Constitution of United Voices of the World (UVW)

1. We, the members of United Voices of the World trade union, hereby promulgate this constitution in order to promote our moral, social and economic well-being and protect and improve our individual and collective rights and interests, as well as foster and regulate harmonious and progressive relations between workers and employers.

2. The name of the union shall be United Voices of the World and hereinafter referred to as “the union”.

3. Our vision, mission and values

3.1. Our **vision** is that low paid, precarious and migrant workers in the UK have power at work, enjoy proper pay and conditions, and are treated with dignity, equality and respect.

3.2. Our **mission** is to achieve this by building power and solidarity in workplaces and communities through collective, legal and direct action.

3.3. Our core **values** are:

a. Unity – we work together; our power lies in the collective strength of our community

b. Courage – we are bold and fearless; we dare to do things differently

c. Participation – we are an open member-led union; every member matters, every voice counts

d. Diversity – we respect each other and value our differences

e. Creativity – we are inventive and resourceful and adapt to change; our work is serious, and we have fun doing it!

f. Solidarity – we stand together with other struggles that share our vision and values

4. Aims of the union

4.1. The aims of the union shall be to:

a. Protect and promote the interests of its members and redress members’ grievances.

b. To secure for the members proper conditions of service.

c. To prevent any reduction of wages, and to ensure that wages are standardised at a fair level.

d. To organise and unite the persons engaged in all sectors of the economy but specifically the low-paid, service sector.

e. To regulate relations between workers and employers.

f. To make efforts at settlements of disputes between workers and employers in an amicable manner in the interests of continuity of work

g. To provide legal assistance to members in respect of matters of disputes, arising out of, or incidental to, their employment.

h. To render necessary help to the members during the period of any legally sanctioned strike brought about with the permission of the union.

i. Take any action that is lawful, which would help it to fulfil its aims.

j. Raise funds and receive contributions where appropriate to finance the work.

k. Publicise and promote the work of the union.

l. Organise meetings, training courses and events.

m. Work with similar groups and exchange information and advice with them.

5. Membership

5.1. Every member shall have the right to equal treatment and opportunity within the union without discrimination on grounds of gender, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, occupation, age, citizenship, race, language or religious and political beliefs, and shall have the following rights as members.

5.2. Membership of the union shall be open to any worker willing to abide by the rules of the union.

5.3. Every member shall have one vote at general meetings concerning any proposed motion or election.

5.4. Any member running in arrears of his or her monthly subscriptions for a period of two months will be declared a defaulter, and in the event of not settling the arrears within one month of the declaration, he or she shall cease to be a member and their name will be removed. He or she may re-join on payment of arrears and fresh admission fee.

5.5. The union shall keep a register of all its members containing their names and particulars of their place of work and domicile.

5.6. The Executive Committee may refuse membership to an applicant, where it is considered such membership would be detrimental to the aims, purposes or activities of the union.

5.7. The Executive Committee may, by resolution passed at a meeting thereof, terminate or suspend the membership of any member, if in its opinion their conduct is prejudicial to the interests and objects of the union, provided that the individual member or representative of the member shall have the right to be heard by the Executive Committee before the final decision is made. There shall be a right of appeal to an independent arbitrator.

6. The Executive Committee

6.1. The Executive Committee of the union shall consist of members from across the union's sectors and groups, including those without a formal structure.

6.2. In monitoring shifts in membership, the Executive should use its discretion to ensure that the committee remains representative of the UVW's diverse membership.

6.3. The Executive Committee shall ensure resources are allocated as necessary to develop and implement work programmes supporting the sectors and groups that comprise the majority of the Union's membership, including new groups without formal structures.

6.4. Election to the Executive Committee will be conducted in accordance with current statutes.

6.5. Elected committee members will nominate members of the committee to hold specific roles, including but not limited to the following: Treasurer; Secretary to the committee; Staff liaison; Disciplinary and grievance. Roles can be shared, where appropriate.

6.6. The General Secretary is a member of the Executive Committee, providing advice and recommendations but without voting rights.

6.7. The Executive Committee shall meet as often as necessary, on such days and at such a place as determined by the Executive Committee. Meetings will be held at least once every two months.

6.8. All members of the Executive Committee shall be given at least seven days' notice of a meeting unless it is deemed an emergency meeting.

6.9. The Executive Committee is responsible for:

a. Providing direction, leadership and strategic oversight of the union on behalf of members

b. Protecting the union's interests, legally and reputationally

c. Ensuring the union fulfils its statutory and constitutional obligations

d. Overseeing the union's finances, to ensure income is sustainable and resources are allocated appropriately

e. Overseeing the arrangements for Annual General Meetings (AGMs)

f. Overseeing union staffing, including recruitment and wellbeing

g. Overseeing staff and membership disciplinary and grievance processes

6.10. The Executive Committee shall appoint trustees to hold the union's property and assets in trust in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

7. The Accounts

7.1. The Treasurer shall keep proper accounting records with respect to the union's transactions, assets and liabilities, and establish and maintain a satisfactory system of control of the union's accounting records, its cash holdings and all its receipts and remittances.

7.2. The union's accounting record shall be kept available for inspection.

7.3. A member of the union has a right to request access to any accounting records of the union which are available for inspection and relate to periods including a time when they were a member of the union. Arrangements will be made with the member to be allowed to inspect the records requested before the end of the period of twenty-eight days beginning with the day the request was made.

7.4. The union shall appoint an auditor who shall make a report to the union on the accounts audited by them. The report shall state whether, in the opinion of the auditor, the accounts give a true and fair view of the matters to which they relate.

8. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

8.1. The union shall hold an AGM at least once every 12 months.

8.2. Where possible members shall be notified personally, otherwise notice will be deemed served by publicly advertising the meetings giving at least 14 days' notice of the AGM.

8.3. Attendees of the AGM shall receive the annual report, financial report and audited statement of accounts. It will also elect 2 scrutineers to count the votes in elections held at the AGM, and vote on motions and nominations submitted by individual members.

9. Amendments to the Constitution

9.1. Proposals for amendments to this constitution can be proposed and voted on at an AGM

Updated October 2026