

**CONSTITUTION  
OF THE  
SCOTTISH EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION**  
as adopted at 21st November 2013 and amended on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018



The Association is a Learned Society as defined by (VAT document reference Notice 701/5 March 2002 Section 11.10) as "a body whose primary purpose is the advancement of a particular branch of knowledge or the fostering of professional expertise. Its membership must be restricted wholly or mainly to those whose employment is, or has been, directly connected with its aims."

The Association acts as an Unincorporated Membership Organisation

The Association is registered as a Charity in Scotland (Registration SCO 03928)

## **1. Title**

The title shall be "**Scottish Educational Research Association**" (using the abbreviated title **SERA** and hereinafter called "The Association")

## **2. Preamble**

### **2.1 Constitutional History**

This Constitution replaces the Original Constitution introduced in 1974. This version was adopted at the AGM held in Perth on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2003. Amendments to the constitution were adopted at the AGM held in Perth on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2004, the effect of which were to introduce Corporate membership. An increase in fees was approved at the AGM on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2005. A motion was approved at the AGM held in Stirling on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2011 to clarify the terms 'audit' and 'auditor' used historically in the SERA constitution. At the AGM held in Glasgow on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2013, minor changes were approved to further define the 'inspection of accounts' to enable SERA to choose a scrutineer or a professional auditor to perform that task.

1. Revision of the Constitution and Dissolution of the Association may only be carried out by a 2/3 majority vote of paid-up members present at a General Meeting
2. In the event of dissolution, after all the debts are discharged, any remaining money is to be transferred to a charity chosen by the Trustees

### **3. Aims and Objectives**

The aim of the Scottish Educational Research Association (SERA) is to support and enhance the role and status of educational research in Scotland.

1. By promoting an active, inclusive membership involving researchers, practitioners, policy makers and others interested in all sectors of the education system in Scotland
2. By providing opportunities for dialogue among educational researchers and all interested parties about the quality, purpose and methodology of educational research
3. By engaging in cooperation and discussion with the policy community, funding agencies, local authorities, national educational bodies and other research associations
4. .By developing appropriate policies and strategies and communicating these effectively in order to enhance the profile of educational research
5. By supporting and monitoring the membership profile and, as appropriate, special interest groups and networks
6. By developing and maintaining constructive links with relevant organisations and associations in the UK, Europe and internationally
7. By arranging such events as conferences, seminars and symposia where research findings can be disseminated and constructive dialogue can take place
8. By disseminating information about research through newsletters, the internet and other publications

### **4. Membership**

Membership of the Association is open to all individuals with a professional or academic interest in research in education in Scotland, as active researchers in the field of education, as educational practitioners, as educational policy makers or administrators.

1. The Membership year shall run from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December.
2. Part year membership is not available on a pro-rata basis. A yearly fee is payable for membership for any part of the membership year. The Executive may offer individuals a one-off special rate on the basis of individual circumstances

Membership is on an individual basis.

#### **4.1. Classes of Membership**

There will be four classes of membership

1. Full membership which is open to all individuals with a professional or academic interest in educational research
2. Full Membership at a reduced rate which is open to full-time students and those who are retired or unwaged
3. Life Membership which may be conferred on individuals in recognition of their services to SERA
4. Honorary Membership that may be conferred on individuals in recognition of their contribution to educational research in Scotland.

#### **4.2. Application for Membership**

- Application for Membership shall be submitted to the Executive Committee of the Association who shall have the powers of approval, review and termination of membership.
- Members are expected to comply with the SERA codes of practice.
- Membership is valid only while that member is fully paid up for that membership year

#### **4.3. Membership Fees**

The Annual Subscription for Members for the following year shall be agreed at the Annual General Meeting.

### **5. Governance**

1. The Association shall be governed under the supreme authority of any properly convened AGM or EGM
2. The Trustees shall be elected yearly at the AGM by nomination and vote.
3. The trustees shall appoint an executive committee.

#### **5.1. The Executive Committee**

1. Any member of the Executive Committee may be removed by a resolution of the Trustees.
2. The Executive Committee shall be entitled to speak for all members.
3. The Executive Committee shall consist of the following elected members:
  - President
  - Vice-President
  - Secretary
  - Treasurer
  - Up to eight ordinary members of The Association
4. The Executive Committee shall have the power to co-opt to the Executive the services of any Member to assist in the working of The Association. It shall also have the power to appoint sub-committees to carry out any work necessary for the goodwill of The Association. Co-opted members shall not have the power to vote except at General Meetings.
5. The following shall be ex-officio members of the Executive Committee:
  - Honorary Members
  - The Immediate Past-President.

These officials shall be entitled to attend Executive Committee meetings, to receive minutes of these proceedings, but shall not have the power to vote except at General Meetings.

6. The terms of office of an Office Bearer or ordinary member of the Executive Committee elected as above will be from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December of the year following the AGM

#### **5.2. Executive Committee Meetings**

1. No Executive Committee meeting shall proceed to business unless six members of the said committee are present.
2. The Executive Committee must meet at least 6 times per year.

### **5.3. General Meetings**

1. No General Meeting shall proceed to business unless 12 members are present inclusive of Executive Committee members.
2. All paid up Members are eligible to attend and vote at a General Meeting.

#### **5.3.1. Annual General Meetings (AGM)**

1. The AGM shall be convened not more than 18 months after the previous AGM
2. The Annual General Meeting shall be at a time and place to be decided by the Executive Committee.
3. Members should be given written notice of the AGM and the agenda at least one month prior to the date of meeting
4. The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting shall be circulated to Members at least one month prior to the following AGM.
5. The accounts shall be inspected and reported upon annually. This inspection and report will be compliant with the legal requirements of SERA as an entity. The report of the inspection of the accounts shall be circulated prior to the Annual General Meeting in accordance with the constitution. The financial year shall run from 1st July to 30th June the following year.
6. Constitutional amendments shall only take place at the Annual General Meeting. Copies of proposed amendments or motions, to be proposed and seconded by paid up Members, to be delivered to The Association Secretary no later than six weeks prior to the General Meeting.
7. All nominations and motions will be received from the floor or in writing to the Secretary. These must be proposed and seconded by an Association member
8. The AGM will attend to the following matters
  - Appointment of returning officer for the meeting
  - Consideration of motions
  - Approval of annual reports of the Executive committee, the Treasurer, the Trustees
  - Approval of the accounts and the report on the accounts
  - Subscription rates and Membership Fees
  - Appointment of an appropriate person to inspect the AccountsSubscription rates and Membership Fees
  - Election of Office Bearers
    - President
    - Vice-President
    - Secretary
    - Treasurer
    - Election of up to 8 ordinary members of the Executive Committee
9. Any other matter affecting the conduct of the Association

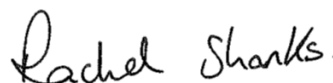
### 5.3.2. Extraordinary General Meetings (EGM)

1. Extra General Meetings can be called by the Executive Committee on the giving of one month's notice of the agenda item or following written notice from a minimum of 25% of the paid up Members.
2. The Minutes of the EGM shall be circulated to Members within one month of the meeting
3. The Extraordinary General Meeting will attend to the following matters
  - Appointment of a chair
  - Appointment of a returning officer
  - The Agenda item notified

#### Signature on behalf of Trustees

**This is to confirm that** the above constitution **was** amended at the Annual General Meeting of the Scottish Educational Research Association held at the University of Glasgow on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018.

Signed by one of the Trustees on behalf of all



PRINT NAME

Rachel Shanks

DESIGNATION

Trustee with responsibility for governance

**Part 2: Explanatory Notes And Guidance**  
**This Appendix does not form part of the constitution)**

**1. Committees and Working Groups**

In order to discharge its various functions in pursuit of the stated aim of the Association, the Executive Committee shall have the power to delegate tasks to such sub-committees and working groups as are deemed necessary.

Some functions of the Executive Committee may require sub-committees to be established, which would be convened by a member of the Executive Committee. Such functions include the following:

- Conference Planning
- Seminar Planning
- Communications and Newsletter
- Website and Publicity
- Membership development
- Supporting new researchers
- Supporting practitioner research
- Supporting SERA networks and special interest groups
  - SERA Networks may be established by agreement of the Executive Committee on the submission of a formal proposal by 10 SERA members including representation from research community, the practice community and the policy community that identifies the proposed network convenor.
- Liaison with other agencies and relevant bodies. Such bodies currently include:
 

|                     |                           |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Scottish Government | GTCS                      |
| BERA                | SQA                       |
| EERA                | CDN – College Development |
| Education Scotland  | Network                   |
| SCEL                |                           |

**2. Fee Structure**

The fee structure and level may be altered only by majority at a General Meeting. Membership rates are:

| Class of Membership | Annual fee |
|---------------------|------------|
| Honorary            | No fee     |
| Life                | No fee     |
| Full                | £40.00     |
| Reduced             | £25.00     |
|                     |            |

### **Part3. Definitions and Executive roles**

#### **This Appendix does not form part of the constitution)**

#### **1. Trustees of SERA as a registered charity**

Trustees are the members of the Executive Committee who are nominated and elected by the membership at an AGM or EGM. Executive Committee members who are not Trustees are Ex Officio members, Co-opted members, Student members and Representatives from non-university bodies.

The Rationale is that the Trustees of The Association should be elected by the membership on whose part they act. The categories of non-Trustees are as follows;

- Ex Officio members (Honorary members and Immediate Past President) are not Trustees as their place on the Executive is conferred by constitution rather than election and they need not take up the position.
- Co-opted members are not Trustees as they are recommended by the Executive for their potential contribution to SERA and its management. These co-options may be temporary and, in order not to place artificial barriers in the way of enabling these co-opted members to take up the post, the onus of Trustee should not be a burden on them.
- The student representative is not a Trustee, given the unpredictable length of membership of the candidate and disproportionate responsibility and liability that would result from Trusteeship.
- Representatives from non-university bodies (e.g. GTCS, SQA) are not Trustees to avoid a conflict of interest.

#### **2. President**

The president is the nominal head of the Association. The duties of the President are:

- Formal representation the Association in all public matters
- Approval of Agenda
- Chairing of Executive Committee Meetings
- Co-ordination of Executive Committee function
- Formal approval of all business matters

#### **3. Vice-President**

The vice-president deputises for the President. Duties are

- To undertake such duties as above in the absence of the President

#### **4. Secretary**

The secretary is the formal organ of the association in all matters of communication. The duties are:

- Processing of all correspondence
- Preparation of minutes of meetings
- Notification of meetings
- Liaison with the SERA Administrator with respect to archiving of materials, distribution of mailings and all such similar clerical functions
- Updating of Executive Committee details for correspondence

## 5. Treasurer

All financial matters are the responsibility of the Treasurer under the authority of the Executive Committee. The Treasurer duties are

- Interpreting the SERA financial position for Executive Committee guidance
- Implementing Executive Committee financial strategies
- Setting budgets
- Acting as the OSCR nominated person
- Authorising payments
- Preparing AGM papers
- Preparing and submission of the Annual reports as a narrative for inspection of the accounts and for OSCR
- Acting as signatory to all SERA financial agreements
- Arranging credit on behalf of SERA
- Executing the following tasks or instructing the business or accounts manager to do so
  - Transacting payments and receipts
  - Maintaining Financial records
  - Book-keeping of ledgers
  - Preparation of accounts for Annual inspection
  - Preparation of the OSCR Annual Monitoring Return forms
- Liaison with the Membership Secretary on
  - Membership fees
  - Membership payment status
  - BACS notifications and amendments
- Liaison with the Conference Administrator on
  - Conference costs and projected profit
  - Conference payments and receipts
  - Conference fees

## 6. SERA publicity officer

The officer is responsible for creating channels for the communication of ideas and interests of the Association. The duties are

- Liaising with the press to send advance information about the conference;
- Liaising with SERA members to ask for any new piece of research; job adverts; special issues of journals that they would like to be made visible at the conference (e.g. on the display table) or they would like to be sent to the attention of the press;
- Liaising with press and media to send information about forthcoming seminars organised by the Association;
- Liaising with members of the Association (and particularly the SERA networks) to stimulate contributions on relevant matters that could grant SERA the attention of the media (Publicity officer in charge of writing short statements);
- Liaising with the editor of the SERA bulletin to identify pieces of research and/or initiatives that could be forwarded to the media to increase profile;
- Liaising with the editors of BERJ and SER to accommodate a small advert about the SERA conference;



- Liaising with speakers at the SERA conference and encourage them to disseminate pieces of work that are relevant to the general public through the media (eg BBC Scotland/education).

### **Part 3. Non-Executive Committee posts and their functions**

#### Business Manager

The Service Provider shall provide the following Business Management services to SERA in accordance with the terms and conditions of an Agreement: These Services are based upon an Appendix document received at the Executive Committee Meeting of 1st June 2007. Subsequently amended on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2010

The Service Provider shall provide the following services to SERA

1. Transacting payments and receipts
2. Maintaining Financial records
3. Book-keeping of ledgers
4. Preparation of accounts for Annual Inspection
5. Preparation of the OSCR Annual Monitoring Return forms

#### Conference Administrator

The Service Provider shall provide the following services to the SERA in accordance with the terms and conditions of an Agreement: The following is based upon the agreement in force from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007

The duties are summarised as:

- Administrative and secretarial support to
  - The Conference Organiser
  - Any member of the Conference sub-committee or Conference team on the authority of the Conference Organiser
- This support will cover the conference areas of
  - Call for papers
  - Receipt and organisation of abstracts
  - Communication of referees findings
  - Conference booking
  - Accommodation booking
  - Conference payment records
  - Production of booklet master
  - In-situ registration
  - Post-conference closure
  - Post conference payment collection
- Communication by telephone, email and hard copy correspondence with
  - SERA conference subcommittee
  - Conference delegates
  - Speakers and invited guests
  - Hotels providing accommodation
  - Conference service providers

## **Membership secretary**

The duties of the Membership Secretary fall into 2 categories, Membership and Postbox.

### **Membership duties**

- Maintainance of membership database (desktop and online)
- Issuing of membership notices
- Issuing of membership reminders
- Issue of receipts
- Issue of Invoices
- Liasion with SERA Executive on membership matters, including BACS

### **Postbox duties**

- Telephone, email and written enquiries regarding SERA membership
- Forwarding to Executive all relevant communication regarding membership
- Addressee for receipt of membership payments
- Addressee for receipt of BACS documents

## **SERA Administrator**

The duties of the SERA Administrator are as follows:

### **Postbox duties**

- Telephone, email and written enquiries regarding SERA
- Forwarding to Executive all relevant communication
- Addressee for receipt of formal communications with SERA (e.g. OSCR)

### **Additional services at additional cost**

- Photocopying
- Mailing
- Typing and other secretarial work

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Election of ordinary members of the Executive Committee and Office Bearers**

- The meeting will appoint a returning officer for elections
- Nominations will be received from the floor or in writing to the Secretary
- Nominations must be consented to by the nominee and supported by at least one member of the Association for one particular role
- Each member of the Association may nominate only one candidate
- All paid-up members are eligible to stand for election
- Retiring officers will be eligible for re-election, except that the President and Vice President may normally not hold office for more than 2 successive years in one capacity
- If there is more than one eligible candidate for any vacancy, a ballot of members will be held at the meeting
- Ballots will be counted in the following order: Office Bearers and other positions in the order they are set out followed by ordinary Executive Committee members