



**The By-Laws
Of
The Syrian British Medical Society
(SBMS)**

November 2015

SBMS

Discussed, amended, and approved at the Annual General Meeting
held on 8th November 2015



Founded 2007

The By-Laws Of The Syrian British Medical Society (SBMS)

Article 1

Name of the Organization

The **Syrian British Medical Society (SBMS)** is a Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a share capital.

Article 2

Mission Statement

The Syrian British Medical Society is a non-political, non-profit organization embracing all healthcare professionals of Syrian decent, residing in the UK.

The Society aims to promote the highest professional and ethical standards amongst British-Syrian Healthcare Professionals, and to create and promote academic and professional links with the Healthcare Professionals in Syria and related organizations worldwide.

The Society will embrace and promote the highest ethical standards in humanitarian and medical relief work, and all related matters.

In order to fulfil its mission, the Society will campaign publicly, and will lobby Governments, national and international bodies and organizations, to foster support for its objectives and further its stated mission.

Article 3

Aims and Objectives

- 3.1. To promote the highest professional and ethical standards amongst British-Syrian Healthcare Professionals.
- 3.2. To encourage cultural and social functions within the organization.
- 3.3. To create and promote links between British professionals and institutions and their Syrian counterparts.
- 3.4. To create and promote academic links with the medical profession in Syria and related organizations worldwide.
- 3.5. To provide help and advice to Syrian medical students, doctors, dentists and other healthcare professionals who like to pursue training in the UK, within the guidelines of the relevant UK professional bodies.
- 3.6. To provide advice to British doctors, dentists, other healthcare professionals who like to pursue training or elective periods in Syria.
- 3.7. To offer specialist medical, professional and academic advice to Syrian hospitals, medical colleges and pharmaceutical industries.
- 3.8. To promote the highest ethical standards in humanitarian and medical relief work.
- 3.9. To provide worldwide academic representation of Syrian doctors, dentists and other healthcare professionals working in the UK.
- 3.10. To create and promote links with other Syrian Medical Societies and Associations throughout the World.
- 3.11. To create and promote links with Arab Medical Societies and Associations in the UK.
- 3.12. To organize and participate in academic medical, dental and pharmaceutical conferences and activities worldwide.

Article 4

Membership

Section 4.1. Membership Categories

4.1.1. Full Membership: Full Membership is open to all Medical Practitioners, Dentists, Pharmacists, Allied Healthcare Professionals, and scientists in fields allied to medicine, who:

- Are of Syrian descent, or are spouses of a person of Syrian descent, *and*
- Are fully registered with the relevant regulatory professional body in the UK (e.g. General Medical Council, General Dental Council, General Pharmaceutical Council, or equivalent) or abroad, *and*
- Have their main residence in the United Kingdom.

4.1.1.1. Full Members are eligible to vote on all issues put forward to Members for consideration.

4.1.1.2. Only Full Members are eligible to stand for election to the Executive Council, including to the post of President.

4.1.1.3. Full Membership applications must be approved by the SBMS Executive Council, upon the recommendation of the Membership Officer, who has the task of verifying the authenticity of the documentation supporting the prospective Member's application.

4.1.1.4. Full Membership becomes active once the application is approved, and the Membership Fees are paid.

4.1.2. Associate Membership: Associate Membership is open to:

- All Postgraduate (who are not currently in a paid job) and Undergraduate students of Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Allied Healthcare Professions, and sciences allied to medicines, who are of Syrian descent, or are spouses of a person of Syrian descent.
- Medical practitioners, Dentists, Pharmacists and Allied Healthcare Professionals and scientists allied to medicine worldwide

4.1.2.1. Associate Members are eligible to attend the Annual General Meeting, and to take part in any discussions and proposals put forward the the Members.

4.1.2.2. Associate Members are not eligible to vote on issues put forward to Members.

4.1.2.3. Associate Members are not eligible to stand for election to the Executive Council.

4.1.2.4. Associate Membership applications must be approved by the SBMS Executive Council, upon the recommendation of the Membership Officer, who has the task of verifying the authenticity of the documentation supporting the prospective Member's application.

4.1.2.5. Associate Membership becomes active once the application is approved, and the Membership Fees are paid.

4.1.2.6. The Executive Council has the authority to waive Membership Fees for an Associate Member or a group of Associate Members, when, in the view of the Executive Council, circumstances of the said Member or group of Members, necessitate such a decision. No application by the Member or Members concerned is required, and no application for this purpose will be accepted.

4.1.3. Honorary Membership: Honorary Membership can be granted to contributors, sponsors, and other individuals, who, in the view of the SBMS Executive Council, have made significant contributions to health sciences or made efforts to promote the Society and support its mission.

4.1.3.1. Nominations for Honorary Membership must be made by two existing Full Members of the Society, and approved by the SBMS Executive Council.

4.1.3.2. Honorary Membership is for life. It will only be withdrawn or terminated if one of the terms in 4.2.1. (below) apply.

4.1.3.2. If the Executive Council approves the nomination for Honorary Membership, the President of the Society should write to the proposed Honorary Member, inviting him/her to take up Honorary Membership at the next Annual General Assembly.

Section 4.2. Membership Termination and Changes

4.2.1. Membership is terminated in case of any of the following:

- a Member is deceased
- a Member fails to pay the annual subscription fee, despite two reminders.
- a Member is convicted of a criminal offence in a British or European court.
- a disciplinary procedure finds that the Member guilty of committing acts unbecoming of SBMS Membership, or of bringing the Society or its Members to disrepute, in accordance with **Article 8** of these By-Laws.

4.2.2. If a Full Member of the Society leaves the United Kingdom permanently, his/her membership category will automatically be changed to Associate Membership.

4.2.3. If a Full Member of the Society has his name removed from the register of the relevant professional body, his/her membership category will automatically be changed to Associate Membership.

4.2.4. The onus is on the Member to inform the Membership Officer of any changes affecting their Membership status

4.2.5. Members are not entitled to any refund of Membership fees, as a result of changes to their Membership status.

Section 4.3. Membership Fees

4.3.1. Membership fees are set by the Annual General Meeting upon the recommendations of the Executive Council, and will be fixed for a minimum period of two years.

4.3.2. Membership runs a period of twelve months, starting from the first day of the month following the approval of Membership Application and payment of the relevant Membership Fees. Fees should be paid annually thereafter, prior to the end of each annual membership period.

4.3.3. New Full Members will be offered the option of a one-year free Membership, during which they will be Associate Members. However, new Members can upgrade to

Full Membership if they choose to waive the offer and pay the Full Membership fees.

4.3.4. A reminder will be sent to Members 28 days prior to the end of their Annual Membership, and a second reminder will be sent 14 days later.

4.3.5. The most preferred method of paying Membership Fees is by Standing Orders. Member are strongly encouraged to set up Standing Orders to be paid before the end of October, to ensure Membership Fees are paid promptly and on time, thus ensuring no disruption to Membership, and significantly reducing the administrative burden on the Society.



Article 5

The General Assembly

Section 5.1. Role, Responsibilities and Constitution

5.1.1. The General Assembly (GA) is the highest authority within the SBMS, determining policies, targets, and procedures for the Society. It consists of all Members of the Society, including Full, Associate, and Honorary Members.

5.1.2. The General Assembly meets once a year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The meeting is chaired by the President, and moderated by the General Secretary.

5.1.3. In the absence of either, nominated Executive Council Officers will be assigned to perform the roles of the absent Executives.

5.1.4. Extraordinary Meetings of the General Assembly can be called by the Executive Council, in special circumstances.

Section 5.2. Proposal of motions

5.2.1. Proposed motions for discussion by the General Assembly must be submitted to the General Secretary in writing, no less than 28 days prior to the date of the Annual General Meeting.

5.2.2. Full, Associate, and Honorary Member can propose motions for discussion. In all cases, motions should be seconded by a Full Member.

5.2.3. Proposed motions will be put forward for discussion by all Members at the Annual General Meeting, or for e-mail voting for motions considered by the Executive Council as “**URGENT**”, if an AGM is not due for more than two calendar months.

5.2.4. A quorum of 30% of the Full Membership needs to be met at the AGM for the motion to be put to vote.

5.2.5. A response rate of 30% of the Full Membership needs to be met for motions put forward for e-mail voting.

5.2.6. A motion will pass if it attains the agreement of the majority (50% + 1) of the Full Members in attendance or responding by e-mail.

Section 5.3. Vote of No Confidence

5.3.1. Motions for a 'Vote of No Confidence' in the Executive Council or any of its Officers must be submitted to the General Secretary in writing, no less than 14 days prior to the date of the Annual General Meeting. If the AGM is not due for over two calendar months, an Extraordinary Meeting will be called.

5.3.2. A motion for a "Vote of No Confidence" must be supported by at least 25% of the Full Members, in order for it to be submitted for discussion.

5.3.3. Motions will be put forward and discussed at the Annual General Meeting or at an Extraordinary Meeting.

5.3.4. A quorum of 30% of the Full Members needs to be met for the motion to be put to vote.

5.3.5. The motion will pass if it attains the agreement of the majority (50% + 1) of the Full Members in attendance.

5.3.6. In case of a successful motion, the Executive Council Officer or Officers concerned will resign, and if appropriate, will continue in a caretaking role, until a replacement can be elected. In cases where continuation in a caretaking role is deemed inappropriate by the Executive Council, the resignation will take effect immediately.

5.3.7. In case of a successful motion, the Executive Council will call for by-election within eight weeks from the Vote of No Confidence, in accordance with **Article 7**, Section 7.3. of the By-Laws of the Society.

Section 5.4. Regional Branches

5.4.1. Members are encouraged to set up Regional Branches of the Society, in order to bring Members together through various local events.

5.4.2. Members located in a certain region of the UK who wish to set up a Regional Branch must apply in writing to the Executive Council.

5.4.3. The application to set up a Regional Branch must carry the signatures of a minimum of five Full Members residing or working in the relevant Region.

5.4.4. Each Regional Branch will have a Regional Co-ordinator and a Regional Secretary,

who will work closely together to manage the activities of the Regional Council, and will be responsible for reporting the activities of the Regional Branch to the Executive Council.

5.4.5. The Regional Co-ordinator and Regional Secretary will be nominated by the SBMS Executive Council, in accordance with the recommendations of the Full Members in the Region. In the absence of any such recommendations, the Executive Council will select Members for the two posts.

5.4.6. The Regional Co-ordinator and Regional Secretary will serve for a maximum of two two-year terms, to coincide with the terms of the SBMS Executive Council.



SBMS

Article 6

The Executive Council

Section 6.1. Overview

6.1.1. The Executive Council consists of seven Officers, including the President, elected by the General Assembly from the Full Membership of the Society for a two-year term.

6.1.2. Officers can be re-elected for a maximum of two consecutive terms. Members who have served two terms on the Executive Council can stand for election after one term out of the Executive Council.

6.1.3. Each of the Officers of the Executive Council will be in charge of a particular aspect of the Council's activities.

6.1.4. Executive Council Officers are entitled to seek the assistance of other Council Officers, and to recruit Members from outside the Council to help in certain defined tasks, through specific "subcommittees", set up for a set purpose, as directed by the Executive Council. Each subcommittee will be chaired by the Council Officer whose brief covers the work of the said subcommittee.

Section 6.2. The Composition of the Executive Council

The Executive Council consists of seven Officers as follows:

6.2.1. The President: The roles of the President include the following:

6.2.1.1. The President is the overall guardian of the Society, its Members, and its By-Laws. He / she is tasked with ensuring that the interests of the Society and its Members are protected and enhanced.

6.2.1.2. The President will chair the Executive Council Meetings, the Annual General Meetings, and Extraordinary Meetings, and setting the agenda for such meetings.

6.2.1.3. The President will be in charge of all the official correspondence related to the Society together with the Secretary.

6.2.1.4. The President will oversee the execution of the Society policies and

motions passed by the General Assembly.

6.2.1.5. The President will represent the Society in communications and contacts with other bodies and organizations, as directed by the Executive Council and/or the General Assembly.

6.2.1.6. The President will call for Extraordinary Council Meeting, when special circumstances arise requiring such a meeting.

6.2.2. The General Secretary: The roles of the General Secretary include the following:

6.2.2.1. The General Secretary co-ordinates the dates and venues for the Annual General Meeting and informs the Society Members of the details.

6.2.2.2. The General Secretary co-ordinates dates and venues of the Executive Council Meetings and informs the Executive Council Officers of the details.

6.2.2.3. The General Secretary liaises closely with the Executive Council in assembling the agenda ahead of the Executive Council Meetings.

6.2.2.4. Together with the President, the General Secretary is responsible for all the official correspondences related to the Society.

6.2.2.5. The General Secretary calls for and coordinates the Executive Council elections with the help of the Membership Officer, under the direction of the President.

6.2.2.6. The General Secretary invites and receives nominations for Executive Council elections and by-elections.

6.2.2.7. On the day of election or by-election, the General Secretary distributes, collects, and validate the ballot papers.

6.2.2.8. On the day of election or by-election, the General Secretary chairs the Interim Elections Committee which will be elected by Society Members on the day of AGM.

6.2.2.9. The General Secretary co-ordinates e-mail votes, collates the responses, and ensures that the e-mail votes are included in the ballot.

6.2.2.10. The General Secretary is in charge of all of the administrative activities of

the Executive Council.

6.2.3. The Treasurer: The Treasurer has the following duties:

6.2.3.1. Ensuring membership fees are collected in a timely manner.

6.2.3.2. Managing the Society's Business Bank Account. The Treasurer, the President, and the General Secretary are signatories to the Account. Two signatures will be required on cheques paid out of the Business Account.

6.2.3.3. Authorising all payments from the Society's Business Bank Account along with the President or the General Secretary.

6.2.3.4. Preparing the Society's Annual Financial Report and presenting it at the Annual General Meeting.

6.2.3.5. Preparing the Society's annual budget and presenting it to the Executive Council for approval, prior to presenting the approved budget to the Annual General Meeting.

6.2.4. The Membership Officer: The Membership Officer has the following responsibilities:

6.2.4.1. Receiving the Membership applications.

6.2.4.2. Verifying the supporting documentation and ensuring eligibility for each Membership category.

6.2.4.3. Setting up and maintaining the Society's Membership database, which should be accessible to all Executive Council Officers.

6.2.4.4. Issuing invoices to Members when Membership Fees are due

6.2.4.5. Issuing reminders to Members who fail to pay the Membership Fees.

6.2.5. The Education & Development Officer: The Education & Development Officer has the following duties:

6.2.5.1. Promoting links between UK academic institutions and their counterparts in Syria.

6.2.5.2. Promoting medical, dental, pharmaceutical and allied health research links.

6.2.5.3. Planning and organising the Society's scientific meetings in coordination with other Executive Council Officers.

6.2.5.4. Developing, planning and organising training courses for Syrian Healthcare Professionals in the UK and in Syria.

6.2.5.5. Organising and promoting joint scientific meetings with other societies.

6.2.6. Events & Media Officer: Duties of the Events & Media Officer include:

6.2.6.1. Organising and promoting regular social and cultural activities for the Society members and their families, including those organised alongside the AGM and other meetings.

6.2.6.2. Creating links and joint social and cultural events with other similar societies in UK and worldwide.

6.2.6.3. Maintaining and developing the Society's web site.

6.2.6.4. Developing, editing and publishing a digital Newsletter for distribution to Members, the media, and interested parties.

6.2.6.5. Promoting the Society in the local, national, and international media in line with the Society's policies and the Executive Council directions.

6.2.7. The Trainees Officer: The Trainees Officer will:

6.2.7.1. Represent the views and interests of the Trainee Members on the Executive Council.

6.2.7.2. Co-ordinate with the Education & Development Officer regarding training courses for Trainee Members.

6.2.7.3. Set up and co-ordinate "Mentorship Schemes" for Trainee Members, to provide Trainee Members with the guidance and advice to develop their careers.

6.2.7.4. Maintain close contacts with Trainee Members, to ensure their needs are addressed and their concerns are passed to the SBMS Executive Council.

Section 6.3. The Executive Council Meetings

6.3.1. The Executive Council will meet at least once every two months. All meetings are minuted. Meetings can take place either in person or via an on-line forum (e.g. Skype or similar).

6.3.2. A quorum of four of the Executive Council Members is required for the meeting to be valid.

6.3.3. Executive Council decisions are passed by a simple majority.

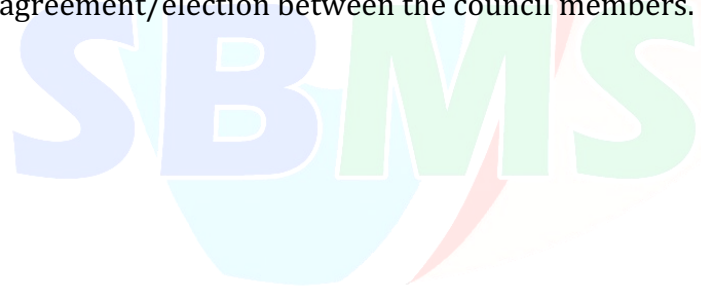
6.3.4. The President holds the casting vote, in case of a tie.

6.3.5. Executive Council members who fail to attend two successive Executive Council meetings without a valid reason and a tabled apology will be relieved from their duties on the Executive Council, and their position on the Executive Council will be put up for by-election, which will be performed in accordance with **Article 7**, Section 7.3. of the Society's By-Laws.

6.3.6. The Executive Council meetings will be chaired by the President or by the General Secretary in the absence of the President. In the absence of both, the Executive Council will be chaired by a nominated Executive Council Officer.

6.3.7. The Executive Council will develop the Society's targets and courses of action to promote the Society, prepares budgets, and reports to be discussed at AGM.

6.3.8. The Executive Council Members will be elected by the Full Members and the duties will be allocated in agreement/election between the council members.



Article 7

Elections

Section 7.1. Election of the President

7.1.1. Self-nominations for the position of President can be accepted from Full Members.

7.1.2. Election for President will take place at the Annual General Meeting, or in exceptional circumstances, at an Extraordinary Meeting of the General Assembly.

7.1.3. The President will be elected for a term of two years. The incumbent President can stand for re-election for a maximum of a second consecutive term.

7.1.4. Members who have served two terms as President can stand again for election after a minimum of one term out of the Executive Council.

7.1.5. Self-nominations must be sent, in writing, along with a supporting statement, to the General Secretary, no less than 28 days before the date of the AGM (or, exceptionally, the Extraordinary Meeting).

7.1.6. Election of the President will be by secret ballot by Full Members, using official validated ballot papers handed to them at the AGM (or the Extraordinary Meeting).

7.1.7. The candidate receiving the highest number of valid votes wins the position.

7.1.8. Full Members can vote by proxy. Each attending Full Member can carry one proxy vote.

7.1.9. Voting by e-mail will not be accepted.

Section 7.2. Election of the Executive Council

7.2.1. Self-nominations for the Executive Council can be accepted from Full Members.

7.2.2. Election for the Executive Council will take place at the Annual General Meeting, or in exceptional circumstances, at an Extraordinary Meeting of the General Assembly.

7.2.3. The Executive Council will be elected for a term of two years. The incumbent Executive Council Officers can stand for re-election for a maximum of a second consecutive term.

7.2.4. Members who have served two terms on the Executive Council can stand again for

election after a minimum of one term out of the Executive Council.

7.2.5. Self-nominations must be sent, in writing, along with a supporting statement, to the General Secretary, no less than 28 days before the date of the AGM (or, exceptionally, the Extraordinary Meeting).

7.2.6. Election of the Executive Council will be by secret ballot by Full Members, using official validated ballot papers handed to them at the AGM (or the Extraordinary Meeting).

7.1.8. Full Members can vote by proxy. Each attending Full Member can carry one proxy vote.

7.1.9. Voting by e-mail will not be accepted.

7.2.10. The candidates receiving the highest number of valid votes win the positions on the Executive Council.

7.2.11. If the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of vacancies, no vote will be necessary, and all candidates will be elected to the vacant posts.

Section 7.3. By-Elections

7.3.1. If a position on the Executive Council becomes vacant, the General Secretary will notify Members at the earliest opportunity, and will call for a By-Election.

7.3.2. If the Executive Council vacancy occurs within two calendar months from a scheduled Annual General Meeting, the By-Election must take place at the AGM, in accordance with the rules stipulated in **Section 7.2.**

7.3.3. If the vacancy occurs more than two calendar months from a scheduled AGM, the By-Election will take place via e-mail voting.

7.3.4. Self-nominations from interested Full Members, along with a supporting statement, must be sent to the General Secretary before the closing date, which is 28 days after the notification is sent.

7.3.5. Names of eligible candidates, and their supporting statements will be distributed to all Members within one week from the closing date.

7.3.6. Full Members will be asked to vote by e-mail. Closing date for receipt of e-mail votes will be 14 days after the names of candidates are announced.

7.3.7. The General Secretary will collate the result and notify Members within one week from the closure of voting. The successful candidate will be formally announced as the new Executive Council Officer.

7.3.8. Successful candidates will serve on the Executive Council till the end of the life of the existing Executive Council. The period served by the candidate voted in through a by-election will not count against the Member's entitlement to serve two successive terms.

7.3.9. If the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of vacancies, no vote will be necessary, and all candidates will be elected to the vacant posts.



SBMMS

Article 8

Disciplinary Procedures

Section 8.1. Disciplinary Procedures against Members:

8.1.1. If a Member is reported to the Executive Council for having committed acts unbecoming of membership, or for bringing the Society or its members to disrepute, the Executive Council, at its next scheduled ordinary meeting, shall take a vote on whether the claim is valid or not.

8.1.2. If the claim was deemed valid and worthy of investigation, the Executive Council shall then instruct the Secretary to write to the said Member, informing him/her of the Council's intention to investigate the claim.

8.1.3. The Member shall be invited to appear in front of a Disciplinary Subcommittee, appointed by the Council, to present his/her case. A date for such meeting shall be set, giving a minimum notice of 28 days from the date of the Secretary's letter that states the Council's intention to pursue the matter.

8.1.4. The Disciplinary Subcommittee shall consist of the President (or a Deputy nominated by the President) as a Chair, and the General Secretary and the Membership Officer as Subcommittee Members.

8.1.5. Members considered for Disciplinary Procedures under this article are entitled to be accompanied at the hearing by a friend or a representative.

8.1.6. If the Member fails to attend the hearing without due notice or justification deemed adequate by the Subcommittee, membership is terminated with immediate effect.

8.1.7. All decisions of the Subcommittee are taken by simple majority, with the Chair holding the casting vote in case of a tie.

8.1.8. If the decision to terminate the membership is taken, the said Member is entitled to an appeal, the request for which must be lodged with the Secretary within 14 days from the date of the initial hearing. Appeals are heard by the Executive Council at its next scheduled ordinary meeting, and the Executive Council decision will be final and binding.

Section 8.2. Disciplinary Procedures against Executive Council Officers

8.2.1. Executive Council Officers are elected to carry out the duties and obligations of the role they are appointed to. It is the duty of each Executive Council Officer to do his/her best to fulfil these duties and obligations. It is also the collective duty of the Executive Council to ensure that all its Officers are performing to the highest level, to achieve their respective roles and obligations.

8.2.2. Executive Council Officers have a duty to report to the Executive Council any of their peers who are deemed incompetent, underperforming, or lacking in commitment.

8.2.3. If the Executive Council receives such reports about a particular Officer, from three individual Council Officers, then the Executive Council is obliged to activate Disciplinary Procedures against the said Officer.

8.2.4. Disciplinary Procedures against an Executive Council Officer are heard at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Executive Council, called for in the normal manner, with a single item on the Agenda, being the Disciplinary Procedures against the said Officer.

8.2.5. A date for such meeting shall be set, giving a minimum notice of 28 days from the date of the Council's decision to pursue the matter.

8.2.6. The Officer considered for Disciplinary Procedures under this article is entitled to be accompanied at the hearing by a friend or a representative.

8.2.7. If the Officer against whom Disciplinary Procedures are undertaken fails to attend the Meeting without due notice or justification deemed adequate by the Executive Council, membership of the said Officer on the Executive Council is terminated with immediate effect.

8.2.8. All decisions of the Executive Council are taken by simple majority, with the President holding the casting vote in case of a tie.

8.2.9. If, following the hearing, the decision is taken to terminate the Officer's membership on the Executive Council, the said Officer is asked to submit his/her resignation to the Secretary within 14 days from the date of the hearing. A notice for By-Election is announced upon the receipt of the Officer's resignation. The By-Election will be held in accordance with the Society's By-Laws.



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