



The ABTUK Constitution

(as updated at the 2016 AGM)

1. NAME

The name of the Association is *The Association of Biodanza Teachers in the UK. ABTUK.*

2. AIMS

The aims of the association are:

- 2.1 To represent and advance the interests of Biodanza Rolando Toro System (RTS) Teachers and Students.
- 2.2 To promote high standards of training, practice and conduct within Biodanza RTS in the UK.
- 2.3 To promote and advance awareness and the reputation of Biodanza RTS in the UK.
- 2.4 To work with International Biocentric Foundation-recognised teachers of Biodanza RTS and International Biocentric Foundation-accredited training schools for teachers of the Biodanza RTS in the professional development and growth of Biodanza in the UK.
- 2.5 To promote links with Rolando Toro System Biodanza in other countries and with the International Biocentric Foundation.

3. INTERPRETATIONS

If there shall be an ambiguity or difference of opinion concerning the meaning or interpretation of any article of the Constitution and if there shall be any matter not otherwise provided for in the Constitution it shall be referred to the Steering Committee whose decision shall be final and binding on all parties, until otherwise settled by any constitutional amendment.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 There shall be five categories of membership, viz Registered Teacher, Student under Supervision, Student, Affiliate Teacher, and Friend of ABTUK. In all cases, membership is conditional on payment of the annual subscription fee set by ABTUK for the membership category and completion of a signed membership form agreeing to the regulations of the Association through which agreement to the regulations of the

Association is declared..

- 4.2 Registered Teacher membership is open to all fully IBF-qualified Teachers of Biodanza RTS practising or living in the UK or abroad. When teaching in the UK, registered teachers should hold professional indemnity insurance .
- 4.3 Student under Supervision membership is open to students under supervision of any IBF-recognised UK School of Biodanza, and to students under supervision resident in the UK but studying at a non-UK IBF-recognised School of Biodanza. Students under supervision must hold indemnity insurance when teaching any classes where an IBF didactic teacher is not present.
- 4.4 Student membership is open to all students except Students under Supervision of any IBF-recognised UK School of Biodanza, or resident in the UK but studying at a non-UK IBF-recognised School of Biodanza.
- 4.5 Affiliate Teacher membership is open to IBF-qualified Teachers of Biodanza RTS, practising and living outside the UK.
- 4.6 Friend of ABTUK membership is open to those who are not eligible for any of the aforementioned membership categories, plus IBF qualified Teachers of Biodanza and former students under supervision who no longer teach Biodanza.

5. SUBSCRIPTION

- 5.1 The membership year runs from 1st February to 31st January.
- 5.2 Membership shall be terminated if after two reminders and one month from the date of last reminder the subscription has not been paid.
- 5.3 If during the course of the membership year a member becomes eligible for another membership category they will be upgraded to that membership category for the rest of that membership year, on notifying the ABTUK secretary. This will incur no additional cost.
- 5.4 Any new member of any category except Friend of ABTUK who joins after the AGM weekend will be offered a reduced membership subscription for the rest of that membership year. If however they join on or after 1st November they will pay the full annual subscription, which will be carried over into the next membership year.
- 5.5 Registered Teacher members who are aged 60 or over or registered disabled on the first day of the membership year are eligible for concessionary membership fees.
- 5.6 Committee members are eligible for cost-free membership of the association for the year following each year of their service on the committee.

6. VOTING RIGHTS

- 6.1
 - a) Registered Teacher members have full voting rights at all Meetings of the Association, but do not have the right to elect the Student Representative who sits on the Steering Committee.
 - b) Student under Supervision members have debating but not voting rights at Meetings of the Association, with one exception (see below).
 - c) Student members have neither debating nor voting rights at Meetings of the Association, with one exception (see next).

Exception: Student under Supervision members and Student members have the right to

elect from amongst the Student under Supervision members a Student Representative to sit on the Steering Committee. At Meetings of the Association this Student Representative has a single vote on behalf of all members of both these membership categories.

d) Affiliate Teacher members have neither debating nor voting rights at Meetings of the Association.

e) Friend of ABTUK members have neither debating nor voting rights at Meetings of the Association.

6.2 Members of ABTUK who have full voting rights may, in the event of being unable to attend an ABTUK AGM or EGM, be entitled to vote in absentia, by one of the following mechanisms:

a) By giving permission and discretion of proxy vote, in writing, with an original signature and contact details, to the ABTUK Chair. Evidence of proxy vote entitlement will be available for any Full member to witness at the AGM or EGM. Lack of such clear written evidence shall invalidate the proxy vote. Through this mechanism, the Chair will have absolute discretion to use a proxy vote as he/she sees fit. Instructions on how to vote in any specific matter(s) cannot be accepted by the Chair.

b) By giving permission, in writing, with an original signature and contact details, to another Full Voting member of ABTUK, who will be present at the AGM or EGM, to vote on the member's behalf. Evidence of proxy vote entitlement will be available for any Full member to witness at the AGM or EGM. Lack of such clear written evidence shall invalidate the proxy vote.

c) In either mechanism, it is essential that the member should inform the ABTUK Secretary *in advance of the AGM or EGM* that they intend to use a proxy vote, and which mechanism is being used.

7. HONORARY OFFICERS and THE STEERING COMMITTEE

7.1 The Steering Committee shall consist of not more than 7 members.

7.2 At the Annual General Meeting of the Association the Registered Teacher members shall elect from amongst themselves a Chairman, a Secretary, and a Treasurer as Honorary Officers of the Association who will comprise 3 of the members of the Steering Committee.

7.3 A Student Representative elected by Student under Supervision members and Student members at the AGM will comprise a further member of the Steering Committee.

7.4 The remaining members of the Steering Committee will be chosen by the Registered Teacher members from amongst themselves at the AGM.

7.5 The Chair, Treasurer and Secretary may not seek re-election to the same post immediately after holding that post for four consecutive years. The Student Representative may not seek re-election as Student Representative immediately after holding that post for two consecutive years. If a situation arises where an important post or posts would otherwise remain unfilled, these limitations may be waived with the agreement of those eligible to vote at the relevant AGM.

7.6 Voting for all members of the Steering Committee shall be by secret ballot.

7.7 All members of the Steering Committee shall retire from office, together at the end of the AGM next after the date in which they came into office but they may be re-elected or reappointed.

- 7.8 In the event of there being any tie in the voting of meetings of the Association or business meetings of the Steering Committee the Chairman shall have a casting vote.
- 7.9 In the event of the Chairman being absent at any Meetings of the Association or business meetings of the Steering Committee the members of the Steering Committee present shall choose from amongst themselves someone to be the Chair of that particular meeting, with the exception of the the Student Representative, for the duration of that particular meeting only.
- 7.10 Nominations for Officers and Steering Committee will be invited by the Secretary at least 28 days before an AGM and will be accepted up to the start of voting for the Steering Committee at the Meeting. All nominations shall be proposed and seconded by members of the appropriate category with the candidate's consent.
- 7.11 If, between one AGM and the next, the post of Student Representative becomes vacant, Student under Supervision members and Student members will be notified and invited to provide a replacement of the appropriate membership category, as defined in section 6 (Voting Rights). If these members do not provide a replacement Student Representative within one month of receiving notification, the Registered Teacher members of the Steering Committee have the right to fill the vacancy by co-opting a Student under Supervision member or a Student member until the following AGM.

8. COMMITTEES

- 8.1 The Steering Committee and Officers may appoint such committees and working parties from time to time for the purpose of making an inquiry or supervising or performing any function as it deems may be necessary.
- 8.2 Members of the committees will be chosen from among the Registered Teacher members present at the meeting in which the initiative is proposed and approved by the meeting.
- 8.3 Registered Teacher members not present at the meeting may be co-opted onto a proposed committee at the discretion of the meeting and with their consent.
- 8.4 Student under Supervision members and Student members may be co-opted to serve on a committee at the discretion of the meeting and with their consent.

9. MEETINGS & PROCEEDINGS OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

- 9.1 The Steering Committee shall hold at least 3 business meetings a year.
- 9.2 There shall be a quorum when at least 3 members of the Steering Committee are present.
- 9.3 Every matter shall be determined by a simple majority of the votes of the members present and voting on the question.
- 9.4 The Steering Committee shall keep minutes of the proceedings of meetings of the steering committee.
- 9.5 The minutes of the Steering Committee meetings shall be circulated to all members of the Steering Committee and be available to be read by any Registered Teacher member, except for confidential notes.
- 9.6 Where reasonable expenses for travel are incurred by Steering Committee members to attend committee meetings and/or an AGM or EGM, these shall be reimbursed from ABTUK funds. It is expected that Committee members will keep such costs to ABTUK as low as possible through early booking of tickets and use of tele-conferencing where

appropriate.

10. GENERAL MEETINGS OF THE ASSOCIATION

- 10.1 Notice of General Meetings must be sent to members in writing by the Secretary at least 28 days before the Meeting.
- 10.2 Non-members may normally attend General Meetings as observers. However the committee and membership reserve the right to discuss topics in private where necessary.
- 10.3 Matters shall be determined by a simple majority of votes of members present and eligible to vote and voting on the question.
- 10.4 The Secretary or other person specifically appointed by the steering committee shall keep a full record of proceedings at every General Meeting.
- 10.5 The minutes of the General Meeting shall be circulated to all members of the Association.

11. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

- 11.1 An Annual General Meeting shall be held within the first 3 months after the subscription renewal date (presently 31st January).
- 11.2 The reports of the Chair, Secretary & Treasurer will be made at the AGM.
- 11.3 The Steering Committee will publish an Annual Report & Accounts on the Association over the previous year including the reports mentioned in the preceding section for distribution among the members of the Association and other interested bodies.
- 11.4 Only those who have paid the subscription fee for that particular year at least two weeks in advance of the AGM are entitled to vote at the AGM.
- 11.5 Minutes of the AGM shall be circulated to all members of the Association.

12. ACCOUNTS

- 12.1 The Steering Committee shall keep accounting records of the Association and prepare an annual statement of account for the Association.
- 12.2 The funds of the Association shall be paid into an account operated by the Steering Committee in the name of the Association. There shall be three signatories to the account, cheques to be signed by any two, one of which must be the Treasurer and the other two must be members of the Steering Committee with the exception of the Student Representative. At the start of each committee new year, the committee should agree how decisions are made concerning expenditure (e.g. through majority consensus or full consent) and preferably set a budget for the year.
- 12.3 The financial year shall end on 31st December.

13. CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES AND AMENDMENTS

- 13.1 Constitutional amendments and the acceptance of new governing documents of the Association shall be made at the AGM. In exceptional circumstances, constitutional amendments and the acceptance of new governing documents of the Association can be

made at an EGM.

- 13.2 The proposed document or amendment shall be sent to all members at least 28 days in advance of the AGM (or EGM) at which the matter is to be debated.
- 13.3 A two thirds majority of those present at the AGM (or EGM) and voting from among the Registered Teacher membership (including the Student Representative) is required for adoption of a constitutional amendment or change or new Governing Document.

14. REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION

Regardless of any constitutional amendments made in the meantime a review of this Constitution shall be made no less than 3 years from the date of the previous review under the direction of the Steering Committee to take account of any changed circumstances brought about by the growth and development of the Biodanza system and profession in the UK.

15. NOTICES

The non-receipt of a notice of a meeting by any member shall not invalidate any proceedings or resolutions at any meeting of the Association, Steering Committee or any Committee thereof.

16. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

- 16.1 All ABTUK members, except Friend of ABTUK members are regulated by the ABTUK Code of Professional and Ethical Conduct (CPEC).
- 16.2 Grievances from members of the public or from ABTUK members regarding the professional conduct of an ABTUK member can be directed in the first instance to any member of the ABTUK Steering Committee for discussion and potential consideration of any informal resolution to the grievance.
- 16.3 In the absence of informal resolution, formal grievances must be submitted in writing to the Chair or Secretary of ABTUK who will notify the Steering Committee and the member who is the subject of the grievance.
- 16.4 On receiving a formal, written grievance, the Chair or Secretary shall convene a Grievance Committee, selected from current Steering Committee members and/or other members. The Chair cannot be part of the Grievance Committee, as he/she will hear any appeal arising.
- 16.5 The identity of the person pursuing a grievance shall be made known to the subject of the grievance, and both shall be made known to the Steering Committee and Grievance Committee. If the investigation of relevant events requires other parties to be involved, the permission of the person initiating the complaint will first be gained (NB. the absence of such permission could result in the grievance process being unable to progress). Anonymity will otherwise be preserved.
- 16.6 The Grievance Committee shall investigate the grievance, sourcing further information as necessary from all parties involved, to determine, so far as they are able, whether, and in what ways, the Code of Professional and Ethical Conduct has been breached.
- 16.7 The Grievance Committee shall report in writing to the Steering Committee, addressing the grievance in terms of the Code of Professional and Professional Conduct.
- 16.8 The recommendations of this report may lead to:
 - a) No action: member considered not at fault, or lack of any evidence to

substantiate the grievance.

- b) Disciplinary action: requirements for e.g. particular action, training etc. and time frame, to be specified in the report of the Grievance Committee.
- c) Disciplinary action: member suspended from ABTUK for a specified length of time, with or without requirement for action, training etc. as above as prerequisite for renewed membership.
- d) Expulsion from ABTUK.
- e) With the exception of a) above, and depending on the severity or outcome of the breach of the CPC, the Grievance Committee may additionally recommend that the ABTUK Steering Committee notify the IBF of the grievance and its outcome. Such action is likely to be reserved for situations where either Committee has strong concerns about the continuing actions or fitness to practise of a member.

16.9 In order to offer optimal protection to the public, grievances and their outcomes shall be formally held by the ABTUK secretary for 5 years from their date of conclusion. Should any further grievances be instigated towards the same member, past grievance processes may be taken into account as evidence by the Grievance Committee.

16.10 Appeal. The aggrieved and the subject of the complaint shall have the right to appeal the outcome/recommendations of the Grievance Committee, within 28 days of being informed of the decision. The appeal will be heard by the ABTUK Chair, who may consult relevant others as he/she sees fit. An appeal does not constitute a re-statement or re-hearing of the original grievance. The purpose of an appeal is to consider any relevant new evidence that wasn't available at the time. The appeal will also review the grievance process to verify it was carried out in accordance with ABTUK's constitution. The appeal process will be completed within 56 days of the appeal being lodged. The Chair may revise any of the recommendations under 16.8. The Chair's decision is final.

16.11 On the conclusion of the grievance, a fully anonymised copy of the report of the Grievance Committee shall be distributed to the ABTUK membership as part of routine communications from the Steering Committee.

17. ADOPTION

This updated Constitution was adopted on the 2nd April 2016 at the Annual General Meeting of the Association held on that day.