

## BRITAIN AND IRELAND ASSOCIATION FOR POLITICAL THOUGHT

### THE ASSOCIATION'S MISSION

The Britain and Ireland Association for Political Thought was founded in 2008 to promote the study of all branches of political thought. The study of political thought tends to be dispersed within and across a number of different disciplines – political science, philosophy, history, law, sociology, economics, and cultural and literary studies, amongst others – and to involve a wide variety of approaches. As a result, the distinctive interests and concerns of this subfield risk being lost because so much academic policy focuses on addressing the main branches of the disciplines within which political thought is to be found - and the fact that political thought often challenges the boundaries of these disciplines makes it even easier to ignore or marginalise. The foundation of the Association for Political Thought is intended to address two main dimensions of this situation:

First, it aims to overcome the tendency for political thought to be marginalised or fall between different disciplines (for example, in the way support for research and graduate study in the field is divided between the ESRC and AHRC) by providing a mechanism for advocating the concerns of those engaged in political thought to relevant policy makers

Second, it aims to facilitate scholarly interaction and collaboration between the whole range of practitioners in the field.

In promoting these dual aims, the Association seeks to:

- (a) Represent the interests of political thought with regard to both teaching and research in relation to the relevant governmental and non-governmental bodies (e.g., HEFC, ESRC, AHRC) and secure and even advance its place within the Academy
- (b) Act as a facilitator for the research activities of its membership (for example, by, among other activities, setting up a web site and e mail lists to advertise conferences and symposia, alerting members to grant opportunities and helping to link people for grant projects through a register of interests, opening up new publishing outlets for theorists and supporting existing ones through links with publishers and contacts with the main general and specialist journals to which those in the field regularly submit)
- (c) Assist the exchange of ideas on teaching activities e.g. through sharing reading lists via the web site
- (d) Forge connections with related associations in the UK and other countries.

## CONSTITUTION

### *CONSTITUTION OF THE BRITAIN AND IRELAND ASSOCIATION FOR POLITICAL THOUGHT*

#### **Article I: Name and Purpose**

1. The name of this society shall be the Britain and Ireland Association for Political Thought.
2. The purpose of this association shall be to promote the study of political thought in Britain and Ireland. Towards that end, the Association seeks to engage all the various traditions and approaches to political thought. More specifically, the Association seeks to advance scholarly interaction, collaboration, and debate among political theorists; to support teaching, research, and publishing in political thought and related forms of interdisciplinary studies; to organize conferences devoted to political thought; and to promote political thought in the academy.
3. The Association is formed exclusively for educational and scientific purposes, consistent with having the status of a Registered Charity in the United Kingdom.

#### **Article II: Membership and Annual Business Meeting**

1. Membership shall be open to persons interested in furthering the purposes of the Association and in participating in its activities, including college and university faculty, graduate students, and independent scholars and researchers with an interest in political thought from all disciplines and countries.
2. A business meeting to elect officers when appropriate (see below) and report on the Association's affairs, decide policy and review, if desired, its constitution, will be held each January at the Political Thought Conference (usually held in Oxford).
3. The Chair can be requested to call an extraordinary business meeting of the Association at any time provided this request has the support of either 10% of the Association's membership or 2/3 of the Executive Committee.

#### **Article III: Officers and Committees**

1. The Association shall have the following officers: an Executive Committee Chair, an Executive Committee, a Secretary and a Treasurer.
  - a. The Committee Chair shall be responsible for convening and directing meetings of the Executive Committee, for communicating decisions of the Committee to the membership, and for presiding over the business meeting. The business meeting will be held each January at the Political Thought Conference (usually held in Oxford).
  - b. The members of the Executive Committee shall be responsible for implementing the decisions of the Association; and for corresponding

with scholarly societies, associations, and related groups on behalf of the Association. The terms of the Executive Committee shall normally be staggered.

c. The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping minutes of all meetings, for recording decisions of the membership and Executive Committee regarding association policies, and will be chosen from among the members of the Executive Committee.

d. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the collection and disbursement of all monies, at the direction of the Executive Committee, and will be chosen from among the members of the Executive Committee.

Each officer shall be limited to no more than three consecutive terms.

2. The Executive Committee Chair will be directly elected by the membership for a renewable term of three years every three years.

3. The Executive Committee shall consist of ten directly-elected officers, inclusive of the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The committee may also co-opt up to three additional members. In addition, the following will be ex-officio members of the committee: the local convenors of the Political Thought Conference, a convenor of the PSA Specialist Group in Political Thought, the coordinator of the Irish Political Theory Network. No directly-elected member shall serve more than three consecutive terms. A majority of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and decisions shall be made by majority vote of said quorum. The Academic Convenors of the Political Thought Conference may be invited to Executive Committee meetings in a non-voting advisory capacity.

4. Officers and Committee Members may be removed from office at any time for failure to carry out their responsibilities or for disrupting or otherwise impeding the work of the Association. Removal from office shall follow only upon a unanimous vote of all members of the Executive Committee (excluding the person being removed, if a member of that Committee).

5. Association officers and at-large members of the Executive Committee shall be elected by the membership at the business meeting.

The process shall be as follows:

a. By two months prior to the next scheduled business meeting, the Executive Committee shall inform all Association members which positions need to be filled and invite members to nominate themselves or others.

b. All nominations require a proposer and a seconder from among the membership. Nominations may be made at any point up to the start of voting, including during the business meeting.

c. The Executive Committee will select a returning officer from among its number to whom nominations may be sent.

d. In the event that there are more candidates than positions, then the returning officer will organise a vote during the business meeting. Members unable to attend the business meeting may appoint a proxy.

voter. The returning officer will select two members of the Association who are neither candidates nor current members of the Committee to count the votes.

5. In the event that any office or Executive Committee position becomes vacant for any reason, the Committee shall appoint a temporary replacement from among the general membership of the Association. In the event that the office of Executive Committee Chair becomes vacant for any reason, the Committee shall select a temporary Chair from among its membership. All such temporary appointments shall serve until the next election.

6. The Executive Committee shall have the authority and responsibility to oversee the administration of all aspects of the Association, including:

- a. administering policies concerning the Association's publications and other association business
- b. fostering affiliations with other learned societies
- c. collecting and disbursing funds acquired from dues, publications, etc.
- d. creating other *ad hoc* or standing committees as necessary
- e. communicating with members through newsletters, etc.
- f. developing guidelines and requirements for membership in the Association
- g. drafting nominating and election procedures for approval by the general membership
- h. creating bylaws for issues regarding governance of the APT as they arise, subject to approval by the general membership
- i. nominating members of the Advisory Committee

7. The Executive Committee may make decisions on behalf of the Association regarding issues requiring resolution that arise between business meetings. The Chair shall communicate any such decisions to the Association's membership.

8. The Executive Committee shall normally include, but not be limited to, at least one graduate student, at least two senior scholars (Professor or equivalent), and at least one junior scholar (Lecturer or equivalent).

#### **Article IV: Amendments**

1. Recommendations for amendments to this constitution may be submitted by any member of the Association at any time to the Executive Committee Chair, who may or may not submit the matter at any time to the whole Committee for consideration. Recommendations for amendments may also be submitted by petition of 10% or more of the general membership to the Committee as a whole. In order to be considered at that year's business meeting, such petitions must be submitted to the Chair no later than two months prior to the next scheduled business meeting, whereupon such petitions shall be forwarded immediately to all members of the Executive Committee for consideration as a potential ballot issue.

2. The Executive Committee shall forward all proposed amendments, along with its recommendation regarding such amendments, to the general membership of the Association no later than one month prior to the next scheduled business meeting.

3. In order for the Constitution to be amended, the proposed amendment must be ratified by a two-thirds vote of the members attending the business meeting of the Association at which the amendment appears on the ballot.

#### **Article V: Ratification**

1. This Constitution took effect following ratification at the Oxford Political Thought Conference AGM in January 2009 and amendment at the Political Thought Conference AGM held in St Catherine's College, Oxford, in January 2018.

