



CONSTITUTION OF UNISA PSYCHOLOGY ASSOCIATION (PsyNISA)

1. **Name**

The name of the Association is:

UNISA Psychology Association (PsyNISA) hereafter referred to as the Association.

2. **Status**

- 2.1. The Association is an Association of the University of South Africa (UNISA) and is established in accordance with Constitution of the UNISA Student Representative Council, hereafter referred to as SRC, and the “Recognition of student organisations and structures” directive.
- 2.2. In the event of any discrepancy between the provisions of these regulations and the constitution of UNISA, the latter constitution shall prevail.

3. **Objectives**

- 3.1. To promote development of student affairs within UNISA;
- 3.2. To provide guidance to Psychology Students in relation to MyUNISA online system, especially in relation to deadlines and events;
- 3.3. Facilitating communication between UNISA faculty, SRC and Psychology Students;
- 3.4. Facilitation of relevant projects and workshops for Psychology Students;
- 3.5. To provide access to psychology related trade shows and exhibitions, lectures and readings;

- 3.6. To provide guidance for placements and internship for post-grad acceptance and procedures.
- 3.7. Maintaining an association of colleagues to support each other and network with, post-graduation and professionally.
- 3.8. Developing an organisational structure for psychology that reconciles historically opposed groups;
- 3.9. To serve the needs and the interests of all South Africa's people;
- 3.10. To acknowledge and surpass psychology's role in the apartheid system;
- 3.11. Ensuring that the Association remains an organ of civil society without an overt or covert loyalty to any political party.
- 3.12. Advancing psychology as a science, profession and as a means of promoting human well-being;
- 3.13. Actively striving for social justice, opposing policies that deny individuals or groups access to the material and psychological conditions necessary for optimal human development and protesting against any violation of basic human rights;
- 3.14. To establish and maintain the highest standard of ethics;
- 3.15. Engaging in policy development processes that are relevant to social enhancement and psychological practice in South Africa;
- 3.16. Promoting the rendering or and advancing mental health services to all in South Africa.

4. **Implementation**

- 4.1. The Association pursues its aims by:
 - 4.1.1. Holding discussions and meetings, by publications and other steps deemed desirable;
 - 4.1.2. Promoting discipline amongst its members in accordance with the prescribed ethical code, and

- 4.2. The Association shall not conduct any business with a view to profit for either the Association or any of its members

5. **Membership**

5.1. Student Members

Student members shall be currently registered students of psychology at the undergraduate, honours or masters' level at UNISA, enrolled for degree purposes.

5.2. Affiliate Members

UNISA Students interested in psychology as a science or as a profession may apply for affiliate membership.

6. **General Rules regarding Membership**

- 6.1. Applications for membership must be submitted in writing to the Secretariat of PsyNISA.
- 6.2. The right of conferring membership lies with the executive committee of the society.
- 6.4. A member may terminate his / her membership by notifying the Secretariat of PsyNISA in writing, who in turn would notify the Association of such resignation.

7. **Disciplinary Steps**

- 7.1. The Executive Committee of the Association may recommend to the SRC that disciplinary or other action be taken against members whose conduct is detrimental to the objectives of UNISA and the Association. A member is entitled to appear in person at a meeting of the executive committee of the Association, before any final decision is taken on such recommendation to the SRC.
- 7.2. The disciplinary measures may be in the form of a warning, suspension, or expulsion from the Society at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
- 7.3. An appeal against the above decision may be made to the SRC within one calendar month.

8. **Management**

- 8.1. The general control and guidance in respect of policy and the business of the Association shall be vested in the Executive Committee of the Association.

9. **Voting Rights**

- 9.1. Student members shall have the right to vote at General Meetings.

- 9.2. Affiliate members shall have no voting rights.

10. **Composition of the Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee of the Association shall consist of a Chairperson, a Vice-chairperson, a Secretary, Treasurer and three additional members. Only student members, who has been registered with UNISA for at least two semesters prior the commencement of the his/her term of office are eligible for election.

11. **Nomination of the Executive**

- 11.1. Nomination of the eligible members, for each portfolio noted in section 13, must be submitted in writing before the Annual General Meeting.

- 11.2. Only Student Members may be nominated as candidates for the election, and the proposed as well as the seconded must be a student member.

- 11.3. Should no nominations be received, the election of the executives shall take place during the following A.G.M.

12. **Election of the Executive**

Voting for the executive members will be conducted every year at the Annual General Meeting. The Chairperson shall serve for a maximum of two successive terms. Voting shall take place by ballot or by show of hands as the current Chairperson may determine.

- 12.1. The current chairperson of the Association or a designated presiding officer must announce the names of nominated students to the meeting after the closing of nominations, but may not permit any debate.

- 12.2. Should only one person be nominated, for any portfolio including additional members, the current chairperson of the Association or a designated presiding officer must declare that candidate as duly elected.
- 12.3. A designated presiding officer should be appointed if the current chairperson is standing for re-election or unable to attend.
- 12.4. Appointment of the presiding officer shall be done by nomination from the floor and voting by show of hands.
- 12.5. Should more than one person be nominated for any portfolio:
- (a) voting must be done at that meeting by secret ballot;
 - (b) each student eligible to vote may cast only one vote per portfolio, with the exception of three votes for additional members.
 - (c) Should three or less additional members be nominated, the current chairperson of the Association or a designated presiding officer must declare that candidates as duly elected.
 - (d) the current chairperson of the Association or a presiding officer must declare the elected candidates who receives a majority of votes.
 - (e) should electronic voting be recommended, a separate policy is to be written by the current executive, approved by the relevant RSRC, and included as an amendment to the constitution under section twelve.
- 12.6. Any dispute arising from any aspect of the elections can be submitted for consideration to an independent election tribunal. The independent election tribunal is constituted of no more than four internal employees who possess a collective skill in law, public policy and political sciences. These members are appointed by the SRC.

13. **Functions of the Executive Committee**

- 13.1. Members of the executive committee of the Association remain in office until such time as a new Executive Committee has been elected, but the executive committee may fill vacancies, which may occur until the next A.G.M by majority vote.
- 13.2. To pass on recommendations and suggestions to the SRC.
- 13.3. Manage the day -to - day affairs of the Association and take such decisions to attain the objectives of the Association.
- 13.4. Portfolios shall consist of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Education and Training Officer and Project Coordinator. Additional members may be elected and assigned designations by the chairperson, as per the requirements of the Association or its members.

(a) Chairperson is the highest officer of the Association. The chairman presides over meetings of the Association and ensures proceedings are conducted in an orderly fashion and is expected to attend all meetings unless special leave is granted by majority of the current remaining executives. When the Association is not in session, the chairperson's duties include acting as its head, its representative to the outside world, its spokesperson and delegation of tasks related to fulfilling the Association's executive strategy.

(b) Vice Chairperson, as the deputy to the chairperson, is able to act with delegated authority on duties designated to the chairperson should the current chairperson be unavailable. The vice chairperson attends to tasks delegated by the chairperson, in accordance with the Association's executive strategy

(c) Secretary deals with correspondence, admits new members, and organizes official meetings and events, of which minutes and media reports are to be compiled respectively. The secretary also compiles the annual report of the Association's activities and presents this at the next A.G.M.

(d) Treasurer is responsible for running the treasury of the association. The treasurer is to keep records of all financial transactions in accordance with section fourteen, with receipts or other supporting documentation, to provide an annual financial report. The annual financial report is to be compiled for presentation at each consecutive A.G.M.

(e) Education and Training is responsible for identifying academic and administrative support needs of undergraduate and postgraduate students at national and regional level. He/She works with the national and regional undergraduate and postgraduate studies officer to ascertain the opinion of undergraduate and postgraduate students on institutional decisions pertaining to teaching, research and community engagement.

(f) Project Coordinator is responsible for coordinating all events of PsyNISA; represents PsyNISA in all forums related to the structure; enhances the recreational and academic level on both provincial level of the RSRC; together with the treasurer general, coordinates and obtains sponsorship from outside organisations to support recreational and academic activities in accordance with the sponsorship rules of the University, and performs all functions required by the PsyNISA in respect of recreational and academic activities.

14. **Finances**

14.1. All subscriptions to the Association are determined by the Association in conjunction with the SRC and will be collected by the Secretariat of PsyNISA. An administration fee as set by the executive may be charged on an annual basis for such collection, only if agreed in a previous A.G.M.

14.2. The Association may generate additional funds for the financing of the activities of the Association, under the authority of the Treasurer.

14.3. Finances shall be managed by the treasurer and records of all transactions are to be kept for one year. Transactions should be in-line with the executive strategy and requirements prescribed by the SRC.

14.4. The Association shall submit an annual income and expenditure account to the SRC for the purpose of financial control.

15. **Meetings**

15.1. An A.G.M. of the Association convenes once a year at such a time and place as decided upon during the preceding A.G.M.

15.2. The chairperson of the Executive Committee may convene a Special General Meeting should it be deemed necessary, or at the written request of a minimum of fifteen Student members.

15.3. At the A.G.M. or at a Special General Meeting a quorum shall consist of the members present.

15.4. At a General Meeting the majority of the votes shall be decisive.

15.5. Members shall be given at least 30 days written notice of a General Meeting and such notice shall include the agenda of the meeting.

15.6. Only student members of the Association are entitled to vote.

15.7. At all meetings the chairperson has a casting vote in the event of an equality of votes.

15.8. Meetings may be attended by means of remote attendance with confirmation of Identity. Contribution may be limited to voting and nominations only.

15.9. Restrictions and communication mediums will be reconsidered and revised at each A.G.M.

16. **Amendments to the By-Laws of the Association**

16.1. Written notice of proposals to amend the constitution, proposed and seconded by student members, shall be circulated to members at least 30 days prior to the General Meeting at which the amendment is to be considered.

16.2. Amendments to the by-laws become operative when approved at the AGM by a two-third majority of votes cast by the student members present.

17. **Dissolution**

- 17.1 The Association shall be dissolved if such a decision is taken at an AGM by a two-third majority of the student members present. The liabilities of the Association will remain the joint responsibility of the members of the Association.

- 17.2. When membership of an Association has been below fifty over a period of two successive years, and such Association will in the opinion of the SRC not revive, the SRC shall recommend to a General Meeting that the Association be disbanded and the SRC shall dispose of the assets and liabilities of a disbanded Association.