

Doula UK constitution



**PO Box 26678
London
N14 4WB**

1. Name

The name of the organisation will be Doula UK

2. Purposes and powers

- a. Doula UK is established
 - i. to promote the role of doulas,
 - ii. to improve communication between doulas, and health professionals
 - iii. to advance doulas' understanding of birth and the postnatal period.
- b. In furtherance of the above purposes, but not further or otherwise, the Association may:
 - i. Promote and organise co-operation in the achievement of the same, nationally, internationally, and locally, and to that end may bring together in conference representatives of voluntary agencies, government departments, statutory authorities and individuals engaged in the furtherance of the same.
 - ii. Promote and carry out or assist in promoting and carrying out research, surveys and investigations and publish the result thereof
 - iii. Arrange and provide for, or join in arranging and providing for, the holding of study days, exhibitions, meetings, lectures, seminars and training courses.
 - iv. Collect and disseminate information on all matters affecting the above purposes and exchange such information with other bodies having similar purposes whether in this country or overseas.
 - v. Procure to be written and print, publish, issue and circulate, gratuitously or otherwise, such papers, books, periodicals, pamphlets or other documents or films as shall further the above purposes.
 - vi. Accepts gifts and borrow or raise money for the purposes of Doula UK on such terms and on such security as shall be thought for PROVIDED THAT Doula UK shall not undertake any permanent trading activities in raising funds for its primary charitable objects.
 - vii. Invest the moneys of Doula UK not immediately required for its purposes in or upon such investments, securities or property as may be thought fit, subject nevertheless to such conditions (if any) as may for the time being be imposed or required by law.
 - viii. Do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the attainment of the said purposes.
 - ix. Mediate between parents or health professionals and member doula in case of complaint or dispute

3. Membership

- a. Membership of Doula UK will be open to any interested individuals or organisations who have paid the annual subscription. There are two main categories : doulas and friends of Doula UK
 - i. Doulas must be working in the UK
 - ii. Doulas must be actively working – unless in a specified break like a maternity leave or sabbatical

- iii. Friends of Doula UK do not have to be doulas but interested individuals or organisations
- b. The said committee shall have the right
 - i. To approve or reject applications for membership, and
 - ii. For good and sufficient reason to terminate the membership of any individual PROVIDED THAT the member concerned shall have the right to be heard by the Committee before a final decision has been made.

4. Training

In order to further the aims of Doula UK and those of individuals, Doula UK shall assess courses from independent trainers (recognised courses) and possibly provide training itself directly, it will offer two categories of doulas

a. Recognised doulas

Recognised doulas shall be those doulas who have successfully attended a Doula UK recognised course and have subsequently been assessed by a Doula UK named assessor. These doulas will have attended a minimum of 4 births and/or 4 postnatal clients.

b. Trainee doulas

Trainee doulas shall be those doulas who have joined Doula UK upon completion of a recognised course but have not yet been assessed.

5. The committee

There shall be a committee for Doula UK which shall direct the policy and manage the affairs of Doula UK

- a. All members of the Committee shall be elected by postal ballot to serve for two years but thereafter eligible for re-election

- a. The posts to be elected in the committee are :

- i. Chair
- ii. Vice chair
- iii. Treasurer
- iv. Secretary
- v. Regional representative coordinator

- b. The Committee may appoint such sub-committees which such powers, duties and duration as it may decide PROVIDED THAT all acts and proceedings of any such sub-committees shall be reported back to the committee as soon as possible
- c. The committee shall appoint one of its member to serve as chair during their membership thereof, or for such shorter period as it may decide.
- d. The committee may appoint one or more qualified auditors, and such staff as it may decide, and may fix any reasonable remuneration for them
- e. The committee shall determine the annual subscription following a vote at the AGM.
- f. The proceedings of the committee shall not be invalidated by failure of, or defect in, any election or appointment.

6. Meetings of Doula UK

- a. Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held in the Autumn. The date and venue will be decided by the committee. 21 days notice will be given to every member. The business thereat shall include consideration of a report prepared on behalf of the committee and considerations of the accounts
- b. The chairperson at her discretion may, and on the special request of 10 or more members must, call a Special General Meeting of Doula UK.

7. Nominations

Nominations for members of the committee must be received by the Secretary at least six

weeks before the Annual General Meeting.

8. Voting

The committee shall determine upon and arrange a system of postal voting for all elections. Other decisions at any meeting shall, save as herein provided, be decided by a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote: and in the event of equality of votes the chairperson shall have a casting vote.

9. Minutes

Each committee or sub-committee shall keep minutes in which its secretary, or other delegate, shall record all proceedings and resolutions.

10. Regions and Regional Representative

- a. The committee shall from time to time define administrative areas to be known as regions
- b. Members of Doula UK resident within each region shall be entitled to elect one of their number to serve as Regional Representative..

11. Finance

- a. All monies raised by or on behalf of Doula UK shall be applied for further purposes of Doula UK and not otherwise PROVIDED THAT nothing herein shall prevent the payment in good faith of reasonable and proper remuneration to any employee of Doula UK or the repayment of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses.
- b. The honorary treasurer shall ensure that proper accounts are kept of the finances of Doula UK
- c. A bank account shall be held in the name of Doula UK with Barclays PLC or with such other bank as the committee shall from time to time decide. The committee shall authorize in writing the Treasurer and the Secretary of Doula UK to sign cheques on behalf of Doula UK.

12. Alterations to the constitution

Any alterations of this constitution shall receive the assent of not less than two thirds of the members present and voting at the meeting specially called for the purpose PROVIDED THAT notice of any such alteration shall have been received by the secretary in writing not less than 21 clear days before the meeting at which alterations is to be brought forward. At least 14 clear days ' notice in writing of such a meeting setting forth the terms of the alteration to be proposed shall be sent by the secretary to each member PROVIDED THAT no alteration be proposed shall be made to Clause 2, Clause 13 or this clause and that no alteration shall be made which would have the effect of causing Doula UK to cease to be a non-profit organisation.

13. Dissolution

If the committee, by a simple majority, decide at any time that, on the ground of expense or otherwise, it is necessary or advisable to dissolve Doula UK, it shall call a meeting of all members by not less than 21 days' notice (stating the terms of the resolution to be proposed thereat). If such decision shall be confirmed by two-thirds majority of those present and voting at such meeting, the committee shall have the power to dispose of any assets held by or on behalf of Doula UK. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to the objects of Doula UK as the committee may determine.

14. Notices

Any notice may be served by the secretary or any member, either personally or by sending it

through the post in a prepaid letter addressed to such member at her last known address in the United Kingdom, and any letter so sent shall be deemed to have been received within 10 days of posting.

15. Interpretation

For the interpretation of this constitution, the Interpretation Act of 1978 shall apply as it applies to the interpretation of an Act of Parliament.

November 2005