determinants within Venustia PSO are subject to this document and are invalid if deemed contradictory with this Constitution. All instructions, requirements, responsibilities, rules and regulations that are stipulated in this Constitution must be adhered to at all times.
 - i) Depending on the severity of the circumstances either of the following two routes can be followed in determining whether something is contradictory with the Constitution:
 - A) Approach the Constitutional Committee in consultation with the PSO Coordinator, and if the dispute still remains, approach Student Court; or
 - B) Approach Student Court.
- c) This Constitution:
 - i) falls under the authority of the Student Rules of Stellenbosch University, the Student Constitution and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 and all other laws applicable in South Africa;
 - ii) will not wholly or partially be inconsistent with the Student Rules, Student Constitution, Statute of the University, Higher Education Act (Act 101 of 1997) or any other Rules and Regulations determined from time to time by the Board of the University.
 - A) In the case where this Constitution is deemed partially inconsistent with any rules mentioned in section 3(c)(i) or (ii), it will be read down and given effect to so far reasonable and possible.
- d) Although Venustia PSO operates autonomously, it remains a body associated with Stellenbosch University.
- e) This Constitution officially replaces any and all previously drafted and approved Constitutions including all associated rules, regulations and laws that previously applied to Venustia PSO.

4. CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE

- a) The purpose of the Constitutional Committee is to ensure the relevance and currency of the Constitution by reviewing each provision of the Constitution during their term. The Constitutional Committee must ensure that the Constitution

is always up to date and in line with the values of Venustia and Stellenbosch University.

- b) It is the duty of the Primaria, as well as the House Committee member leading the Constitution portfolio (if there is such a House Committee member in the year concerned), to ensure that a Constitutional Committee is elected within two calendar months from the election of the incoming House Committee in the year concerned.
- c) The structure of the Constitutional Committee will be as follows:
 - A) One House Committee member to head the Constitutional Committee.
 - 1) This Constitutional Committee member will be elected during a House Committee meeting by the House Committee.
 - 2) They will act as chairperson to all Constitutional Committee meetings, as well as House Committee meetings convened for the sole purpose of discussing the Constitution.
 - 3) They are responsible for ensuring that the Constitution is adequately reviewed within their term.
 - B) Three Venustia PSO members.
 - 1) Applications for these three Constitutional Committee members must be opened to Venustia PSO members by the House Committee member who will head the Constitutional Committee.
 - 2) Further procedure to the election of these three members may be determined by the House Committee member who will head the Constitutional Committee in the year concerned.
 - C) The fifth member of the Constitutional Committee will be appointed after the election of the members mentioned in section 4(c)(B) by the Constitutional Committee.
- d) The duties of the Constitutional Committee:
 - A) Review the Constitution during their term.
 - B) Propose any amendments which may be necessary during their term.
 - 1) This includes making a motion and submitting this motion to the PSO in terms of section 5.
 - C) Convene for at least four Constitutional Committee meetings in order to discuss the Constitution during their term.
 - D) Facilitate a Constitution training session within a month after the House

Committee is elected at the end of the Constitutional Committees' term for the incoming House Committee.

5. AMENDMENTS AND INTERPRETATION

- a) Amendments to this Constitution can only be made if:
 - i) They are submitted in the form of a motion as contained in annexure A, introduced at a properly constituted house meeting as contained in section 2(h), with a quorum of forty (40) members.
 - A) The motion has been signed by the individual proposing the motion, as well as four (4) members who support the proposal of the motion.
 - B) The motion has been submitted to the Primaria and Secretary-General, in writing, with the relevant signatures at least five (5) days before the relevant house meeting.
 - C) The motion has been sent out to the members, along with the agenda for the house meeting, as outlined in section 6(a)(i)(C) a minimum of 48 hours prior to the house meeting.
 - D) Such a motion is passed at the house meeting with a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$), rounded up to the nearest whole number, majority of the members of Venustia present at the house meeting.
 - E) The changes are ratified by the Student Court.
 - b) When clarity is required about any section of this Constitution the following authorities may be approached depending the severity of the circumstances:
 - i) Approach the Constitutional Committee in consultation with the PSO Coordinator, and if the dispute still remains, approach Student Court; or
 - ii) Approach Student Court.
 - c) In cases where there is any doubt or difference of opinion about the meaning of any word, section or paragraph of this Constitution, the interpretation of the Student Court of Stellenbosch will be valid.
 - d) The Constitutional Committee, as contained in section 4(a), is responsible to ensure that any necessary amendments to the Constitution be made in their term.

6. HOUSE MEETINGS

- a) Ordinary House Meetings:

- i) Ordinary House Meetings must meet the following stipulations:
 - A) At least four (4) Ordinary House Meetings must be held in the term of a House Committee, with a maximum of two (2) per academic term.
 - B) Announcement of the Ordinary House Meetings must be sent out at least seven (7) days before the scheduled meeting date.
 - C) The agenda must be sent to the members of the PSO at least two (2) days before the scheduled meeting date.
- b) Extraordinary House Meetings:
 - i) An extraordinary house meeting may be convened in the following cases:
 - A) Emergencies as identified or confirmed by the Primaria in consultation with the Vice-Primaria and the PSO Coordinator.
 - B) When the current House Committee, excluding the Primaria and Vice-Primaria, deem it necessary to have an extraordinary house meeting.
 - C) When requested in writing by a Venustia PSO member, and seconded by 4 other members who do not serve on the House Committee.
 - ii) An extraordinary house meeting may be convened regardless of the minimum and maximum ordinary house meetings allowed in terms of section 6(a)(i)(A).
 - iii) An extraordinary house meeting may only deal with the matters contained in the agenda – no additional agenda points may be accepted after the agenda has been distributed to the members of the PSO.
 - iv) Announcement of the Extraordinary House Meetings must be sent out at least seven (7) days before the scheduled meeting date.
 - v) The agenda must be sent to the members of the PSO at least two (2) days before the scheduled meeting date.
- c) The rules regarding who will chair House Meetings are as follows:
 - i) The Primaria chairs both Ordinary and Extraordinary House Meetings.
 - ii) In the absence of the Primaria, the Vice-Primaria will chair both Ordinary and Extraordinary House Meetings.
 - iii) In the absence of both the Primaria and the Vice-Primaria, the House Committee will elect a temporary chairperson from the House Committee who will act as chairperson until the Primaria or Vice-Primaria arrives.
 - iv) In the case where the House Committee by majority vote (50% + 1 House

Committee member) deem a particular house meeting, or a particular agenda point as the case may be, a conflict of interest for the chair of that relevant House Meeting or agenda point, the House Committee will elect a chair for that House Meeting or agenda point.

- d) Regulations regarding quorum are as follows:
- i) At both Ordinary and Extraordinary House Meetings forty (40) members form quorum.
 - ii) If there is not quorum fifteen (15) minutes after the official starting time of the relevant House Meeting, the meeting will be cancelled and reconvened within fourteen (14) days of the original date.
 - A) In the case where this is not possible, the House Meeting will be cancelled and reconvened to the nearest available date.
 - B) No decisions requiring a vote of the PSO will be allowed during the first fifteen (15) minutes after the official starting time in the case where there is not quorum, or not yet quorum.
 - iii) If there is not quorum present at the second meeting convened in terms of section 5(d)(ii), the House Committee may address the items on the agenda and any decisions (including regarding motions to amend the Constitution) taken at such meeting will be deemed to have been taken at a properly constituted meeting.

7. OFFICIAL HEADS OF THE PSO

a) **PSO Coordinator:**

- i) This is a permanent member of the staff appointed by the University. The coordinator reports to the Director of the Centre for Student Communities. The coordinator, along with the House Committee, is responsible for the general management of the PSO.
- ii) The main responsibilities of the coordinator are:
 - A) To serve as a contact person between the University, the Centre for Student Communities and the PSO.
 - B) To govern and manage the PSO effectively.
 - C) To be available for interaction and consultation.
 - D) To enhance the cluster initiative.

- E) To assist and manage challenging crisis situations.
- F) To participate in training.
- G) To ensure that alcohol usage is in line with the alcohol policy.

b) Primaria:

- i) In addition to the powers and duties mentioned in the Rules and Council, the Primaria as the Head of the House shall be responsible for the following:
 - A) Delegation of duties, as well as the general management of the House Committee.
- ii) The Primaria will serve as a member of the House Committee.
 - A) This membership flows from the individual's capacity as Primaria.
 - B) If the individual ceases to be Primaria, their membership to the House Committee will subsequently be terminated.
- iii) The election of the Primaria is outlined in section 8(g).

c) Vice-Primaria:

- i) The primary role of the Vice-Primaria is to assist the Primaria. The Vice-Primaria will service in an advisory capacity to the Primaria.
- ii) It is the duty of the Vice Primaria to organize check ins with each of the House Committee members on a regular basis.
- iii) The Vice-Primaria will act as Chairperson of the House Committee in the absence of the Primaria.
- iv) The Vice-Primaria will serve as a member of the House Committee.
 - A) This membership flows from the individual's capacity as Vice-Primaria.
 - B) If the individual ceases to be Vice-Primaria, their membership to the House Committee will subsequently be terminated.
- v) The election of the Vice-Primaria is outlined in section 8(g).

d) Head Mentor:

- i) The primary role of the Head Mentor is to act as a guide to the mentors, as well as to equip them with the necessary skills to enable them to be successful in their term as mentors.
- ii) The Head Mentor will serve as a member of the House Committee.
 - A) This membership flows from the individual's capacity as Head Mentor.

- B) If the individual ceases to be Head Mentor, their membership to the House Committee will subsequently be terminated.
- iv) The election of the Head Mentor is outlined in section 8(g).

e) House Committee:

- i) The election of the House Committee is outlined in section 8(f)
- ii) The House Committee (including the Primaria, Vice-Primaria and Head Mentor) consists of a minimum of eight (8) members and a maximum of nine (9) members) unless provided for in section 7 (e)(iii)(A).
 - A) The following exceptions to this rule applies:
 - 1) When the newly elected House Committee, in consultation with the PSO Coordinator deem it necessary, an additional House Committee member may (but does not have to) be co-opted in terms of section 10(a).
 - 2) When the newly elected House Committee, in consultation with the PSO Coordinator deem it necessary to appoint a House Committee Advisor by majority vote (50% plus 1).
 - 3) The PSO Coordinator, or relevant University structures, or the Centre for Student Communities states otherwise.
- iii) The House Committee is to read this Constitution, attend a Constitutional Committee training session and discuss their duties in terms of it, within a month of being elected.
- iv) The House Committee convenes once a week, unless there are no agenda points for that particular week, however two or more consecutive house committee meetings may not be cancelled, during the academic term until and excluding the two weeks prior to examinations.
 - A) All members of the House Committee are to attend all meetings, unless a valid excuse is communicated to the Primaria in a timely manner.
 - 1) Valid excuses automatically include illness with a valid doctor's certificate and a test, examination, practical assessment or any other academic assessment taking place during the meeting time.

- 2) Any other excuses' validity will be determined by the Primaria in consultation with the Vice-Primaria.
 - 3) Timely notice is deemed to be at least 48 hours before the meeting time, except in emergency cases.
 - 4) Emergencies must be communicated as soon as is deemed reasonable by the Primaria in consultation with the Vice-Primaria. Thereafter, the validity of the emergency will be determined by the Primaria in consultation with the Vice-Primaria.
- v) The House Committee must contain at least the following portfolios in terms of the election procedure detailed in section 7(e)(vi):
- A) Primaria.
 - B) Vice-Primaria.
 - C) Head Mentor.
- vi) The House Committee is to discuss and allocate the following compulsory portfolios within a month of the last House Committee member being elected or appointed. In the event of a deadlock, the Primaria in consultation with the Vice-Primaria will have the final say regarding the allocation of these portfolios:
- A) Financial Manager.
 - B) Secretary-General.
 - C) Safety.
 - D) Cluster.
- vii) The House Committee is to discuss and allocate any other portfolios they deem necessary within a month of the last House Committee member being elected or appointed. In the event of a deadlock, the Primaria in consultation with the Vice-Primaria will have the final say regarding the allocation of these portfolios.
- viii) The House Committee is responsible for the following:
- A) Determining the strategic direction (vision and mission) of the PSO.
 - B) The administration of the PSO.
 - C) Maintaining order in the interest of the PSO.
 - D) Fostering unity and active membership.

- E) Managing their allocated portfolios to the best of their abilities.
- F) Taking complete responsibility for their activities within their portfolios and committees.
- G) Providing a detailed budget for each of their portfolios in consultation with the financial manager.
- H) Providing a detailed report for each of their portfolios to the Primaria at the end of their term, as well as providing a mid-term report to the Primaria on a date at the Primaria's discretion.
- I) Attending all house meetings and Critical Engagement events unless they have a valid excuse or an emergency.
 - 1) Valid excuses automatically include illness with a valid doctor's certificate and a test, examination, practical assessment or any other academic assessment taking place during the meeting time.
 - 2) Any other excuses' validity will be determined by the Primaria in consultation with the Vice-Primaria.
 - 3) Timely notice is deemed to be at least 48 hours before the meeting time, except in emergency cases.
 - 4) Emergencies must be communicated as soon as is deemed reasonable by the Primaria in consultation with the Vice-Primaria. Thereafter, the validity of the emergency will be determined by the Primaria in consultation with the Vice-Primaria.
- J) Attending all other free Venustia PSO, and all Cluster (as determined by the Cluster House Committee member) events so far reasonable and possible for at least an hour, unless they have a valid excuse or an emergency.
 - 1) Valid excuses automatically include illness with a valid doctor's certificate and a test, examination, practical assessment or any other academic assessment taking place during the meeting time.
 - 2) Any other excuses' validity will be determined by the Primaria in consultation with the Vice-Primaria.
 - 3) Timely notice is deemed to be at least 48 hours before the

meeting time, except in emergency cases.

- 4) Emergencies must be communicated as soon as is deemed reasonable by the Primaria in consultation with the Vice-Primaria. Thereafter, the validity of the emergency will be determined by the Primaria in consultation with the Vice-Primaria.
- 5) This section is *not* to be interpreted as all events which are not free are thus not compulsory. This is to be determined internally by the House Committee of the relevant year

8. ELECTION PROCEDURES

a) Election of the House Committee:

- i) The House Committee, which includes the Primaria, Vice-Primaria and Head Mentor, are directly elected by secret ballot by all eligible and registered members of Venustia PSO during a free, transparent and fair election.
- ii) The election of House Committee members occurs annually at the House Committee Caucus that has to take place before the University requires the newly elected House Committee to be announced. It is the responsibility of the outgoing House Committee members along with the PSO Coordinator to ensure that the new House Committee is elected before the University requires it.

b) Election Committee:

- i) The Election Committee consists of five (5) individuals.
 - A) The three (3) permanent members are:
 - 1) the outgoing Primaria,
 - 2) the outgoing Vice-Primaria, and
 - 3) the PSO Coordinator.
 - B) The fourth member is elected by the three permanent members of the Election Committee.
 - C) The fifth member is elected by the three permanent members of the Election Committee, but has to have served as a House Committee

member from a different Stellenbosch PSO or Residence during the year of the caucus.

D) The outgoing Primaria acts as Election Convener. Should they run for a position on the House Committee again, the outgoing Vice-Primaria will be the Election Convener and the open position on the Election Committee will be filled by a House Committee member who is not running for a position on the House Committee again, elected by the House Committee members who are not running for a position on the House Committee again with a simple majority vote (50% plus one individual).

E) Should the Vice-Primaria run for a position on the House Committee again, the open position on the Election Committee, as Election Convener, will be filled by a House Committee member who is not running for a position on the House Committee again, elected by the House Committee members who are not running for a position on the House Committee again with a simple majority vote (50% plus one individual).

F) In the event that there are no more eligible candidates in terms of section 7(c)(vii), the outgoing Secretary-General, along with the PSO Coordinator, is responsible for opening applications to the PSO to fill the remaining Election Committee positions, as well as facilitate the process to fill these positions and appoint an Election Convener in terms of these applications.

G) An election candidate may not serve on the Election Committee in any circumstances.

1) If an Election Committee member decides to stand in the election, that individual's resignation to the Election Committee is immediate and another individual must be found to replace them in terms of section 7(b).

ii) The responsibilities of the Election Committee:

A) Administrate the election and nomination process.

B) Always act in accordance with this Constitution.

C) Keep the PSO informed of all the aspects regarding the Election process.

- D) Ensure that all candidates are treated fairly.
 - E) Count the votes twice and make the results available as soon as possible.
 - F) Conduct themselves neutrally and fairly.
- iii) The Convener of the Election Committee has the responsibility to write a report on the election that covers the entire election process. The report will be made available to the PSO Coordinator within two weeks after the completion of the election process.
- iv) The Election Committee is empowered to conduct the election and can make a ruling on the following:
 - A) the validity of a vote.
 - B) improper recruiting of votes.
 - C) the establishment of an Interim Election.
 - D) specific dates and times of an Election, in consultation with the House Committee.
- c) Eligibility and nominations:
 - i) A candidate for a position on the House Committee must be a registered student of the University and a member, or alumni of the PSO during the time they will serve on the House Committee. (example: if someone is a candidate for the House Committee of 2018/2019, they must at least be a member of the house in 2019).
 - ii) A first year academic student is not eligible for election as member of the House Committee.
 - iii) A candidate for a position on the House Committee must comply with the University regulations in terms of academic achievements and requirements. In other words, a candidate for a position on the House Committee must have leadership HEMIS.
 - iv) All possible candidates are subject to compliance with University regulations. The PSO Coordinator will ensure that all applicants who fulfill these criteria are eligible to apply for a position on the House Committee.
 - v) A candidate for the position on the House Committee must be available for the entire Welcoming Period.
 - A) Exceptions may be made by direction of the PSO Coordinator for

candidates who are available for over 70% of the Welcoming Period.

B) Exceptions may be made where the candidate has an emergency.

1) Emergencies must be communicated as soon as is deemed reasonable by the Primaria in consultation with the Vice-Primaria. Thereafter, the validity of the emergency will be determined by the Primaria in consultation with the Vice-Primaria.

vi) Application forms for House Committee members must be closed at least seven (7) days before the caucus.

vii) In the event that there are not enough eligible candidates available to fill all the positions:

A) The application process will be extended for a period of time at the discretion of the Election Committee.

B) If the period of time mentioned in section 8(c)(vii)(A) has lapsed and there are still not enough eligible candidates available to fill all the positions, the application process will be extended for a period of time at the discretion of the Election Committee and be open to First Years to run.

d) Applications:

i) Application forms must include the following:

A) full name(s) and student number of the applicant;

B) the position(s) the applicant is applying for;

C) any other information that the Election Committee deems necessary.

ii) Applicants are bound to the positions indicated on their application forms. This means that once an applicant is successfully elected to the position of House Committee member, they may not run for the position of Primaria or Vice-Primaria if this was not indicated on her application form, as well as if the applicant runs for the position of Primaria, but not the position of Vice-Primaria, then the applicant may not run for Vice-Primaria if they do not get elected to the position of Primaria and has not indicated the position of Vice-Primaria on their application.

e) Caucus:

- i) A caucus for the eligible candidates that takes place over two (2) days.
 - A) On the first caucus day the Primaria, Vice-Primaria and Head Mentor elections will take place.
 - B) On the second caucus day the rest of the House Committee elections will take place.
- ii) The Election Convener will chair the caucus.
- iii) The outgoing House Committee and the Election Committee will be given the opportunity to ask each candidate a selection of questions before questioning is opened to the floor.
 - A) The Election Convener and PSO Coordinator may dismiss questions that they consider irrelevant or out of order.
 - B) The Election Convener and PSO Coordinator must dismiss *any* statements made by the floor immediately.
- iv) All eligible candidates need to be present at the relevant caucus for their application form to be considered valid.
- f) House Committee Elections:
 - i) The caucus will happen as follows:
 - A) Each House Committee candidate will have the opportunity to address those present.
 - B) The outgoing House Committee and the Election Committee will be given the opportunity to ask each candidate a selection of questions before questioning is opened to the floor.
 - C) Those present will deliberate then vote.
 - ii) Each member present may only vote once.
 - A) No one is allowed to vote on anyone's behalf, unless provided for by the Election Committee after consultation with the outgoing House Committee and the PSO is notified of this exception at least 48 hours before the first caucus, as well as who qualifies for this exception.
 - B) If a prospective candidate is also a current member of the PSO, they are also entitled to vote.
 - C) The Election Committee members and outgoing House Committee are entitled to vote if they are current members of the PSO.
 - iii) Members may vote for as many persons as there are available House

Committee positions. (For example: if there are 8 positions open in the relevant year, each member may vote for 8 House Committee members)

- iv) The Election Committee has to keep record of each member that votes.
Only registered members of Venustia PSO may vote.
- v) The votes need to be tallied as soon as possible after voting has closed.
- vi) A successful candidate must receive a minimum of one third ($\frac{1}{3}$) rounded up to the next whole number of the total votes cast.
 - A) If after the first voting round not all the available positions on the House Committee has been filled, subsequent voting rounds will take place until all the available positions on the House Committee has been filled. All subsequent voting rounds will exclude the candidates already elected onto the House Committee (the candidates who received more than one third ($\frac{1}{3}$) rounded up to the next whole number of the total votes cast in a previous voting round) and start anew.
 - B) In the event that more candidates than available positions on the House Committee receive one third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of the total votes cast in any given voting round, the candidates with the highest number of votes will fill the remaining positions on the House Committee.
 - C) In the event of an equal vote between two or more candidates with less available positions on the House Committee, another round of voting will take place.

For example:

The candidates are A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H.

Round 1 voting takes place and candidates A, C, E, F have each received over one third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of the total votes cast. Therefore candidates A, C, E, F are elected onto the House Committee.

Round 2 voting takes place and candidates D and H have received over one third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of the total votes cast and are therefore elected onto the House Committee.

This will continue until all the positions on the House Committee have been filled.

In the event that more persons received one third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of the total votes cast than there are available positions on the House Committee, the persons with the most amount of votes will fill the available positions on the House Committee.

g) **Primaria, Vice-Primaria and Head Mentor Elections:**

- i) The caucus will happen as follows:
 - A) Each Primaria candidate will have the opportunity to address those present.
 - B) The outgoing House Committee and the Election Committee will

be given the opportunity to ask each candidate a selection of questions before questioning is opened to the floor.

- C) Those present will deliberate then vote.
- D) The new Primaria will be announced.
- E) Each Vice-Primaria candidate will have the opportunity to address those present.
- F) The outgoing House Committee and the Election Committee will be given the opportunity to ask each candidate a selection of questions before questioning is opened to the floor.
- G) Those present will deliberate then vote.
- H) The new Vice-Primaria will be announced.
- I) Each Head Mentor candidate will have the opportunity to address those present.
- J) The outgoing House Committee and the Election Committee will be given the opportunity to ask each candidate a selection of questions before questioning is opened to the floor.
- K) Those present will deliberate then vote.
- L) The new Head Mentor will be announced.

ii) Each member present may only vote once.

- A) No one is allowed to vote on anyone's behalf, unless provided for by the Election Committee after consultation with the outgoing House Committee and the PSO is notified of this exception at least 48 hours before the first caucus, as well as who qualifies for this exception.
- B) If a prospective candidate is also a current member of the PSO, they are also entitled to vote.
- C) The Election Committee members and outgoing House Committee are entitled to vote if they are current members of the PSO.

iii) Voting will happen as follows:

- A) First round of voting: Members may vote for up to two candidates in each respective voting opportunity mentioned in section 8(g)(i).
- B) Second round of voting: Members may vote for up to one candidate in each respective voting opportunity mentioned in section 8(g)(i).

- C) In order for a candidate to be successfully elected into the position of Primaria, Vice-Primaria or Head Mentor they must receive 50% plus one vote in their respective second round of voting.
- iv) The Election Committee has to keep record of each member that votes. Only registered members of Venustia PSO may vote.
- v) The votes need to be tallied as soon as possible after voting has closed.
- h) Grievances with the election procedure:
 - i) Grievances regarding the election must be handed in to the Election Convener within forty-eight (48) hours of the official announcement of the newly elected House Committee in writing.
 - ii) If the Election Convener in consultation with the PSO Coordinator and the Election Committee consider the grievances to be valid, they shall take immediate steps to rectify the matter, or to declare the election invalid and organize a new election.
 - iii) In cases where the grievances were signed by at least twenty (20) members or in cases where at least twenty (20) members object in writing to the election procedure, the Election Convener shall be obliged to convene an Extraordinary House Meeting to investigate the matter and to draw conclusions. The burden of proof shall in this case be on the person/s who objected in writing.
- i) Announcement of the newly elected House Committee:
 - i) The newly elected Primaria, Vice-Primaria, Head Mentor and House Committee are announced at the respective caucuses and at the annual House Dance of Venustia PSO by the Election Convener.

9. RESIGNATIONS AND TERMINATIONS

- a) The membership to the House Committee is terminated if:
 - i) The House Committee member hands in their written resignation to the Secretary-General with fourteen (14) days' notice.
 - 1) In the case where the Primaria, Vice-Primaria or Head Mentor resigns, the House Committee must consider co-opting the individual as a House Committee member in consultation with the PSO Coordinator and objective third

party chosen by the House Committee from the SRC or a faculty student representative body.

- ii) The House Committee removes the member from office with a two thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) rounded up to the next whole number majority of votes by the House Committee. In such a case the House Committee must report this to the house at the next House Meeting.
- iii) A House Committee member is absent from two (2) consecutive House Committee meetings or a total of three (3) House Committee meetings without leave or valid reason.
 - A) If a House Committee member's House Committee membership is terminated in accordance with section 9(a)(iii), they have right to appeal to the House Committee, so that the House Committee can decide whether the reasons for absence without leave were valid.
 - 1) If the reasons are found to be valid, the appeal will be granted and the House Committee membership will not be terminated.
 - 2) If the reasons are found not to be valid, the appeal will be dismissed and the House Committee membership will remain terminated.
- iv) The House Committee member is removed by a vote of no confidence with a common majority of 50% plus one vote due to not adequately fulfilling their portfolio commitments or actively participating in the fulfillment of the aims of Venustia PSO.
 - A) Such vote of no confidence has to take place after at least a five (5) day notice to the members of the PSO in the form of a motion attached to the agenda at the convening of an ordinary or extraordinary house meeting.
 - B) Such vote of no confidence may be appealed to Student Court.
- b) If the position of Primaria or Vice-Primaria becomes vacant, the Secretary-General shall convene a House Committee meeting. At the meeting the vacancy shall be filled by electing a member of the House Committee by means of secret ballot. This election will be conducted by the PSO coordinator and a member of the previous Election Committee in terms of section 8(b).
- c) If any position except that of Primaria or Vice-Primaria falls vacant, the House

Committee has the right to fill the vacancy by co-opting a new member in terms of section 10, with the exception of the position of Financial Manager. In such a case, a current House Committee member must be trained to fulfil this role.

- d) Succession upon resignation or termination:
 - i) If the post of Primaria falls vacant, the Vice-Primaria shall perform the duties of Primaria until a new Primaria has been elected in accordance with section 8(b).
 - ii) If both the Primaria and Vice-Primaria resign, they shall continue to perform their duties until new office bearers have been elected.
 - iii) If the entire House Committee resigns, they shall continue to perform their duties until new office bearers have been elected.

10. CO-OPTING A HOUSE COMMITTEE MEMBER

- a) A new House Committee member is co-opted by means of the following procedure:
 - i) Applications are opened to the PSO for at least 14 days.
 - A) In the event that the Primari, Vice-Primaria or Head Mentor resigns in terms of section... where co-opting must be considered, applications do not have to be opened to the PSO at all.
 - ii) The current House Committee cast votes by secret ballot in an election convened by the PSO Coordinator and a member of the Election Committee of the previous Election Committee term. The co-opted member must receive two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) rounded up to the nearest whole number of the votes cast to be successfully elected.

11. MENTORS AND COMMITTEES

- a) Mentors:
 - i) Mentors will serve Venustia under the guidance of the Head Mentor.
 - ii) Election of mentors:
 - A) The mentors will be elected after a process of interviews.
 - B) The number of mentors to be elected each year will be determined by the PSO Coordinator in consultation with the House Committee.

C) Eligible candidates:

- 1) A candidate for the position of a mentor must comply with the University regulations in terms of academic achievements and requirements. In other words, a candidate for a position of a mentor must have leadership HEMIS.
- 2) All possible candidates are subject to compliance with University regulations. The PSO coordinator will ensure that all applicants who fulfill these criteria are eligible to apply to be a mentor.
- 3) A candidate for a position of a mentor must be a registered student of the University and a member or alumni of the PSO during the time they will serve as mentor. (example: if someone is a candidate for mentor of 2018/2019, they must at least be a member of the PSO in 2019).
- 4) A candidate for a position of a mentor must be in at least their second academic year during the term which they will serve as a mentor.
- 5) A candidate for the position of a mentor must be available for the entire Welcoming Period.
 - a. Exceptions may be made by direction of the Head Mentor for candidates who are available for over 70% of the Welcoming Period.

D) The Head Mentor must send out application forms.

E) The Head Mentor, in deliberation with a panel of their choosing with four (4) individuals, conducts the interviews and elects the mentors.

- 1) The panel must consist of the following individuals:
 - a. The outgoing Head Mentor.
 - b. At least one external House Committee member or PSO Coordinator or Residence Head.

iii) Duties of mentors include, but are not limited to:

A) Duties and responsibilities of mentors as determined by relevant

University structures, the Centre for Student Communities and the Head Mentor.

B) Attending all compulsory Venustia PSO and University organized training sessions for leaders, as well as mentors.

1) The duties outlined in section 11(a)(iii)(A) and (B) take absolute preference.

C) Attending all Venustia PSO House Meetings.

D) Attending all Venustia PSO Critical Engagement events.

E) Reasonable participation in other Venustia PSO events.

iv) A mentor will be excused from their duties in the following circumstance:

A) If they present a valid excuse or emergency with timely notice.

1) Valid excuses automatically include illness with a valid doctor's certificate and a test, examination, practical assessment or any other academic assessment taking place during the meeting time.

2) Any other excuses' validity will be determined by the Head Mentor.

3) Timely notice is deemed to be at least 48 hours before the meeting time, except in emergency cases.

4) Emergencies must be communicated as soon as is deemed reasonable by the Head Mentor. Thereafter, the validity of the emergency will be determined by the Head Mentor.

B) If they have been present at the event for at least an hour.

b) Other committees (for example: Second Years Committee and Seniors Committee):

i) The term "committee" in this section excludes the Election Committee and the Constitutional Committee.

ii) Duties of other committees include, but are not limited to:

A) Duties and responsibilities of committees as determined by the the House Committee member who heads that committee in consultation with the House Committee.

B) Attending all compulsory Venustia PSO and University organized training sessions for leaders.

C) The duties outlined in section 11(b)(ii)(A) and (B) take absolute

preference.

- D) Attending all Venustia PSO House Meetings.
- E) Attending all Venustia PSO Critical Engagement events.
- F) Reasonable participation in other Venustia PSO events.

iii) A committee member will be excused from their duties in the following circumstance:

- A) If they present a valid excuse or emergency with timely notice.
 - 1) Valid excuses automatically include illness with a valid doctor's certificate and a test, examination, practical assessment or any other academic assessment taking place during the meeting time.
 - 2) Any other excuses' validity will be determined by the House Committee member who heads that committee.
 - 3) Timely notice is deemed to be at least 48 hours before the meeting time, except in emergency cases.
 - 4) Emergencies must be communicated as soon as is deemed reasonable by the House Committee member who heads that committee. Thereafter, the validity of the emergency will be determined by the House Committee member who heads that committee.
- B) If they have been present at the event for at least an hour.

12. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

- a) The point of departure for disciplinary procedures is restorative justice and facilitating bringing the member back to good standing with the rest of the PSO.
- b) All members of Venustia are to be held accountable to the values of the PSO, as laid out in section 2(b), and all conduct will be measured against these values.
- c) Procedure regarding a complaint against a member of the PSO:
 - i) Procedure to issue such complaint:
 - A) A complaint must be issued to the Primaria or, if Primaria is unavailable, to the Vice-Primaria.

- B) Complaint must be written and clearly state that it is a complaint which the complainant wants pursued. Complainant can decide to do this anonymously if the situation dictates that complainant might experience duress due to complaint.
- C) The Primaria must during her term provide a mechanism for complaints to be received anonymously.
- D) The Complainant must give the name of the person who complaint is directed against and where possible, their student number.
- E) Full detail of the wrongful conduct done by the person who the complaint is directed at must be given.
- F) Value of the PSO which is being infringed upon should be indicated.
- G) Evidence of said wrongful conduct must be provided where it is possible.
- H) The person who the complaint is directed against must be informed of the complaint by the Primaria or, if Primaria is unavailable, to the Vice-Primaria within a reasonable time after the complaint is made.
- I) Primaria or, if Primaria is unavailable, to the Vice-Primaria. must schedule a meeting between the parties applicable, where a solution must be found through restorative justice and mediation.
 - 1) The primary goal of the meeting that must take place in terms of section 12(c)(i)(I) is to find a solution between the complainant and the person who the complaint is directed against.
 - 2) The Primaria must act as mediator between the two parties.
 - 3) The goal is not to lay down a punishment, but rather to achieve peace between the parties. This can be achieved through: Acknowledgement of misconduct; Compromise between conflicting views; Declaratory order: setting out the values of Venustia and principles that must be adhered to.
 - 4) Where restorative justice and mediation fails the Central

Disciplinary Committee or the Equality Unit may be approached for further relief and as a last resort.

- i. This would include instances of gross misconduct or where one of the parties believes it is necessary to involve these authorities.
 - ii. Under these circumstances, all decisions will be made and obliged to as prescribed and decided by these authorities.
- d) Procedure regarding a complaint against a House Committee member of the PSO:
 - i) The same procedure is prescribed for a complaint against a House Committee member as mentioned in section 12(c), however instead of the complaint being directed at the Primaria or, if Primaria is unavailable, to the Vice-Primaria, the complain must instead be directed to the PSO Coordinator, in writing.

13. HOUSE FINANCES

- a) No money or transactions may be entered into without the written consent of both the Primaria (or Vice-Primaria if the Primaria is not available) and Financial Manager.
- b) An internal financial policy must be set up by the Financial Manager in consultation with the House Committee and PSO Coordinator.
 - i) Such financial policy must be reviewed each year by the Financial Manager in consultation with the House Committee and the PSO Coordinator.
 - ii) To ensure that the internal financial policy is of a good standard, the following parties may be consulted in drawing it up/ updating it:
 - A) Division Finances
 - B) Financial Manager of Student Representative Council
 - C) Financial Manager of Student Parliament
 - D) Financial Manager of Societies Council
 - E) Centre for Student Affairs

F) Centre for Student Communities

14. HOUSE COMMITTEE HOUSE/ HK HOUSE

a) Ordinary cases:

- i) Only the House Committee will live in the HK House.
- ii) Rooms in the HK House will be allocated as follows:
 - A) The House Committee residing in the HK House will determine which rooms will be allocated to each respective House Committee member.
 - 1) In the case where there is conflict, the rooms in dispute will be decided as follows: The room numbers will be thrown into a hat. In alphabetical order based on surname the remaining House Committee members who have not yet been allocated a room will draw a room number from the hat. This room will be allocated to that respective House Committee member.
- iii) It is not compulsory for all House Committee members to live in the house.

b) Extraordinary cases:

- i) In the case where more House Committee members want to stay in the HK House than there are rooms available, the biggest room/s will be shared by two people. The House Committee will decide which room/s is the biggest. Those room numbers will then be placed in the hat twice in terms of section 14(a)(ii)(A).
- ii) In a case where fewer House Committee members want to stay in the HK House than rooms available and there are extra rooms available, applications for those rooms must be opened to other members from the PSO:
 - A) The order for application openings is as follows:
 - 1) Mentors and other committees (including Second Years Committee and Seniors Committee).
 - 2) The other members of Venustia PSO.
 - B) The criteria for choosing who will stay in the available room/s is as

follows:

- 1) Financial neediness.
 - 2) Willingness to contribute to the PSO.
 - 3) Compatibility with other house members.
- C) The House Committee residing in the house will decide who gets the available room/s based on the above-mentioned criteria.

ANNEXURE A

MOTION TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION
OF VENUSTIA PSO, _____ (year most recently amended)

I, _____ (Student Number: _____), hereby
institute a motion to amend the following section/s of the Constitution of Venustia PSO:

_____.

The section/s currently read as follows: (*precise words used in the current Constitution*)

The proposed amendment to the section/s will read as follows: (*precise words proposed
to be used in the amended Constitution*)

The grounds upon which this motion to amend the Constitution is to be made: (*reasons
for motion/ problems with current version*)

Signature of the Proposer: _____

Date of motion: _____

Four members of Venustia PSO whom support this motion:

1) _____
(Name and Surname) (Student Number) (Signature)

2) _____
(Name and Surname) (Student Number) (Signature)

3) _____
(Name and Surname) (Student Number) (Signature)

4) _____
(Name and Surname) (Student Number) (Signature)