

Constitution of the United Kingdom Association for Language Testing and Assessment (UKALTA) (January 2024)

Preface

This is the constitution adopted at the seventh Annual General Meeting of the UK Association for Language Testing and Assessment (UKALTA) held at the 41st Language Testing Forum, on-line, on December 14, 2021. It also incorporates subsequent revisions made in 2024 related to extending the UKALTA Membership Categories. The provision for two new membership categories was discussed and unanimously agreed at the ninth Annual General Meeting of the Association, held in person at the 43rd Language Testing Forum on November 25, 2023.

1. Name

United Kingdom Association for Language Testing and Assessment (UKALTA).

2. Aims and objectives

2.1 To provide a forum for the exchange of information and research on language testing and assessment in the UK.

2.2 To provide a framework for supporting the language testing research community in the UK, and to mentor new and emerging researchers and professionals working in the field.

2.3 To encourage research and discussion on the assessment of a broad spectrum of languages in the UK, and actively seek to establish close relationships with organizations and societies that focus on language education and assessment issues

2.4 To provide a forum for proactively facilitating a greater awareness of issues related to professionalism in language assessment in the UK, and to provide a highly visible source of professional expertise to which educational and corporate organizations, government, and the media will look to for input on issues related to improving language assessment in the UK. The Association will proactively seek to be consulted in the next Research Excellence Framework, or similar activity, and also to be consulted during future reviews of assessment-related policy.

2.5 To actively conduct outreach activities to raise awareness of issues related to language testing and assessment in society generally, and improve assessment literacy for both specialist and non-specialist members of the public.

3. Affiliations

3.1 The Association will be affiliated with the International Language Testing Association, and will promote the ILTA Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice as important principles for professionals working in the field of language testing and assessment.

3.2 The Association supports the mission and activities of other professional associations involved in language testing and assessment and will seek to work with them in building a forum to facilitate the interaction of language testing professionals internationally.

3.3 The Association will actively seek to build close relationships with other organisations dealing with applied linguistics, language testing and assessment, and language teaching and learning, and will promote the interaction of members and exchange of news and information between such organisations.

4. Full and Associate Membership

4.1. Full and Associate membership are open to all individuals who have a professional and/or academic interest in the field of language testing and assessment in the UK, and who meet any additional criteria for either membership category (see Appendix A – Membership Guidelines).

4.2 Both Full and Associate membership are free of charge.

4.3 Both Full and Associate membership will be granted by a Membership and Nominations committee, to be appointed by the Executive Committee. The Membership & Nominations Committee shall receive and review all applications for membership. Approval of applications will not be withheld unreasonably.

4.4 Membership lists shall be periodically reviewed by the Membership & Nominations Committee and members may be asked to renew their membership. Members who do not respond to calls to renew membership will have their membership removed.

4.5 Full members will have the right to attend and vote in the AGM, and to stand for election to any position for which the Association holds elections, including the Executive Committee.

4.6 Associate members will have the right to attend but not vote in the AGM. They will not be able to stand for election to any position for which the Association holds elections.

5. Executive Committee

5.1 The Executive Committee shall consist of a President, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership and Nominations Committee Chair, Communications/Website Coordinator, Postgraduate Research Network Officer, Events and Liaison Officer, and 2 Ordinary Members. Any of these Executive Committee roles may be a shared post if considered appropriate (e.g. Co-Presidents).

5.2 The role of the Executive Committee, and the duties of each member of the Executive Committee, are set out in Appendix B – Executive Committee Guidelines.

5.3 The Membership and Nominations Committee shall oversee the call for nominations for Executive Committee positions and oversee elections to positions at the annual AGM (see Appendix C – Membership and Nominations Guidelines; Appendix D – Committees Guidelines).

6. Meetings

6.1 The Association year will be the calendar year, from January to December.

6.2 The Association shall hold an Annual General Meeting once a year, normally at the LTF Conference.

6.3 The AGM will be chaired by the President of the Executive Committee.

6.4 The Executive Committee will hold such meetings as the Committee deems appropriate and necessary to carry out its role (typically once every 1-2 months). Executive Committee meetings may be arranged as face-to-face meetings or through other means such as tele-/video-conferencing and will be chaired by the President or another member of the Executive Committee designated by the president.

7. Annual conference

7.1 The Language Testing Forum will be the annual conference of the Association.

7.2 The LTF will normally be run by a local LTF Chair and Organising Committee, and hosted by a local institution, in the same manner as past precedent. In exceptional circumstances, the UKALTA Executive Committee may decide to make alternative arrangements.

7.3 Proposals to host LTF events shall be presented at the Association's AGM each year. There shall be an advisory vote by the members present at the AGM to accept a specific proposal. However, the final decision on the location of LTF shall be made by the Executive Committee.

7.4 The Executive Committee will provide advice and support for the local LTF Chair through the LTF programme committee (see Appendix D – Committees Guidelines).

7.5 The LTF Chair will be invited to sit on the Executive Committee to facilitate communication between the Association and the LTF organizers. The LTF Chair will provide regular updates on the progress of organization to the Executive Committee, including on prospective costs, attendance fees, theme, and plenary speakers.

7.6 In principle, costs for organizing LTF will be borne by the hosting institution and covered by attendance fees and sponsorship. A surplus income generated by LTF after the full costs of the conference have been covered will be donated to the Association. The financial arrangements around conferences will be negotiated by the local organizing chair and the hosting organization in consultation with the Association Treasurer.

8. Organizational Sponsorship

The Executive Committee shall explore the possibility of creating opportunities for academic and corporate organizations to provide financial support for the Association through structured or ad hoc sponsorship. Such financial support shall in no way compromise, or be seen to compromise, the integrity or independence of the Association, but will provide the financial support necessary to support the activities of the Association. The criteria for sponsorship, amount of sponsorship, and processes involved will be investigated by the Executive Committee. Sponsorship may be accepted by the Interim Executive Committee at any time

provided there is majority agreement by the committee that the sponsorship does not threaten the integrity or independence of the Association.

A new membership category of Affiliated Organisation (AO) status will facilitate this from 2024 (see Appendix A – Membership Guidelines).

9. Amendments

The provisions of this Constitution can be amended, deleted or added to only by an Annual General Meeting and only if a precise motion to that effect is included in the papers summoning the meeting and is approved by two thirds of those voting.

Appendix A – Membership Guidelines

1. UKALTA membership is open to those persons who apply for membership (Full or Associate) and who fulfil the relevant membership criteria, as evaluated by the UKALTA Membership & Nominations Committee. Institutions/organisations may apply for Affiliated Organisation (AO) status if they fulfil the relevant criteria specified for admission.
2. Members of the UKALTA Membership & Nominations Committee will review all membership applications and evaluate these according to a pre-specified and published set of criteria. Decisions made by the Committee will be final and valid for the year during which the application has been made. Members can re-apply if their circumstances have changed. Approval of applications will not be withheld unreasonably.
3. Members are eligible to participate in all UKALTA activities.
4. By becoming a UKALTA member, a person consents to UKALTA to hold personal details supplied to UKALTA in the application process. Data on members held by UKALTA will not be given to third parties outside UKALTA's membership. Members' names and contact details may be passed to other members where this is in pursuit of the aims of UKALTA.
5. Members must not use the UKALTA name, acronym or logo without the expressed permission of the UKALTA Executive Committee.
6. Membership lists shall be periodically reviewed by the Membership & Nominations Committee and members may be asked to renew their membership. Members who do not respond to calls to renew membership within a period of six weeks will have their membership removed. Individuals affected may re-apply for membership at any time.
7. Members may leave the organisation at any time by writing to the UKALTA Chair of the Membership & Nominations Committee.
8. Full membership:
 - a. Those eligible to join UKALTA as full members are people who
 - are working, studying or living in the UK, or able to show strong connections with the UK;
 - AND have an interest and preferably an involvement in language testing and/or assessment;
 - AND meet any additional criteria for membership proposed and approved at the Annual General Meeting of UKALTA.
 - b. Full membership is free of charge.
 - c. Full members will have the right to attend and vote in the Annual General Meeting and stand for election to any position for which UKALTA holds elections.
9. Associate membership:
 - a. Those eligible to join UKALTA as associate members are people who

- have an interest and preferably an involvement in language testing and/or assessment;
 - AND meet any additional criteria for membership proposed and approved at the Annual General Meeting of UKALTA.
- b. Associate membership is free of charge.
- c. Associate members will have the right to attend the Annual General Meeting. However, Associate members may not vote in the AGM, or stand for election to any position for which UKALTA holds elections.

10. The UKALTA Membership & Nominations Committee may use its discretion to terminate membership where any of the following criteria apply:

- a. Where a member no longer meets the criteria for membership.
- b. Where a member has by their unwarranted action brought the organisation into disrepute.
- c. Where a member is found to be uncontactable despite reasonable attempts to contact the member with a request for up-to-date contact details.
- d. Other reasons which are deemed to be of such a serious nature that they warrant exclusion.

Only in exceptional circumstances will termination of membership on grounds of conduct take place without there having been prior advice to the member in question that their conduct could result in their membership being terminated. A member may, within a month, appeal against the decision to the UKALTA President. The Executive Committee will consider the case and the evidence submitted to support the appeal, and its decision will be final.

11. Affiliated Organisation (AO) status:

The purpose of the Affiliated Organisation (AO) status category is two-fold:

- to enable institutions and organisations who are in sympathy with the ethos, aims and objectives of UKALTA to demonstrate support and encouragement to the UK's leading professional association for language testing and assessment, including exploration of opportunities for cooperation;
 - to provide a valuable source of income for UKALTA in support of its activities throughout the year, helping to secure the long-term sustainability of the professional association.
- a. To be considered for Affiliated Organisation (AO) status, institutions/organisations must
- be based in the UK, or able to show strong connections with the UK (e.g. through having a UK-based office/personnel);

- AND teach and/or assess languages, or provide products and/or services that support the teaching and/or assessment of languages, or carry out research into the teaching and/or assessment of languages;
 - AND meet any additional criteria for Affiliated Organisation status proposed and approved at the Annual General Meeting of UKALTA.
- b. Affiliated Organisation (AO) status will incur an annual fee of £150 (subject to annual review) and will run from 01 January to 31 December each year.
- c. Affiliated Organisation (AO) status will entitle institutions/organisations
- to be listed along with their logo as an Affiliated Organisation (AO) on a dedicated page of the UKALTA website (e.g. under Links and Partnerships);
 - to use an approved 'Affiliated Organisation of UKALTA' logo provided by the UKALTA Executive Committee.
- d. Affiliated Organisation status will not entitle institutions to AGM voting rights or to nomination of its staff or representatives for UKALTA posts.

12. The UKALTA Executive Committee may use its discretion to terminate Affiliated Organisation (AO) status where any of the following criteria apply:

- a. Where an institution/organisation no longer meets the criteria for AO status.
- b. Where an institution/organisation fails to respond to communications from UKALTA.
- c. Where an institution/organisation has by their unwarranted action brought the association into disrepute.
- d. Where an institution/organisation fails to adhere to the terms and conditions for AO status set out and agreed at the application/approval stage (e.g. acceptance of the ILTA Codes of Ethics/Practice and the UKALTA logo policy).
- e. Other reasons which are deemed to be of such a serious nature that they warrant exclusion.

Only in exceptional circumstances will termination of AO status on grounds of conduct take place without there having been prior advice to the AO in question that their conduct could result in their AO status being terminated. The Executive Committee will consider the case and its decision will be final.

13. Additional classes of membership may be proposed and approved at the Annual General Meeting of UKALTA.

Appendix B - Executive Committee Guidelines

Section 1: Role of Executive Committee

1. The Executive Committee shall be the principal policy-making body of UKALTA and shall be responsible for managing its resources and activities.
2. The Executive Committee shall be the administrative agent of UKALTA, shall supervise the work of the Secretary, Treasurer, Communications & Website Coordinator, Chair of the Membership & Nominations Committee, Postgraduate Research Network Officer, Events and Liaison Officer, and 2 Ordinary Members, and shall exercise general supervision over the affairs of the Association.
3. In addition to the Annual General Meeting, regular meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held (at least once a year), with the times, medium or places to be specified by vote of the Executive Committee. Meetings may be held through telephone or online conference calls, electronic mail, or face-to-face.
4. The Executive Committee shall consist of a President, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications & Website Coordinator, Chair of the Membership & Nominations Committee, Postgraduate Research Network Officer, Events and Liaison Officer, and 2 Ordinary Members.
5. The Executive Committee members shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of UKALTA, according to the procedures specified in the Nominations & Elections section.
6. Members of the Executive Committee may succeed themselves for no more than one consecutive term.
7. The terms of office of the Executive Committee members shall run from 1 January of the year after they are elected to 31 December of the year in which their term expires.
8. Each Executive Committee member shall serve UKALTA for a three-year term.
9. The President, Secretary and Treasurer positions shall start and finish asynchronously. All other officer roles will start and finish asynchronously as far as is reasonable. The standard term for all Executive Committee roles is 3 years, with the possibility of re-election for a second term.
10. In the event of incapacity or resignation of the President, the Secretary will observe the general well-functioning of UKALTA until the following Annual General Meeting, where a new President will need to be elected. In the event of the incapacity or resignation of an officer other than the President, the Executive Committee shall fill the vacancy for the unexpired term. The members of the Executive Committee (President, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications & Website Coordinator, Chair of the Membership & Nominations Committee, Postgraduate Research Network Officer, Events and Liaison Officer, and 2 Ordinary Members) shall normally be expected to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Association. Having regard for the financial situation of UKALTA at the time and whether any alternative source of funding is available to the Executive Committee members, their travel within the UK and accommodation costs will be covered to attend the LTF at which the Annual General Meeting takes place.

Section 2: Duties of Executive Committee members

1. President

The President shall serve as presiding officer of UKALTA and of the Executive Committee, and shall perform responsibilities adhering to the office, including the following:

- a. To determine the agenda for meetings of the Executive Committee and the Annual General Meeting and to preside at these meetings.
- b. To carry out the purposes or business of UKALTA and other actions as directed by the membership.
- c. To serve as the official representative of UKALTA to other professional organizations.
- d. To keep the membership informed of important issues concerning language testing and assessment.
- e. To appoint members of all committees whose membership is not otherwise specified (e.g. LTF Programme Committee).

2. Secretary

The Secretary shall perform the usual functions of secretary and shall administer the general affairs of UKALTA under the direction of the Executive Committee. Specific duties of the secretary include the following:

- a. To record and distribute minutes of all meetings.
- b. To carry out general administrative tasks for UKALTA.
- c. To assist the President with arrangements for the AGM.
- d. To manage the executive content on the website.

3. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall perform the usual functions of treasurer and shall administer the financial affairs of UKALTA under the direction of the Executive Committee. Specific duties of the Treasurer include the following:

- a. To collect any dues, receive funds and maintain financial records of UKALTA.
- b. To prepare a draft annual budget for the Executive Committee's approval.
- c. To pay bills incurred by UKALTA.
- d. To give a financial report at each meeting of the Executive Committee and at each Annual General Meeting.
- e. To undertake from time to time a strategic review of UKALTA income and expenditure, in order to ensure that the financial base of the Association remains secure.

- f. To provide financial advice and oversight to the LTF Programme Committee, to enable LTF to access UKALTA funds to support advance conference arrangements, and to assist the LTF Programme Chair in making financial accounting to UKALTA.
- g. To make a recommendation to the Executive Committee on any proposal to create a new category of UKALTA membership.

4. Communications & Website Coordinator

The Communications & Website Coordinator shall perform the usual functions of a communications and website coordinator under the direction of the Executive Committee. Specific duties of the Communications & Website Coordinator include the following:

- a. To develop and maintain a website for UKALTA.
- b. To develop and maintain an electronic membership application system.
- c. To provide communication and website advice & support to the LTF Programme Committee.
- d. To send communications to the membership or other instances as required by the Executive Committee.

5. Chair of the Membership & Nominations Committee

The Chair of the Membership & Nominations Committee shall perform the usual functions of a membership and nominations chair under the direction of the Executive Committee. Specific duties of the Chair of the Membership & Nominations Committee include the following:

- a. To preside the Membership & Nominations Committee.
- b. To ensure processing and evaluation of membership applications.
- c. To maintain a list of active members.
- d. To organise a call for nominees for positions available for election.
- e. To obtain from each nominee his or her consent to be nominated and also a biodata statement.
- f. To organise elections to be conducted at the Annual General Meeting.
- g. To oversee the conduct of elections and to assure that such elections are conducted expeditiously, fairly and as specified in the Constitution.

6. Postgraduate Research Network Officer

The Postgraduate Research Network Officer serves as a liaison between the UKALTA Postgraduate Research Network and the UKALTA Executive Committee. Specific duties include:

- a) To be a member of the PGR Network steering group.
- b) Together with other members of the PGR Network steering group, to organise events and develop other initiatives for postgraduate students and early career researchers who are UKALTA members.
- c) To serve as a liaison between the PGR Network leadership and the UKALTA Executive Committee.

7. Events and Liaison Officer

The Events and Liaison Officer is responsible for assisting with the organisation of events under the direction of the Executive Committee and for maintaining liaison with UKALTA links and partners. Specific duties include:

- a) To support the annual LTF conference in collaboration with the Local Chair and Organising Committee.
- b) To take a lead on and/or support UKALTA events.
- c) To maintain ongoing liaison with UKALTA links and partnerships.

8. Ordinary Members (2 posts)

Ordinary Members are responsible for undertaking special projects and ad hoc tasks that emerge for the Executive Committee and supporting other members of the EC and facilitating delivery of the tasks of the EC as appropriate. Specific duties include:

- a) Contributing to discussion and decision making at EC meetings.
- b) Reviewing and giving feedback on reports, proposals, abstracts, etc.
- c) Helping to develop and draft new policy and briefing documents for UKALTA.

Appendix C - Nominations and Elections Guidelines

1. All members of the Executive Committee and members of the Membership & Nominations Committee shall be nominated by the Membership & Nominations Committee. Any member of UKALTA may submit suggestions for nominees for any office to the Membership & Nominations Committee. Self-nominations are allowed. A call for nominations will be sent out to the membership by the Chair of the Membership & Nominations Committee no later than one month before the Annual General Meeting in which a position is due for re-election. Nominees standing for election have to be members of UKALTA.
2. The Membership & Nominations Committee shall compile a slate with up to three nominees willing to stand for election for each available position.
3. All members of the Executive Committee and members of the Membership & Nominations Committee shall be elected by a ballot coordinated and presided over by the Chair of the Membership & Nominations Committee. Voting will normally be online using secure and appropriate systems and results will be reported at the Annual General Meeting.
4. For the offices of President, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications & Website Coordinator, Chair of the Membership & Nominations Committee, Postgraduate Research Network Officer and Events and Liaison Officer each member of UKALTA shall have one vote and the candidate receiving the largest number of votes shall be elected. For the members of the Membership & Nominations Committee, and for the 2 Ordinary Members, each member of UKALTA shall have as many votes as there are respective vacancies and the candidates receiving the largest number of votes shall be elected. In the case of a tied vote for any of the vacant positions, the tie shall be broken by a majority vote of the executive Committee members present at the Annual General Meeting.
5. Members of the existing Executive Committee and of the Membership & Nominations Committee who are standing for re-election will not be involved in counting the votes.

Appendix D – Committees Guidelines

1. Standing committees of UKALTA shall include the Membership & Nominations Committee and the LTF Programme Committee.
2. The Membership & Nominations Committee shall consist of a Chair and two additional members of UKALTA elected in accordance with the Constitution.
 - a. Membership of the Committee, with the exception of the Chair, shall be for a period of one year, which shall run from 1 January to 31 December of the year after the members are elected. Members of the Membership & Nominations Committee may succeed themselves for no more than one consecutive term.
 - b. The Membership & Nominations Committee shall be responsible for preparing a slate of candidates for each office, each position on the Executive Committee that is open for election, and for positions on the Membership & Nominations Committee.
 - c. The Membership & Nominations Committee shall be responsible for reviewing and evaluating membership applications according to a pre-specified and published set of criteria.
3. The LTF Programme Committee shall consist of the UKALTA President, the UKALTA Treasurer, the past and the next LTF (Co-)Chair(s) and co-opted committee members as needed for the local organisation of the LTF.
 - a. The next (Co-)Chair(s) will be the convenor(s) of the "next-to-be-held" LTF, as determined at the Annual General Meeting.
 - b. The (Co-)Chair(s) may co-opt additional committee members as needed.
 - c. The LTF Programme Committee for the next LTF shall provide the Executive Committee with regular updates on the progress of the conference organisation, including prospective costs, attendance fees, theme, and plenary speakers.
 - d. In consultation with the Executive Committee, the LTF Programme Committee will be responsible for the following:
 - Theme selection
 - Programme selection and planning
 - Selection of proposal reviewers and review of proposals
 - Selection of meeting and hotel accommodation
 - Determination of fees for attendance and special program activities.
 - Good financial management in line with the Constitution regulations on the annual conference, in consultation with the Treasurer
 - Conference communication, in consultation with the Communications & Website Coordinator
 - e. The past (Co-)Chair(s) will make a financial reporting to the Executive Committee within three months after the LTF.

4. The Executive Committee may establish and dissolve ad hoc committees at its discretion or at the direction of the membership.

Appendix E – Fees Guidelines

1. Full and Associate membership are free.
2. Affiliated Organisation (AO) status will incur an annual fee of £150 (subject to annual review).
3. Registration fees for the Language Testing Forum shall be established by the LTF Programme Committee, in consultation with the UKALTA Executive Committee. Registration fees for other activities of UKALTA shall be established by the UKALTA Treasurer with the approval of the Executive Committee.
4. Where additional membership types are agreed, any associated fees will be agreed by the Executive Committee.