

1. Name

The name of the organisation shall be - Association of Lipspeakers.

2. Aims and Objectives

The aims of the Association shall be to represent Lipspeakers as a professional body, and to promote lipspeaking and its good practice by:

- Supporting Lipspeakers by disseminating information, providing learning opportunities and assisting in professional development
- Representing the views and concerns of Lipspeakers to external bodies
- Promoting professional standards within Lipspeaking. Encouraging the training and development of Lipspeakers.

3. Structure

The Association shall have the following structure. There shall be two categories of membership:

3.1. **Full membership:** This shall be open to those who hold a Level 3 Lipspeaking qualification and who are registered with the National Registers of Communication Professionals working with Deaf and Deafblind People, herein known as NRCPD, as a Lipspeaker.

Prospective members should show support for the ethos and integrity of the association.

Membership benefits:

- Free advertising in the Directory on the ALS website
- Training arranged by the ALS at a reduced rate
- Continuing Professional Development opportunities provided
- Regular news updates from the Committee
- Access to a community of Lipspeakers

There is also the opportunity to:

- Represent the profession of Lipspeakers on external boards/committees and publicise the Association and its work at conferences and events
- Serve on the committee to shape the profession.

3.2 Entry to the ALS Directory of Lipspeakers shall be on condition of the following: current registration with the NRCPD under the category of Lipspeaker; adherence to the Code of Conduct for Lipspeakers and full payment of the membership fee.

3.3 All members should uphold and respect the aims and objectives of ALS. Any person who does not uphold the professional reputation of lipspeakers may, after a discretionary review by the committee members, be refused membership.

3.4. **Associate membership** This category is for those with an interest in Lipspeaking, students of Lipspeaking, deaf clients and colleagues, and those who support and subscribe to the aims and objectives of the Association.

3.5 The associate member should subscribe to the principles of ALS and membership can be refused and is at the discretion of the committee.

Membership benefits:

- Workshops arranged by the ALS
- Regular news updates from the Committee

There is also the opportunity to:

- If invited, serve as an Ambassador for the Association

4. Subscription

All membership shall be subject to payment of an annual sum laid down by the Committee, the limits to be determined annually by the Committee by the time of the Annual General Meeting. Membership shall lapse if the annual subscription is not paid within a period of 1 month after renewal is due. Fees shall be deemed payable on 1st January every year irrespective of the date of joining the Association. Joining mid-term will incur a pro-rata fee.

5 Officers and Members of the Committee

5. 1 Only Full members of the Association shall be eligible to vote and hold office in the Association.

5. 2 The Committee members and officers shall be elected or re-elected every 3 years at the Annual General Meeting. All candidates for election must consent to office / membership of the Committee and must be proposed and seconded by at least two voting members of the Association. Proposals made be received in advance of the AGM or made on the day.

5.3. The committee aims to encourage students by, where appropriate, co-opting them onto the committee to provide an opportunity for the student voice to be heard. They will not be eligible to vote.

5.4. The usual term of office or membership of the Committee will be three years. Members can be re-elected to continue to serve on the Committee, with no maximum term. The following officers are subject to a maximum term of five years: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and Membership officer.

5.5. At any election, it is desirable that at most half of the Committee officers and members change over, to allow for continuity. In particular, it is desirable that the Chair and Vice Chair posts are not put up for election in the same year.

5.6 In the event that there are no nominations for Chair, or Vice Chair, then the Committee shall be formed from full ALS members who are proposed, seconded, and voted onto the Committee. The

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Committee then forms a collegiate, agreeing to share the tasks between them. The Committee will then share responsibility for responding to queries addressed to ALS as a body.

6. Committee Meetings

6.1. The Committee shall hold 2 meetings per year both of which are to be minuted. Meetings shall be convened by the Secretary or Chair by notice to members of the Committee.

6.2. These meetings may be in person, or arranged virtually, dependent on availability and cost of travel. However, at least one meeting per year, in addition to the Annual General Meeting, must be held where members of the committee are physically present. This requirement may be waived in times where gatherings are not permitted for public health reasons.

6.3. Extraordinary meetings of the Committee shall be convened at the request of its members, or more formally, by petition of at least 10 full members.

6.4. Such a meeting must be convened within 6 weeks of receipt of the request or petition, by the Secretary. Notice of the meeting must be circulated to the Committee at least 21 days before the date thereof and must include the reason for the petition.

6.5. The Quorum at any Annual General Meeting of the Association shall be 25 voting members of the Association or 25% of the voting membership present, whichever is the lesser.

6.6. The Quorum at any meeting of the Committee shall be three voting members of the Committee. In the event of an equality of votes, the vote of the Chair of the meeting shall hold the deciding vote. In circumstances where an important decision needs to be made, and the meeting is not quorate, the remaining committee members will need to be consulted and vote via email within 3 working days after the meeting. When working without a Chair on the Committee, a tied vote may need to be held over for further discussion within the committee and, if necessary, the voting membership.

6.7. Provision shall be made in all meetings for minutes to be taken for circulation to members of the Committee and to members of the Association in the case of General Meetings.

6.8. In the event of an Extraordinary Committee meeting, minutes must be taken and circulated to all petitioners.

7. Powers of the Committee are:

7.1. Subject to lawful consent, to raise funds by way of gifts, grants, loans and fund-raising activities. The Association shall not undertake permanent trading activities.

7.2. To apply the funds of the Association in any lawful way for the furtherance of its aims. This shall not be deemed to preclude the payment of out-of-pocket expenses to the Association members.

7.3. To establish and operate current and deposit accounts in any bank or building society in the United Kingdom in the name of the Association.

7.4. To employ and pay any persons not being a member of the Committee to supervise, organise and carry out the work of the Association.

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7.5. Subject to lawful consent to dispose of or to return to account all or any of the assets of the Association.

7.6. To delegate such powers as are thought necessary for the furtherance of the aims of the Association, provided that any persons or sub-committees so employed report fully and promptly to the Committee.

8. General Meetings

8.1. The Association shall hold an Annual General Meeting at a time and place to be decided by the Committee: members and affiliates will be notified no less than 60 days before the date of the proposed meeting.

8.2. The Association's Committee may call an extraordinary meeting should the need arise. Members and affiliates will be notified no less than 30 days before the date of the proposed meeting.

9 Communication

9.1 Members are asked to remember that, whilst displaying/using the ALS name/logo, (whether written communication or at events where the badge is displayed), they are representatives of the Association and should therefore conduct themselves in a professional manner, abiding by the Code of Practice set out by the ALS membership www.lipspeaking.co.uk and the NRCPD Code of Conduct www.nrcpd.org.uk, along with ethical principles. All members are expected to behave in a way which supports the lipspeaking profession and to demonstrate commitment to the Association.

9.2 Communication between Members and the Committee. The Committee undertakes to disseminate minutes of its meetings for the membership, using email or an online facility. Members can correspond with the Committee using an advertised email address. All communication is expected to be relevant to professional practice, courteous and factual.

9.3 Communication amongst Members. Online support groups and chat forums are administered by a member of the Committee. Any communication between Members is expected to be conducted with all due regard for confidentiality, respect, courtesy and professional demeanour. Reposting or copying of content is only acceptable with the written permission of the author. Membership groups are considered to be safe spaces for members to post material and views relating to our profession. If a Member does not adopt such behaviour they may – as a last resort - be removed from the online group

10. Financial Arrangements

10.1. Each cheque drawn on current or deposit accounts held in the name of the Association shall require the signature of at least two of three named members of the Committee.

10.2. The financial year shall be 1st April to 31st March.

10.3. The Treasurer of the Association shall keep the accounts of the Association and shall submit them to the Committee and the Annual General Meeting.

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10.4. The accounts shall be independently examined annually by Accountants approved by the voting members.

10.5. The Association agrees to reimburse the reasonable expenses of committee members in the pursuance of their duties on behalf of the Association. It is expected that committee members shall make every effort to keep their expense claims to a minimum. In all expense claims, members will have the option of converting their claim into a donation to the Association.

11 Complaints and Sanctions

11.1 External complaints: The ALS does not undertake to investigate external complaints about professional practice as this may prejudice any future investigations by the NRCPD.

11.2 Complaints raised by a Member regarding the actions of the Committee: All complaints should be made to the Committee in writing. Unless there is exceptional urgency, the complaint should be discussed at the next Committee meeting, with the Member having the opportunity to join the committee meeting to discuss their complaint. The Member may choose to be supported by a colleague when dealing with the Committee.

11.3 Concerns raised by the Committee regarding the actions of a Member: The Committee may raise concern about any Member whose actions are considered to be outside of the ALS Code of Practice or in breach of this Constitution. Concerns will be expressed in a written warning to the Member, inviting their fresh undertaking to abide by such frameworks. Subsequent breaches may lead to the termination of their membership of ALS.

12. Amendments of the Constitution

The Association shall amend the Constitution only by provision of a General Meeting at which the quorum shall be two-thirds of the voting members present. The General Meeting shall be called according to the conditions in paragraph 8.

13. Dissolution of the Association

13.1 The dissolution of the Association shall be at the approval of no less than 2/3 of the voting members at a General Meeting.

~~13.2~~ 13.2 In the event of dissolution, all funds shall be used in payment of outstanding debts. Any residual monies shall be disbursed to such charities as may be agreed by a simple majority at a General Meeting.

13.3 The Committee shall appoint an officer of the Association to disburse monies in accordance with the decision of the Association.

Definition of meanings:

Committee meetings - shall consist of the officers designated in paragraph 5. Extraordinary

Committee Meeting -shall consist of at least three of the officers designated in paragraph 5, two of which must be the Chair or Vice Chair, Treasurer or Secretary.

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Annual General Meeting or General Meeting - must consist of the Chair or Vice Chair of the Association [if that office is held], Secretary, Membership Officer and Treasurer. It shall be open to all members of the Association. Full members will be entitled to vote.

NRCPD – The National Registers of Communication Professionals working with Deaf and Deafblind people.