



Registered Charity No. 1198865

Executive Committee Conduct Agreement

Colchester Operatic Society fully complies with information legislation. For the full details on how we use your personal information please visit our website <https://www.colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk/about/privacy-policy/> or speak to our Secretary if you are unable to access the internet.

Welcome to the Executive Committee. As a member of the Executive Committee (often shortened to “exec” or referred to as “The Committee”) you become a trustee of the Society (which is a registered charity) and help manage the Society in accordance with our Constitution and any relevant legislation and guidance from the Charity Commission. **Please note it is a trustees' duty to operate their charity for the public benefit.** In addition to the constitution we have other rules, policies and procedures which should also be adhered to. These are:

- CO2 Rules
- Health & Safety Policy
- Complaints policy & procedure
- Privacy policy
- Records Management (Data protection) policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Social media policy
- Inclusion, Equality & Diversity policy
- COS guidance on the use of personal ICT equipment and handling emails
- Ethical Fundraising Policy
- Conflict of Interests Policy
- This Executive Committee Conduct agreement

All policies can be found on our website:

<https://www.colchesteroperaticsociety.co.uk/about/policies/>

To help you in your role (if you have been allocated a specific role or office) you can also refer to your job description.

Your term of appointment is one year from the date of the latest AGM up until next year's AGM. At least 2 weeks before the next AGM you will need to decide whether you wish to stand for the committee again the following year as notification of nominations go out to members 14 days prior to the AGM. If the number of nominations and current committee members re-standing is greater than the number stated in the rules, then there will be a vote at the AGM to elect the specified Executive Committee members.

All members of the Executive Committee should read the below terms, which state what is expected of them regarding their conduct as a member of the Executive Committee and a trustee of the Society:

- Executive Committee members will make every effort that is reasonably possible to ensure that all of Colchester Operatic Society's members and appointed/employed personnel are treated with dignity and respect.
- Executive Committee members will abide by the Society's Constitution and rules and act in the best interests of the Society and its members at all times.
- Executive Committee members will abide by all relevant legislation and guidance from the Charity Commission, including ensuring our annual report, and associated accounts, are accurate and submitted to the Charity Commission by the deadline
- Executive Committee members will act as representatives of the membership and make decisions based on the best interests of the Society and its members. There will be times that the best interests of the Society will not always match the best interests of specific individuals and members of the Executive Committee must consider all factors carefully before making decisions. In such cases the best interests of the Society as a whole will take priority, providing there is not a breach of our constitution, rules or of an individual's lawful rights.
- Executive Committee members represent the Society and its members and should conduct themselves accordingly, treating everyone with dignity and respect and presenting a positive and professional impression of the Society to others.
- Executive Committee members should respect the position of power they hold within the Society and behave responsibly and respectfully at Society rehearsals, meetings and events in order to set a good example to members, especially for our younger members in CO2.
- Executive Committee members should work together in the best interests of the Society and ensure their interactions with each other, Society members, outside organisations and other appointed/employed personnel allow for positive working relationships.
- Bullying, discrimination and harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. Any evidence or reports of bullying, discrimination and/or harassment involving a member of the Executive Committee will be taken seriously, discussed by the Executive Committee (without the person in question present) and appropriate action taken by the Chair and/or Officers of the Society.
- Executive Committee members should be vigilant to bullying, discrimination and harassment of any kind between our members and/or any appointed/employed personnel and ensure appropriate action is taken as soon as possible, as necessary, with the majority of the Committee's approval where/when possible.
- Executive Committee members should ensure they carry out their responsibilities and duties as agreed to the best of their abilities. If they cannot do so, they should let other committee members know as soon as possible so they can support them with their role/responsibilities/duties or so their role/responsibilities/duties can be passed on to another committee member as appropriate and necessary.
- Executive Committee members should trust those appointed with roles and specific jobs/tasks to fulfil them but also support each other where and when possible.

- Whilst we are accountable to the membership and Executive Committee decisions, actions and reasoning should be made known to members, this is not always immediately possible or in the best interests of all members, exec members and any other individuals and organisations. **Therefore discussions at Executive Committee meetings should remain confidential unless agreed otherwise.** Details of discussions should not be disclosed to members without agreement from the majority of the Executive Committee. Minutes may contain confidential information and details of confidential discussions and are circulated with members of the Committee and elected Cast Representative(s) (if appropriate) only. These should not be disclosed to others unless agreed by the majority of the Executive Committee. Once the majority of the Executive Committee has agreed, decisions made and overall reasoning for any decision, as well as any other agreed information should and can be shared with membership in a timely manner as appropriate.
- All members of the Executive Committee will have their own personal view points which they have the right to express in meetings and email discussions. They should equally respect the rights of others to express their own views in meetings and email discussions, providing all views expressed are not abusive, defamatory, sexist, racist and/or could be interpreted as harassment, discrimination or bullying. If any views expressed during meetings and email discussions are considered abusive, defamatory, sexist, racist and/or interpreted as harassment, discrimination or bullying then appropriate action will be taken by the Chair or an Officer of the Society. This may include asking the individual to leave a meeting or discussion, asking the individual to review and rephrase what they are saying, asking an individual to resign from the Committee or reporting an individual for criminal prosecution.
- Decisions made by the Executive Committee are done so democratically during meetings or through email discussions whenever possible. However some decisions will need to be made quickly on behalf of the Society in its best interests. In such instances the Chair has the power to make decisions on behalf of the Executive Committee/Society. Some decisions can also be made by the appointed Officer/Committee member charged with the specific responsibility relating to the decision and who has been given the power to make such decisions on behalf of the Executive Committee. These decisions should be shared with the rest of the committee either by email or at the next meeting. The Chair should be informed of any major decision made on behalf of the Society at the time of the decision or immediately afterwards in order to effectively manage the committee and Society.
- It is important to declare any conflicts of interest that arise during meetings, decisions and any of your roles/work for the Society at the earliest opportunity to ensure they do not adversely affect the Society. You may need to remove yourself from certain discussions or decisions to manage a conflict of interest.
- As a registered charity we are accountable to the Charity Commission and have to abide by all laws applicable to a Charity. Further information and guidance on being a trustee from the Charity Commission will be shared with you when you join the committee. **You will need to declare you are eligible to act as a trustee on behalf of the Society**, and are **not** prevented in doing so by; having any unspent criminal convictions that would disqualify you from being a charity trustee; being on the sex offenders register; being found in contempt of court by making a false statement; being bankrupt, having an IVA or debt relief order; previously disobeying a Charity Commission Order; having been removed as a trustee for another charity or been previously disqualified from acting as a trustee by the Charity Commission.

All Executive Committee members are expected to have read this document and agree to abide by the above terms.