

Delegate Conference 2025
Proposed Rule Changes

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Delegates will consider the following MU Rule changes at Conference. These will be included in the Conference Report and considered as a separate item in the Conference Programme.

1. Rule I (2)(i): Objects and Definitions

Reason for proposed change:

An addition is proposed to explicitly state the Union's opposition to both racism and fascism in its Objects, and to expand the list of protected characteristics to match those set out in the Equality Act.

Current Rule (including proposed changes in red):

(i) To actively oppose actively racism, fascism and all forms of harassment, prejudice and unfair discrimination whether on the grounds of sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion and/or belief, ~~colour~~, class, pregnancy and/or maternity, caring responsibilities, marital and/or civil partnership status, sexuality, sexual orientation, disability, age, gender reassignment, or other status or personal characteristic.

2. Rule III (3): Regions

Reason for proposed change:

Removal of wording is proposed which specifies a member needs to have been a member of a Region for a year in order to join the Regional Committee. A year's membership of the MU is still considered an appropriate eligibility criterion, in order to allow an understanding of what membership entails to be gained, but the regional requirement continues to mean a number of knowledgeable members each year, who have changed regions, being ineligible to stand.

An additional wording change is proposed, the intention of which is to tie any requirement for length of membership to the "nomination deadline" (i.e. the published last date on which a nomination can be received) rather than "nomination day" (i.e. the day they supply their nomination details to the MU) which could be any date during the period when nominations are open. Rather than make candidates wait until their membership anniversary has passed before securing nomination, the change allows them to secure nomination at any point provided they will have reached the required membership length by the nomination deadline.

Current Rule (including proposed changes in red):

(3) Candidates for election to the Regional Committee shall have been members of the Union ~~and of the Region continuously~~ for at least one year ~~on prior to the nomination day deadline~~. No person who is or who at any time during the preceding five years was employed by the MU shall be eligible for nomination.

3. Rule III (9): Regions

Reason for proposed change:

A change is proposed which permits Regional Committees to elect more than one Vice Chair for the year. When limited to a single Chair and Vice Chair it has sometimes been the case that neither was available to undertake a specific responsibility, resulting in meetings and other democratic processes facing delays. With a wider group of Vice Chairs (the EC currently appoint 3 Vice Chairs each year) the possibility of regional processes being disrupted or delayed will be reduced. In addition, minor tidying of the wording for consistency with other rules following legal advice.

Current Rule (including proposed changes in red):

9. The Regional Committee shall, at its first meeting in each calendar year, elect from its number a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson(s) for the year. Candidates for such office shall have been members of the MU for at least three years ~~on~~ prior to their nomination ~~day~~.

4. Rule IV: Election of EC

Reason for proposed change:

A change is proposed that will permit implementation of a reserved seat structure for EC elections that is responsive to the EC's current demographic makeup. Based on existing EC membership, up to 10 extra seats, in addition to those currently elected, could be reserved for underrepresented members. This would include Global Majority, LGBT+, Women, Disabled and Young Members, 2 seats per underrepresented group. Members would be elected to these seats by members from their specific underrepresented community group.

Current Rule (including proposed changes in red):

1. The EC shall consist of members elected from each Region. Each Region shall be entitled to one EC member for every 1,500 members as at the previous year's end, provided that no Region shall have fewer than two or more than seven EC members.

2. The EC shall also have seats reserved for Underrepresented Communities, which, for this purpose, are Disabled Members, Members from the Global Majority, LGBT+ Members, Women Members and Young Members. Two seats will be reserved for each Underrepresented Community.

a. Disabled Members are MU members who, at the time membership data is extracted for the purpose of conducting a ballot, are both currently in membership and have indicated they are a Disabled Member in response to the MU's diversity monitoring survey.

b. Members from the Global Majority are MU members who, at the time membership data is extracted for the purpose of conducting a ballot, are both currently in membership and have indicated they are a Member of the Global Majority in response to the MU's diversity monitoring survey.

c. LGBT+ Members are MU members who, at the time membership data is extracted for the purpose of conducting a ballot, are both currently in membership and have indicated they are an LGBT+ Member in response to the MU's diversity monitoring survey.

d. Women Members are MU members who, at the time membership data is extracted for the purpose of conducting a ballot, are both currently in membership and have the gender 'female' within their MU membership record.

e. Young Members are MU members who, at the time membership data is extracted for the purpose of conducting a ballot, are both currently in membership and are under 30 years of age according to their MU membership record.

3. If the percentage of members from any of the five Underrepresented Communities elected to the EC from Regions for the current year is less than the percentage of that Underrepresented Community in the general UK population, as identified in the category most relevant to that Underrepresented Community in the most recent UK census, members from that Underrepresented Community shall elect two EC members from amongst their number to fill the two seats reserved for that Underrepresented Community.

4. The EC shall maintain reserved seats for each Underrepresented Community only for such period as it deems there to be a shortfall of members from that Underrepresented Community elected to the EC from Regions. The EC may add or remove reserved seats for any or all Underrepresented Communities as it considers appropriate.

5. 2. Candidates for the EC shall have been members of the MU for at least three consecutive years from the most recent date of admission prior to ~~the nomination deadline and must be resident in or undertake the majority of their work as a musician in the Region in which they are nominated.~~ No person who is or who at any time during the preceding five years prior to the nomination deadline was employed by the MU shall be eligible for nomination.

a. Candidates nominated by a Region must be resident in or undertake the majority of their work as a musician in ~~the that Region in which they are nominated.~~ Each Any candidate for the Executive Committee shall be nominated by another member of their Region. Such nomination, and consent and membership number of the nominee, must be received by the Secretary of the Regional Committee on or before dates and via methods specified by the EC from time to time.

b. Candidates nominated from an Underrepresented Community must be a member of that Underrepresented Community. Each candidate shall be nominated by another member of that Underrepresented Community. Such nomination, and consent and membership number of the nominee, must be received by the Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion on or before dates and via methods specified by the EC from time to time.

~~6.4.~~ Candidates nominated may submit a written election address for the information and consideration of members as determined by the EC taking account of the prevailing legal provisions concerning the conduct of such ballots.

~~7.5.~~ The ballot papers for the election shall be prepared and issued and counted by such independent body as may be designated by the EC. On receipt of the ballot results from the independent scrutineer the General Secretary shall publish those results to the candidates and the members.

~~8.6.~~ Members of the EC shall be elected by a ballot vote of the Regions or Underrepresented Communities for which there are vacancies to be filled. Members elected at the annual election shall take office from the start of the first EC meeting in the calendar year following their election and shall hold office ordinarily until immediately before the first EC meeting in the calendar year two years later. Prior to the holding of an election to which this Rule relates the EC may for the purpose of ensuring that some elections take place annually, decide the period of office of a successful candidate or candidates shall be of such period shorter than two years as they determine. Members of the EC shall be eligible for re-election unless otherwise disqualified.

~~9.7.~~ Members shall not hold a seat on their Regional Committee whilst they remain a member of the EC but are entitled to attend Regional Committee meetings as an observer.

~~10.8.~~ If a casual vacancy shall occur, an election shall be held as soon as is practicable. The member elected shall take office immediately the result is declared and shall continue in office for the unexpired period of office of the member who has vacated their office.

11.-9. If within any period of 60 days a majority of the Regional Committees in existence at the end of such period shall have passed a resolution to that effect, a special delegate conference shall be held to consider whether all the members of the EC shall be removed from office and the General Secretary shall decide the time and place of and make arrangements for the conference. All the members of the EC shall be removed from office if the special delegate conference shall so resolve and the functions and powers of the EC shall thereupon devolve upon the General Secretary until the election of a new EC. The General Secretary shall arrange for such election to be held as soon as is practicable.

5. Rule VI (3 & 4): Motions to EC, Regional Committees and Delegate Conferences

Reason for proposed change:

Motions to Delegate Conference are usually considered at Regional Committee meetings in the April of each Conference year. The current rule on motions limits the number that each member can support, move and second, with the intention of preventing any individual member from dominating proceedings. However, the limits have historically made completing the business of April Regional Committee meetings very difficult, with committee members unable to move or second ordinary agenda items due to having already reached their limit. It is therefore proposed to increase the number of motions to Delegate Conference a member can support from 2 to 4, and to remove the limit on moving and seconding motions to Delegate Conference at a Regional Committee entirely. This should still prevent a single member dominating the consideration of motions whilst permitting Regional Committees to complete their April meeting agendas without issue.

Current Rule (including proposed changes in red):

3. **Prospective M**otions from members to a Delegate Conference must be submitted in writing for consideration by a Regional Committee or the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee.

a. **Prospective Delegate Conference M**otions to a Regional Committee must be supported by at least five members of the Region who must provide their names and membership numbers. **A member may not support more than four prospective motions.** A **prospective** motion may be accepted, rejected or amended by the Regional Committee. If a **prospective** motion, as amended, is accepted by the meeting on a majority vote, the Regional Organiser shall submit it for consideration at the next Delegate Conference, subject to any restrictions on the number of motions as set out in Conference Standing Orders.

b. **Prospective Delegate Conference M**otions to the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee must be concerned solely with issues and matters relating to equality, diversity and inclusion and must be supported by at least five members who must provide their names and

membership numbers. One such motion may be accepted or amended by the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee. The Head of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion shall submit such motion for consideration at the next Delegate Conference.

4.

a. Nothing in Rule VI shall require the EC or a Regional Committee to accept for debate a motion which would have the effect of re-opening a vote or decision on the same or a similar issue taken by the same body within the past seven months.

b. The number of motions which a member may move and/or second (under sub-Rule VI.1a and/or VI.2a ~~and/or VI.3~~) or support (under sub-Rules VI.1b and/or c and VI.2b ~~and/or VI.3~~) shall be limited to a maximum of two at any one meeting.

6. Rule VIII: The General Secretary

Reason for proposed change:

Changes are proposed which allow for modernisation of the General Secretary election process, removing the need for candidates to initially be nominated and seconded in writing, and instead permitting an online nomination gathering process requiring candidates to acquire a minimum of 50 member nominations in total in order to qualify for inclusion on the postal ballot. Some additional changes are proposed simply to tidy up wording and clarify the process.

Current Rule (including proposed changes in red):

1. In the event of a vacancy in the office of General Secretary, the EC shall secure an election for a successor as soon as practicable. The EC shall ~~determine~~ **decide**:

(a) ~~a~~ **the** timetable for the election of General Secretary;

(b) ~~shall appoint an~~ **the** independent scrutineer for the election process;

(c) ~~shall determine~~ the terms and conditions of employment of the General Secretary

(d) ~~the election process rules and guidance for candidates, MU members and employees~~

(e) ~~and may determine a~~ **the** job description (**incorporating a skills/competence profile**) for the post of General Secretary.

2. The EC shall ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, all members ~~will be sent published notice~~ are notified of the election ~~timetable, notice of~~ the independent scrutineer, ~~the timetable election process rules and guidance~~ and ~~any~~ job description ~~for the post of General Secretary and skills/competence profile~~, and shall invite ~~nominations~~ applications.

~~2. The General Secretary shall be elected by a ballot vote of the MU. Candidates shall confirm in writing their consent to be nominated and~~

~~their agreement to accept, if elected, such terms and conditions of employment as the EC may require.~~

3. ~~A~~Candidates must either have had at least five years continuous MU membership immediately prior to ~~the deadline for applications nomination~~, or must have had at least five years continuous employment with the MU immediately prior to ~~the deadline for applications nomination~~. ~~For the nomination to be valid the candidate must be both proposed and seconded in writing by eligible members of a Region at a duly convened Regional meeting and a motion to adopt the nomination must be carried at that meeting. Each Region may nominate one candidate and no member may vote for the nomination of more than one candidate at the Regional meeting.~~

4. Candidates shall confirm in writing their agreement to the election process rules and their agreement to accept, if elected, such terms and conditions of employment as the EC may require.

Candidates ~~nominated~~ may submit for the consideration of members a written election statement of such length and format as may be determined by the EC taking account of the prevailing legal provisions concerning the conduct of such ~~elections ballots~~.

5. The General Secretary shall be elected by a ballot vote of all members, excluding free members, in membership on a date (to be determined by the EC) prior to start of the ballot.

6. A period of a minimum of eight weeks prior to the start of the ballot shall be permitted for candidates to gather nominations from members (determined in Rule VIII (5)). Each member shall be permitted to nominate a single candidate of their choice. Only candidates securing a minimum of 50 nominations by the nomination deadline shall be included in the ballot. If all candidates secure less than 50 nominations, the minimum will be reduced in steps of 10 nominations until at least one candidate has secured the minimum number of nominations or greater. At this point all candidates securing the minimum number of nominations or greater will be included in the ballot.

7. ~~5.~~The ballot papers for the election shall be prepared and issued to each member (~~determined in Rule VIII (5)~~) together with the election statements for each candidate included in the ballot and the ~~any~~ job

description for the post of General Secretary, and ~~skills/competence profile determined under Rule VIII.1.~~ The ballot papers shall be counted by the independent scrutineer or such other independent person as may be appointed by the EC. Upon receipt of the ballot results from the independent scrutineer, the results shall be published by the EC to the membership **as soon as reasonably possible** in such manner as it shall determine.

8. ~~If only a single eligible candidate applies for the position, or if only a single candidate secures the minimum number of nominations or greater (as determined in Rule VIII (6)) the election will be deemed uncontested, and the candidate will be elected without a ballot.~~

9. ~~6.~~ The General Secretary shall, under the authority of the EC, be responsible for the administration of the MU's affairs and shall attend meetings of the EC. The General Secretary will carry out the duties as directed by the EC and the Rules of the MU. The duties may be varied by the EC from time to time.

10. ~~7.~~ In their absence, the duties of General Secretary shall be carried out by the Deputy General Secretary and in the absence of the or any Deputy General Secretary by the Assistant General Secretaries.

11. ~~8.~~ The General Secretary shall hold office for the maximum period provided by law or until death, cessation of membership, resignation or removal from office, in accordance with the provisions of the Rules. In the event that the General Secretary dies in office, retires or is removed without completing their term of office, an election for a successor shall be held as soon as practicable. A person so removed from office without completing their term of office shall not be eligible to stand for any future election for any office.

12. ~~9.~~ The General Secretary may be suspended from office by resolution of the EC on the ground that they are or may be unable and/or unwilling to perform their duties satisfactorily and/or has brought the MU into disrepute, upon a motion to that effect being moved at a duly convened meeting and carried by a vote in favour of not less than 75% of the total number of serving EC members. In the event of such a resolution being passed, the General Secretary shall forthwith be suspended from office and the EC shall arrange immediately for a ballot vote of members on a

motion to remove the General Secretary from office on such grounds as the EC shall determine.

The EC shall provide the General Secretary with a copy of its motion and the grounds for the motion. The EC and the General Secretary shall be entitled to state in writing their reasons for and against the motion and grounds, and to exchange such statements in advance of these being made available to members with the ballot papers. In the event that the motion is passed by a simple majority of those members voting, the General Secretary shall forthwith be removed from office and shall not be eligible for any future election for any office. In the event that the motion is not passed by a simple majority of members voting, the suspension of the General Secretary shall forthwith be lifted.

7. Rule XI: Subscriptions

Reason for proposed change:

A motion was brought to EC, and accepted, for a new membership category rewarding long-service. The new membership category will be open to members who have been in continuous membership for 55 years, and will retain the same benefits, services and eligibility for election to office as full MU membership but will be free of any cost.

In addition, it is proposed to simplify the qualification rules and administration of existing free and concessionary memberships, which are currently confusing:

- **Retired Concessionary membership (59 members)**
 - Qualification: 35 years continuous membership + “Retired from profession of music”
 - Cost / Benefits: 58% of full membership – same benefits and eligibility as full membership
- **Retired Free membership**
 - Qualification: 35 years continuous membership + “Retired from profession of music”
 - Cost / Benefits: Free – no benefits except advice / communications – can’t stand for election
- **Free membership (1,613 members between “Retired Free” and “Free”)**
 - Qualification: 20 years continuous membership + “Permanently unable to follow any employment”
 - Cost / Benefits: Free – no benefits except advice / communications – can’t stand for election

It is proposed to cease offering the retired concessionary membership (the 59 members currently on this rate will be permitted to stay on this rate, but no new members will be able to join them) and merge the “Retired Free” and “Free” memberships into one category accessible after 20 years’ continuous membership if retired from the profession of music, but without access to benefits or services other than access to MU communications.

Current Rule (including proposed changes in red):

1. Subscriptions shall be such sums as determined by the EC. The subscription ordinarily is annual and becomes due on the anniversary of

admission, unless otherwise authorised by the EC. Termination of membership for any reason during the course of a year shall not affect the amount of subscription due for that year.

~~2. A member who at the time of application is not in arrears with subscriptions or levies and,~~

~~a. has been a member continuously for 20 years or more and is permanently unable to follow any employment or,~~

~~b. has been a member continuously for 35 years or more and has retired from following the profession of music may apply to their Regional Committee for free member status. Should such status be granted the member will be excused subscriptions and levies and will be entitled only to such benefits, services and privileges of membership as the EC from time to time in its absolute discretion may determine.~~

2. A member who at the time of application is not in arrears with subscriptions or levies, has been a member continuously for 20 years or more and is retired from the profession of music may apply to their Regional Committee for **Retired Free Membership**. Should such membership be granted the member will be excused subscriptions and levies and will be entitled only to such benefits, services and privileges of membership as the EC from time to time in its absolute discretion may determine.

For the avoidance of doubt, Retired Free Members will not be eligible to hold any office in the Union or to nominate or vote in Union elections or ballots and any reference to the entitlement of a member to stand or nominate or vote in an election or hold office shall be interpreted as excluding Retired Free Members.

3. A member who at the time of application is not in arrears with subscriptions or levies and has been a member continuously for 55 years or more may apply to their Regional Committee for **Long-Service Free Membership**. Should such membership be granted the member will be excused subscriptions and levies but will remain entitled to all benefits, services and privileges of membership, and will be eligible to hold office in the Union and to nominate and vote in Union elections and ballots.

4. ~~3.~~ The EC may grant free membership status to any other member on such terms and for such periods as it may in its absolute discretion think fit.

~~4. The EC may exercise its discretion differently in respect of the three categories of free members. For the avoidance of doubt, free members will not be eligible to hold any office in the Union or to nominate or vote in Union elections or ballots and any reference to the entitlement of a member to stand or nominate or vote in an election or hold office shall be interpreted as excluding free members.~~

~~5. A member who at the time of application is not in arrears with subscriptions or levies and has been a member continuously for 35 years or more and has retired from following the profession of music may apply to their Regional Committee for concessionary member status.~~

5. Previously, members who at the time of application were not in arrears with subscriptions or levies, had been a member continuously for 35 years or more and had retired from following the profession of music could apply to their Regional Committee for **Retired Concessionary Membership**. The EC shall retain this category only until all current Retired Concessionary Members have ceased membership. No new members may be admitted to this membership category, and current Retired Concessionary Members may not be re-admitted to this category after leaving the Union.

6. The EC may grant Concessionary member status to any other member on such terms and for such periods as it may in its absolute discretion think fit.

7. A concessionary member shall be liable to pay a subscription of an amount according to a scale determined by the EC and shall be entitled only to such benefits, services or privileges of membership and to hold such offices or to nominate or vote in such Union elections or ballots as the EC from time to time in its absolute discretion may determine.

8. The subscription due from each member shall be remitted no later than 28 days after the time provided for in clause 1 of this rule. Each member shall be given written notice that their subscription is overdue,

and of the action to be taken in the event of their failure to pay within the notified timescale.

9. Any member whose subscription is not paid within the 28 day period specified in Rule XI 8, and/or with levies or fines 28 days' outstanding, shall cease to be a member.

10. Any Officer who ceases to be a member under Rule XI 9 shall automatically cease to hold office.

11. Where a member pays subscriptions by direct debit, any reference to the renewal date shall be read as referring to the date on which the direct debit instalment is due and any reference to the subscription shall be read as referring to an instalment.

8. Rule XIV: Alteration of Rules

Reason for proposed change:

A change is proposed that it is felt will improve the democratic process of altering the MU Rules by removing the EC's ability to vote down a proposed rule change received from a Regional Committee without further consultation with the wider membership.

The process to get a rule change, proposed by a member, to either a ballot of members or to Delegate Conference (the two current methods for effecting a rule change) would still require acceptance by the member's own Regional Committee and support from a majority of the remaining Regional Committees. The EC would retain the opportunity to review the proposed rule change and provide comment to be submitted with it to the remaining Regional Committees for their decision.

Minor re-formatting of the Rule is also proposed which will not change the meaning or intention of the rule, but should assist with clarity.

Current Rule (including proposed changes in red):

1. Save as expressly provided for elsewhere in these Rules, these Rules shall only be altered by, at the discretion of the EC, either:
 - a. A ballot vote of the members; or
 - b. A Delegate Conference
2. ~~e.~~ Rule changes, whether by ballot or Conference, shall only be proposed by (i) the EC or (ii) a majority decision of the MU's Regional Committees reached in accordance with the procedure described in Rule XIV.~~32~~ below.
3. ~~2.~~ A motion proposing a Rule change may be submitted to a Regional Committee in accordance with Rule VI.1b and, if accepted in accordance with Rule VI.1b, submitted to the EC in accordance with that Rule. ~~If a majority of the EC vote to do so, †~~The proposal(s) shall then be referred by the EC to all other MU Regional Committees who shall at their next meeting vote whether the Rule change proposal(s) should proceed. The EC may, in its sole discretion, when referring the proposal to Regional

Committees include with the proposal a statement or statements giving the views of the EC and/or the Regional Committee which submitted the proposal. If a majority of Regional Committees (taken together with the Regional Committee proposing the Rule change) vote that the Rule change should proceed, the EC shall then at its next meeting refer the proposal(s) to whichever of (i) a ballot vote of the members; or (ii) a Delegate Conference as the EC shall in its absolute discretion consider appropriate. In the event of a ballot the EC shall have the right to include with the ballot paper a statement giving its views on the proposal(s).

4. ~~3.~~ In the event of a change of legislation that would make any Rule unlawful, the EC shall have the power to amend that Rule so as to comply with that legislation.

9. Rule XVII (2): Disciplinary Procedures

Reason for proposed change:

It is proposed to add wording to ensure list of protected characteristics matches that set out in the Equality Act.

Current Rule (including proposed changes in red):

2. Disciplinary action may be taken against any member who does any of the following (including doing so as a member of a political party):

- a. Disregards, disobeys or breaks any of the Rules or regulations of the MU applicable to them, or any instruction issued in accordance with the Rules;
- b. Acts in a manner prejudicial or detrimental to the MU or their Region;
- c. Commits:
 - i. Any act of discrimination or harassment on grounds of ~~age, colour, disability, marital status, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation~~ sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion and/or belief, class, pregnancy and/or maternity, caring responsibilities, marital and/or civil partnership status, sexuality, sexual orientation, disability, age, gender reassignment, or other status or personal characteristic; or,
 - ii. Any other discriminatory conduct which is prejudicial to the objects of the MU set out at Rule I;
- d. Misappropriates any money or property belonging to the MU which is under their control, or fails properly to account for money which was, is or should be under their control or defrauds the MU in any way;
- e. Evades payment of the correct rate of subscriptions.

10. Rule XVII (10): Disciplinary Procedures

Reason for proposed change:

Currently the rule setting out disciplinary procedures is not completely clear on the General Secretary's options should they decide to suspend a member during the period they are the subject of a disciplinary investigation. It is proposed to amend the rule in order to clarify that the General Secretary is permitted to suspend a member (a) from holding office, (b) from accessing any or all benefits and services, and (c) from attending meetings and events, and (d) from membership entirely, or any combination of these.

Current Rule (including proposed changes in red):

10. At any time during an investigation or disciplinary under this Rule XVII, the General Secretary (or such persons delegated under Rule XVII (5)) may suspend the member concerned for such period and on such terms as they shall in their absolute discretion think appropriate **including, but not limited to, any or all of the following:**

- a. suspension from holding office**
- b. suspension from accessing any or all benefits, services and privileges of membership**
- c. suspension from attending any or all Union meetings and events**
- d. suspension from membership entirely**