

Lancaster University Roleplaying Society Constitution

As of 29/07/2017

The society

- 1.1. The name of the society shall be Lancaster University Roleplaying Society, hereafter referred to as “the society”.
- 1.2. The society shall be affiliated to Lancaster University Students’ Union (LUSU) subject to the conditions set out in the Activities by-law. As such the society agrees to abide by the union constitution, its by-laws, the LUSU safety framework, and all other union policies.
- 1.3. The society may affiliate to external bodies subject to the union council (see section 15 of the union constitution).

Aims

- 2.1. The society shall exist to:
 - i. Support and promote roleplaying within Lancaster University.
 - ii. Provide a social forum for its members.

Membership

- 3.1. Membership of the society is open to all full and associate members of LUSU. Society membership should fall into two categories, full and associate, as laid out in Section 3 of the union constitution. Individuals other than those mentioned above may be offered membership by the executive committee subject to their agreement to abide by this constitution.
- 3.2. Society membership is only granted to those individuals who have paid the required annual fee to the society as determined by the executive committee and possess a LUSU Purple Card or LUSU Clubs and Societies Card, except for honorary members (see 3.7 below) who only require one of the aforementioned cards.
- 3.3. All members have the right to attend and speak at meetings, and nominate, second, and vote for candidates at elections.
- 3.4. Honorary membership may be granted subject to the agreement of a qualified majority at the AGM. This shall normally be granted to ex-members for outstanding service to the society, or for those who can continue to offer service to the society. Honorary members are considered full members.
 - i. Karl Lucas is an honorary member.
 - ii. Toby Barlow is an honorary member.
 - iii. Jez Green is an honorary member.
 - iv. Jonathan Halls is an honorary member.
 - v. Paul Dennison is an honorary member.
 - vi. Martin Rathbone is an honorary member.
 - vii. Kirsty Barnes is an honorary member.
 - viii. Luke Butcher is an honorary member.
 - ix. Laura Eyre is an honorary member.
 - x. Jonathan Holding is an honorary member.
 - xi. Tom Lynch is an honorary member.
 - xii. Cath Stinton is an honorary member.

- 3.5. The executive committee may refuse or revoke membership of an individual for failing to abide by this constitution, the societies safety code of practice, the society Mental Health Safeguarding Policy (Appendix 1), the society Photography Policy (Appendix 2), the LUSU safety framework, or for bringing the society into disrepute, subject to the complaints procedure set out in section 7 of this constitution.
- 3.6. Fees will only be refunded in exceptional circumstances and only with the unanimous agreement of the executive committee. Once fees have been refunded, membership is revoked.

Executive committee

- 4.1. The society shall be administered by an annually elected executive committee who shall have the duties and responsibilities set out below. Only full members may be nominated for the positions of president, secretary, and treasurer.
 - i. President, who shall:
 1. Be the primary representative of the society to the LUSU, the University, and to external bodies.
 2. Co-ordinate and oversee the activities of both the exec and the society as a whole.
 3. Act as chairperson to all society meetings.
 4. Ensure that the LUSU safety framework and the code of practice is adhered to.
 5. Attend Activities Council and other relevant meetings
 - ii. Treasurer, who shall:
 1. Maintain good order of society finances and ensure the LUSU financial regulations are adhered to.
 2. Maintain an up-to-date account of all financial transactions.
 3. Advise the executive committee and members on expenditure of budget.
 4. Prepare a statement of revenue and expenditure to be presented at the AGM.
 - iii. Secretary, who shall:
 1. Be responsible for the administration of all matters relating to membership and liaison appropriately with the treasurer.
 2. Be responsible for all society correspondence and administration.
 3. Take minutes at meetings and circulate agendas and minutes of meetings to members.
 4. Informing members of other appropriate information as and when necessary.
 5. Be responsible for the ordering and maintenance of all society equipment.
 6. Act as the returning officer and ensure the smooth running of the general meetings.
 - iv. Tabletop representative, who shall:
 1. Be responsible for the organising and promoting of tabletop roleplaying events.
 2. Be responsible for the maintenance and organisation of the society library.
 3. Be responsible for organising and booking rooms on campus to provide a location for tabletop role-playing.
 - v. Live and Safety representative, who shall:
 1. Be responsible for the maintenance and addition to the live roleplay weapons and costume.
 2. Be responsible for the safety checking of all weapons which are to be used in a live roleplay event. This includes all personal weapons.

3. Be responsible for the training of members in basic combat and missile weapons training.
 4. Liaise with other LARP system referees and organisations.
 5. Be responsible for the allocation of live slots.
 6. Ensure that the safety codes of practice are adhered to at all live roleplay events.
 7. Be responsible for the adjudication of complaints against live roleplay referees and other live roleplayers.
 8. Be responsible for organising and booking rooms on campus to provide a location for live roleplaying.
 9. Attend compulsory safety meetings and report back to the executive committee the details of the meeting.
 10. Advise on any change in practices that may affect any society risk assessment.
 11. Keep records on all safety matters, such as first aiders and records of adherence to safety practices.
 12. Be in contact with LUSU, the executive committee and relevant members of the society (including system referees) to advise on matters of safety.
 13. Advise on necessary safety costs.
- vi. Social Secretary, who shall:
1. Plan a social calendar.
 2. Take responsibility for the organisation of all social events.
 3. Ensure that members have sufficient social fora for their needs and act as a primary contact point for concerns or questions regarding social activity as a society.
- vii. Webmaster, who will be responsible for:
1. Checking the society email inbox, including replying to emails from members or non-members, or forwarding such emails onto the relevant exec member or other party.
 2. Maintaining the society mailing list and website.
 3. Keeping track of all of the various LURPS accounts, passwords and printing budget across university services.
 4. Assisting the tabletop representative with the room bookings system if required.
 5. Maintaining online social media accounts representing the society.
- 4.2. One member of the executive committee will be responsible for completing the LUSU safety certification course.
- 4.3. In the absence of any member of the executive committee their duties may be delegated to another executive committee member. Alternatively a member may be co-opted to fulfil such duties subject to the approval of a general meeting.
- 4.4. Members of the executive committee shall be elected at the AGM and shall take office from the last day of the Lent term.
- i. In the event of resignation, vote of no confidence or removal from the executive committee for any other reason, an election for this position shall be held at the nearest available opportunity.
- 4.5. Failure of executive committee members to carry out the duties conferred on them by this constitution or by resolutions of society meetings without reasonable excuse will be grounds for suspension or a motion of no confidence in the officer concerned.

Elections

- 5.1. The secretary will act as returning officer for society elections. Should the secretary be a candidate in any election then another officer may be appointed acting returning officer by the executive for the duration of that election.
- 5.2. All officers shall be elected towards the end of the Lent term at the AGM, or, if required, at any general meeting.
- 5.3. All officers shall be offered training by the LUSU training office, if available.
- 5.4. Any post may be filled following the result of an election at an EGM (see 6.2).
- 5.5. Society members will be informed of the date of the election, of the election positions available and details for nominations 2 weeks prior to voting taking place.
- 5.6. The option to re-open nominations shall be available to be voted for in all elections.
- 5.7. All elections are preceded by speeches by the candidates; the returning officer shall determine in advance the maximum length of the speeches. The speeches shall be followed by questions to the candidates.
- 5.8. Candidates who are unable to attend must send written confirmation of their intention to stand. This may include a speech to be read out by the returning officer. If no confirmation is received then the candidate in question will be excluded from the election and will be unable to stand.
- 5.9. A show of hands shall be taken at the meeting for each candidate, members may only vote once per position. The returning officer shall be responsible for the counting.
- 5.10. The winning candidate will be determined to be the candidate who receives the most votes in any particular election, subject to the quorum being fulfilled.
- 5.11. Any member may propose that voting be done by secret ballot subject to approval of a simple majority of the meeting.
- 5.12. Any complaints regarding election should be first taken to the returning officer and then to the societies council chair, as per the complaints procedure in LUSU constitution by-law 26.

Meetings

- 6.1. Extraordinary General Meetings (EGMs) may be called by the President, by a majority decision of the executive committee or by written request by 5 or more society members.
 - i. Such general meetings must be called with at least five days' notice.
 - ii. The quorum for such meetings shall be 20 members.
 - iii. An EGM shall only discuss matters relating to the reason the meeting was called.
- 6.2. Any elected officer may be suspended or expelled from their position following a motion of no-confidence being passed at a general meeting. A qualified majority of votes will be required to pass any such motion, subject to the relevant quorum being fulfilled.
- 6.3. There shall be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) in the last few weeks of the Lent term each year, with the date to be decided upon by the executive committee. In this AGM, the President shall present a report of the societies
 - i. Elections for positions on the executive committee shall be held at the AGM.
 - ii. The quorum for such meetings shall be 20 members.
- 6.4. Each member has the right to attend executive committee meetings. These meetings shall be announced as far in advance as possible.

Complaints

- 7.1. Any complaints about the running or operation of the society should initially be discussed with the president and then follow the procedures set out in by-law 26 of the LUSU constitution.
 - i. Any complaints specifically concerning the president should be brought to the secretary.

Constitution

- 8.1. The whole or any part of this constitution may be altered, amended or deleted at any general meeting or at the AGM. Any changes shall require a qualified majority and will be subject to the relevant quorum being fulfilled.
- 8.2. The constitution and the safety code of practice shall be reviewed by the society before the end of the first academic term each year.

Safety

- 9.1. The society must adhere to the LUSU safety framework at all times. Copies of this will be distributed at appropriate times of the year. Failure to abide by this framework may result in disciplinary action.
- 9.2. The society shall have a safety code of practice that shall be reviewed annually. This code shall be shown to each member of the society before they subscribe to the Society and shall be made readily available throughout the year.
- 9.3. It is the duty of the President to ensure that the safety framework and the safety code of practice are enforced in all society activities.

Appendix 1: Mental Health Safeguarding Policy for Lancaster University Roleplaying Society

Whilst [LUSU](#) should always be a student's first port of call to increase the accessibility of any society's activity LURPS recognises that mental health illnesses can have an impact upon a person's experience of a game and may, at times limit them from playing a game. Because they are almost always invisible and can be difficult for the person with said illness/disability to describe the particular access difficulties being faced we recognise the need for a policy making clear that identifying arising issues is still possible and outlining what are reasonable accommodations that can be provided.

Not every game suits every player. There are many different genres and play styles offered within LURPS and there will be some that don't suit members in ways that are nothing to do with accessibility. As a player, referee or GM it's ok to recognise this, however you should make sure that you aren't excluding people based on things they can't change, in line with [LUSU's Constitution](#). The [LURPS Executive](#) are there to facilitate communication between members if this is needed for reasons of privacy. [LUSU](#) are the best resource to use if any sort of advocacy is sought. The LURPS Executive are fellow members and are not trained or qualified to deal professionally with mental health problems.

Accommodations are not about making games easier for individual players, referees or GMs, they are about making it no more difficult than for other players.

GMs and Referees are asked to make clear in their pitches what sort of games they are running and consider, if appropriate, having a content warning in the pitch.

Accommodations that can be made;

- Photocopying or Printing out rules/summaries of mechanics for games.
- Having a 'catch up' or reminder at the beginning of sessions to refresh people as to the occurrences of last session
- Taking and sharing notes about game sessions
- Support and encourage "time-outs" during play to calm down or mentally regroup during play. This is protected by the LURPS safety code of conduct.
- Prohibit general boundary-breaking behaviours in all players, such as unwanted personal contact, physically aggressive behaviour (that goes beyond usual safe LARP combat) - and empower all our players to set their own physical boundaries. This is protected by the LURPS safety code of conduct.
- As a player be aware of your personal "triggers" and inform your GM/Referee about them. If you do not wish to do for privacy reasons then you can inform an appropriate member of the Exec and ask them to speak with your GM/Referee discretely -
 - GMs/Referees to give advance warning if these are going to come up in the main plot.
 - GMs/Referees to avoid touching on these themes in personal plot.
 - This needs to be done in tandem with a player's own actions: if you do not want to roleplay through parental issues, please do not write a background with complex familial relations or seek out your NPC parents, etc.
- As a GM/Referee be aware of your personal "triggers" and do not feel it necessary to include these in the game you are running even if players ask you to do so. You do not need to explain why you will not include these in your game.
 - GMs/Referees to give advance warning if specific things are excluded from a game.(An appropriate time for this would be during character generation).
 - GMs/Referees to give advance warning if certain themes are excluded from inclusion in their game.
- Ask your GM/Referee if it is possible for them to write plot facilitating retirements or breaks from play when needed -
 - Creating appropriate plot reasons for your character to leave.
 - ... and to return, if/when you are ready to play them again.
 - Providing NPC parts (if desired) so you can keep attending sessions, or if you could play a different character in the meantime.
- Ask your GM/Referee if it is possible for them to temporarily suspend or wrap-up your character-specific personal plot if it becomes problematic or if for some reason you are finding it has a negative impact on your enjoyment.
- Ask your GM/Referee if it is possible for them to be available to talk through any issues or problems you are having in the game.
- As a GM/Referee you can take a time out from your own game if necessary. You can talk through whether appointing one of the players as a temporary GM/Referee is appropriate or if it is better to put the game on hiatus.

Accommodations that aren't appropriate to make:

- As a player asking Referees or GMs to ret-con or fundamentally change established plot of a game, including personal plot. This includes altering the motivations, personality or behaviour of NPCs.
- Deflecting or interfering with the actions of other players (out of character and outside of the game).
- Protecting a character from death while they are still being played when nothing in-character supports this.

- Offering personal plot, reasons for retirement or breaks that are fundamentally impossible in-universe, or require a PC or NPC to act in an out of character fashion.
- Participation in LURPS cannot be a “need”. If either the GM, refs, or the Live Rep, think it’s in the interest of you or the rest of the playerbase (or the refs themselves) for you to take a break from the game, this has to be respected. We appreciate this can be difficult to hear, but this is a game, and, for the mental and emotional safety and wellbeing of the refs and other players, cannot be considered a medical requirement. Please see the final section for elaboration.
- Similarly, it cannot be considered a medical requirement to play any given game or play any given LARP session over monsterring it. While refusing individual monster roles for your own comfort levels and boundaries is perfectly fine, if you feel that you are not well enough to participate at all as a monster, then you are considered not well enough to participate as a player. Please see the final section for elaboration.
- Players should not petition other players for any of the above changes - ie, asking other players to change their IC behaviour. If you feel a player’s behaviour is problematic for Out Of Character reasons, this needs to be dealt with OOC through the refs and live rep.

The referees and GMs reserve the rights to...

- Seek the advice and support of the Exec or LUSU in any situation and take the time necessary to do so.
- Refuse a background if it contains themes that they are not comfortable reffing for.
- Ask any player to take a break from the game or remove them entirely if we feel that their OOC behaviour is causing us or other players undue stress or actively detrimental to our own mental health.

LURPS is a student society, and is not suitable for personal therapy.

Participating in LURPS games cannot be used as a therapy or treatment for mental health problems. While we recognise that catharsis is a part of roleplay for some people, putting too much weight or becoming reliant on LURPS games as a support system is unfair on yourself, the exec, and the other members.

The refs and GMs are not qualified mental health professionals and cannot respond appropriately to this sort of roleplay, nor have they volunteered to do so by running their games.

The players are also not qualified mental health professionals and cannot respond appropriately to this sort of roleplay, nor have they volunteered to do so by participating in games.

Some game worlds are full of unpleasant things, and there are often chain reactions of consequences that cause these unpleasant things to land on your character. If encountering uncomfortable IC situations, negative consequences, conflict (either with NPCs or other PCs) or character death would cause you extreme emotional distress and/or be to the detriment of your mental health, we would strongly recommend looking into alternatives to playing particular games.

We try to treat all In-Character representations of mental illness with nuance, consideration and respect. We ask that those portraying mental illness in their own characters do the same. If you have any concerns on this front, please talk to the LURPS Executive. All parties should feel free to contact the Executive if they do not feel comfortable bringing the issue to the individual directly - including GMs or Referees.

In Conclusion

This isn’t a list of things that must be done in every single game, this is a document of suggestions for how to make games accessible to the widest possible audience of members when relevant.

Having members who are happy with our society is what we are aiming for and good safeguarding and accessibility can help us do that.

This Policy was written in association with Access:LARP, Kirsty Barnes, Lucie Elliott, Doug Kohler and Lancaster University Students Union. It was modelled on the mental health policy created by Kirsty Barnes and Lucie Elliott.

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Appendix 2: LURPS Photography Policy

Principles

1. Photography has always been a part of LURPS events, largely because it's great fun afterwards to be able to share the images and reminisce. Players who missed certain moments because they were in a different area get a glimpse of the drama that other characters experienced, and potential future players get a taste of what might be in store for them. Meanwhile, the refs get to sit back and look at them with the satisfaction of "We caused this!"
2. Photography also should not interfere with the game itself. Photographers are asked to remain discreet in out of the way positions, and to refrain from using a flash, and turn off sounds from the camera.
3. Some people have privacy concerns for a wide variety of reasons, both professional and personal. This policy attempts to balance the rights of those people with those who desire to have images and memories that they will be able to keep forever.
4. Photographers should only post images that are unlikely to cause embarrassment to either the subjects or anybody attending the event.
5. Sometimes LURPS will wish to use photographs as part of publicity for LURPS, this will involve asking photographers and models to sign an appropriate release form as detailed in point 15.

Informed Consent

5. The section titled Default Policy applies to the majority of LURPS events. Unless otherwise stated during the event pitch, or before time in, this policy is to be considered by photographers, players and refs to be in force.
6. Attending an event is considered to be consenting to the photography policy of that event.
7. Events may deviate from this policy for any reason that the event organiser deems needed. Best practice would be to detail changes during any event pitch so that both players and potential photographers are aware of their rights and responsibilities before the event commences.

Default Policy: Privacy

8. A curated selection of photographs taken during the event will be made available on Facebook within a reasonable timeframe.
 - a. These photographs will be posted to the LURPS group on Facebook visible to the members of the group only
 - b. or, any event specific group visible to members of the group only. The group should be a closed group to ensure that the photographs are not shared wider

- c. or, the photographer's personal timeline with privacy set to friends only.
9. Subjects of the photograph may only tag themselves. Please do not tag other people in photographs as they may not wish to inform their friends and family of their attendance at this event.
10. Security of the photographs is subject to Facebook security model, and photograph subjects accept that this may change at a future date outside of LURPS or the photographer's control.
11. The photographer may, at their discretion, add the photographs to a Flickr or other mass photograph online storage system as long as no person identifying labels are applied to the images.

Default Policy: Reuse and Derived Products

12. Notwithstanding the exception below, images may not be reused, reposted, nor disseminated further without the explicit permission of the photographer and any subject persons within the image.
13. Images containing only one person, or can be cropped to only one person, may be used as that person's avatar image/profile picture or other similar use.
14. Images may not be used to create any derived product without the explicit permission of the photographer and any subject persons within the image.
15. No images may be used for any commercial or publicity purposes without an appropriate photography model release form. The standard LURPS publicity release form can be found at: [LURPS Photograph Release Form](#)

Acceptance

16. Attendance at a LURPS event constitutes acceptance of the terms detailed above. You are providing both the LURPS and the photographer a perpetual and irrevocable license to use your image and likeness in the manner detailed within this policy.