STANDING ORDERS

PREAMBLE

Except where the context indicates otherwise, these standing orders shall apply to the conduct of all Association meetings. In what follows, the term “Convener" is used to refer to the person chairing a meeting, regardless of the actual office held.

1 ORDER OF BUSINESS

1.1 The order of business shall be submitted by the Convener for approval.

1.2 The order of any item on the agenda may be altered on motion.

1.3 Additional items of business may be intimated to the Convener not later than thirty minutes after the stated opening time of the meeting, and if accepted as competent by the Convener shall be added to the agenda; such addition to the agenda shall be intimated immediately to the meeting.

1.4 **Declaration of Interest**

To assist members in deciding in whether or not to declare any personal interest when discussing agenda items, members should refer to the “Objective Test” as promulgated by the Standards Commission, Scotland viz. “You need to consider the objective test – whether an ordinary member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard the interest as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your decision.”

Any person declaring an interest will be asked to leave the meeting, unless they may be required to provide some specialist knowledge. That being the case they can remain but without voice or vote.

2 MOTIONS

2.1 Notices of motion to Council and Congress shall be submitted in writing on behalf of a District and shall be signed by the District or Area Secretary. They must be received by the General Secretary at least ten days before a Council meeting and at least six weeks before Congress. Motions for consideration at District meetings shall not require previous notice. The forms are available to download from www.ssta.org.uk/xxxxxx

2.2 Notwithstanding paragraph 1 above, the Convener has absolute discretion to accept or reject an emergency motion for which due notice has not been given. The acceptance of such a motion and its addition to the agenda shall be intimated immediately to the meeting.

2.3 Unless two-thirds of those present and voting otherwise decide, a motion relating to a matter which has previously been the subject of debate in Council shall not be considered a competent item of agenda unless one meeting of Council has elapsed since the previous debate. Unless two-thirds of those present and voting otherwise decide, a motion which has

been the subject of a debate at Congress shall not be considered a competent item of agenda unless one meeting of Congress has elapsed since the previous debate.

2.4 Notices of motion considered incompetent by the Convener shall not be entered on the agenda; but, intimation of the decision and the reasons for the decision shall be made to the meeting at the time of the submission of order of business.

2.5 **COMPETENCE OF MOTIONS**

Motions which are received by the General Secretary by the due date may be declared incompetent by the President (after consultation with the Standing Orders Advisory Committee if necessary) on the following grounds.

2.5.1 *Lack of sense*
where, because of grammatical or other linguistic confusion, the motion does not make sense.

2.5.2 *Ambiguity*
where the motion is capable of being interpreted in conflicting ways.

2.5.3 *Lack of specification*
where the motion is insufficiently clear as to what action would require to be taken were the motion to be passed.

2.5.4 *Impossibility of execution*
where the motion calls on a person or body to act in a way that is beyond their powers, or outwith their terms of reference.

2.5.5 *Politically unacceptable*
where a motion calls for (or implies) support for or opposition to a specific political party.

2.5.6 *Contrary to the aims of the Association*
where a motion expresses a view or calls for action which is incompatible with the Constitutional aims of the Association, unless such a motion is in the form of a proposed amendment to the Constitution.

2.5.7 *Illegality*
where a motion calls for action to be taken which would be contrary to the law.

2.6 **COMPOSITE MOTIONS**

a) It shall be open to the Standing Orders Advisory Committee, where two or more motions cover substantially the same topic, to suggest a composite motion or motions in consultation with the proposers of the original motions.

b) Any agreed composited motion shall be tabled to Council or Congress under Order of Business.

3 STANDING ORDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

3.1 The Standing Orders Advisory Committee shall comprise of all Office Bearers

3.2 The Standing Orders Advisory Committee may either meet or be consulted on the initiative of the President to advise on:

- the competence of motions
- the compositing of motions;
- the application of Standing Orders;
- the amendment of Standing Orders.

3.3 The President shall retain the right to rule finally on the competence of any motion or application of Standing Orders.

4 CONDUCT OF DEBATE

4.1 Movers of motions and amendments shall be allowed eight minutes, other speakers four minutes.

4.2 It shall be open to any member to move that a speaker be heard further. This motion, if seconded, shall be put to the meeting without discussion. When an extension of time is allowed, it shall be for not more than two minutes.

4.3 Reports after being presented, and motions and amendments after being seconded shall be open for discussion.

4.4 Members shall be allowed to speak only once on any one motion or amendment. The mover of the motion shall close the debate.

Movers of motions and amendments may reply, and shall be allowed four minutes each to reply, confining themselves strictly to answering previous speakers. When there is no debate following a seconded amendment, the mover of the motion shall have the right to reply to new points raised in the amendment.

4.5 Every report or motion, in its final form, shall be accepted or rejected by vote.

4.6 (a) **Points of Order**. A point of order may be put to the Convener at any time. The Convener must consider the point and give a ruling thereon, which shall be final.

(b) **Points of Explanation**. A member who has already spoken in a debate may, at the discretion of the Convener, be allowed to state without argument a factual point of explanation.

(c) **Points of Information**. It shall be open to any member at the close of any speech to put a point of information through the Convener to the last speaker; the Convener shall determine whether the point may be put. The speaker so challenged shall have the right to disregard the point. There shall be no discussion.

4.7 A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the mover, with the consent of the seconder and of the meeting. This shall not be the subject of any debate.

5 COMPETENT AMENDMENTS

Only the following amendments shall be competent.

5.1 TEXTUAL AMENDMENTS

(a) To amend the motion. An amendment to any original motion shall be disposed of before any further amendment is accepted for discussion. The procedure shall be as in paragraph 4.4 above. If any amendment is carried, it shall become the substantive motion, to which further amendments may be moved.

(b) Amendments to reports previously circulated to Districts/Areas in time for discussion at the Annual General Meetings shall not be competent unless included in the agenda

5.2 PROCEDURAL AMENDMENTS

5.2.1 **To remit to Council or an appropriate committee**. This may be moved at the conclusion of any speech. The Convener may not refuse to accept such an amendment, but may postpone putting it to the meeting until the completion of any discussion which is in progress when such an amendment is moved.

5.2.2 **To adjourn the debate**. This may be moved at the conclusion of any speech. If this be carried, the meeting shall proceed to the next business. The adjourned debate may be resumed at such time as the meeting may determine, which should normally be at the earliest suitable opportunity.

5.2.3 **That the question be now put**. This may be moved at the conclusion of any speech. If seconded, it shall be put forthwith. If carried, the motion or amendment under debate shall be put after the mover of the motion or amendment has the opportunity of reply.

5.2.4 **That the meeting proceed to the next business**. This may be moved at the conclusion of any speech. If seconded, it shall be put forthwith. If carried, the question under discussion shall be considered as dropped.

5.2.5 **That the motion or amendment be withdrawn**. This may be moved at the conclusion of any speech. If seconded, it shall be put forthwith. If carried, the motion or amendment shall immediately be withdrawn by the proposer.

6 VOTING

Voting shall be by show of hands and/or a verifiable digital medium that has been approved by the Standing Orders Advisory Committee and Executive. If a count is not taken, it shall be open to any member to demand one. The result of such count shall be announced to the meeting. At the request of the mover either of the motion or the amendment a recount shall be granted, provided such request be made and the recount taken immediately after the initial count. The Convener shall have a casting vote in addition to a deliberative vote.

7 DISSENT

It shall be open to a member to enter his or her dissent from any decision.

8 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

The motion to suspend standing orders in whole or in part must be seconded, and shall be carried if supported by two-thirds of those present and entitled to vote. The Convener may not refuse to accept such motion, but may postpone putting it to the meeting until the completion of any discussion which is in progress when such suspension is moved.

APPENDIX TO STANDING ORDERS

NOMENCLATURE AND STATUS

A USE OF NAMES

A.1 Any member being asked to complete a form of any kind for the Association should be asked to use the name by which they wish to be known.

A.2 The names of members and others should normally be recorded by the Association using forename and surname. Titles shall not be used.

A.3 If the forename of any person is not known, their initial(s) should be substituted until such time as their forename is known.

B ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

B.1 The following order of precedence shall be used.

Firstly, Office Bearers in the order
- President
- Vice President
- General Secretary
- Minutes Secretary
- General Treasurer
- Immediate Past President

Secondly, the Convener of the meeting
the Secretary of the meeting (if there be one)

Thirdly, Members in alphabetical order of surname, whether as a single list or in order of District/Area where appropriate.

Fourthly, Assessors - if members, in alphabetical order
if officials, in order of seniority

B.2 Guests (where applicable) shall be listed in alphabetical order by
a) organisation
b) office
c) surname
d) title as appropriate

C STATUS OF OFFICE BEARERS

C.1 Where an Office Bearer is convening a **meeting in their capacity as an Office Bearer**, they shall be described by both name and title of Office.

C.2 When an Office Bearer is acting **by virtue of having been elected** as a Convener or member of a committee etc., they shall be described by name and (if appropriate) as Convener.