

## **AHKLC Constitution**

### Constitution of The Association of Hong Kong Language Centres

#### 1. Name

The name of the organisation will be The Association of Hong Kong Language Centres (hereafter referred to as the Association or the AHKLC).

#### 2. Registered address

The registered address will be the work address of the Association President.

#### 3. Mission

The Mission of the Association is to serve the interests of the members of the Association, by encouraging scholarship, facilitating international contacts, promoting the status of language centres and their staff, and facilitating cross-centre initiatives.

#### 4. Membership

There will be three types of membership:

4.1 Institutional Membership - All Hong Kong tertiary language centres, including those of Associate degree awarding institutions, are eligible. Other language centres in Hong Kong may be considered for membership by the Executive Committee. There is no restriction on which language(s) a centre teaches in order to be considered for membership. Additionally, in the event that there are multiple centres from one institution that wish to pursue membership, this is permissible, with each centre bearing responsibility for the independent payment of membership fees.

All individuals holding appointment, either full-time or part-time, in a member centre of the Association in good standing, are entitled to the full rights and benefits conferred upon eligible personnel of member centres, such as they may be, including participation in designated Association events and meetings, i.e., the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

4.2 Institutional Associate Membership - Language centres and language centre organisations and associations outside Hong Kong are eligible and may be admitted for associate membership upon the approval of the Executive Committee.

All individuals who belong to a centre or organisation with associate membership are automatically entitled to the rights and benefits conferred by associate memberships and therefore do not need to join as an individual.

4.3 Individual Associate Memberships - Members of non-member institutions including NET teachers and staff of non-member academic language centres are eligible.

4.4 Membership is conferred when annual payment of the stated membership fee is received by the Association. Maintenance of membership standing is contingent upon the timely payment of annual membership fees.

4.5 Procedure on withdrawal from membership: There will be no refund of fees, and no replacement of the member representative, if there is one.

4.6 Cessation of Membership is by withdrawal in writing or if the subscription remains unpaid for 6 months after it is due. No refunds will be given.

## 5. Structure

### 5.1 Annual General Meeting

There will be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) every year, with advance notice, at an AHKLC sponsored conference or event where possible. The voting will be by simple majority voting, except for amendments to the constitution. Online voting will be possible. If there is an even split, the matter will be deemed undecided and the Executive Committee will explore whether more discussion is needed before bringing it back for another vote.

The AGM will be attended by both the Executive Committee and Committee of Representatives, and will be open to anyone from a member centre, with employment status to be verified as appropriate. Individuals from non-member institutions may attend and participate, but will not have voting rights.

The meetings of the AGM will be quorate if one-third of member centres are represented. The agenda of the AGM will include election of officers if the terms of any of the Executive Officers have reached or will reach their expiry prior to the next anticipated AGM, followed by President's report, Secretary's report, Treasurer's report, Events Officer's report, Project Officer's report, Discussion of relevant points, and Any Other Business.

### 5.2 Executive Committee (EC):

The core aims of the Executive Committee are to set a direction for the Association and adopt policies and practices to achieve the mission of the Association. The EC will meet regularly as needed throughout the year.

The Executive Committee will be comprised of the following Executive Officer (EO) posts:

- 1) President
- 2) Secretary
- 3) Treasurer
- 4) Events Officer
- 5) Project Officer
- 6) And other positions deemed necessary and approved by a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

Terms of office will be for three years, starting at the end of the AGM at which the EO is elected, with the possibility of continuation for a second term. The possibility of a third, and any subsequent terms requires formally standing for office in an open contest.

In principle, EOs should be from different institutions. However, if this results in an EO position being left vacant, a second person from the same institution could be elected.

It will normally be expected that the out-going President will continue to serve for one year, for the sake of a smooth transition.

Procedure on early resignation / withdrawal from membership of EO: Replacement will normally take place either at an AGM. If a position becomes vacant after the AGM has taken place, the President can appoint a replacement for the vacant position for the period of no more than a year.

Election procedures: Nominations, and the names of proposers and seconders will be delivered to the EC at least one week in advance of the AGM. Either the proposer or seconder must be a member of the Executive Committee. The nominee cannot be their own proposer or seconder. Balloting for EOs will be conducted within the AGM on the basis of one person, one vote among those in attendance. Voting is open to all staff from language centre members, and individual associate members. Online voting is permissible for individuals from member institutions who attend the AGM online. Proxy voting will be allowed if there is written notification to the President three days in advance of the AGM.

### 5.3 Committee of Representatives (CoR)

The aims of the Committee are to provide a platform for each member institution to have a representative to serve in the Association. The role of the representative is to serve as a liaison between the Association and the respective centre that the representative belongs to. Representatives will disseminate information about the Association to the centre, and inform the Association of key events in the institution as well as offering suggestions on the promotion of events/talks/conferences and other matters.

The membership of the CoR will comprise one representative from each member centre, one individual to act as representative for all Associate institutions (if any), and one individual to act as representative for all individual members (if any). Whereas the representatives will serve in this capacity on behalf of their centres, centres will not usually have more than one representative. Where Executive Officers are also drawn from member centres, this may mean that there are two individuals from one member centre who hold formal roles in the Association. While it is preferable for every member centre to have a representative, if a Centre Head (or equivalent) would prefer that a sitting Executive Officer also act as the Centre representative while in their term of office, this is permissible if deemed acceptable by the Executive Committee.

Representatives will be nominated by the Centre Head (or equivalent) of each institutional member, with the approval of the EC. Representatives are expected to serve for 2 years in the first instance. Whether there is a change in representatives beyond this will depend on both the member institution and the Association.

There will be at least 2 meetings of the CoR each year with all representatives expected to attend. Executive Officers of the Executive Committee are also expected to attend.

Institutional members may send a substitute representative to meetings. If an institution has more than one Centre member, each Centre is entitled to its own representative. Alternatively, the relevant Centres can agree for one individual to represent multiple Centres within the same institution, if desired.

## 6. Finance

6.1 The Association will raise funds by membership fees, which will be set with approval by vote at an AGM. It may also set entrance or registration fees for Association events.

6.2 Spending limits. The Treasurer alone can authorise expenditures of up to HK\$5,000. Over this amount, the EC needs to approve with documentation of approval in minutes which are available to the Association members.

6.3 The Association will not go into debt. It will not invest funds in accounts that might lose money. The financial year of the Association will be from 1 September to 31 August.

7. Amendment of the Constitution requires a 2/3 majority vote in both the EC and AGM.

8. Dissolution. In the event of the dissolution of the Association, any remaining funds will be used to sponsor an AHKLC-related event agreed upon by a majority of the EOs.

## 9. Standing Orders:

a. The President will chair Association meetings, including AGM, EC and CoR meetings.

b. The President will endeavor to ensure the efficient and orderly conduct of meetings and promote opportunities for participation among eligible attendees.

c. Ordinary business will be decided through discussion within respective meetings, with the Chair ensuring documentation of the final outcome and execution of relevant decisions.

d. Should there be meaningful difference of opinion which cannot be readily agreed within an AGM or EC meeting, any Association member attending the meeting may request the matter to be put to a vote.

e. The Secretary may be designated to serve as Acting Chair in the Chair's absence, either (a) at the request of the chair or (b) in the event of the temporary incapacitation of the Chair.

f. The Secretary will keep minutes and circulate them to all members and will maintain an accurate membership list.

g. The Treasurer will collect membership fees and ensure Association accounts are accurate.

h. Only the Executive Officers can authorise expenditure exceeding HK\$5,000.

- i. The Events Officer will work with the membership to ensure that any event with Association involvement is in alignment with the mission of the AHKLC.
- j. The Project Officer will work with the membership to facilitate and advocate for projects which are in alignment with the mission of the AHKLC.
- k. Any other officer position deemed necessary within the EC will abide by the mission of the AHKLC.
- l. The Association will avoid interference in the interests, resources, policies, personnel matters and internal workings of individual language centres.
- m. The Association website is the ultimate responsibility of the Executive Committee which will ensure that it is kept current.

#### 10. Logo

A change of logo will require agreement by the EC.

#### Acronyms:

- Association of Hong Kong Language Centres (AHKLC)
- Executive Committee (EC)
- Executive Officer (EO)
- Committee of Representatives (CoR)
- Annual General Meeting (AGM)