



Constitution of the Association of Geography Teachers of Ireland

1. Title:

The name of this Association is “Cumann na Múinteoirí Tíreolaíochta na hÉireann” or in English, “The Association of Geography Teachers of Ireland”.

2. Mission Statement:

The Association of Geography Teachers of Ireland (hereinafter referred to as “the Association”) shall promote the teaching and status of Geography through the objectives specified below.

3. Objectives:

3.1. To promote the teaching of Geography and to encourage co-operation in the improvement of Geography teaching.

3.2. To establish links with similar associations abroad.

3.3. To obtain and maintain representation on organisations concerned with the discipline and teaching of Geography.

3.4. In cases where direct representation is not possible, to obtain and maintain consultative status on organisations concerned with the discipline and teaching of Geography.

3.5. To maintain the Gwenda Hurst Memorial Fund, vested in trustees and appointed by the Annual General Meeting.

3.6. To liaise with the Department of Education and Science in the administration of public funding for the Association.

4. Membership:

4.1. Full membership of the Association shall be open to any person involved in the teaching of Geography and these members shall constitute the Membership of the Association.

4.2. A person shall become a full member of the Association by paying the appropriate subscription for the academic year in question. A person’s full membership shall lapse on his /her failing to pay the current subscription of a full member by December 31st of the subscription year in question.

4.3. A full member shall be entitled to hold office and to enjoy the full benefits of the Association as determined by the National Executive.

4.4. A full member shall be entitled to vote at Annual General, Special General and Extraordinary General Meetings of the Association.

4.5. There shall be a class of membership called ‘Associate Membership’, to include retired teachers and third level students, the conditions of which shall be determined by the National Executive.

4.6. An associate member shall be entitled to participate in all activities of the Association, except for voting at Annual General, Special General and Extraordinary General Meetings of the Association, and to enjoy such other benefits of the Association as shall be determined by the National Executive.

4.7. Honorary membership of the Association may on rare occasions be conferred for life by the Annual General Meeting of the Association on the recommendation of the National Executive for exceptionally meritorious services to the Association and/or to the discipline of Geography.

4.8. Honorary members shall be entitled to the same benefits and privileges as full members of the Association.

4.9. In the event of a dispute regarding the membership of an individual member of the Association, the National Executive shall deliberate on the matter. The decision of the National Executive shall be determined in accordance with this Constitution.

5. Structure of the Association:

5.1. The Association is composed of a National Executive and one or more Branches.

5.2. The National Executive is called 'The National Executive of the Association of Geography Teachers of Ireland' (hereafter referred to as the 'National Executive').

5.3. Members may choose the Branch of which they would like to be a member.

6. Officers of the Association:

6.1. The Officers of the Association shall be

- (i) the President
- (ii) the Vice-President
- (iii) the Honorary Secretary
- (iv) the Honorary Treasurer
- (v) the Honorary Assistant Treasurer
- (vi) Webmaster
- (vii) Immediate Past-President

6.2. Officers of the Association, other than the President, do not exercise a vote at ordinary meetings of the National Executive.

6.3. The President of the Association exercises only a casting vote at ordinary meetings of the National Executive.

7. Election, Office and Duties of the President:

7.1. The President, who is the principal officer of the Association, shall represent the Association in accordance with the objectives of the Association.

7.2. The President of the Association shall organise, coordinate and chair meetings of the National Executive.

7.3. The President of the Association shall be elected by a simple majority vote of the members under a 'first past the post' system. The vote to elect the President shall be held by secret ballot at the AGM to elect the President of the Association. The result of the election of the President shall be presented at the Annual General Meeting or an Extra-ordinary General Meeting called for the purposes of electing the President of the Association.

7.4. Where only one candidate stands for election to the Office of President of the Association, that candidate shall be deemed elected at the AGM or EGM without the need to hold a ballot.

7.5. Only full members of the Association shall be entitled to be nominated for, run for and vote in the election to the office of President of the Association.

7.6. The National Executive shall give notice of acceptance of nominations for election to the office of President. No nominations shall be accepted after the closing date decided upon by the National Executive, which date shall be no sooner than one month after notice of acceptance of nominations.

7.7. Only full members of the Association shall be nominated for election to the office of the President by completing and submitting before the assigned closing date a form made available by the National Executive specifically for the purposes of such nomination and co-signed by any two full members preferably but not exclusively from their Branch committee.

7.8. Nomination forms which do not meet the requirements specified in paragraph 7.7 above shall be deemed invalid for the purposes of the election to the office of President of the Association.

7.9. Nomination forms for election to the office of the President of the Association shall be received by the Honorary Secretary and presented at a meeting of the National Executive for the purposes of agreeing the list of names for the ballot paper. The National Executive shall not refuse a nomination which has been submitted in due form as specified in paragraph 7.7 above.

7.10. For the purpose of electing the President of the Association, the National Executive shall appoint three National Executive representatives, each, insofar as practicable, from different Branches, to organise the issuing, receipt and counting of ballot papers.

7.11. The National Executive shall appoint an independent monitor, who shall not be a member of the Association to verify the count in the election of the President. All secret ballots shall be counted only in the presence of the independent monitor.

7.12. A single term of office of the President shall not exceed two years. The President, as elected under this Constitution, shall be entitled to self-nominate for a further term of office without the requirement for co-signers as specified in paragraph 7.7 above. Save as otherwise unanimously agreed by the National Executive, no President shall serve more than 2 consecutive terms as President of the Association.

8. Other Officers of the Association:

8.1 The positions of Vice President, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Assistant Treasurer shall be filled by the nomination of and agreement of the National Executive.

8.2. The term of office of the Officers of the Association shall be two years from the date of appointment. The National Executive shall have the discretion to reappoint an Officer for further terms.

8.3. Retiring Officers shall hand over to their successors as soon as possible all records, funds and property which belong to their office.

8.4. The President, with the Honorary Secretary, shall call and make arrangements for the Annual General Meeting, Extraordinary General Meetings and Ordinary Meetings of the National Executive; the President shall chair such meetings.

8.5 Where the President of the Association is no longer able to fulfil his/her functions or resigns or is otherwise removed from office, the Vice-President shall assume the title and duties of the President of the Association. In this instance, the Vice-President completes remaining portion of the original term of office of the President.

8.6 A Vice-President who becomes President under paragraph 8.5 shall be entitled to self-nominate for the next election to the office of President and may serve for one further term subject to successful election at the Annual General Meeting.

8.7. The Honorary Secretary shall organise the maintenance of all National Executive correspondence, agenda and minutes and other records.

8.8. The Honorary Treasurer of the Association shall receive all grants to the Association; the portion, as determined by the National Executive, of the subscription of members of the Branches; the surplus funds from publications and other services of the Association and any other income that may accrue to the Association.

8.9. The Honorary Treasurer shall open, manage and close bank accounts of the Association as directed by the National Executive.

8.10. The Honorary Secretary shall keep a secure updated list of members of the Association with their postal and email addresses, and Branch affiliation. Soon after October 1st, the Honorary Treasurer shall notify lapsing members of their obligation to pay the appropriate current subscription to retain membership of the Association.

8.11 The Register of Members shall be the register used to determine members' right to vote in meetings of the Association.

8.12. At the National Executive meeting immediately prior to the Annual General Meeting, the Honorary Treasurer shall present the annual statement of accounts made up to August 31st, or a date determined by the National Executive. Copies of the statement of accounts shall be made available at the Annual General Meeting by the Honorary Treasurer and shall be forwarded by him / her to the Branch Secretaries soon after the Annual General Meeting.

9. Dismissal of an Officer of the Association:

9.1 Other than through the expiration of a term of office, no Officer shall be dismissed from office unless:

(i) a motion, fully stated in writing, to dismiss an Officer has been circulated to the members of the National Executive a minimum of 14 days prior to a special meeting of the National Executive summoned to discuss and vote on the motion. The said motion must be proposed and passed by a majority of at least two-thirds of the members of the National Executive.

(ii) the grounds of the motion refer to the conduct or standing of the Officer adversely affecting the reputation of the Association and/or the Officer's due performance of his/her duties;

(ii) the motion has been notified to the Officer in question a minimum of 14 days prior to a special meeting of the National Executive summoned to discuss and vote on the motion.

(iii) the Officer in question has been permitted to answer the motion at the special meeting of the National Executive called to discuss the motion prior to the vote;

(iv) the motion has been passed by two thirds of the members of the National Executive present and voting;

(v) the Officer who, having the right of appeal to the Trustees of the Association, foregoes or fails in that appeal. The appeal must be lodged with the Trustees within 14 days of the dismissal.

9.2 Following the dismissal and/or appeal against dismissal of an Officer, the National Executive shall, at the earliest possible opportunity, agree on the appointment and/or election of a replacement Officer in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution for the remainder of the dismissed Officer's term.

10. The National Executive:

10.1. The membership of the National Executive shall consist of the Officers of the Association and two nominated representatives of each Branch of the Association. The National Executive has the power to invite to attend meeting person(s) it feels could usefully contribute to its deliberations.

10.2. The duties of the National Executive shall be to

10.2.1. uphold the Constitution and objectives of the Association,

10.2.2. summon annual and other general meetings as agreed by the National Executive,

10.2.3. oversee the organisation of the Annual Conference of the Association,

10.2.4. Direct the publication of the Association's Journal,

10.2.5. liaise with the Gwenda Hurst Memorial Trustees

10.2.6 Liaise with the Webmaster in the maintenance of the Association website

10.3. The National Executive shall have the right to summon the Annual General and other meetings provided Members of the Association have been given notice of such a meeting and have been provided with an agenda for such a meeting 14 days in advance of the meeting.

10.4. The President, having regard to the advice of the National Executive, has discretion to approve Association expenditure.

10.5. The National Executive shall meet at least once per year.

10.6. It shall be in the power of the National Executive to make rules for its own procedures.

10.7. The National Executive shall have discretionary power to approve the establishment of a new Branch.

10.8. The National Executive shall have the power to appoint sub-committees for special purposes and to determine their terms of reference.

10.9. Casual vacancies in any National Executive office may be filled by the National Executive for the unexpired period of the relevant term of office.

11. Branches of the Association:

11.1. The Branches of the Association shall be Branches duly recognised by the National Executive. The National Executive shall agree on the name of each newly recognised Branch so as to avoid conflict over Branch names.

11.2. Except where specified elsewhere in this Constitution, Branches of the Association may operate autonomously in the conduct of their business.

11.3. A Branch shall be entitled to elect its own Officers, who must be full members of the Association, and shall conduct the Branch's affairs in conformity with the Constitution and objectives of the Association.

11.4. A Branch shall be entitled to send two members to meetings of the National Executive.

11.5. The Secretary of each Branch shall send to the Honorary Secretary of the National Executive, as soon as possible, the names of the incoming Branch Officers and of the Branch representatives to the National Executive.

11.6. A Branch is required to forward to the Honorary Treasurer of the Association and at the earliest opportunity each year the names and addresses of the Branch members and the portion of the current subscription paid by the members of the Branch as determined by the National Executive on the advice of the Honorary Treasurer and agreed at the Annual General Meeting.

11.7. The National Executive shall not be responsible for expenses incurred by Branches, but it may subsidise particular activities undertaken by a Branch.

11.8. Each Branch shall furnish the National Executive with details of proposed activities (an outline of the annual programme) for the forthcoming year and estimated costs associated therewith for purposes of public funding applications.

11.9. Each Branch shall, in good time, notify the Honorary Secretary of the Association of the details of forthcoming activities being undertaken by his / her Branch (where these differ from the proposed programme supplied by the Branch Treasurer) for the purposes of informing the membership of the Association of such activities

11.10. Each Branch shall present an annual report of the Branch's activities to the Annual General Meeting. Where a Branch AGM does not occur until after the date of the Association AGM, the Branch shall provide a provisional report of the Branch's activities.

11.11. Except with the prior approval of the National Executive, a Branch shall not undertake negotiations or other business affecting the whole Association.

11.12. The officers of a Branch shall notify the National Executive of the Branch's dissolution where this occurs.

11.13. The National Executive shall have the power to withdraw recognition of a Branch where a Branch acts contrary to this Constitution or the objectives of the Association. The said Branch shall be afforded the opportunity to rectify any actions contrary to this Constitution and the objectives of the Association prior to a decision to withdraw recognition of the branch.

12. General Meetings:

12.1. The Annual General Meeting of the Association shall be held at the earliest opportunity in the school year and shall be chaired by the President of the Association.

12.2. The amounts of the subscriptions to be paid by full and associate members of the Association and the portion of the Branch subscriptions to be forwarded to the National Executive shall be proposed by the National Executive on the advice of the Honorary Treasurer and agreed by members of the Association at the Annual General Meeting.

12.3. Excepting motions to amend the Constitution, the National Executive shall have the power to bring to an extraordinary general meeting of the Association all business which it considers to be urgent. A minimum notice of 14 days shall be given for such meetings.

12.4. At ordinary meetings of the National Executive each Branch shall exercise one vote. In the absence of Branch representatives, the Branch vote may be cast by proxy subject to that proxy vote having been submitted prior to the meeting of the National Executive in writing and signed by the Chairperson and one other Officer of the Branch. In the event of a Branch's representation being absent from meetings for one academic year, the Branch's proxy vote shall be suspended. In this event, the President of the Association shall inquire as to the absence of the said Branch's representation. The purpose of this proxy vote is to allow a Branch to maintain its connection with the Association during a temporary or unexpected absence.

12.5. Any member wishing to propose at a general meeting a resolution which affects the Constitution of the Association shall give notice in writing of such a resolution to the Honorary Secretary of the Association at least one month before the date of the general meeting; the Honorary Secretary shall notify all members of such resolutions, with the names of their respective proposers; no proposed alteration of the Constitution shall have effect unless it is carried by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting at the general meeting at which the Constitutional resolution is proposed.

12.6. Any member at an Annual General Meeting shall have the right to move a resolution on any other matter which in the opinion of the person presiding at the meeting relates to the affairs of the Association or to the teaching of Geography in Ireland; decisions in the resolutions at general meetings which do not affect the Constitution of the Association shall be by simple majority of the members present and voting.

12.7. The President and the Honorary Secretary shall make the necessary arrangements for a general meeting with the approval of the National Executive.

13. Stationery and Website:

13.1 Recognised Branches of the Association may use the logo of the Association on their stationery subject to the rules below, namely

- (i) The logo shall be placed at the top of letters;
- (ii) The original colour and arrangement of the logo shall not be altered;
- (iii) The name of the Branch using the logo shall be present under the logo.

13.2 Stationery issued by the National Executive is subject to the rules above but shall carry the words 'National Executive' in place of a Branch name in all correspondence.

13.3 The Stationery of the Association shall not be used for any purpose other than official Association business.

13.4 The Association shall maintain a web presence at <http://www.agti.ie> for the purposes of providing information about the Association and its activities.

13.5 All events of the Association should be advertised on the Association website (<http://www.agti.ie>) but in any case all publicly funded Branch and Association activities shall be advertised on the Association website.

14. Trustees:

14.1. The National Executive shall nominate five trustees, to be called the Trustees of the Association of Geography Teachers of Ireland, composed of;

- (i) the Honorary Treasurer of the Association;
- (ii) the immediate Past-President (rotating position);
- (iii) three other Trustees.

14.2. With the exception of the Honorary Treasurer and the immediate Past-President, no member of the National Executive shall be a Trustee of the Association.

14.3. Ownership of the property of the Association shall be vested in the Membership of the Association.

14.4. The role of the Trustees of the Association shall be to

- (i) receive reports on the activities and financing of the Association,
- (ii) to make recommendations, where they regard such as appropriate, to the Association on its activities and financing
- (iii) to oversee the distribution of the Association property subject to paragraph 16.2,
- (iv) to adjudicate on appeals against dismissal under paragraph 9.1 (v).

14.5. No liability of the Association shall attach to the Trustees of the Association.

14.6. The Trustees of the Association shall have the power to call a meeting of the National Executive where

- (i) reports under 14.4 (i) above have not been received by the Trustees for a period of 12 months;
- (ii) the contents of annual reports give the Trustees cause for concern as to the condition of the Association.

15. Gwenda Hurst Memorial Fund:

The Gwenda Hurst Memorial Fund was set up as a memorial to Gwenda Hurst who founded the Association to help to further the cause of Geography teaching in Ireland and is used in the sponsorship of the Annual Gwenda Hurst Memorial Lecture and such other activities as the Fund can support. The Fund is managed by the Gwenda Hurst Trustees and the Trust is governed by its own constitution.

15.1. At least three Trustees, one of whom shall be the Honorary Treasurer of the Association, shall be approved and appointed at every fifth Annual General Meeting, beginning in 1978, to administer the Gwenda Hurst Memorial Fund and shall be known formally as Trustees of the Gwenda Hurst Memorial Fund.

15.2 The Association shall maintain the Gwenda Hurst Memorial Fund.

15.3. The Trustees of the Gwenda Hurst Memorial Fund shall present to the Annual General Meeting a report on their administration of the Gwenda Hurst Memorial Fund.

15.4. Excepting those provisions detailed above, no provision of this Constitution shall prejudice the operation of the Gwenda Hurst Memorial Trust.

16. Dissolution:

16.1. The Association shall be dissolved only by a resolution passed by at least three-quarters of the members present and voting at a Special General Meeting to which all members of the Association shall be invited; at least three months' notice setting out the purpose of the special meeting shall be given by the proposer of the resolution through the Honorary Secretary, who shall notify members of the resolution and the name of the proposer.

16.2. Prior to the dissolution of the Association, the members present at the duly summoned Special General Meeting, and having due regard to the advice of the Trustees of the Association, shall decide to dispose of any remaining funds and other property of the Association as far as reasonably practicable within the spirit of the Constitution.

17. Constitution:

17.1. This Constitution shall enter into force following its adoption by at least a two-thirds majority of the membership at a Special General Meeting convened for the purpose of adopting this Constitution.

17.2. A copy of the Constitution shall be provided by the National Executive to every member of the Association and shall be posted on the Association website.

17.3. An official copy of this Constitution shall be bound and held by the President and the Honorary Treasurer and an exact copy of the same forwarded to the national co-ordination centre for public funding.

17.4. In the event of a dispute as to the interpretation of this Constitution, subject to the principles of natural justice and the law of Ireland, the interpretation of this Constitution shall be determined by the National Executive whose decision shall be final.