

WORLD FEDERATION OF COLLEGES AND POLYTECHNICS

CONSTITUTION

1. World Federation of Colleges & Polytechnics

1.1 The World Federation of Colleges & Polytechnics (WFCP) as established by the inaugural General meeting of members held on 24 March 2002 in Melbourne Australia.

2. Aims

To be a strong united voice and international forum through which colleges and polytechnics in different countries can:

- Collectively promote and develop their contribution to their own communities and countries as an international economic and social force
- Collectively influence the development of policy in all areas which impact on human resources development and lifelong learning
- Share insight, experience and learn from one another
- Share the most current and effective tools and approaches to content and delivery
- Learn from and work with each other internationally
- Promote partnerships to improve staff and student mobility and credit recognition
- Develop partnerships and quality standards for the delivery of international co-operation contracts
- Organise World Congresses and other high profile international events

3. Objectives

- To be a forum for members to learn from each other and to share ideas and information on the roles they plan and the mechanisms and programmes they employ to fill these roles.
- To be a resource for members in meeting their national and international objectives.
- To be an advocate of colleges, polytechnics and similar learning institutions by raising awareness of their contribution to human resources development and the role they play in the development of society in general and the economy in particular.
- To promote the development of linkages between members and the international business and learning community.

4. Values

- To support policies that promote lifelong learning and that recognise the diversity of lifelong learners
- To support its members in developing their own unique approach to community and institutional development
- To support member organisations in addressing their individual missions and to respect the diversity of such missions
- To promote an understanding of the relationship between workforce skill development, economic development and social prosperity
- To promote the principle of equality and social inclusion in all aspects of lifelong learning, particularly with regard to race, gender, religion and ethnic background
- To promote and uphold in its own dealings, the highest levels of transparency, integrity and probity

5. Membership

- 5.1 The Federation shall be voluntary in nature and provide a mechanism for linking and pursuing its aims and values through member organisations which represent the interests of individual colleges and polytechnics.
- 5.2 Eligibility for full membership shall be open to:
- a) Third level colleges or polytechnics of further and/or higher education, other than universities; and which have a primary vocational mission;
 - b) National and regional membership associations & societies of colleges and polytechnics;
 - c) Cross-national membership associations & societies of colleges and polytechnics.
- 5.3 Individual colleges and polytechnics seeking membership of the Federation must be nominated by their national or cross-national association wherever:
- a) one exists; and
 - b) is a current member of the Federation.
- 5.4 The Secretary/Treasurer shall as soon as possible bring any application for membership before a meeting of the Board and the Board shall thereupon decide whether such an applicant is eligible to join the Federation.
- 5.5 The Secretary/Treasurer shall submit a list of new Board members to each Board meeting.

- 5.6 Organisations other than regional or national associations or societies of colleges and polytechnics may be deemed eligible for membership only where no appropriate national association or society of colleges or polytechnics exists and where a special case can be made to the Board. The Board is empowered to accept that organisation into membership.
- 5.7 The Board may also agree to accept as associate members other related organisations.
- 5.8 Membership shall be contingent upon a member organisation maintaining the status of being a fully paid up member of the Federation.
- 5.9 All colleges and organisations accepted into full or associate membership are deemed to fully support the aims and values of the Federation as set out in this Constitution.

6. Membership Voting Rights

- 6.1 Voting by the full membership, including the General Meeting of members shall be one vote per member as defined in article 5.2
- 6.2 Voting at meetings of the Board shall be on the basis of one member, one vote.
- 6.3 Associate members shall not be entitled to vote at any meeting of the Federation.
- 6.4 The quorum for decision making shall be the majority (51% plus) of those entitled to vote. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair of the meeting shall be entitled to a second or casting vote.
- 6.5 In the event that a meeting which has been properly convened with a pre-circulated agenda is not quorate, the meeting can make decisions on agenda recommendations on the condition that the decisions are presented to the next properly constituted and quorate meeting for formal ratification.
- 6.6 Voting at any meeting of the Federation may be by proxy, provided written authority by the member organisation(s) concerned has been given to the representative casting the vote.

7. Cessation of Membership

- 7.1 Membership shall cease if:
- a) A member gives to the Secretary/Treasurer 30 days notice in writing of intention to discontinue membership;
 - b) A member fails to pay any part of a sum fixed for annual subscription or any levy six months after that sum was due, and the Board notes by a simple majority that member's membership shall lapse and cease;
 - c) A member no longer meets any of the criteria for membership as outlined in article 5.

8. Governance of the Federation

- 8.1 The supreme decision making body of the Federation shall be the General Meeting of members.
- 8.2 The General Meeting of members shall elect a Board to manage the affairs of the Federation for the period of time until the next General Meeting.
- 8.3 In electing the Board, a General Meeting shall endeavour to ensure that at least one member of the Board shall come from a continent represented within the membership.
- 8.4 The Board shall be mandated to perform – and to be accountable for – such actions as may be reasonably expected by the membership in between General Meetings, in particular:-
- a) Championing and steering the aims of the Federation as set out in this Constitution;
 - b) Specific responsibilities deemed under this constitution;
 - c) Agreeing arrangements for the provision of suitable and cost effective secretarial and financial support services;
 - d) Employ staff on such terms and conditions as the Board itself may decide;
 - e) Other such responsibilities as may be authorised by the General Meeting of members.
- 8.5 A specific and non-negotiable minimum responsibility of the Board shall be to set in place and oversee the arrangements for the next World Congress of Colleges and Polytechnics.
- 8.6 The Board shall meet, either in person or through electronic means, at least once a year during its period of office.
- 8.7 The Board shall be accountable to the membership as a whole and shall present to the General Meeting of members a full report of all its activities during its period of office.
- 8.8 The General Meeting of members may also, if it wishes, authorise the Board to appoint a Patron who should be a high profile, internationally renowned person.

9. Special General Meetings of Members

- 9.1 Special General Meetings of members may be held as often as the Board considers necessary, or if at least 25% of fully paid members of the Federation, from at least two countries, request the Board to do so.
- 9.2 Written notice of any Special General Meeting must be sent by the Board to all members at least three months' in advance of the meeting.

10. Membership and Appointment of the Board

- 10.1 The Board shall comprise nine (9) representatives of member organisations elected by the General Meeting of members in accordance with Paragraphs 10.2 to 10.4 below.
- 10.2 A notice of the General Meeting of members and request for nominations for Board membership shall be sent to all paid up full member organisations at least six months before the date of the General Meeting. Only authorised representatives of paid up full member organisations of the Federation shall be eligible to stand as nominees.
- 10.3 Nominations must be submitted in writing to the address shown on the notice by the date shown. This shall normally be at least two months after the date of the notice calling for nominations.
- 10.4 Three months prior to any General Meeting the Secretariat shall send to all paid up full member organisations a summary of all the nominations received. Where more than nine nominations have been received, that summary shall set out the arrangements for an election at the general meeting of members.
- 10.5 The Board shall take office immediately following its election at the General Meeting of members and shall serve for the period of time up until the next General Meeting.
- 10.6 The Board shall be responsible for appointing from among its numbers a Chair and other officers as deemed appropriate.
- 10.7 The Chair and other Board members shall be elected by the Board at the 1st Board meeting held after a General Meeting.
- 10.8 The Chair shall serve a term until the next General Meeting and shall be eligible for re-election but shall not serve for more than two consecutive mandates.
- 10.9 The term of office for the Board shall be the period of time up until the next General Meeting of members.
- 10.10 All members of the Board shall be entitled to vote at Board meetings.
- 10.11 Should any member be absent for two consecutive meetings of the Board, without having:
- a) given the Chair prior notice of his or her inability to attend the meeting concerned; or
 - b) arranged for a substitute to attend in his/her place, s/he may be asked by the Board to relinquish his/her place on the Board unless a special case for their being permitted to continue is approved by the Board.
- 10.12 The Board shall have the authority to co-opt from time to time up to four (4) additional persons from among the Federation's membership.

- 10.13 An individual serves on the Board as the official representative of the relevant member organisation. Should s/he be replaced in the capacity under which s/he was appointed his/her replacement in that post will automatically continue on the Board. In the event of a mid-term vacancy through other reasons, including resignation of the organisation from membership, non-attendance at meetings etc. the Board shall be empowered to make appropriate alternative arrangements for a replacement.

11. Officers of the Board

- 11.1 The officers of the Federation shall consist of Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary/Treasurer.

11.2 Chair

- 11.2.1 The duties of the Chair shall be to:

- a) Preside at General Meetings of the Federation and its Board meetings;
- b) Preserve order;
- c) Give an impartial report upon votes; and
- d) Perform other such duties as are incidental to the office.

11.3 Deputy Chair

- 11.3.1 The Deputy Chair shall assist the Chair, and if the Chair is absent shall act in the Chair's stead, and while so acting shall have all the powers of the Chair.

- 11.3.2 If for whatever reason the Chair fails to complete his/her term of office, the Deputy Chair shall fill the position of Chair until such time as the Board elects a new Chair.

- 11.3.3 If neither the Chair nor the Deputy Chair is present at a meeting, the members present shall appoint one of their numbers to preside.

11.4 Secretary / Treasurer

- 11.4.1 The Board shall elect a Secretary/Treasurer at the first Board meeting following each General Meeting.

- 11.4.2 The duties of the Secretary/Treasurer shall include:

- a) Keeping all records of the Federation including a register of members, with their names, addresses, and dates of their joining the Federation and the termination of their membership;
- b) Keeping the minutes;
- c) Preparing immediately prior to each General Meeting a report on the business and proceedings of the Federation during the period since the previous General Meeting for presentation to members at the General Meeting;

- d) Receiving into a bank account, and paying out monies;
- e) Keeping a true and proper set of books accounting for the monies;
- f) Preparing statements of the finances of the Federation;
- g) The recovery of debts due to the Federation.

12. Conduct and Authority of the Board

- 12.1 The World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics shall take on a responsibility to underwrite the financial or other losses of any particular Board member who the Board has specifically mandated to act on behalf of the Board provided such action has been carried out with the full knowledge and specific authority of the Board.
- 12.2 Minutes of meetings of the Board together with a report of all other significant actions taken by individual Board members on behalf of the Federation, shall be publicised at regular intervals to the full membership.
- 12.3 All Board members are expected to uphold generally accepted principles of integrity and probity in all their dealings conducted in the name of the Federation, in particular to declare to the Board all matters of potential financial interest either to themselves personally or to their employing/sponsoring institutions.

13. Federation Membership Fees and Expenditure Budget

- 13.1 The Board shall be responsible for approving the Federation's budget. The formula for determining membership subscriptions shall be made by a general meeting of the Federation. Such a membership fee formula shall:-
 - a) take account of realistic expectations of expenditure during its term of office (including secretariat costs);
 - b) be fair and equitable given the diversity of membership and different economic circumstances of different countries and categories of membership.
- 13.2 An audited Statement of Financial Performance (Revenue Statement) for the year ended 31 December together with a Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) as at 31 December shall be made available to all member organisations of the Federation before 30 June each following year.

14. Internal Procedures

- 14.1 This constitution is intended to provide a framework and basis for co-operative working between the member organisations. It is not intended to regulate every potential situation which may arise, but more to convey the spirit in which the Federation was created.

- 14.2 Until such time as it may be decided to proceed with legal registration and a more tightly controlled legal constitution, each Board should prepare and agree (within three months of its election) a more detailed schedule of internal financial and “authority to act” procedures. These procedures must take full account of responsibilities and powers to act which may be assigned to Board officers or staff.

15. Dissolution

- 15.1 **Realisation of Assets and Discharge of liabilities**
If the majority of members at a general meeting resolve to dissolve the Federation, the Board shall realise all the available assets and as far as possible discharge all the liabilities of the Federation.
- 15.2 **Surplus Distribution**
The surplus funds of the Federation, if any, shall thereupon be disposed of in such a manner as the Board may think fit.
- 15.3 **Shortfall Liability**
If there is a shortfall of funds upon realisation, the liabilities shall be paid proportionally by the members.