

Statute of the Malta Educational Research Association

Section A: Name and Purpose

Article 1

The name of the organisation is the Malta Educational Research Association known also with its acronym MERA

Article 2

MERA is a voluntary (not-for-profit), professional and scientific association engaged in educational research, autonomous from Government, and enrolled with the Malta Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations.

Article 3

The Association organizes its activities in the territory of the Republic of Malta. The headquarters and postal address of the Association is at the Faculty of Education, Room 231, University of Malta, Msida, MSD 2080, Malta. Phone: 2340-2932.

Article 4

The purposes of the Association are:

- (1) To promote and organize educational research and support educators to contribute to the overall social development through research in the domain of education;
- (2) To encourage the study of relevant theoretical and practical problems in education through individual and team work and collaboration between academic and administrative institutions;
- (3) To support the professional and scientific activities of its members in the Maltese and international sphere;
- (4) To contribute to the research capacity building, endorsement of educational research, and communication among its members;
- (5) To disseminate the research and evaluation findings of its members and of the Association within Malta and abroad;
- (6) To contribute to and nurture the application of the highest ethics standards and quality of educational research;
- (7) To liaise researcher members with education policy makers in Malta in the interest of scientifically-based policy making;
- (8) To liaise researcher members of the Association with international and regional research organisations and with individual colleagues abroad.

Article 5

In order to fulfill its purposes the Association:

- (1) Will seek and join membership of similar and like-minded international and regional organisations;

- (2) Will be receptive to collaboration with other scientific and professional organizations on the basis of professional interests, mutual respect and autonomy in order to raise the level of scientific and professional interest of its members.

Article 6

To achieve the adopted goals and objectives, the Association will:

- (1) conduct and/or initiate its own research activity;
- (2) organize scientific and professional meetings;
- (3) support the work of its members involved in various research domains and research sections in education;
- (4) facilitate the exchange of research material and research-related information between researchers in Malta and more widely through the medium of publications and electronic communication;
- (5) organize other forms of collaborative research work.

Section B: Membership

Article 1

Members of the Malta Educational Research Association may be regular, honorary or associate members. Membership is available to individuals engaged or interested in educational research, assessment or evaluation of educational practice.

Article 2

Regular members of the Malta Educational Research Association are educators who are engaged in research in the Republic of Malta.

Article 3

Honorary members of the Malta Educational Research Association are, Maltese educators, nationals living or working abroad, or educators from other countries who provide a significant contribution to the work and the development of MERA. The decision of honorary membership is made by MERA General Assembly on the proposal of MERA Administrative Board. Honorary members shall not pay membership fee.

Article 4

Associate Members of the Malta Educational Research Association may be undergraduate and graduate students and educators from Malta and other countries who are engaged or interested in educational research, assessment, and evaluation and wish to contribute to the work of MERA. Student members pay a reduced fees but have all rights, responsibilities and privileges of regular members.

Article 5

MERA members:

- (1) actively contribute to attainment of MERA goals;
- (2) participate in activities of MERA in accordance with their interests;
- (3) take a direct part in decision-making at the General Meeting and through MERA bodies;
- (4) perform activities entrusted to them by MERA Administrative Board.
- (5) abide by the provisions of MERA decisions;
- (6) pay yearly membership fee on a regular basis.

Article 6

MERA shall keep records containing the following information about the members:

- (1) salutation;
- (2) member's name and surname;
- (3) mailing address;
- (4) name of the institution where a member works;
- (5) the information about member's academic or professional title;
- (6) the contact information including phone number(s) and email address.

Article 7

Membership shall become effective upon acceptance of an application and payment of dues as determined by MERA Administrative Board.

Should a member fail to pay the membership fee for the current year, he/she shall lose his/her rights and privileges until outstanding fees are paid.

The membership year shall be from 1st October through 30th September.

Article 8

A member may withdraw from membership by providing a written statement of withdrawal.

Membership of all Association members shall be suspended with the termination of the Association's operation.

1. Membership shall terminate:

- a. on the death of a member;
- b. by termination by the member;
- c. by termination by the Association;
- d. by expulsion.

2. Membership may only be terminated by the member with effect from the end of a financial year, provided that notice of termination is given in writing before the end of that year.

3. Membership may also be terminated by MERA only with effect from the end of a financial year.

Membership is terminated by the Administrative Board in writing and with due observance of a period of at least four-week advance notice. The Administrative Board may only terminate a membership if the annual contribution is not paid.

4. Expulsion is only possible where a member acts contrary to the statute, rules or resolutions of the Association, as for instance in the event that the member harms the Association in an unreasonable manner. Expulsion is carried out by the Administrative Board, which shall inform the member in question of the resolution, stating the reasons for the expulsion. The person concerned has the right to lodge an appeal with the General Council within one month of receipt of the notification. The member shall be suspended during the appeal period and while the appeal is pending. The General Council may only resolve on a member's expulsion by a resolution to that effect, adopted with a majority of at least two-thirds of the votes cast.

5. The Administrative Board may suspend a member who acts contrary to the statute, rules or resolutions of the Association or who harms the Association in an unreasonable manner for a period to be determined by the Council up to a maximum of six (6) months. An appeal against such suspension may be made to the General Council.

Section C: Organisation of the Association

Article 1

The main organs of the Association are:

- (1) The General Council
- (2) The Administrative Board

Article 2: The General Council

The major organ of the Association, the **General Council**, will meet annually in the month of April of each year in order to:

- (1) Approve the Annual Administrative Report and the Annual Accounts of the Association presented to it by the Administrative Board;
- (2) Approve of any amendments to the statute of the Association or to the procedures of the General Council submitted to it by the Board;
- (3) Approve of any increases in the dues paid by the members of the Association or of any change to the conditions of membership submitted by the Administrative Board;
- (4) Elect the members of the Administrative Board when such an election is due;
- (5) Approve the Association's Auditor.

Article 2.1: The Annual General Meeting

The annual meeting of the General Council of the Association which is also its Annual General Meeting (AGM) is open to fully subscribed members of the Association and is subject to the following procedures:

AGM: Convocation of meeting

- (1) The AGM is called by the Administrative Board in April of each calendar year at least a fortnight (15 days) before it is scheduled to meet by means of a circular notice to all fully-subscribed members and through a public notice in the media;
- (2) The notice to the members shall contain: (a) the date, time and venue of the meeting; (b) the agenda of the meeting; (c) an invitation to members to forward any motions for changes or amendments to the statute in writing for consideration by the Meeting.
- (3) The Administrative Board can decide to organize elections via electronic voting.

1. AGM: Conduct of Meeting

- (1) The quorum for the AGM is 50% of the fully-subscribed members + 1.
- (2) Where there is no official quorum twenty minutes after the scheduled time for the meeting to begin, the AGM will go ahead with its business with the members present.
- (3) The Chairperson of the Administrative Board presides over the AGM and its proceedings.
- (4) Members wishing to put a motion to the AGM regarding the conduct of the meeting may do so at the beginning of the meeting where they may ask for the temporary suspension of the agenda, and they need two seconders.
- (5) All votes taken over motions put to the AGM are taken by show of hands.

2. AGM: Elections to the Administrative Board

- (1) The Administrative Board is elected by the General Council at its AGM for a term of three years.
- (2) AGMs where an election of a new Board is held are chaired by the out-going care-taker Chairperson up to the point of the election for a new Board which is turned over to an ad hoc committee of three (3) electoral officers to conduct the election.
- (3) Seconded nominations for election to the new Board are invited together with the notice for the AGM meeting and received by the out-going care-taken Chairperson up to twenty-four (24) hours before the scheduled AGM meeting.
- (4) All fully subscribed members are eligible to be nominated to the Board, this includes the members of the outgoing Board who may be nominated for re-election.
- (5) Nominations for the new Chairperson must be separate from those for the other members of the Board.
- (6) The election of the new Board is the last item on the AGM agenda.
- (7) The electoral officers are nominated and seconded on the spot by the AGM – the first three nominees approved by the meeting conduct the election.
- (8) The first election is for the new Chairperson who is elected directly by the AGM.
- (9) The second election is for the other remaining members of the Board.
- (10) Both elections are held by secret ballot with those receiving the highest number of votes elected to the Board.
- (11) The newly elected Chairperson of the Board brings the AGM to a close.

Article 4: The Administrative Board

1. Composition

- (1) The Administrative Board is made up of nine (9) members, the Chairperson who is elected directly by the General Assembly and eight (8) other members.
- (2) The other administrators are appointed internally at the first meeting of the Board chaired by the Chairperson.
- (3) The Administrative Board is made up of the Chairperson, his or her Deputy, a Board Secretary, an International Secretary, a Treasurer, a Public Relations Officer, and three (3) other members.
- (4) The Board is empowered to create other administrative posts from among its members for the purposes of efficient administration of the Association.

2. Responsibilities

- (1) The Board is entrusted with managing the business of the Association in a manner that conforms with, is loyal to, and pursues the purposes of the Association as they are set out in Section A Article 4 of this statute.
- (2) For this purpose it is charged with meeting on a regular basis, in any case a minimum of once every two (2) months, and/or as may be required for the efficient management of its business.
- (3) The first Administrative Board elected by the Association is charged to set out its own rules and procedures for attendance at, and for the conduct of, its meetings.
- (4) For this purpose and for the way it conducts itself generally in the fulfilment of its responsibilities it must guide itself by the Code of Ethics and Good Practice published by the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations.
- (5) The Board considers applications for membership of the Association, keeps regularly updated lists, public lists, of members under the different categories and charges membership dues as set by the General Assembly.
- (6) The Board identifies, organises and manages programmes of activities, academic and social intended to further and fulfil the purposes of the Association in line with this statute.
- (7) The Board organises, and prepares the materials, for the AGM of the Association including an administrative report, an appropriate financial statement, and any motions that may be presented for its consideration.
- (8) The Board organises and prepares all the materials for any Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) that it may be required to call for the Association's members.
- (9) The Board is empowered to propose changes and amendments to the statute of the Association and to forward such business for the consideration of the AGM of the General Assembly, including memberships of international and regional research associations, which it considers beneficial to the general purposes of the Association, to its management, and to its finances.
- (10) The Board is empowered to sign contracts, enter into agreements, and pursue projects with kindred local and international organisations that are in conformity with and pursue the purposes of the Association on behalf of its members.

- (11) The Board is empowered to make financial decisions in the interest of the Association, including investments and fund-raising.
- (12) The Board Chairperson or his or her Deputy together with the International Secretary represent the Association at all meetings of local and/or international or regional associations of which the Association is member.
- (13) The Board may co-opt members in a non-voting capacity to help it to pursue its purposes.
- (14) The Board may set up its own committees or sub-committees for its own better operations and for specific purposes related to the pursuit of the objectives and purposes of the Association.

Article 2.2: Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)

- (1) The Chairperson of the Board is required to call an Extraordinary General Meeting on any subject of concern for the members of the Association which is presented to it signed by a minimum of twenty per-cent (20%) of the fully-subscribed membership.
- (2) The request for an EGM is to be addressed to the Chairperson, must be presented in written form and in the form of a motion and must be accompanied with the signatures of the members who support it.
- (3) The Chairperson must call the meeting within a reasonable time and must announce it in a circular announcing the motion and in a public notice advertising the date, time and place of the meeting.
- (4) The Chairperson will conduct the EGM which vote on the presented motion with a show of hands.
- (5) No motion shall be put to the EGM which: (a) would alter the statute of the Association, (b) would alter decisions taken at the previous AGM of the General Council.

Section D: Finances

Article 1: Income

The Association is a not-for-profit organisation, it cannot therefore undertake commercial activities and be run as a commercial company. Its income can come however:

- (1) From the fees paid to it by its members;
- (2) From voluntary grants, donations, financial subsidies, etc., from its own members and the general public;
- (3) From any fund-raising activities organised by its members on its behalf or by other persons for it;
- (4) From the organisation of activities related to its purposes; participation fees from conferences, seminars, round table, and other meetings it may organise alone and in collaboration with other educational agencies that conform with its purposes;
- (5) From the sale of materials generated in and connected with the activities detailed in (4) including publications, brochures, etc., as well as the sale of other publications related to its purposes: books, reports, magazines, journals etc.;

- (6) By applying for projects to governmental bodies or other national or foreign funds, including EU funds;
- (7) From contracts of service (research, policy reports, and training) with the Government or any independent agency local or foreign wanting to commission its services.
- (8) Should the Association decide to undertake any commercial activity it must set up the appropriate legal entity for the purpose, i.e. a commercial company, in compliance with the laws regulating the activities of voluntary organisations.

Article 2: Assets

The Administrative Board will manage all the Association's assets in a manner agreed with the Association's external Auditor and under the following conditions:.

- (1) The Association's financial transactions shall be made through an account with the Bank of Valletta and in accordance the accounting standards foreseen for associations of its type.
- (2) The Administrative Board may engage the services of an accountant to perform accounting services to support the Treasurer.
- (3) Besides its financial assets the Association may own property (movable and/or immovable assets) which must be entered into a record held and kept updated by the Administrative Board.

Article 3: Auditor

A professional Auditor appointed by the General Council and external to the Association will examine the accounting records, check them for compliance with all the relevant financial regulations including the requirements of the laws regulating voluntary organisations. The Auditor will present the Association Treasurer with an annual audit report to be submitted to the Board of Administrators for its approval and then to the AGM of the General Council.

Section E: Dissolution

The Association can only be dissolved, for whatever reason, by resolution of the General Council on a motion to this effect put to it by the Board of Administrators. The motion will be voted on at the AGM or at an EGM called for the purpose and will be subject to the rules of these meetings. The vote will be taken by show of hands and will pass if it gains a 51% majority of the eligible voters (fully-subscribed members) present.

In the case of dissolution the Association's assets will go to another agency of a non-profit kind approved by the same meeting.

In Msida, Malta
25th May, 2015