

UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS STUDENT UNION CONSTITUTION

CHAPTER I Student Union

1 § Name, domicile, languages and legal status

The name of the Student Union is Taideyliopiston ylioppilaskunta – Konstuniversitetets studentkår. The English name University of the Arts Student Union may also be used. The name of the Student Union is abbreviated in Finnish as TaiYo, in Swedish as KonSt and in English as ArtSU.

In this Constitution, the University of the Arts Student Union is referred to as the “Student Union” and the University of Arts Helsinki as the “University”. When writing the name of the Student Union, either the Finnish or Swedish name, or both names together, shall be used.

The Student Union is domiciled in Helsinki.

The languages of the Student Union are Finnish and Swedish. The language of the minutes is Finnish. All activities aimed at the Swedish-speaking members of the Student Union shall be arranged in Swedish.

In accordance with Section 46 of the Universities Act (558/2009) and the Government Decree on Universities, the Student Union is a self-governing public corporation.

2 § Members

Members of the Student Union shall include all the students of the University admitted to a bachelor’s or master’s degree programme, except for students participating in commissioned education. The Student Union Board may also accept other students of the University as members.

3 § Purpose of the Student Union

The purpose of the Student Union is to act as a link between its members and to promote their societal, social and intellectual aspirations as well as those regarding studying and the status of students in society. The Student Union’s mission is to participate in the University’s educational task provided for in Section 2 of the Universities Act by preparing students for active, aware and critical citizenship.

4 § Decision-making power

The decision-making power of the Student Union shall be exercised by the Representative Council as provided in this Constitution. The Representative Council shall be elected by proportional and secret ballot, as specified in the Election Rules.

35 The Board elected by the Representative Council shall have the decision-making,
36 administrative and executive power in matters which have not been assigned to the
37 Representative Council in this Constitution.

38 **CHAPTER II Voting right and eligibility for election**

39 **5 § Voting right**

40 A member of the Student Union registered for attendance at the University shall have
41 the right to vote in the election of the Student Union's Representative Council, general
42 meeting and member vote. The right to vote shall be equal and personal and may not be
43 exercised through a proxy.

44 **6 § Eligibility for election**

45 Every member of the Student Union shall be eligible to be a member of the
46 Representative Council or the Board. However, a person acting as a member of the
47 Representative Council must have the right to vote. More comprehensive eligibility shall
48 also enable a member who has registered for non-attendance to run as a candidate and
49 contribute to the equal treatment of members.

50 Each member and deputy member of the Representative Council shall be eligible to run
51 for the position of Chair or Vice Chair of the Representative Council.

52 **7 § Disqualification**

53 The following persons shall be disqualified to act as members of the Representative
54 Council or the Board:

- 55 1. Persons employed by a company owned by the Student Union or a company of
56 which the Student Union owns at least 50%;
- 57 2. Persons in a permanent employment relationship of at least one year with the
58 Student Union.

59 In addition, the members of the Student Union Board shall be disqualified to act as
60 members of the Representative Council during their term of office.

61 **CHAPTER III Representative Council**

62 **8 § Representative Council**

63 The Representative Council shall consist of fifteen (15) members.

64 The procedure for the election of the Representative Council shall be further specified in
65 the Election Rules.

66 **9 § Term of office and dissolution of the Representative Council**

67 The term of office of the Representative Council shall begin from the confirmation of the
68 result of the election for the Representative Council and last for two years.

69 However, the term of office of the Representative Council shall continue after the actual
70 term until the new Representative Council has been elected.

71 The Representative Council may dissolve itself and order a new election to be held. The
72 dissolution of the Representative Council and the conduct of a new election shall be
73 decided upon by two (2) consecutive Representative Council meetings, which shall be
74 held at least fourteen (14) days apart. At both meetings, the dissolution decision must be
75 supported by at least two-thirds (2/3) of all members of the Representative Council. The
76 new Representative Council shall be elected within sixty (60) days of the dissolution
77 decision for the remainder of the term of office.

78 The dissolved Representative Council shall attend to the duties of the Representative
79 Council until the new Representative Council has been elected.

80 **10 § Vice members**

81 The inviting of vice members shall be governed by the Rules of Procedure of the
82 Representative Council.

83 **11 § Duties of the Representative Council**

84 The duties of the Representative Council shall include:

- 85 1. Monitoring and promoting the realisation of the purpose of the Student Union in
86 the Student Union's activities;
- 87 2. Electing and dismissing the Chair and Vice Chairs of the Representative Council;
- 88 3. Electing the person forming the Board;
- 89 4. Appointing and dismissing the Chair and other members of the Board;
- 90 5. Electing and dismissing the Secretary General of the Student Union;
- 91 6. Appointing student representatives to the University Collegium and the Board of
92 the University of the Arts Helsinki;
- 93 7. Deciding on the Student Union's joining other communities and resignation from
94 them;
- 95 8. Inviting honorary members;
- 96 9. Determining the amount of the membership fee;
- 97 10. Deciding on the official notice board of the Student Union;
- 98 11. Selecting the auditors or audit firm of the Student Union;
- 99 12. Deciding on the Student Union's annual budget and supplementary budgets;
- 100 13. Approving the goals, guidelines and plans for the Student Union's activities,
101 finances and asset management;
- 102 14. Considering the reports issued by the Board on the activities and finances of the
103 Student Union and deciding on the measures to be taken;
- 104 15. Deciding on the approval of the Student Union's financial statements and on
105 granting the Board and other responsible persons a release from liability;
- 106 16. Deciding on the purchase, sale or exchange of property or shares;
- 107 17. Deciding on the substantial reduction or expansion of the Student Union's
108 business;
- 109 18. Deciding on contracting debt that extends past the financial year;
- 110 19. Deciding, on a proposal from the Board, on other matters of financial significance;
- 111 20. Approving the Student Union's Constitution, the Representative Council's Rules of
112 Procedure, the Board's Rules of Procedure, Election Rules, Economic and

113 Administrative Regulations as well as other regulations. The Constitution of the
114 Student Union shall be submitted to the President of the University for
115 confirmation.

116 In addition, the Representative Council shall decide on other matters that have been
117 assigned to the Representative Council elsewhere in this Constitution or in regulations
118 concerning the Student Union or matters which the Representative Council has reserved
119 the right to decide in individual cases or which the Board considers necessary to be
120 resolved by the Representative Council.

121 **12 § Retention of discretion**

122 In individual cases, the Representative Council shall retain discretion in a matter falling
123 within the competence of the Board. However, the Representative Council's right to
124 retain discretion does not allow it to make decisions entailing the amendment of
125 decisions that legally bind the Student Union.

126 A motion to retain discretion may be made by:

- 127 1. Two (2) members of the Representative Council at the Representative Council
128 meeting;
- 129 2. Five (5) members of Representative Council, in which case the motion must be
130 submitted in writing to the Chair of the Representative Council.

131 A motion to retain discretion cannot be shelved.

132 In the case of a motion to retain discretion, the Board cannot make a decision before the
133 decision of the Representative Council on the matter concerning the retention of
134 discretion.

135 **13 § Enquiry**

136 Five (5) members of the Representative Council may address an enquiry on a specific
137 matter to the Board. The enquiry shall be submitted in writing to the Chair of the
138 Representative Council, who shall promptly inform the Board.

139 Within thirty (30) days of being informed, the Board shall respond in writing to the
140 members of the Representative Council. The response shall be discussed at the next
141 meeting of the Representative Council.

142 **14 § Resolution**

143 The Representative Council may approve resolutions addressed to the Board.

144 **15 § Meeting of the Representative Council**

145 The Representative Council shall meet at least:

- 146 1. For its organising meeting to deal with at least the matters mentioned in Sections
147 11.1(2), (3) and (11) within thirty (30) days of confirming the result of the
148 election for the Representative Council;

- 149 2. By the end of November of the calendar year following the election year, for a
150 meeting dealing with at least the matters mentioned in Sections 11.1(2), (3) and
151 (11);
- 152 3. Annually before the end of the calendar year, to deal with at least the matters
153 mentioned in Sections 11.1(4) and (12);
- 154 4. Annually by April at the latest, to decide on the matters mentioned in Sections
155 11.1(14) and (15).

156 The Representative Council shall also meet at the invitation of the Chair of the
157 Representative Council at other times:

- 158 1. When the Chair or Board of the Representative Council deems it necessary;
- 159 2. When three (3) members of the Representative Council submit a written request
160 to the Chair of the Representative Council in order to address a matter;
- 161 3. When the Board has received an enquiry as referred to in Section 13.

162 In this case, the meeting of the Representative Council shall be held within thirty (30)
163 days of the request.

164 The first meeting of the Representative Council after the election shall be convened by
165 the current Chair of the Representative Council.

166 **16 § Quorum**

167 The Representative Council meeting shall have a quorum when at least eight (8)
168 members of the Representative Council, including the Chair or Vice Chair of the
169 Representative Council, are present.

170 At the Representative Council meetings, the members of the Representative Council or
171 deputy members invited to replace them shall have the decision-making power.

172 **17 § Right to attend and right to speak**

173 Each member of the Student Union, each person assigned by the Student Union as well
174 as the Board, Secretary General and employees of the Student Union shall have the right
175 to attend and speak at meetings of the Representative Council. The Chair of the
176 Representative Council may also grant other persons the right to attend or speak.
177 However, for duly justified reasons, the Representative Council may decide that an
178 individual case shall be addressed entirely or partly in a closed session.

179 **CHAPTER IV Presiding officers of the Representative Council**

180 **18 § Presiding officers of the Representative Council**

181 The presiding officers of the Representative Council shall consist of the Chair and two
182 Vice Chairs of the Representative Council.

183 **19 § Term of office**

184 The presiding officers of the Representative Council shall be elected for one year at a
185 time. The term of office of the presiding officers shall begin at the meeting following
186 their election, which shall also be convened by the new Chair.

187 **20 § Election of the presiding officers**

188 The presiding officers of the Representative Council shall be elected by the
189 Representative Council.

190 The person elected as Chair of the Representative Council must receive more than half of
191 the votes of the members of the Representative Council present. If none of the
192 candidates receives the required majority in the votes, a new vote shall be held such that
193 the candidates with the lowest number of votes and no votes in the previous vote are
194 eliminated. This procedure shall be continued until one of the candidates receives the
195 required majority. In case of a tie, the winner shall be determined by drawing lots.

196 The Vice Chairs of the Representative Council shall be elected by personal and
197 proportional ballot, in which the two candidates with the most votes shall be elected, in
198 that order. In the election, each vote cast shall be divided among up to two (2)
199 candidates marked on the ballot, with the first candidate receiving one (1) vote and the
200 second candidate half (1/2) a vote. In case of a tie, the winner shall be determined by
201 drawing lots.

202 If the Chair or Vice Chair of the Representative Council resigns, loses their eligibility, is
203 dismissed or becomes permanently incapable or disqualified during the term of office,
204 the Representative Council shall, if it deems this necessary, elect a new Chair or Vice
205 Chair for the remainder of the term of office.

206 **21 § Duties of the Chair of the Representative Council**

207 The duties of the Chair of the Representative Council shall include:

- 208 1. Convening and chairing the Representative Council meetings;
- 209 2. Overseeing that the activities of the Student Union's Representative Council and
210 the Board comply with the applicable laws, regulations, the Student Union's
211 Constitution and other regulations;
- 212 3. When necessary, deciding how the Student Union's Constitution and other
213 regulations are interpreted;
- 214 4. Signing the minutes of the Representative Council meetings and the general
215 meetings of the Student Union;
- 216 5. Carrying out other tasks assigned to the Chair in accordance with this
217 Constitution and other regulations.

218 If the Chair is prevented from attending to their duties, the Vice Chair shall take their
219 place. The Chair of the Representative Council shall have the right to attend and speak at
220 meetings of the Board.

221 **CHAPTER V Board**

222 **22 § Number of members of the Board**

223 The Student Union Board shall consist of a minimum of six (6) and a maximum of ten
224 (10) members, including the Chair. At least one member is elected to the Board from
225 each Academy of the University of Arts Helsinki, namely the Academy of Fine Arts, the
226 Sibelius Academy and the Theatre Academy, from which there is more than one (1)
227 candidate.

228 **23 § Term of office**

229 The term of office of the Board shall be one calendar year.

230 However, the Board shall continue to serve as an official board until a new Board is
231 elected.

232 **24 § Person forming the Board**

233 The Representative Council shall elect the person forming the Board in the same manner
234 as it elects the Chair of the Representative Council.

235 **25 § Formation of the board**

236 The call for the Board shall be open and public. The person forming the Board shall
237 submit a proposal on the Board members to the Representative Council no later than at
238 the next meeting following the person's election. If the Representative Council approves
239 the proposal, the person forming the Board shall be elected as the Chair of the Board and
240 the persons named in the proposal shall be elected as the Board members.

241 If the Representative Council does not approve the proposal, a new election for the
242 person forming the Board shall be held and the new person shall provide their proposal
243 on the Board members. This election procedure shall be continued until the
244 Representative Council approves the proposal made by the person forming the Board.

245 **26 § Issue of confidence**

246 With the majority vote of the present Representative Council members, the
247 Representative Council shall have the power to dismiss the Board, the Chair of the Board
248 or a member of the Board during the term of office by declaring that they do not enjoy
249 the confidence of the Representative Council.

250 The issue of confidence shall be initiated either immediately at the Representative
251 Council meeting convened for the purpose of addressing the matter or by at least seven
252 (7) Representative Council members eligible to vote requesting the Chair to include the
253 item on the agenda at least fourteen (14) days prior to the next Representative Council
254 meeting.

255 When initiating the issue of confidence, the reasons for the issue of confidence shall be
256 submitted in writing to the Chair of the Representative Council, who must immediately
257 forward them to the Board.

258 If the Representative Council states that the Board, the Chair of the Board or a member
259 of the Board does not enjoy the confidence of the Representative Council, procedures in
260 accordance with Section 27 shall be initiated at the same meeting, unless the

261 Representative Council decides to shelve the election of the person forming the Board or
262 a member of the Board.

263 **27 § Supplementing the Board**

264 In the event that the Board is dismissed from its duties or the Chair of the Board loses
265 their eligibility, is dismissed from their duties or resigns from the Board during the term
266 of office, the new Board shall be formed immediately.

267 If a member of the Board loses their eligibility, is dismissed or resigns from the Board
268 during the term of office, the Chair of the Board may present a new board member
269 candidate to the Representative Council. The Representative Council shall state the loss
270 of eligibility.

271 If the Representative Council approves the proposal, the proposed person shall be
272 elected as a member of the Board. If the Representative Council does not approve the
273 proposal, the Chair of the Board may propose another candidate. If there are several
274 candidates, the list of candidates shall be rejected or approved as such. The procedure
275 shall be continued until the Representative Council approves the proposal of the Chair of
276 the Board.

277 **28 § Assembly of the Board**

278 The Board shall elect one or two Vice Chairs from among its members for the term of
279 office and shall agree on the division of tasks. The Board may have divisions,
280 committees, working groups or other groups to prepare matters and carry out other
281 tasks.

282 **29 § Authority**

283 The Board shall manage the activities of the Student Union, exercise, the Student Union'
284 power of speech, claim responsibility and respond on behalf of the Student Union in
285 court and to other authorities as well as sign contracts and take other legal action on
286 behalf of the Student Union.

287 The Chair of the Board shall be called the Chair of the Student Union.

288 **30 § Reports on activities**

289 The Board shall annually report to the Representative Council on activities and finances.

290 **CHAPTER VI Finances**

291 **31 § Financial year**

292 The Student Union's financial year shall be the calendar year.

293 **32 § Membership fees**

294 The Representative Council shall have the right to order the annual membership fee to
295 be paid by the members of the Student Union. The membership fee shall be confirmed
296 by the President of the University.

297 The collection of the membership fee shall be supervised by the University. The Student
298 Union Board shall decide on the manner and time of the collection of the membership
299 fee. The Board may waive the membership fee.

300 The Board may decide to waive all or part of the membership fee if it is evident due to a
301 member's proven lack of financial resources that the membership fee would jeopardise
302 their right to education under Section 16 of the Constitution of Finland (731/1999).

303 The Student Union Board may decide to partially exempt from the membership fee the
304 amount payable to the Finnish Student Health Service if the member proves to have paid
305 the membership fee for that academic year or academic term to two or more students
306 unions of Finnish universities.

307 **33 § Auditors**

308 Two (2) auditors and their personal deputy auditors shall be elected for each financial
309 year to audit the Student Union's financial accounts and financial statements and
310 administration. An Authorised Public Accounting Firm (KHT) or Registered Association
311 of Certified Auditors (HTM) approved by the Finland Chamber of Commerce or a
312 regional Chamber of Commerce may also be selected to carry out the audit.

313 **34 § Financial statements**

314 The Board shall prepare financial statements for each financial year in accordance with
315 the Accounting Act and provide the auditors with the documents required for the audit
316 within eighty (80) days of the end of the financial year.

317 **35 § Audit report**

318 The auditing firm shall report to the Board on its audit within thirty (30) days of
319 receiving the financial statements and related documents.

320 The Board shall submit to the Representative Council the financial statements, audit
321 report and reports drawn up in response to reminders at the latest in connection with
322 an invitation to the Representative Council meeting where the financial statements and
323 audit report will be discussed.

324 **36 § Economic Committee**

325 The Board may appoint an Economic Committee for the Student Union, which shall act
326 as an advisory expert body in matters related to the management and administration of
327 the Student Union's assets. The Economic Committee shall be further specified in the
328 Economic Regulations.

329 In matters referred to in Sections 11.1(16), (17), (18) and (19), the Representative
330 Council and the Board shall consult the Economic Committee.

331 **CHAPTER VII Signing, informing and notifications**

332 **37 § Senior executive**

333 The senior executive of the Student Union shall be the Secretary General. The tasks of
334 the Secretary General shall be further specified in the Administrative Regulations.

335 **38 § Signature**

336 The name of the Student Union shall be signed by the Chair or Vice Chair of the Board
337 together with the Secretary General.

338 **39 § Informing**

339 The decisions of the Student Union's Representative Council and Board shall be
340 displayed on the Student Union's official notice board no later than seven (7) days after
341 the meeting. In accordance with Section 86 of the Universities Act, the members of the
342 Student Union shall be deemed to have been informed of the decision when the decision
343 has been made publicly available.

344 A party who is not a member of the Student Union shall be informed of a decision
345 concerning them without undue delay.

346 **40 § Reception of notifications**

347 Notifications concerning the Student Union shall be received on behalf of the Student
348 Union by the Secretary General or a person specifically appointed by the Board to
349 receive notifications on behalf of the Secretary General.

350 **CHAPTER VIII General meeting of the Student Union, member**
351 **vote and initiatives**

352 **41 § General meeting of the Student Union**

353 Members of the Student Union may be invited to an advisory general meeting to discuss
354 and express their views on the issues mentioned in the meeting invitation, when at least
355 forty (40) members of the Student Union submit a written request to the Chair of the
356 Representative Council in order to address a matter, or when the Representative Council
357 deems it necessary by a two-thirds (2/3) majority. The meeting shall be convened
358 within thirty (30) days of the request. However, this time limit shall not be consumed
359 outside the University's spring and autumn terms. A general meeting of the Student
360 Union may only be held between 15 September and 15 December or between 15 January
361 and 15 May.

362 The general meeting shall be convened by the Chair of the Representative Council. The
363 invitation to the general meeting of the Student Union must be published at least one
364 week before the meeting. The Rules of Procedure of the Representative Council shall be
365 followed at the meeting, where applicable.

366 **42 § Member vote**

367 An advisory member vote may be held among the members of the Student Union.

368 A member vote shall be conducted when more than half of all the members of the
369 Representative Council request the vote in writing at the meeting concerning a matter
370 on the agenda, or when at least sixty (60) members of the Student Union submit a
371 written request to the Board.

372 A member vote shall be conducted within sixty (60) days of the request in accordance
373 with Paragraph 2. However, this time limit shall not be consumed outside the
374 University's spring and autumn terms. The Election Rules of the Student Union shall be
375 followed in the member vote as applicable. A member vote may only be conducted
376 between 15 September and 15 December or between 15 January and 15 May.

377 The Board shall decide on and be responsible for the detailed implementation of the
378 member vote.

379 **43 § Making initiatives**

380 Five (5) members of the Student Union as well as each Academy-specific division and
381 association operating within the Student Union have the right to make initiatives for the
382 Student Union's Representative Council or Board.

383 The Representative Council shall reply to the initiative within two (2) months and the
384 Board within one (1) month of its submission to the Secretary General of the Student
385 Union.

386 The members or division or association representatives who made the initiative shall
387 have the right to participate in the discussion on the initiative in the Representative
388 Council and the Board.

389 **CHAPTER IX Publicity and appeals against decisions**

390 **44 § Archive**

391 Student Union documents must be archived in such a way that the archive serves as a
392 source of information for the archivist, Student Union members, authorities and
393 research.

394 **45 § Publicity**

395 The publicity of the activities and documents of the Student Union is governed by
396 Section 30 of the Universities Act.

397 **46 § Appeal**

398 An appeal shall be lodged against a decision made by the executive body of the Student
399 Union as provided in Section 86 of the Universities Act.

400 In addition, the decision of an executive body elected by the Student Union Board may
401 be appealed to the Board.

402 **CHAPTER X Specific provisions**

403 **47 § Honorary members**

404 The Student Union may have honorary members who are invited by the Representative
405 Council by unanimous decision. Honorary members may be persons who the Student
406 Union wishes to pay particular tribute to for their work in favour of the University of the
407 Arts Helsinki, its students, Finnish art or the Student Union's general aims.

408 Honorary members do not have the rights or obligations of Student Union members.

409 **48 § Anniversary**

410 The Student Union's anniversary is 14 April, which is Taito's name day in the Finnish
411 calendar. Whenever possible, the anniversary shall be celebrated within a week of the
412 date in a manner decided by the Board.

413 **49 § Associations operating under the Student Union**

414 Associations may be affiliated to the Student Union. The affiliation of associations to the
415 Student Union shall be stipulated in more detail by a regulation.

416 **50 § Responsibility in a position of trust**

417 Persons elected to a position of trust by the executive body of the Student Union may be
418 dismissed if they take advantage of or disclose to others any information received in
419 their position that is not public, or if they have caused considerable damage to the
420 Student Union within or outside the Student Union, or repeatedly fail to fulfil the
421 obligations of their position.

422 **51 § Amendment and entry into force of the Constitution**

423 Amendments to this Constitution shall be decided by the Representative Council.

424 Amendments to the Constitution shall be decided at two (2) Representative Council
425 meetings, which shall be held at least two (2) weeks apart. Such a decision shall require
426 the support of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Representative Council members present
427 at each meeting. The decision shall be submitted to the President of the University for
428 confirmation.

429 This Constitution shall enter into force immediately upon confirmation by the President
430 of the University. However, the provisions of Section 8.1 and Section 16.1 concerning the
431 number of members of the Representative Council and the quorum for meetings of the
432 Representative Council shall not enter into force until the next Representative Council
433 begins its term of office. During the current Representative Council's term of office, the
434 Representative Council shall consist of eighteen (18) members and the Representative
435 Council meeting shall have a quorum when at least ten (10) members of the
436 Representative Council, including the Chair or Vice Chair of the Representative Council,
437 are present.

438 This Constitution was approved by the Representative Council at its meetings 1/2017
439 and 2/2017 on 27 April 2017 and 30 May 2017, respectively.

440 This Constitution was confirmed by the President of the University of the Arts Helsinki
441 on 4 July 2017.

APPROVED 30 MAY 2017