CWU
The communications union

RULE BOOK

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Rule 1 Name

1. The name of the Union shall be the Communication Workers Union (CWU).

2. The name Communication Workers Union or the initials, or logo of the Union shall not be used in the title or description of any other organisation or publication without the authority of the National Executive Council (NEC).

Rule 2 Objectives

1. The objectives of the Union shall be:

1. To unite and organise all those entitled to be members. To protect and promote members' interests and maintain and improve their working lives;

2. To regulate the relations between members and their employers, and between members;

3. To secure the greatest possible measure of effective participation by the Union and its members in all decisions affecting their working lives as determined by these Rules;

4. To actively oppose all forms of discrimination based on race, creed, religion, age, political affiliation, disability, marital status, sex or sexual or gender orientation in industry, the Union and society in general. To this end the CWU shall actively oppose any organisation, political or otherwise, whose aims are racist or fascist;

5. To actively oppose all forms of sexual harassment;

6. To promote and encourage proportionality and fair representation of all members, in industry, the Union and society in general;

7. To actively identify any cause or barrier that prevents the Union being fully representative of its members. This shall include lawful positive action as permitted by the law from time to time, including but not limited to in favour of women and race minorities as necessary and proportionate until such time as the Union is satisfied that its structure reflects and supports the gender and racial balance of the members it represents or other lawful positive action is longer required. This includes National and/or Branch Rules which reserve specific seats or positions to women and race minorities.

   Any rules which are intended to give effect to the positive action measures that the union decides to adopt from time to time and at its discretion, must be read in accordance with Rule 2.1.7 and with the law as applicable at the time the rule is applied.

8. To promote, organise and facilitate access to adult education to enable members to advance their skills for life;

9. To further these objects by political means, including, where appropriate by use of its Political Fund;

10. To affiliate to and participate in such organisations as General Conference or the NEC decide are in the interests of the members. NEC decisions shall be subject to ratification by the subsequent General Conference.

Rule 3 Membership

1. Membership

1. Union membership shall include:

   a) All relevant persons in the wider communications, financial services, information technology and related industries and in all businesses where the Union has recognition;

   b) Retired Members i.e. members who have formally retired who will have the right to retain membership of the branch with whom they completed the greater part of their service.

   c) Officers of the Union and groups or persons as the NEC may, from time to time, determine.

2. Admission

1. Each applicant for membership shall complete an application form, which shall then be forwarded, normally by the Branch, to the Head Office of the Union.

2. Members applying for retired membership must submit their application form within 26 weeks of retiring.

3. Each completed application form shall contain a declaration signed by the applicant that they accept the conditions of membership.

4. The acceptance of an application for membership by the NEC shall confer upon each member all the rights and privileges of the Union. However, no member shall be entitled to retrospective benefits or services.

3. Appointment of Assurer for Membership Records

1. In accordance with section 24 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations Consolidation Act 1992 (TULRCA) the union is required to appoint an Independent Assurer to examine the membership records of CWU. The assurer shall not be removed from office except by a resolution passed at a Conference of its members, or of delegates of its members.

2. The assurer duly appointed should assess the membership records of the CWU and shall be re-appointed as assurer for the following accounting period, unless a resolution has been passed at a Conference of the Union appointing a different assurer, or the assurer has expressed that they shall not be re- appointed, or they have given notice to the Trade Union in writing of their unwillingness to be re-appointed, or they are ineligible for re-appointment, or they have ceased to act as an assurer by reasons of incapacity.

Rule 4 Members Entitlements and Obligations

1. Members of the Union are entitled to:

1. be treated with respect and courtesy by Union staff, officials and members;

2. seek local assistance and advice from their Branch on any work related problem and, where appropriate, to be represented by the Union before their employer and in agreed circumstances before external bodies;

3. have appropriate matters raised with the Union dealt with promptly and efficiently.

4. attend and take an active part in the Branch Annual General Meeting and all other appropriate membership meetings pertaining to their place of work;

5. stand for Union office in accordance with the Rules and Branch Constitution;

6. vote in all national and local elections in accordance with the Rules and Branch Constitution;

7. receive appropriate benefits and as negotiated by the Union either nationally or locally and appropriate legal services at the discretion of the NEC in accordance with published procedures;

8. apply for assistance from the National Welfare Fund and/or, where such exists, local Welfare Fund;

9. receive a copy of the Union journal;

10. receive a national certificate of recognition upon completion of twenty-five years continuous membership in accordance with published procedures;

11. receive a death benefit consisting of a payment to the spouse, next of kin, or other legal assignee, in the sum of £1,133 should the member die whilst in membership of the Union. This figure will be increased at the same time as membership subscriptions are increased and by the same percentage of any increase. It shall be the responsibility of the NEC that these provisions are implemented.

2. Members are obliged to:

1. treat Union staff, officials and members with respect and courtesy;

2. support and promote the Union's objectives;

3. promote the CWU's role in the workplace;

4. take an active part in the Union's decision making processes;

5. respect the Union's democratic processes and decisions;

6. inform the Union of changes to their membership details;

7. ensure their Union subscriptions are kept up to date.

3. Union Awards

1. Branch Honorary Membership

   a) This may be conferred upon ex-Branch members no longer eligible for full membership who have rendered distinguished service to the Branch.

   b) It may also be conferred upon:

      (i) A National Officer of the Union provided such an Officer has been a member of and rendered distinguished service to the Branch.

      (ii) Any other relevant persons not otherwise eligible for full membership of the Branch who have rendered distinguished service to the Branch and the Communication Workers Union (or its predecessors).

   c) To secure election as a Branch Honorary Member, the nominee must receive a majority of two-thirds of those voting at a Branch meeting.

   d) Only those awarded Branch Honorary Membership under Rule 4.3.1 a) and Rule 4.3.1 b) (i) will qualify to have their Union subscriptions paid by their awarding Branch.

2. National Honorary Membership

   a) This may be conferred upon ex-members no longer eligible for full membership or others who have not been eligible for full membership who have rendered distinguished service to the trade union movement at national level over a period of years.

   b) Nominations may be made by a Branch or the NEC not later than 31 December. Nominations must be approved by a two thirds majority of the NEC members present.

   c) The names of approved nominees shall be submitted to the subsequent General Conference for endorsement.

3. Union Gold Badge

   a) A Branch may apply to the NEC for this award to a Branch member,

enclosing the service record and supporting case.

b) The NEC at its absolute discretion may make an award in recognition of exceptional, long and/or meritorious service to the Union.

c) The NEC shall have the authority to award this to members of Head Office staff and honoured guests of the Union considered to have made a meritorious contribution to the well being of the trade union and labour movement either nationally or internationally.

4. These awards shall be governed by regulations issued by the NEC.

Rule 5 Structure

1. The Union shall consist of:

1. Members;
2. Branches;
3. Regional Structure
4. Industrial co-ordinating structures;
5. NEC;
6. Industrial Executives;
7. Constituencies;
8. Officers and their staff.

Rule 6 Branches

1. General

1. The Union shall be divided into Branches constituted under the authority of the NEC and subject to the Branch Model Constitution. In exercising this authority the NEC shall have regard to the CWU Branch measures of success approved by the NEC, local circumstances, members' wishes and the requirement for an efficient, financially viable organisation.

2. The objectives of each Branch shall be to:

   a) comply with the Branch Model Constitution and authorised variations;

   b) locally organise, recruit and maximise membership levels;

   c) protect and promote the interests of members in accordance with the Objectives and Rules;

   d) keep members informed on local and national matters;

   e) effectively consult members on local issues affecting their work;

   f) implement the policies and directives of the NEC and its Industrial Executives.

3. Where a Branch fails to fulfil its obligations in respect of organising and recruiting in any area, business or business division, the NEC may, either directly or via the Industrial Executives, consider allocating organising and recruiting rights, together with any existing members, to an alternative Branch.

2. Branch Members

1. Each member shall belong to a Branch. In the event of any dispute the NEC shall determine the appropriate Branch.

2. Each member is entitled to representation. Where a conflict of interests arises, the Branch shall inform the NEC and seek representation to resolve the conflict.

3. Branch Constitution

1. All Branches shall operate according to the Model Branch Constitution that shall set minimum standards for every Branch. The NEC shall be responsible for publishing the Model Branch Constitution and ensuring its adherence. The Model Branch Constitution shall be mandatory.

2. The Branch Constitution may be varied subject to agreement by the Branch and approval of the NEC.

3. The Model Branch Constitution shall be subject to amendment by motion to General Conference. Any such motion shall require a two-thirds majority to be carried.

4. Branch Organisation

1. Each Branch shall hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) by no later than 31 March of each year.

2. Each Branch shall elect not less than eight Branch Officers and eight other Branch Committee members. The Branch Officers are;

    - Chair
    - Secretary
    - Treasurer
    - Equality Officer
    - Women's Officer
    - BAME Officer
    - Young Workers Officer
    - Political Officer

    Branch Officers should, where possible, not hold more than one of these posts at any one time and the Women's Officer shall be a woman. The Branch Committee (Officers and Lay members) shall fulfil the roles and responsibilities detailed in the Branch constitution.

3. Between AGM's each Branch shall hold regular Branch Committee or membership meetings for the effective governance of the Branch.

4. A Branch shall not instruct or permit any Branch Officer to act in a manner contrary to the Rules and Objectives or prevent them from acting in accordance with the Rules and Objectives of the Union.

5. Each Branch shall maintain accurate and up-to-date membership records.

6. Each Branch may affiliate to and participate in the appropriate local Trade Union Councils, Labour Parties and other organisations to which the Union is affiliated nationally. However, a Branch shall not support or participate in any other organisation without prior consent of the NEC.

7. Branches may communicate directly with other Branches of the Union, but shall not directly communicate with lay members of another Branch.

8. Branches are responsible for promoting the interests of their retired members and for engaging with their retired members to actively involve them in dealing with these issues, accordingly Branches shall establish a Retired Members section to ensure that the interests of their retired members are protected and promoted. The Retired Members section shall be entitled to elect a section committee which shall be responsible for engaging positively with members of the section to actively involve them in pursuing their interests and issues.

One position on the Branch committee will be reserved for a representative from the Retired Members section, elected by and from the members of that section. That individual shall be entitled to attend Branch committee meetings to ensure that retired member's issues are raised and discussed at this level. Such a representative shall not be entitled to vote on any industrial/occupational issues at these meetings.

5. Equality

1. Each Branch within its area shall ensure fair representation of all members, in terms of race, creed, religion, age, political affiliation, disability, marital status, sex or sexual or gender orientation.

2. Each Branch shall strive to ensure proportionality in Branch organisation and leadership.

6. Constituency Sections

1. Where a Branch has members in more than one Constituency, as defined in the Rules, it shall establish Constituency Sections.

2. A Constituency Section shall have autonomy to deal with matters specific to the members of the Section.

3. A Constituency Section shall be officered by a Secretary and Chair elected by and taken from its members. The Secretary of a Constituency shall, as a minimum, be an Assistant Secretary of the Branch.

4. A Branch must ensure that each Constituency Section is granted a fair share of Branch resources and, where applicable, facilities. All Constituency Sections have the right to be represented at Biennial Conference.

5. At every session of the Union's Conference, upon the determination of occupational and constitutional issues, a Branch with Constituency Sections may, where a common Branch policy cannot be agreed, divide its votes, including card votes, on a Constituency basis.

6. Single Constituency Branches and Constituencies within a Branch shall have authority to form such business and divisional sections as are required to meet occupational needs.

7. Branch Mergers

1. The procedure to be followed when Branches wish to merge shall be as follows:

    a) Branches shall notify each of their respective members of the intention to consider the matter at a specially convened meeting of the Branch;

    b) Branches shall notify the General Secretary in writing of their intention;

c) The GS shall bring the matter to the attention of the NEC, which shall at its discretion authorise the following merger procedure to commence:

i) Branches shall hold, in each Branch wishing to merge, an individual membership ballot on the question. All members of the Branches concerned shall be notified of the ballot, and timetable governing it, and shall be given the opportunity to vote;

ii) The merger shall proceed if a majority of those participating in each Branch ballot vote in favour.

8. Branch Finance

1. The Branch financial year shall be from 1 January to 31 December. Each Branch shall prepare annual balances, including a bank statement certifying the balance in hand of every account held by the Branch, which shall be submitted to CWU HQ Finance Department by no later than 28 February each year, unless CWU HQ gives notice of an alternative date. All financial vouchers shall be retained for at least two years from the date of the year-end concerned. Statements of account, bank statements and balance sheets shall be retained for at least seven years.

2. Every year each Branch shall produce a financial plan for the following year, which shall:

a) be agreed by the Branch Committee, published to members and lodged as a record at CWU HQ Finance Department;

b) show expected income based on membership figures at the time the plan is agreed by the Branch;

c) include detailed planned expenditure, following the principle that such expenditure shall not exceed income;

d) allocate sufficient funds to cover the provision of childcare costs where activists attend CWU meetings, training events, briefings etc.

e) allocate sufficient funds to ensure Branch representation and participation at Equality conferences and events.

f) identify the purpose of any annual surplus and the intention to use it on behalf of the members;

g) be reported on, against performance to date, to each Branch Committee meeting.

3. Separate and distinct accounts shall be kept for each scheme or fund for which the Branch is responsible e.g. General Account, Savings Account, Welfare Fund, Political Fund, etc.

4. Each Branch shall keep proper accounting records compatible with CWU HQ Finance Department systems.

5. Each Branch shall maintain a register of property and equipment showing cost and date of purchase, and retain all receipts for such until disposal of the property or equipment. All property purchased through the use of membership subscriptions shall remain the property of the CWU.

6. At least two signatures shall be required for withdrawals from any account held in the Branch name.

7. A current statement of Branch accounts, including all relevant books and supporting vouchers, shall be presented for inspection and approval at each Branch Committee meeting and shall then be signed by the Branch Chair and Secretary.

8. Branch Auditors

   a) The Branch AGM shall elect two Branch Auditors who shall not be Branch Officers or Branch Committee members. Their names shall be circulated to members and notified to CWU HQ Finance Department upon their election.

   b) The Auditors shall examine and audit all Branch Accounts to ensure accuracy and shall have the right to examine and question the Branch Finances, financial policy, income and expenditure on behalf of the lay membership. All vouchers, receipts, bank statements, documents, accounts books, remittance forms and ledgers shall be examined to verify accuracy or otherwise. Auditors shall also verify all cash at the bank and shall satisfy themselves that all Branch income and expenditure is accounted for.

   c) The Branch Auditors shall produce a signed statement to Branch members and copy it to CWU HQ Finance Department declaring they have executed their responsibilities.

9. CWU HQ Finance Department, on the advice of the CWU national chartered accountants, shall be responsible for and fund the annual auditing of as many Branch accounts as is deemed necessary.

10. Branches shall not use chartered accountants unless authorised in writing by the CWU HQ Finance Department; such accountants shall be appointed by CWU HQ Finance Department.

11. The CWU HQ Finance Department or appointed representative shall have the right to examine, on demand, all records of accounts and bank statements and attend Branch meetings to take part in any debate or discussion on the Branch Accounts.

12. To ensure reimbursement Branch claims due to be met by CWU HQ must be forwarded within 3 months of the activity. CWU HQ shall notify all Branches of the year-end cut-off date for such claims.

13. Each Branch may allocate up to 5% of rebate income for the remuneration of their officials. The individual amounts to be paid shall be determined by the AGM.

14. Each Branch may establish a Welfare Fund by the transfer of not more than 5% of rebate income in each year. The Fund shall be used for giving financial and/or other assistance to members in appropriate circumstances. A Welfare Fund shall be administered by Trustees elected at the AGM in accordance with Regulations approved by the NEC.

15. When a Branch is closed all funds and financial documents shall be forwarded to the CWU Finance Department. All assets shall become the property of CWU Trustees and administered by the CWU Finance Department and no party shall have any claim on them unless determined by the NEC.

16. Each Branch shall make provision in its constitution to ensure compliance with these Rules.

Rule 7 Regional Structure and National Networks

1. CWU Regional Structure

1. From September 2025, there will be five CWU Regional Areas. Each Regional Area will elect a Regional Official.

2. The Regional Official will work under the direction of the General Secretary and the NEC and their responsibilities will include:

    - Develop and implementation of the new National Networks and support national non-industrial strategies of the union
    - Implement CWU strategies that further grows the CWU's influence across the wider trade union movement
    - Involvement in all Regional Sub Committees within their Regional area
    - Implementing the CWU Political strategy
    - Solidifying the CWU links to our external political networks, including the Regional Labour Parties and Regional TUC

3. The NEC will review the roles and the structures 12 months following introduction

2. Regional Area

The 5 CWU Regional Areas will combine 2 of the CWU regional boundaries (as of June 2025) which will be paired as follows:

- Eastern & Midlands
- London & South East
- North East & North West
- Northern Ireland & Scotland
- South West & Wales and the Marches

3. Election Arrangements

1. Each of the 5 Regional Areas will elect a Regional Official.

2. The Regional Official will be elected by and from all Branches from within the Regional Area on a Branch Ballot basis of all branches within the respective former CWU Boundaries as of June 2025.

3. All CWU members in the Regional Area, who are employed in CWU recognised companies will be eligible to stand for election and hold the Regional Official position.

4. The successful candidate shall be the individual who receives the highest number of votes cast.

5. The period of office for the Regional Official will be 18 months from September 2025.

6. The Regional Official will be engaged by the CWU on a secondment basis for the period they hold the position.

7. Members who subsequently leave employment in CWU recognised companies during their period of office will no longer be able to hold the position and would be required to immediately relinquish the position.

4. National Networks

There will be a series of National Networks for specific non-industrial and the wider trade union and political work that will provide a direct link between CWU HQ and the existing Regional Sub-Committees.

The National Networks will be as follows:

- National Equality Network
- National Education Network
- National Political Network
- National Health and Safety Network
- National Young Workers Network
- National Retired Members Network

5. Regional Sub-Committees

1. To support the National Networks, there will be the following Regional Sub-Committees:

    - Regional Equality Sub-Committee comprising of Branch Women's Officers, Branch Equality Officers, Branch BAME Officers and other representatives from the 4 equality streams.
    - Regional Education, Learning and Training Sub-Committee comprising of Branch Lead ULR's and Branch Secretaries
    - Regional Political Sub-Committee comprising of Branch Political Officers.
    - Regional Health and Safety Sub-Committee comprising Lead Health and Safety Representatives from all Branches.
    - Regional Young Workers Sub-Committee comprising of 1 delegate per branch.
    - Regional Retired Members Sub-Committee comprising of 1 delegate per branch.

2. The boundaries for the Regional Sub-Committees will be the existing boundaries of the CWU regions as of June 2025.

3. Regional Sub-Committees shall elect a lead who will oversee the respective Regional Sub-Committees.

4. Regional Sub-Committees shall adopt and operate the Regional Sub-Committee constitution approved by the NEC.

Rule 8 National Organisation

1. National Executive Council (NEC)

1. There shall be a NEC responsible for:

   a) implementing the decisions of General and Special General Conferences;

   b) the general management and control of the Union between Biennial/Special Conferences during which periods it shall have supreme authority on all issues except those which are within the remit of the Industrial Executives;

   c) the allocation of each member to one of the Constituencies, which shall be defined by both industry and grade, but where common grading systems exist, duties and industry shall be the criteria for allocation;

   d) varying the composition of the Constituencies. Any such change requiring the support of two-thirds of the NEC including a simple majority within each of the Constituencies.

2. All members of the National Executive Council will be treated equally assuming equal status and responsibilities on the NEC (except the Retired Members Sector NEC representative as outlined in these Rules).

3. The NEC shall comprise 24 members:

   a) President and Vice President, but their inclusion shall not increase the numbers from their originating Constituencies.

   b) 10 lay members elected biennially by and from the Postal Constituency and 1 of whom shall be the Chair of the Postal Constituency. All of whom shall automatically be members of the Postal Industrial Executive. At least 2 lay members must be women. At least 1 lay member must be BAME.

   c) 7 lay members elected biennially by and from the Telecom and Financial Services Constituency and 1 of whom shall be the Chair of the TFS Constituency. All of whom shall automatically be members of the Telecoms and Financial Services Industrial Executive. At least 2 lay members must be women. At least 1 lay member must be BAME.

   d) 2 lay Young Workers members elected biennially who must be 29 or under at the time of the election. 1 of whom will be elected by and from the Postal Constituency and 1 of whom shall be elected by and from the Telecoms and Financial Services Constituency.

   e) 1 lay Retired Member elected biennially by all members of the retired sector.

The Retired Members NEC representative shall be entitled to vote on all issues except issues that could be considered to have an industrial context except where they apply only to Retired Members.

f) 4 lay Equality members elected biennially by all members of union except the Retired Members for each of the following equality strands;

Women
LGBT+
BAME
Disability

4. In order to ensure equitable distribution of resources within the Union the annual budget shall require a two thirds majority of the lay NEC members.

5. The NEC shall be responsible for allocating resources to sustain industrial action authorised in accordance with the Rules.

6. All decisions of the NEC shall be binding on all members of the NEC based on the general principle of collective responsibility.

7. The NEC shall convene decision making policy forums as appropriate on matters relevant to the business of the NEC. Regulations for such policy forums shall be determined by the NEC. A policy forum may be called by the NEC or at the request of Branches representing not less than 40% of the membership. Requests from Branches must be the result of a decision taken at a properly constituted Branch meeting.

8. The NEC Retired Member shall in conjunction with and under the authority of the General Secretary and the NEC actively promote the recruitment of Retired Members within Branches.

The NEC shall provide a report to Branches prior to Biennial Conference containing details of Retired Membership numbers increase or decrease during the prior financial period, together with a brief summation of national recruitment activity carried out within that period.

2. President and Vice President

1. The Union shall have a President and Vice-President. These offices shall rotate annually between the Chairs of each Industrial Executive.

2. The President shall Chair the NEC.

3. The chairing of biennial conference will rotate between constituencies and be chaired by the President or the Vice President from the appropriate constituency. In the event a special conference is called, this will be chaired by the President.

4. The Vice President shall deputise for the President.

5. The President is the principle lay-official of the Union and shall be responsible for ensuring the Union acts in accordance with its Rules.

6. The President may intervene and rule on the inclusion of any motion before General/Special Conference deemed to be out with the Rules.

7. Where any ambiguity arises regarding the interpretation of the Union's rules, the President shall make a ruling. Subject to relevant standing orders, the President's ruling on any such matter shall be regarded as final.

8. The President shall be kept informed of any national discussions impinging upon the CWU's status as defined by the Rules.

3. Sub Committees

1. The NEC shall set up such committees as it considers necessary for the efficient goverance of the Union. The structure and procedures of sub-committees shall be contained in regulations agreed by a two thirds majority of NEC members and shall be published to Branches.

2. Co-ordinating Organisation

   The NEC shall be responsible for funding industry related co-ordinating machinery and for maintaining a coherent organisational structure subject to the full involvement of the Industrial Executives in determining and endorsing the operational arrangements.

4. Industrial Executives

1. There shall be: a Postal Executive; a Telecoms and Financial Services Executive.

2. Each Industrial Executive shall be responsible for:

   a) implementing Industrial Conference decisions;

   b) dealing with and implementing decisions on all occupational and conditions of service issues exclusively within its remit between Industrial Conferences;

   c) ensuring appropriate organisation exists below national level to co-ordinate industrial activity;

   d) ensuring the appointment/election of such Trustees to employee pension funds as required and shall seek endorsement by the appropriate Industrial Conference.

3. The Industrial Executives shall convene decision making policy forums as appropriate. Regulations for policy forums shall be determined by the NEC.

4. The Industrial Executives shall be obliged to consult the membership affected by any major agreement. If a proposed major agreement concerning the terms and conditions of employment, including hours and pay, has not previously been approved by an Industry Conference, before such a proposed agreement is signed the Industrial Executive must consult the Branches or members concerned by either Branch or individual ballot, as appropriate, the result of which shall be binding on the Industrial Executive.

In the event of Branches or members deciding that a proposed agreement be rejected, the Industrial Executive shall, if it desires, place the matter before a Special Conference.

5. Industrial Executives may authorise industrial action in line with the Rules.

5. Postal Executive (PE)

1. The PE shall be responsible for occupational and conditions of service issues for all Postal and related employers where the Union is recognised and shall ensure appropriate business co-ordinating committees exist below national level in all Royal Mail and other postal businesses. Such organisation shall only be altered by decision of a Conference or ballot of the relevant membership.

2. Members of the PE shall deputise for the Assistant Secretaries Postal in their absence/unavailability in dealing with the employer within their remit.

3. a) The PE shall consist of 14 lay members elected biennially by and taken from the Postal Constituency and 1 of whom shall be the Postal Constituency Chair, 10 shall be the NEC Postal Constituency Representatives, 4 shall be elected by and from the Postal Constituency;

   b) The DGS(P) and the Assistant Secretaries who deal with postal issues, but without voting rights.

4. The Chair of the PE shall be elected biennially by and taken from members of the Postal Constituency by a simple majority of those members entitled to vote.

5. Any member of the Postal Constituency shall be eligible for nomination to the position of Chair.

6. The position of Chair shall not increase the number of biennially elected members.

6. Telecoms and Financial Services Executive (T&FSE)

1. The T&FSE shall be responsible for:

   a) occupational and conditions of service issues for all telecommunications, information technology financial services and related employers where the Union is recognised.

2. a) The T&FSE shall consist of 15 lay members elected biennially by and taken from members of the Telecoms and Financial Services Constituency, 7 of whom shall be the TFS NEC members.

   b) The DGS (T&FS) and the Assistant Secretaries who deal with Telecoms and Financial Services issues, but without voting rights.

3. The Chair of the T&FSE shall be elected biennially by and taken from members of the T&FS Constituency by a simple majority of those members entitled to vote.

4. Any member of the T&FS Constituency shall be eligible for nomination to the position of Chair.

5. The position of Chair shall not increase the number of biennially elected TFSE members.

6. The T&FSE shall be empowered to establish sub-committees as it considers necessary for the efficient conduct of its business.

7. The structure and the procedural rules of these other sub-committees shall be contained in regulations which shall be published to Branches.

7. Election Procedures for Biennially Contested NEC and Industrial Executive Seats.

1. All elections shall be by secret ballot of those members entitled to vote. Retired members shall only be able to vote for the Retired Members Sector representative of the NEC. The candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected.

2. Only members of the Union shall be able to stand for NEC and Industrial Executive positions. However, Retired Members shall be entitled to stand for the NEC Retired Members Sector position.

3. The NEC shall determine and publish to Branches, procedures and regulations..

4. The method of recommending support for candidates to its own Branch members shall be a matter for each Branch. Notification of names of candidates and voting entitlement will be published to Branches in advance of the dispatch of ballot papers to assist branches in this matter.

5. The ballot paper shall list candidates in alphabetical order and shall indicate forenames, or the name by which they are commonly known, and surnames.

6. Asterisks or any other mark indicating existing Executive status shall not be included on the ballot paper.

7. Candidates may submit a personal statement of not more than 300 words to be circulated with their biographical details. The grade of the candidate shall be shown in the biographical details. The personal statement and biographical details of all candidates shall be circulated to all Branches of the CWU.

   Candidates who wish may also submit a personal photograph for publication with their biographical details and statement.

8. All candidates from the Postal Constituency must have the nomination of their own Branch. A properly constituted Branch meeting must have approved such nominations.

9. All candidates from the Telecoms and Financial Services Constituency must be nominated by a Branch or Branches having members in the Constituency. Branches shall be able to nominate as many candidates as there are seats. A properly constituted Branch meeting must have approved such nominations. Details of all Branch nominations shall be published to Branches and included with the candidates' election statement.

10. All candidates from the Retired Members sector must have the nomination of their own Branch. A properly constituted Branch meeting must have approved such nominations.

8. Vacancies

1. If a NEC vacancy arises the General Secretary shall report to the NEC with a recommendation whether or not to hold an election, taking account of the date and financial implications.

2. If an Industrial Executive vacancy arises the NEC in conjunction with the relevant Industrial Executive shall determine whether the position should be filled, taking account of the date and financial implications.

9. Minutes

The NEC, T&FSE and PE must provide regular updates to branches on progress of all policies decided by any conference or policy forum.

Minutes taken at the NEC, T&FSE and PE including recorded votes shall be circulated to Branches within one week of being agreed.

10. Delegations

The NEC shall publish regulations annually to deal with the size and election of delegations to TUC's, Labour Party etc.

11. Retired Members Committee

1. There shall be a Retired Members Committee which shall consist of 2 members of the NEC who shall be the Vice President of the NEC and the Retired Members Sector Member of the NEC, and 12 Retired Members elected biennially from nominations which may be received from any Branch of the Union on the following basis; 2 from Wales, 2 from Northern Ireland, 2 from Scotland and 6 from England. If a vacancy arises during the year it shall be filled by the highest placed runner up in the most recent ballot.

2. The Committee shall meet at least 3 times per year and shall normally be chaired by the Vice President.

3. The Committee shall aim to protect the interests of pensioners and shall;

a) advise the NEC on any matters pertinent to Retired Members of the Union

b) select motions and delegates to National Pensioners Committees and Conferences.

4. Reports of the business of the Committee shall be submitted to General Conference and the NEC.

12. CWU Young Workers Committee

1. The CWU Young Workers Committee shall consist of 2 members of the NEC who shall be the nationally elected Young Workers members of the NEC plus 2 lay members elected biennially from each of the CWU Regional Young Workers Sub-Committee areas (as of June 2025), with 1 being from the TFS Constituency and 1 from the Postal Constituency and two lay members elected by and from the UTAW Branch.

   All candidates shall be aged 29 or under at the time of election.

2. At its first meeting the Committee shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair. The CWU Young Workers Chair or their substitute shall attend the relevant Industrial Executive in an ex-officio capacity. The CWU Young Workers Vice Chair or their substitute shall not be of the same Industrial Executive remit as the Chair and shall attend the relevant Industrial Executive in an ex-officio capacity.

3. The Committee shall meet at least 4 times a year.

4. The Committee shall aim to protect and promote the interests of young workers and shall:

   a) advise the NEC, its sub-committees and the Industrial Executives on any matter pertinent to young workers;

   b) select delegates and motions to affiliated young workers bodies including the TUC Youth, Young Labour and International forums;

   c) nominate candidates for national committees of affiliated young workers bodies including the TUC Youth, Young Labour and International forums.

5. Reports of the CWU Young Workers Committee shall be submitted to the NEC and other appropriate bodies for information.

Rule 9 Officers

1. General

1. The terms of the appointment for each Officer shall be embodied in a written agreement with the Union and shall comply with appropriate trade union and employment legislation.

2. An Officer shall not serve as a Member of Parliament or in any other legislature and shall not undertake any ministerial or similar duties.

3. No permanent Officer shall submit their name to any political party for selection as a candidate for any parliamentary position without prior advice to the NEC.

4. Absence coverage for Officers shall be arranged as follows:

    a) When an Officer is substituting the General Secretary, Deputy General Secretary (Postal) or Deputy General Secretary (Telecom and Financial Services) for a period of one week or more, they shall receive in those periods the rate of the General Officer concerned.

    b) When a lay member of the NEC substitutes a General Officer for a period of one week or more, they shall receive in those periods the rate of pay of the General Officer concerned. They shall not, during such periods, be entitled to receive normal employment pay in addition to Officerial pay, nor shall they receive remuneration as a NEC member.

5. Whether permanent Officers are elected or appointed, they shall have the same role serving the whole Union, which dependent on the precise allocation of responsibilities to individuals according to the Rules, or by the GS shall include the following:

    a) The right to correspond and negotiate directly with all tiers of management and to make representations to all external bodies as directed by the appropriate NEC or Industrial Executive;

    b) The right to attend the NEC, the relevant Industrial Executive, and other relevant committees to deal with matters within the Officer's responsibility;

    c) The right to attend and speak at Union Conferences, participate in Union schools, and visit all Union structures below national level and to contribute articles to the Union's or other publications as appropriate;

    d) The right to correspond with and speak to Branches in order to deal with matters within the Officer's responsibility;

e) The right to represent the Union when appropriate at national fora such as the Labour Party and the TUC, at international fora such as meetings convened by Union Network International and the European Commission, and on Union delegations abroad.

6. Officers responsible for negotiating and corresponding with management on behalf of the Industrial Executives shall keep Branches and other relevant Union bodies below national level informed about the progress of negotiations and shall, where appropriate, seek advice from these bodies on issues on which they have relevant specialist knowledge.

2. General Secretary

1. Every 5 years the GS shall be subject to election by the entire membership.

2. The duties of the GS shall include:

a) chief negotiator and principal spokesperson of the Union;

b) responsibility to the NEC for the supervision and control of the administration of the Union and of the Officers and staff. However, any proposal for the creation of a new Officer post shall be subject to NEC endorsement;

c) convening and attending all Conferences of the Union and meetings of the NEC and its committees;

d) assigning duties and directing the work of all other Officers of the Union including directing the work of Business Co-ordinating Committees and Officers that do not call for Conference decisions. However, where this involves a reallocation of responsibilities affecting an Assistant Secretary it shall require the endorsement of the Industrial Executive or NEC as appropriate;

e) engaging such staff as may be necessary to conduct the work of the Union;

f) Placing before the NEC the decisions of General and Rules Revision Conferences and giving direction on these and other matters.

g) keeping the membership informed on all general matters and decisions including parliamentary, legal, political, industrial and official questions and keeping a record of such decisions;

h) keeping the records of the Union and collating statistical and general information for the purposes of the Union, also keeping the Union in touch with developments in the trade union movement;

i) supplying Conference Standing Orders Committee information as to what motions or amendments submitted for the Conference Agenda are already covered by Union policy and which are being actively pursued.

3. The GS has the power to authorise:

   (a) The bringing or defending legal proceedings of any type by the Union and funding by the Union of any of its costs including disbursements, of and occasioned by such legal proceedings;

   (b) Funding by the Union of any costs, including disbursements of and proceedings by any member or members

   Authorisation for the purposes above may be given retrospectively.

   The above is without prejudice to the power of the General Secretary, at any time, to impose such limitations, terms or conditions upon the duration, nature or extent of any such funding as the General Secretary shall think fit, irrespective of whether such funding has or has not commenced.

4. The GS shall ensure that the Union has a published employment practice. The employment practice shall be designed to avoid any possibility of discrimination or unfair treatment in the recruitment and selection process for employees and potential employees of the Union. The Union's employment practice shall be submitted initially, and periodically thereafter, to the relevant Equality Commissions.

5. The GS shall be the Union's principal representative on the TUC General Council.

6. When the GS is absent, or at other times when the duties need to be covered they shall be covered by either the DGS(P) or the DGS(T&FS).

3. Deputy General Secretary - Postal

1. Every 5 years the DGS (P) shall be subject to election by the members of the Postal Constituency.

2. The DGS (P) shall be the principal Officer responsible for all issues solely within the remit of the PE.

4. Deputy General Secretary - Telecoms and Financial Services

1. Every 5 years the DGS (T&FS) shall be subject to election by the members of the T&FS Constituency.

2. The DGS (T&FS) shall be the principal Officer responsible for all issues solely within the remit of the TFSE.

5. Assistant Secretaries and other Officers

1. All Assistant Secretaries shall have equal status in the Union.

2. The responsibilities of all Assistant Secretaries shall be to carry out and discharge under the direction of the GS such Union duties as they may be required to perform.

3. There shall be the following Industrial Officers elected every 5 years:

   a) The Assistant Secretaries elected by the Postal Constituency
   b) The Assistant Secretaries elected by the T&FS Constituency.

6. Nomination and Election Procedures

1. All elections shall be by secret ballot of those members entitled to vote. Retired Members shall only vote for non-occupational positions. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected.

2. Only members of the Union, except Retired Members, shall be entitled to stand.

3. The NEC shall determine and publish to Branches, procedures and regulations.

4. The method of recommending support for candidates to its own members shall be a matter for each Branch.

5. The ballot paper shall list candidates in alphabetical order and shall indicate forenames or the name by which they are commonly known and surnames.

6. Asterisks or any other mark indicating existing Officer status shall not be included on the ballot paper.

7. Candidates may submit a personal statement to be circulated with their biographical details. The length of such a statement shall be determined by the NEC and reported to Branches. Candidates may also submit a personal recent photograph for publication with their biographical details and statement.

Rule 10 Conferences

1. Conferences

1. There shall be a Biennial Conference of the Union held at a date determined by the NEC every two years to debate and determine matters of policy.

2. The normal length of the Biennial Conference shall be 5 days with 2 days allocated to General Conference of which half a day will be dedicated to Equality Policy and up to half a day dedicated Rule Revision session and 3 days allocated to the Postal and Telecoms and Financial Services Conference.

3. There shall also be the following Conferences held each year:

   a) Retired Members
   b) Young Workers

2. Conference Delegations

1. Branch representation at General Conference and Industrial Conferences shall be:

Membership	Delegates	Membership	Delegates
1-750	2	3001-3750	6
751-1500	3	3751-4500	7
1501-2250	4	4501-5250	8
2251-3000	5	5251 and above	9

2. Where the Branch Secretary attends General and Industrial Conferences then they will be included in the delegation entitlement.

3. Branch representation shall be based on the Branch Membership excluding retired members conducted as close to the Conference as possible.

4. Branches may vary its delegates within the Branch delegation entitlement.

5. Each Branch shall strive to ensure proportionality in its delegation.

6. Business Based Field Officials shall attend in an ex-officio capacity. They may participate in discussion at the specific request of their respective parent Committee or of a Branch within that Committee but shall not vote.

3. General Conference

a. The General Conference is the supreme authority of the Union on matters of common policy whilst it is in session. The main role of the NEC is to carry out the instructions of the General conference. To this end the supreme authority is vested in the NEC between General Conferences. Decisions taken and policies determined by the NEC are ultimately subject to ratification by General Conference.

b. The procedures for promoting policy in the TUC, and the wider labour movement, and associated delegations will be the responsibility of the NEC.

4. Business of the General Conference

The business of the General conference shall be to consider motions submitted by the NEC and Branches and to receive a report from the Officers and the NEC. The audited statement of accounts of the Union funds will be contained within the report. The decisions of the General Conference shall be binding upon the NEC and all members.

5. Motions

1. The NEC shall also be entitled to submit motions as appropriate.

2. Regional Sub Committees shall be entitled to submit motions as follows:

    a) Regional Equality Sub Committees shall be entitled to submit one motion to the Equality Section.
    b) Regional Education, Learning and Training Sub Committees shall be entitled to submit one motion to the Education, Learning and Training Section.
    c) Regional Political Sub Committees shall be entitled to submit one motion to the Political Fund Management Committee (PFMC) Section.
    d) Regional Health and Safety Sub Committees shall be entitled to submit three motions to the Health and Safety Section.

3. Branches shall be entitled to submit up to 3 motions to General Conference.

4. The Retired Members and Young Workers Conferences shall each be entitled to submit two motions to General Conference.

6. Special Reports

The NEC shall be entitled to submit a Special Report before the Conference covering major strategic issues. The Report will be open to motions to amend from Branches and Regions and any other relevant bodies entitled to submit motions to amend.

7. Voting Procedures

Voting at the General Conference shall normally be by a show of hands.

A card vote may be called for by the Chair of the General Conference or when thirty delegates are on their feet calling for such a vote.

When a card vote is taken it shall normally be based on the General Conference Branch membership count including retired members, except where the motion does not affect Retired members.

A proposition shall be treated as carried if it obtains a simple majority of the votes cast.

8. Standing Orders Committee

1. There shall be Standing Orders Committees which shall be responsible for arranging the timetable and order of each session of the Conferences. The Committees shall prepare the standing orders for the Conferences which shall be published to Branches and adopted at the Conferences.

2. The General Conference SOC shall consist of 8 members drawn from the Postal SOC and the Telecoms and Financial Services SOC. 4 members to be elected annually by and from the Postal SOC and 4 members to be elected annually by and from the Telecom and Financial Services SOC.

3. The General SOC shall appoint a Chair and Vice Chair, 1 from among the Postal SOC members and 1 from among the Telecoms and Financial Services SOC to serve on an annual rotating basis.

4. Postal SOC

   The Postal SOC shall consist of 7 members elected biennially by and from the Postal Constituency.

5. Telecoms and Financial Services SOC

   The Telecoms and Financial Services SOC shall consist of 7 members elected biennially by and from the Telecoms and Financial Services Constituency.

6. The Standing Orders for the Conferences shall include provision that:

   i) the NEC, PEC and TFSE (as appropriate) shall indicate in an SOC document (published prior to Conference) the motions which they are prepared to accept. If this is agreed by the relevant Conference when the SOC document is adopted, those motions will not be debated and will be deemed to be carried. Branches will have the facility to register opposition to the acceptance and thus have a debate;

   ii) procedures for the calling of and conduct of card votes in accordance with the Rules;

   iii) the NEC, PEC, TFSE, Branches and Regional Equality Sub Committee and

Regional H&S Sub Committee shall be able to challenge the terms of the relevant SOC report and Conference Agendas, subject to having given prior notification to the appropriate Conference SOC under procedures to be determined by the SOC and published within the Standing Orders for the General and Industrial Conferences.

7. The Standing Orders Committee will give priority to motions in the following order:-

   a) Category A - Those motions which in the view of the SOC require a decision by Conference;

   b) Category B - Motions whose general point is to reverse policy decided at the previous year's conference;

   c) Category C - Those motions which in the view of the SOC seek only to confirm existing policy;

   d) Category D - Those motions which in the opinion of the SOC could be dealt with in correspondence;

   e) Category X - Those motions which in the opinion of the SOC are out of order. These shall be printed but shall not be admitted to the agenda.

9. Special General Conference

1. A Special General Conference may be called by the NEC or at the request of Branches representing not less than 51% of the membership. Requests from Branches must be the result of a decision taken at a properly constituted Branch meeting.

2. A Special Conference shall only deal with the business for which it has been called.

3. The Standing Orders and procedures adopted for a Special Conference shall normally be in accord with those used for the General Conference.

10. Telecoms and Financial Services Conference

1. The Telecoms and Financial Services (T&FS) Conference shall be divided into sessions as follows:

   a) Joint Industry Based Conference for Telecoms and related industries, including an appropriate time slot for BT Fleet motions;

   b) Financial Services;

2. Business of T&FS Conferences:

   a) they shall consider motions submitted by the T&FSE and Branches;

b) they shall be the supreme authority on those occupational and conditions of service issues relevant to each particular Conference and within the remit of the T&FSE;

c) the T&FSE shall be responsible for allocating time to each session;

d) the T&FSE shall carry out all instructions arising out of motions affecting pay and conditions carried at the T&FS Conference.

3. Representation shall be based on a count of Branch membership excluding retired members conducted as close to Conference as possible.

4. A Branch may vary its delegates within the total Branch delegation entitlement.

5. Each Branch shall strive to ensure proportionality in its delegation.

6. Motions:

a) Each Branch shall be entitled to submit up to 4 motions to each of the industry based conferences in which they have members. Branches that have members in other businesses outside of BT shall be entitled to submit up to 2 extra motions related to other businesses.

b) The T&FSE shall be entitled to submit motions to each session.

7. Special Reports

The T&FSE will be entitled to submit a Special Report covering major strategic issues that will be open to motions to amend submitted from the relevant bodies entitled to submit motions to amend.

8. Voting Procedures:

a) Voting shall normally be by a show of hands.

b) A card vote may be called by the Chair or by the number of delegates as specified in the Standing Orders rising to their feet. When a card vote is taken it shall be based on the Conference Branch membership count excluding retired members.

11. Special Conference (T&FS)

a) Subject to the endorsement of the NEC, the T&FSE shall have the authority to convene a Special T&FS Conference.

b) The T&FS Conference shall have the authority to call a Special T&FS Conference subject to ratification by General Conference.

c) A Special T&FS Conference may also be convened if called for by Branches representing at least 51% of the membership. Requests from Branches must be the result of a decision taken at a properly constituted Branch meeting.

d) A Special T&FS Conference shall only deal with the business for which the Conference has been called.

e) The Standing Orders and procedures adopted for a Special T&FS Conference shall normally be in accord with those used for the T&FS Conference.

Postal Conference

12. Business of the Postal Conference

1. The business of the Postal Industry shall be to receive reports from the PEC and the Postal Standing Orders Committee, to deal with Motions submitted by the PEC, Branches and Business Co-ordinating Committees.

2. The Postal Conference shall be the supreme authority on those occupational and conditions of service issues within the remit of the PEC.

3. The PEC shall carry out all instructions of motions carried at Postal Conferences.

13. Motions

1. Each Branch and each appropriate Business Co-ordinating Committee shall be entitled to submit up to 4 motions to each section of the Postal Industry Conference and 4 motions to each of the Sectional Conferences where they have members. Branches that have members in other businesses outside of the Post Office or Royal Mail Group shall be entitled to submit up to 2 extra motions related to other businesses.

2. The PEC shall be entitled to submit motions to each session of Conference.

3. Regional Health and Safety Sub Committees shall be entitled to submit up to 2 motions to the General Issues Section of the Postal Industry Conference.

14. Special Reports

The Postal Executive will be entitled to submit a Special Report covering major strategic issues. The Report will be open to motions to amend from Branches and Business Co-ordinating Committees.

15. Voting Procedures

1. Voting shall normally be by a show of hands.

2. A card vote may be called by the Chair or by the number of delegates as specified in Standing Orders rising to their feet. When a card vote is taken it shall be based on the Conference Branch membership excluding retired members.

3. The Standing Orders Committee will be represented at the count and will counter sign the final result before handing the result to the Chair of the Conference.

16. Special Conference (Postal)

1. Subject to the endorsement of the NEC, the PEC and the Postal Conference shall have the authority to convene a Special Postal Industry or Sectional Conference.

2. A Special Postal Conference may be called by the PEC or at the request of Branches representing at least 51% of the membership. Requests from Branches must be the result of a decision taken at a properly constituted Branch meeting.

3. A Special Conference shall only deal with the business for which it has been called.

4. The Standing Orders and procedures adopted for a Special Conference shall normally be in accord with those used for the Postal Conference.

17. Branches

1. Representation will be based on a count of Branch membership excluding retired members conducted as close to Conference as possible.

2. Branches may vary their delegates as they wish within the total delegation entitlement applicable to their Branch at the Conference.

18. Retired Members' Conference

1. The NEC shall determine the date, venue, duration and delegations to the Retired Members' Conference.

2. Each Branch shall be represented in proportion to the number of retired members, subject to a minimum representation of one delegate.

3. Each Branch shall be entitled to submit 1 motion to the Retired Members' Conference.

4. Each Retired Members' Regional Sub Committee shall be entitled to submit 1 motion to the Retired Members' Conference.

5. The General Conference SOC shall determine the procedures to operate at the Retired Members' Conference.

6. The Retired Members' Committee shall be consulted and be involved in the organisation of the Retired Members' Conference.

7. The Retired Members' Committee shall be responsible for pursuing the

policies adopted at the Retired Members' Conference via the NEC and its appropriate sub-committees.

8. The Retired Members' Conference shall elect 2 delegates to attend CWU General Conference who will be entitled to speak on items that impact upon the union's retired members.

9. The Retired Members' Conference may submit 2 motions to CWU General Conference.

10. Retired Members' Regional Sub Committee Secretaries shall attend the Retired Members' Conference in an ex-officio capacity with the right to speak and move motions on behalf of their Retired Members' Regional Sub Committee but not to vote. Funding for Retired Members' Regional Sub Committee Secretaries to attend Retired Members' Conference shall be from the General Fund.

11. The Retired Members' Committee shall be entitled to submit up to 3 motions to the Retired Members' Conference.

19. Young Workers Conference

1. The NEC shall determine the date, venue, duration and delegations to the Young Workers Annual Conference.

2. Each Branch shall be represented in proportion to the number of members aged 30 and under, subject to a minimum representation of 1 delegate.

3. Each Branch shall be entitled to submit 1 motion to the Young Workers Annual Conference.

4. Each Regional Young Workers Sub Committee shall be entitled to submit 1 motion to the Young Workers Annual Conference.

5. The General Conference SOC shall determine the procedures to operate at the Young Workers Annual Conference.

6. The Young Workers Committee shall be consulted and be involved in the organisation of the Young Workers Annual Conference.

7. The Young Workers Committee shall be responsible for pursuing the policies adopted at the Young Workers Annual Conference via the NEC and its appropriate sub-committees.

8. The Young Workers Annual Conference shall elect 2 delegates to attend CWU General Conference who will be entitled to speak on items that impact upon the union's young members.

9. The Young Workers Annual Conference may submit 2 motions to CWU General Conference and 1 motion to the Postal (Group) and the Telecoms Industrial Conferences.

10. Regional Young Workers Sub Committee Secretaries shall attend Young Workers Annual Conference in an ex-officio capacity with the right to speak and move motions on behalf of their Regional Young Workers Sub Committee but not to vote. Funding for Regional Young Workers Sub Committee Secretaries to attend Young Workers Annual Conference shall be from the General Fund.

11. The Young Workers Committee shall be entitled to submit up to 3 motions to the Young Workers Annual Conference.

Rule 11 Finance

1. Funds

1. The principal Funds of the Union shall be:

   a) The General Fund;
   b) The Defence Fund;
   c) The National Welfare Fund;
   d) Political Funds administered separately and consisting of

      i) General Political Fund;
      ii) Affiliated Political Fund;

   e) Branch funds.

There are separate Pension Funds held in trust on behalf of employees of the Union.

2. Trustees

1. The Union shall have 4 biennially NEC elected Trustees. 2 shall be from the Postal Constituency and 2 from the Telecom and Financial Services Constituency. The Trustees shall act under the direction of the NEC. The written record of the resolution of appointment or removal and discharge shall be treated as if it were the instrument in writing of such appointment or removal and discharge.

2. Properties of the Union, including monies, securities and all other assets whatsoever, shall be held corporately by the Trustees on behalf of the members.

3. The duties of the Trustees shall be to:

   a) place in bank(s), in an appropriate account of the Union, all funds received by them at Head Office of the Union;

   b) subject to the above, to invest the funds of the Union, under the direction of the NEC, in investments authorised or to be authorised by Act of Parliament for the investment of trust funds;

   c) examine all accounts submitted for payment;

   d) sign cheques in payment of all proper accounts, and present same for countersigning by an Officer nominated by the NEC for this purpose;

   e) defray from the General Fund the expenditure incurred by the NEC, if not provided for by the Rules, as it shall direct;

f) make payments out of the General Fund of all or any premiums on any guarantee taken by the NEC upon Officers at Head Office handling the funds of the Union.

4. The Trustees shall have authority to sign documents on behalf of the Union and to inspect any accounts or financial records of the Union at any time.

5. The Trustees, on the direction of the NEC, shall have power to borrow money on security or otherwise and dispose of any asset of the Union.

3. Members' Auditors

1. There shall be 2 lay Members Auditors elected biennially to examine the accounts and report to the membership. A lay members Auditor shall not hold any other national position.

2. The lay Members Auditors shall be entitled to submit recommendations to the NEC arising from their examination of the accounts of the Union. The NEC shall consider such recommendations and report its conclusion to the next appropriate General Conference.

4. Inspection of Accounts

Every member has the right to request access to the accounting records of the Union subject to the provisions of the relevant legislation. On receipt of such a request the General Secretary shall provide the member with a reasonable opportunity and time to carry out the inspection.

5. Subscriptions

1. The NEC shall determine on an annual basis membership subscription rates inclusive of the contributions to the Political Fund. In setting such rates the NEC shall consider and have due regard for the following membership status:

   a) Full-time employees;
   b) Part-time employees;
   c) Young Workers;
   d) Retired and Retired Associate Members;
   e) Non-recognised companies.

2. Any member whose contributions or payments of levy made under these Rules are the equivalent of eight weeks in arrears, shall be advised that failure to pay the arrears may result in the cessation of membership.

3. Members on sick leave, maternity leave, adoptive leave or shared parental leave without full pay shall be entitled to free membership for that period of leave.

4. Any member who resigns from the Union may only be re-admitted at the discretion of the NEC. Applicants for re-admission may be required by the NEC to repay any arrears of contributions or levies.

6. Rebates

1. From 1 September 2024 each Branch shall receive monthly 23% of its Branch membership income received by CWU HQs General Fund excluding Retired Members. Each Branch shall be responsible for its own funds for meeting the following expenses:

   a) All Conference expenses including subsistence, travel and loss of pay;
   b) Regional Sub Committees and Industrial based Committee expenses including travel and subsistence;
   c) Travel and subsistence for all education courses;
   d) Travel and subsistence for national briefings;
   e) Visits to HQ requested by the Branch

2. From 1 September 2024 each Branch shall receive a rebate for its Retired Members Section of 23% of all income received by CWU HQ from the contribution of the Branch Retired Members. Such rebates shall only be paid to the Branch on formation of a Retired Members Section.

3. Any Branch that has in excess of 12 months equivalent rebate in its bank balance shall have future rebates held centrally in a separate national account set up for that sole purpose. From May 2019, 70% of the funds held in the account will be returned to the CWU General Fund. The remaining 30% of the funds held in the account on this date will be placed in a fund that any Branch can request a grant from for any specific project, campaigns or for assistance due to lack of funds by making an appropriate case to the CWU Trustees via the CWU Finance Department. All future withheld rebates will be dealt with in accordance with the above principle.

7. Financial Planning

Every year the NEC shall produce a financial plan for the following year, which shall:

a) be published to branches and lodged as a record at CWU HQ Finance Department;
b) show expected income based on membership figures at the time the plan is agreed by the NEC;
c) include detailed planned expenditure, following the principle that such expenditure shall not exceed income;
d) identify the purpose of any annual surplus and the intention to use it on behalf of the members;
e) identify allocations to budget holders and to be reported on, against performance to date, quarterly to branches.

Rule 12 Political Fund

Introduction

1. The objects of the Communication Workers Union shall include the furtherance of the political objects to which section 72 of the amended Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (the 1992 Act) applies. Those political objects are-

72 Political objects to which restriction applies.

(1) The political objects to which this Chapter applies are the expenditure of money:

(a) on any contribution to the funds of, or on the payment of expenses incurred directly or indirectly by, a political party;

(b) on the provision of any service or property for use by or on behalf of any political party;

(c) in connection with the registration of electors, the candidature of any person, the selection of any candidate or the holding of any ballot by the union in connection with any election to a political office;

(d) on the maintenance of any holder of a political office;

(e) on the holding of any conference or meeting by or on behalf of a political party or of any other meeting the main purpose of which is the transaction of business in connection with a political party;

(f) on the production, publication or distribution of any literature, document, film, sound recording or advertisement the main purpose of which is to persuade people to vote for a political party or candidate or to persuade them not to vote for a political party or candidate.

(2) Where a person attends a conference or meeting as a delegate or otherwise as a participator in the proceedings, any expenditure incurred in connection with his attendance as such shall, for the purposes of subsection 1(e), be taken to be expenditure incurred on the holding of the conference or meeting.

(3) In determining, for the purposes of subsection (1), whether a trade union has incurred expenditure of a kind mentioned in that subsection, no account shall be taken of the ordinary administrative expenses of the union

(4) In this section :

"**candidate**" means a candidate for election to a political office and includes a prospective candidate;

"**contribution**", in relation to the funds of a political party, includes any fee

payable for affiliation to, or membership of, the party and any loan made to the party;

"**electors**" means electors at any election to a political office;

"**film**" includes any record, however made, of a sequence of visual images, which is capable of being used as a means of showing that sequence as a moving picture;

"**local authority**" means a local authority within the meaning of section 270 of the Local Government Act 1972 or section 235 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973; and

"**political office**" means the office of member of Parliament, member of the European Parliament or member of a local authority or any position within a political party.

2. Any payments in the furtherance of these political objects shall be made out of a separate fund of the union. This fund shall be called the political fund.

(1) The NEC shall appoint 4 Trustees of the Political Fund. Each Constituency shall be represented. The Trustees shall act in accordance with the directions of the NEC.

3. The union shall make clear how much of any regular contribution is for the political fund. If the political fund is included in regular contributions, the union shall specify that 20p of each weekly contribution is for the political fund. The union shall ensure that members who have opted out do not pay this amount, by reducing or removing it from their contribution.

(1) The NEC shall have power to increase the amount of the levy having regard to increases in the Retail Price and Average Earnings Indices and the level of Union contributions generally. Any such increase shall be endorsed by Biennial Conference.

4. Any member who chooses not to contribute to the political fund of the union shall not be excluded from any benefits of the union or placed in any respect either directly or indirectly under any disability or disadvantage as compared with other members of the union (except in relation to the control or management of the political fund). Any form (including an electronic form) that a person has to complete to become a member of the union must include a statement to that effect, as well as a statement to the effect that the person may opt out of contributing to the political fund.

5. Any member who claims to be aggrieved by a breach of these political fund rules may complain to the Certification Officer. After making such enquiries as they think fit, the Certification Officer shall give both the complainant and a representative of the union an opportunity to make written representations. They may also give both the complainant and a representative of the union an opportunity to make oral representations. After this, if the Certification Officer considers that such a breach has been committed, they make such order for remedying the breach as they think appropriate in the circumstances. Any such order of the Certification Officer may, subject to the right of appeal provided by section 95 of the 1992 Act, be enforced in the manner provided for in sections 82(4A) and 82(4B) of the 1992 Act.

6. Contribution to the political fund of the union shall not be made a condition for admission to the union, and members of the union who choose not to contribute to the political fund must not be placed under any obligation to do so.

7. All members of the Union, in whatever category, shall have a right to pay contributions to the Political Fund.

8. The union shall ensure that a copy of the political fund rules is available, free of charge, to any member of the union who requests a copy.

Opt-out information notices

9. As soon as possible, and no later than 8 weeks after the union votes to adopt political objects, the union shall publish the notice at Appendix 1 to every member.

10. The union will publish the notice using the same methods it normally uses for important information. At present, this includes;

Sending a letter to each member; publishing it in the Union's magazine; posting it on the Union's website; sending it by email; displaying it in a prominent place for at least 12 months; including it in branch circulars.

11. The same notice shall be published again, within eight weeks of each ten year anniversary of a vote to adopt political objects (including any vote that took place before the commencement of the new section 84A of the 1992 Act, as substituted by the Employment Rights Act 2025), unless the resolution has been rescinded or otherwise ceases to have effect.

Submitting an opt-out notice

12. Any member can give notice to opt out of contributing to the political fund at any time.

    To do so, members can:

    i. Use the official opt-out notice form, or

    ii. Send a written request that clearly states that they do not want to contribute to the political fund. Such a written request can be delivered in person, sent by post, email, or through any electronic form the union provides.

13. Members can get a copy of the official opt-out notice from:

    i. From the union, by emailing **membership@cwu.org** or

    ii. From the Certification Officer by emailing **info@certoffice.org**

14. The official opt-out notice form in use can be found at Appendix 2.

15. When the union receives an opt-out notice from a member, it will send the member an acknowledgment to the address provided.

When the opt-out notice takes effect

16. The opt-out takes effect on the earlier of:

    i. The earliest feasible opportunity for processing an opt-out notice after it has been received by the union or

    ii. 1 January in the year following the year in which the notice is given.

17. The union shall make sure that members who have opted out do not pay into the political fund.

Withdrawing an opt-out notice

18. Any member who has opted out of contributing to the political fund may withdraw their opt-out at any time. Doing so means the member will start contributing to the political fund again. To withdrawn an opt-out notice, the member should give the union an opt-out withdrawal notice, which is a written statement saying they wish to withdraw their opt-out notice and start contributing to the union's political fund again.

19. The opt-out withdrawal notice can be delivered in person, sent by post, email, or through any electronic form the union provides.

20. When the union receives the opt-out withdrawal notice, it will send the member an acknowledgement to the address provided and process the withdrawal of the opt-out notice as soon as reasonably practicable.

Northern Ireland Members

1. In compliance with Article 59 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, members of Branches in Northern Ireland are not required to make any contribution to the Political Fund unless they:

    a) have given notice in writing of their willingness to contribute to the fund;

    and

    b) have not notified the Union in writing of withdrawal of such notice.

2. Northern Ireland members are exempt from contributing to the Political Fund unless they give written notice that they wish to do so. A form of notice indicating the wish to contribute to the Political Fund may be obtained from any Branch in Northern Ireland.

3. The Executive Committee shall give effect to the statutory exemption of Northern Ireland members to contribute to the Political Fund of the Union by making a separate levy on contributions to that fund from those Northern Ireland members who have provided written consent of their willingness to contribute, namely, the sum of 20p per week, and have not subsequently withdrawn that consent. No moneys of the Union other than the amount raised by such separate levy shall be paid into the Political Fund.

4. Northern Ireland members who are statutorily exempt from the obligation to contribute to the Political Fund of the Union shall not be excluded from any benefits of the Union, or placed in any respect either directly or indirectly under any disability or disadvantage as compared with other members of the Union (except in relation to the control or management of the political fund) by reason of their being exempt.

5. Contribution to the Political Fund of the Union shall not be made a condition for admission to the Union.

6. If any Northern Ireland member alleges that he/she is aggrieved by a breach of any of the rules made pursuant to Article 59 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 he may complain to the Northern Ireland Certification Officer, by emailing info@nicertoffice.org.uk , under Article 57(2) to (4) of that Order.

7. If, after giving the complainant and a representative of the Union an opportunity to be heard, the Certification Officer considers that a breach has been committed, he may make an order for remedying it as he thinks just in the circumstances. Under Article 69 of the 1995 Order an appeal against any decision of the Certification Officer may be made to the Court of Appeal on a question of law.

8. Additionally, if any Northern Ireland member alleges that he/she is aggrieved by a breach of the Political Fund rules made pursuant to Section 82 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 he/she may complain to the GB Certification Officer, by emailing info@certoffice.org. If, after giving the complainant and a representative of the union an opportunity of being heard, the GB Certification Officer considers that a breach has been committed, he/she may make an order for remedying it as he/she thinks just in the circumstances. Any such order of the GB Certification Officer is subject to the right of appeal provided for by Section 82(4) of the 1992 Act.

Grants and Rebates

21. Branches shall be allowed grants from the Political Fund of a sum up to but not exceeding that which is equal to one third of the annual contribution to the Political Fund of the Union per member per year of the Branch political membership. To protect the political Fund of the Union such rebates shall only be used to further the political objects of the Union and the expenditure of money shall only be made by the Branch in accordance with Branch bye-laws as determined by the NEC. As a condition of receiving such rebates, Branches shall make such returns and reports as the NEC may determine, provide an annual statement of Branch political accounts and affiliate to Constituency Labour Parties. The condition to affiliate to Constituency Labour Parties shall not extend to Branches in Northern Ireland.

    (1) Payments from the Political Fund to Branches must be in accordance with the policy determined by General Conference or the NEC.

    (2) Each Regional Political Sub Committee Fund will receive 20% of the total Political Fund rebate available to Branches to allow these committees to campaign regionally to promote Union policies on a fair and equitable basis.

Labour Party Conference

22. The NEC shall issue regulations prescribing the procedures for the elections of delegates to the Labour Party Conferences.

Labour Party NEC

23. The CWU nomination for the Labour Party NEC shall be voted on under regulations issued by the NEC.

Annual Political Forum

24. There shall be an annual meeting of all Regional Sub Committees and Branch political officers to discuss the promulgation of Union policy within the Labour Party.

Transitional arrangements for members who joined the Communication Workers Union between 1 March 2018 and 17 February 2026

Between 1 March 2018 and 17 February 2026, members were not automatically opted in to the political fund. Instead, they had to actively opt-in. The Employment Rights Act 2025 has amended the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, so that new members are treated as opted-in unless they choose to opt-out. The following rules explain how unions must handle members who joined between 1 March 2018 and 17 February 2026.

Default opt-outs for certain members

25. Any member who joined the union between 1 March 2018 and 17 February 2026 and was not contributing to the political fund immediately before 18 February 2026, is treated by law as having given an opt-out notice under the new section 84 of the 1992 Act, substituted by the 2025 Act. This opt-out remains in effect until the member gives a withdrawal notice in accordance with these rules. The union does not need to take any action to process these opt-outs, as they apply automatically under the law. This automatically applied opt-out notice is treated as effective from 18 February 2026 and will remain in effect until the member gives an opt-out withdrawal notice to cancel it (as addressed in paragraphs 17-19).

Transitional period for opt-in withdrawals

The following rules (26-29) apply to members who joined the union between 1 March 2018 and 18 February 2026 and submitted an opt-in notice that remains in force on 18 February 2026. These rules cover the four-week period until (and including) 17 March 2026. After that period, these members will be captured by the processes described earlier in these rules.

26. Any member who joined the union between 1 March 2018 and 18 February 2026 and, during that time, submitted an opt-in notice, may for a short period give a withdrawal notice under section 84 of the 1992 Act, as it stood before the 2025 Act.

27. During the transitional period until (and including) 18 March 2026, if a member who submitted an opt-in notice wishes to stop contributing to the political fund, they may give the union an opt-in withdrawal notice, which is a written statement saying they no longer wish to contribute.

28. The opt-in withdrawal notice can be delivered in person, sent by post, email, or through any electronic form the union provides.

29. The opt-in withdrawal notice takes effect one month after the date on which it is given.

Appendix 1 : Opt-out information notice

Notice to Members in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992

The Communication Workers Union has a political fund. This fund is used for activities connected with political objects as defined by section 72 of the above Act. All spending on these activities comes from this separate political fund.

Every member has the right not to contribute to the union's political fund. To exercise this right, you must give the union an opt-out notice.

You can give an opt-out notice in any of these ways:

- **Deliver it in person, by post, or through a person you have asked to deliver it on your behalf**
- **Send it by email to membership@cwu.org**
- **Complete an electronic form provided by the union and submit it online following the union's instructions.**

A form of opt-out notice can also be obtained:

- **From the union, by e-mailing membership@cwu.org or**
- **From the Certification Officer by emailing info@certoffice.org**

If you later change your mind, you can give a withdrawal notice to cancel your opt-out. This will put you back into contributing to the political fund.

Date	

Appendix 2: Opt-out Notice

Communication Workers Union	
Political fund opt-out notice **I do not want to contribute to the union's political fund. By giving this notice, I will be exempt from making any payments to the political fund.**	
Signature	
Print name	
Postal or email address	
Date	

Rule 13 Industrial Action

1. The NEC shall be responsible for ensuring that the union is fully compliant with all relevant legislation governing Industrial Action.

2. The NEC, a Conference or a properly convened Branch Meeting may in furtherance of the Union's objectives decide to authorise, endorse, call or take industrial action, including strike action. All such action must be within the law and in accordance with, and in compliance of, all statutory obligations, inclusive of ballots etc. Where a Branch decides to take action to protect immediate local interests, the General Secretary and NEC must be informed.

3. For the avoidance of doubt it is confirmed that nothing contained in these Rules empowers a Branch or any other person, committee, group or body of persons to authorise, endorse, call or take industrial action without there being a statutory ballot and compliance in all other respects with the requirements of Part V of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 as amended or replaced from time to time.

Rule 14 Dispute Resolution

1. General

1. Matters of dispute arising from the rules or regulations of the Union affecting Union members shall be dealt with in accordance with this rule.

2. The purpose of this rule is to deal with all matters of potential dispute between members, with the aim of achieving settlements where disputes arise. This rule covers all aspects of union administration.

3. All potential disputes will be administered by the General Secretary's Department. The process will identify the nature of the potential dispute and will be subsequently classified as one of the following:

   a) breakdown in relationships
   b) breach of national rules

   Potential disputes arising from the above will be dealt with the CWU Complaints Procedure or National Disputes Committee (NDC).

4. None of the above will be actioned in the event of a dispute being contemplated or in progress either via an internal employer procedure or an external body and has reached a conclusion.

2. CWU Complaints Procedure

1. All matters requiring consideration shall be dealt with by the General Secretary's Department in line with the appropriate byelaws.

3. National Dispute Committee (NDC)

1. All matters requiring consideration and/or investigation shall be administered by the General Secretary's Department.

2. The Committee shall be served by an Officer appointed by the General Secretary. The Committee shall consist of members of the NEC, which will be determined by the byelaws.

4. National Dispute Committee Powers and Procedures

1. All matters requiring consideration under this rule should be referred to the General Secretary's Department. Such matters may be referred by either a member or a Branch.

2. The NEC shall prescribe regulations governing the procedures for the conduct of all cases before the NDC and may amend such regulations from time to time. These amendments shall be subject to endorsement at a subsequent General Conference.

3. The NDC has the power to require the production of written evidence and attendance of witnesses who are members of the Union. In the event of non-production of written evidence or non-attendance by either of the parties involved, the Committee has the right to take decisions in their absence.

4. The NDC shall consider each dispute in line with the NDC byelaws and conclude whether or not the dispute is appropriate to be dealt with at a full hearing of the NDC.

5. Following the full hearing of the dispute, in the event the NDC conclude that there has been a breach of the national rules, the NEC may exercise one or more of the following powers.

   a) censure the member concerned;
   b) suspend the member from membership or from all or any benefits of membership for such time as may be determined;
   c) remove the member from any CWU representative office;
   d) disqualify the member from holding office for such a period as the NDC may determine;
   e) impose a suspended sentence for so long as the NDC shall consider just and reasonable;
   f) expel the member from the Union.

6. There shall be a right of appeal against decisions of the NDC to an Independent Appeal Panel. In all cases of appeal, the decision appealed against shall be suspended pending the hearing of the appeal. An appeal against a decision of the NDC can only be brought by the charged member.

5. Independent Appeals Panel (IAP)

1. The NEC shall prescribe byelaws governing the procedure for the conduct of all cases before the IAP and may amend such byelaws from time to time.

2. The IAP shall consist of 3 Independent members, one of which shall be the Chair.

3. The IAP shall be served by an Officer appointed by the General Secretary.

4. The decision of the IAP shall be final and binding on the appellant and the Union and concludes the internal process.

6. Functions of the General Secretary and the NDC Officer in Relation to potential disputes

1. The Officer to the NDC shall be responsible for the documentation of matters requiring consideration by the NDC and for recording the proceedings of the Committee.

2. The Officer to the NDC shall notify a member of their rights under the rules of the Union and the consequences of failure to comply with any direction issued, or any penalty imposed by the NDC. The Officer will notify the General Secretary of the final decision.

Rule 15 Alteration of Rules

1. Rules Revision Conference

1. Every 4 years the Union shall hold a Conference for the purpose of reviewing and revising its rules.

2. Each Branch of the Union shall have the opportunity to submit 3 proposals relating to the rules.

3. The NEC shall be entitled to submit proposals relating to the rules.

4. Each proposal to amend the rules receiving a majority in support including a majority within each of the following;

   a) the Postal Constituency
   b) the Telecoms and Financial Services Constituency

   shall then form part of the rules of the Union.

2. Special Rules Revision Conference

1. A Special Rules Revision Conference may be called by the NEC or at the request of Branches representing not less than 51% of the membership. Requests from Branches must be the result of a decision taken at a properly constituted Branch meeting.

2. The Standing Orders and procedures adopted for a Special Rules Revision Conference shall normally be in accord with those used for the Rules Revision Conference.

3. Biennial Conference

1. In addition to Rules Revision Conferences there shall be provision at each General Conference of the Union for a Rules Revision session.

2. At each General Conference Rules Revision session each Branch shall have the opportunity to submit 1 proposal relating to the rules.

3. At each General Conference Rules Revision session the NEC shall be entitled to submit proposal relating to the rules.

4. At each General Conference Rules Revision session each proposal to amend the rules receiving a two thirds majority in support, including a two thirds majority within each of the following;

a) the Postal Constituency
b) the Telecoms and Financial Services Constituency

shall then form part of the rules of the Union.

4. Role of the NEC

1. The NEC shall be empowered to amend the rules to deal with any inaccuracy or error or in order to comply with any Statute of the Realm or regulation made thereunder. The NEC shall also be empowered to make any consequential amendment to the rules required as a result of amendments carried at any Rules Revision session of Conference or at a Rules Revision Conference or a Special Rules Revision Conference.

2. The NEC shall be empowered to interpret the rules or to decide upon any issue in respect of which the rules are silent. The decision of the NEC on any such matter shall be final.

3. It shall be the duty of the General Secretary, upon receiving notice of a proposal on the amendment of these rules, to take suitable advice and report to the Standing Orders Committee, who shall ensure that such motions are placed before the Rules Revision Conference, Special Rules Revision Conference or General Conference Rules Revision session as the case may be, in such a form that the language and content clearly express the purpose of the motion and saving so far as the purpose of the motion otherwise requires, are in conformity with body of the rules and the principles incorporated therein.

5. Operative Date of Rule Amendments

Any alterations to rule carried at a Rules Revision Conference, Special Rules Revision Conference or General Conference Rules Revision session shall become operative immediately following the close of that conference.

6. Rule Book

Within 6 months of a Rules Revision Conference, Special Rules Revision Conference or General Conference Rules Revision session an updated Rule Book shall be produced and distributed to every Branch.

Rule 16 Amalgamation

1. The Union may amalgamate with, or transfer engagements to or from, any trade union as General/Special General Conference may determine, subject to the terms of the relevant legislation.

2. The NEC shall have the power to submit the question of amalgamation and Transfer of Engagements to a General/Special General Conference.

NOTES

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