



BRUSSELS CHORAL SOCIETY
INTERNAL REGULATIONS
Version as of 11 April 2016

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1. Internal Regulations – Singing Members

These Regulations have been approved by the BCS Board in accordance with Article 27 of the BCS Statutes and submitted to the General Meeting. In event of conflict between these regulations and the original French version of the BCS Statutes ('Statuts coordonnés au 29 mars 2004'), the latter shall prevail.

1. Members' rights

Singing members are entitled to attend rehearsals, to sing in concerts (subject to the provisions of para 6.1 below) and to take part in other activities organized by the BCS. They are full members of the BCS and may vote at general meetings and be elected as members of the Board of Directors.

2. Auditions and re-auditions

To become a full member, also known as a "singing member", of the BCS, candidates must pass an audition. The audition shall normally consist of singing with accompaniment a single, simple piece demonstrating vocal range, colour, size, intonation and musicianship together with tonal recall of a piece already rehearsed and sight-reading exercises. The audition panel shall consist of the Musical Director, one of the Assistant Musical Directors and the accompanist. The panel shall determine whether a person is accepted as a singing member and to which voice part (1st or 2nd soprano, alto, tenor or bass) he/she is assigned.

Following their initial audition, full members must re-audition every five years or at the discretion of the Musical Director. This happens on an ad hoc basis, and can range in frequency from every one to every five years. The audition panel may decide that continued membership is authorized for a further five years or for a shorter period as deemed appropriate by the panel. The panel may refuse initial admittance or renewal of membership. A person who fails an audition may request a second audition giving appropriate justifications. The panel may or may not accept such a request.

The MD, in consultation with the voice representative (VR), may decide that any member absent from rehearsals and/or concerts for one year or more or who misses too many rehearsals is required to re-audition before returning to the choir.

3. Annual membership fee

Every member is required to pay an annual membership fee in September each year or on joining the choir. The amount is fixed annually by the Board and communicated to the members. The membership fee may be paid in 2 instalments; 50% in September and 50% in January. Members who join during the second semester (January - June) pay a half-year fee. With the agreement of the President, VP Internal Affairs and Treasurer, the fee may be reduced or waived by a voice representative (VR) for an individual member if payment would cause hardship.

The Treasurer shall provide the VRs with lists of the members who have paid their fees. If necessary, the VRs shall issue reminders to members of their voice sections who have not yet paid. A member who fails to pay the fee within one month of receiving such a reminder shall be deemed to have resigned from the BCS and shall no longer be entitled to attend rehearsals and concerts.

4. Voice representatives (VRs)

Each voice section shall be administered by one of its members who is known as the voice representative. VRs shall also have deputies who shall perform their duties in their absence. The VR shall record the presence of members in his/her voice section at each rehearsal and concert. The VR shall contact members who miss two consecutive rehearsals without explanation to ask for the reasons for their absence. If a VR considers that a member's

attendance is inadequate, he/she shall warn the member concerned that he/she risks being excluded from the next concert performance. If attendance remains unsatisfactory, the VR shall report this to the MD requesting a decision on whether the member should be authorized to take part in a concert.

The VR shall liaise with the MD on musical matters regarding the section and individual section members. The VRs should note – if possible – special remarks of the MD and relay them to their section. The VRs shall greet and assist candidate and new members.

5. Exclusion

A member may be excluded from the ASBL, in which case he/she may not take part in rehearsals or concerts, if he/she has not paid the membership fee, has not passed an audition, or re-audition or, when so decided by a two-thirds majority at a general meeting, for reasons of unacceptable conduct.

The MD, in consultation with the relevant VR, may also refuse to allow a member to sing in a concert or may require that he/she pass an audition if his/her attendance at rehearsals is unsatisfactory. The MD, in consultation with the corresponding VR and the Assistant Musical Directors, may decide on purely musical grounds (even if attendance is satisfactory) that a member may not take part in a concert.

6. Members' obligations

6.1 Rehearsals

Singing members must attend rehearsals regularly and in particular all general rehearsals with the concert conductor. Members who, for good reasons, cannot attend one or more rehearsals must inform their VR in advance. Before each rehearsal, members must prepare the passages indicated in the rehearsal schedule. Punctual arrival at rehearsals is essential and frequent late-coming or early departure will be taken into account when determining whether a member's attendance is adequate. Failure to comply with these rules will incur the risk of being disqualified from singing in the performance.

Members are encouraged to assist in setting out chairs in the rehearsal room and in putting them away after rehearsals. The rehearsal premises must be left in good order, windows closed, all rubbish cleared, bottles and glasses returned to the Bar, etc.

6.2 Concerts

Full members are required to take part in every concert. Members must comply with the dress code specified by the Executive Committee for each concert. Failure to do so may cause exclusion of a member from a given concert. Members are encouraged to assist in promoting concerts in every way possible.

6.3 Image and audio rights

Members must agree to assign to the Brussels Choral Society for uses agreed by the Board of Directors their rights related to any sound and video recordings as well as still images of their participation in the choir's activities.

6.4 Conduct

Members are required to conduct themselves at all times in an appropriate manner with respect to the choir, fellow choir members, conductors and musicians and in particular to follow instructions given at rehearsals and concerts. The Board may suspend any member whose conduct it considers unacceptable. Such suspension shall remain in force until the next general meeting, which shall decide whether the member concerned is to be excluded from the BCS.

6.5 Training and workshops

Singing members are expected to take part in training sessions, workshops or similar events organized by the BCS.

7. Dress Code

Any change to the dress codes will be communicated in good time before a given concert. If you have any questions about whether your attire is appropriate, please ask your Voice Representative.

7.1. Dress Code for Ladies

Concert attire is formal and black (not grey, not off-black, not charcoal)

Top

- Sleeves must be at least 3/4 length
- Lace, voile, organza, etc....are acceptable blouse materials provided that you wear a tank top/shirt underneath; i.e. bustiers/brassieres may not be worn alone beneath a transparent fabric

Bottom

- Ankle-length black skirt —or—
- black trousers (no jeans, no chinos, no athletic apparel)

Feet

- Black hose — in the summertime you may choose not to wear hose
- Black shoes — in the summertime, you may choose to wear sandals provided that they are simple and black
- Shoes should be comfortable, but they still need to look nice; no coloured decorations, no boots, no athletic shoes/sneakers

Jewellery & Scarf

- Jewellery, if worn, should be simple and not distracting or colourful
- Claret-coloured scarves are worn at certain performances. Scarves are worn draped around the neck with the ends hanging parallel in the front of the body; a singing member pays a deposit for her scarf and is responsible for it during her time in the choir; upon leaving the choir a member may return the scarf and receive her deposit back

Due to the diverse nature of the venues in which we perform, the choir cannot always guarantee the security of changing rooms and thus does not take responsibility for personal items left there during performances. As such, you may choose to bring a small, discreet black purse on stage.

7.2. Dress Code for Men

1. Dinner suit ("Smoking") with white shirt and black bow tie, black socks and black shoes, or, depending on the concert:
2. Black long-sleeved shirt, black trousers, black socks and black shoes.

2. Internal Regulations – Governance

These Regulations have been approved by the BCS Board in accordance with Article 27 of the BCS Statutes. In event of conflict between these regulations and the original French version of the BCS Statutes ('Statuts coordonnés au 29 mars 2004'), the latter shall prevail.

1. The ASBL

The BCS is a non-profit-making association ("ASBL – Association sans but lucratif") under Belgian Law. The ASBL has two categories of members:

- Full members ("membres effectifs"), also known as "singing members", of the BCS. These are persons who have been admitted to the choir following a successful audition and who have paid the membership fee determined by the Board for this category of member;
- Associate (non-singing) members ("membres adhérents") who have paid the membership fee determined by the Board for this category of member.

2. The Board of Directors

The ASBL is governed by a Board of Directors. It must consist of at least seven members who are full or associate members of the ASBL and who are elected by the General Meeting ("assemblée générale"). The President, Treasurer and Secretary are appointed by the General Meeting from among the Board members. In the event of a vacancy during the course of the year, the Board may appoint a replacement who shall be co-opted on a temporary basis until the next AGM. The Board members shall not be paid although legitimate expenses may be reimbursed to them.

The composition of the Board (other than the three afore-mentioned posts) may be modified by a general meeting of the ASBL. Currently the Board members are the President, three Vice Presidents (Concert Management, Communications, and Internal Affairs), the Representatives of the four voice sections: soprano, alto, tenor, bass (VRs), the Treasurer and the Secretary. Each VR has a deputy ("suppléant"). The Musical Director (MD) normally attends its meetings in an advisory capacity. The Board may invite other persons to attend its meetings but only for the items regarding which it wishes to receive their views. The MD and any other invited persons may take part in discussions but are not entitled to vote.

The Board is responsible for the sound management of the ASBL and reports to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) or to any Extraordinary General Meeting. All powers which are not expressly or legally assigned to the general meeting lie with the Board. The Board has sole power to make financial or other commitments on behalf of the BCS. The Board must approve the overall budget of major events (for example concerts or choral weekends) as well as the membership fees to be paid by full and associate members, appointments to positions such as those of Musical Director and Accompanist, long-term goals and the concert programme (this is a non-exhaustive list).

It may delegate certain powers. It may set up sub-committees or other groups composed of Board members and other persons to deal with specific issues. The Board shall meet whenever necessary and at least three times per year. A Board meeting shall be held shortly after the AGM. Minutes showing all decisions taken shall be drawn up after each meeting. Urgent decisions requiring Board approval may be taken between meetings by correspondence using email, with a deadline for responses from Board members. In the absence of a response, the member concerned shall be deemed to approve the decision. Such decisions shall also be recorded in minutes.

A meeting of the Board shall be deemed valid provided that at least eight members are present or represented by proxy. Any absent member may give a proxy to another Board member. A proxy is valid for a specific meeting only. The member giving the proxy may indicate the position to be adopted on his/her behalf regarding any item to be discussed. A member who attends a Board meeting may not exercise more than one proxy. Absent VRs shall normally be replaced by their deputies who shall then have full voting rights.

3. Roles of the Board members

The Board members shall have specific responsibilities which are summarized below:

- a. President:
 - coordinating the overall running of the BCS;
 - coordinating the activities of the Board and the Executive Committee;
 - chairing the Board, the Executive Committee and General Meetings;
 - representing the BCS with respect to external partners;
 - coordinating efforts to find structural sponsorship.

- b. VP Concert Management:
 - maintaining a concert planning schedule and liaising with other Brussels-based choirs and orchestras to prevent a clash of dates and programme;
 - liaising with orchestras and soloists;
 - booking venues;
 - drawing up contracts with orchestras and soloists;
 - performing stage management;
 - handling concert ticket sales and reporting relevant information to the Treasurer;
 - issuing VIP invitations;
 - providing choir members with concert information.

- c. VP Internal Affairs:
 - welcoming new candidates and organizing their auditions; organizing re-auditions;
 - keeping the list of members up-to-date and reporting any changes to the Secretary, Treasurer and relevant Voice Representative;
 - organizing workshops and social events;
 - arranging transport and accommodation for the choir;
 - dealing with problems arising from any “hardship” cases;
 - maintaining contacts with the rehearsal space and tidying up the premises after rehearsals.

- d. VP Communications:
 - maintaining contacts with the press & media;
 - dealing with public relations;
 - establishing a concert promotion schedule for each concert;
 - preparing printed and digital promotion material;
 - coordinating the distribution of printed material in collaboration with VRs and members;
 - preparing BCS Newsletters and New Year’s Greetings;
 - preparing online concert and membership surveys;
 - maintaining the BCS website and Facebook page;
 - publishing the internal newsletter “Chorus Lines” and other notices to members, including ‘Who’s who’;
 - promoting the recruitment of new members;
 - maintaining the BCS database and external mailing lists;

- maintaining the physical BCS archives.
- e. Treasurer:
- in coordination with the President, establishing annual and concert budgets;
 - submitting the annual budget for approval by the AGM;
 - submitting concert budgets for approval by the Board;
 - monitoring the ASBL's financial situation and reporting the latter to the Board and EC;
 - preparing the annual accounts (balance sheet and profit and loss account) for approval by the AGM;
 - performing all necessary financial transactions (subject to counter-signature by the President or a Vice President where required);
 - managing insurance contracts;
 - making tax declarations;
 - over-seeing the financial aspects of ordering and selling scores to members in collaboration with the appointed Librarian(s);
 - over-seeing the financial aspects of the bar in collaboration with the appointed Bar Manager(s);
 - obtaining SABAM authorizations when necessary.
 -
- f. Secretary:
- compiling and distributing the agendas of the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee and General Meetings;
 - taking the minutes of meetings of the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee and General Meetings;
 - distributing the minutes of the Board and EC to all Board members and of General Meetings to all members;
 - arranging for relevant notices to be published in the Moniteur belge;
 - registering the accounts with the greffe du tribunal de commerce;
 - maintaining the BCS database and internal mailing lists;
 - maintaining the online BCS archive on Dropbox: managing access for Board and Executive Committee members; revoking access upon termination of mandate, resignation or exclusion;
 - keeping an overview of and distributing BCS email-accounts to Board and Executive Committee members; revoking access upon termination of mandate, resignation or exclusion;
 - managing the internal communication to members via info@brusselschoralsociety.com.
- g. Voice representatives:
- administering their voice sections and representing their views to the Board;
 - monitoring members' attendance at rehearsals and concerts;
 - liaising with VP Concert Management and the Stage Manager concerning the list of singers for each concert;
 - encouraging members to promote BCS concerts and involving them in the distribution of concert promotion material (in collaboration with VP Communications);
 - liaising with the Musical Director on musical matters;
 - liaising with the Treasurer on financial matters related to membership fees;
 - greeting and assisting candidates and new members.

4. Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the BCS must take place during the first half of each year and is normally held in the spring. All full members must be invited to attend. Associate members may also attend in an advisory capacity. The Musical Director also attends the AGM and is invited to present an artistic report. All Board members as well as the Deputy VRs are elected for one year at the AGM. The AGM also appoints auditors, approves the budget for the current year and the accounts of the previous year, and carries out the other functions required in the Statutes and by Belgian law.

5. Appointments

Any full or associate member of the BCS may stand for office as a Board member or other appointment within the management structure of the ASBL. In order to ensure that key posts are filled with competent persons, an Appointments Sub-committee, consisting of the President and three Vice-Presidents, shall seek suitable candidates for the following posts:

Elected by a General Meeting:

- President
- Vice-President Concert Management
- Vice-President Communications
- Vice-President Internal Affairs
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Voice Representatives and their deputies

Appointed by the Board:

- Musical Director
- Accompanist

6. Executive Committee (EC)

The BCS shall be managed on a daily basis by a sub-committee of the Board known as the Executive Committee. It shall consist of the President (who shall act as its chairman), the three Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer and the Secretary. It shall take its decisions by majority vote and record those decisions in minutes which shall be distributed to all Board members. The Musical Director shall normally attend its meetings in an advisory capacity. Urgent decisions requiring EC approval may be taken between meetings by correspondence using email, with a deadline for responses from committee members. In the absence of a response, the member concerned shall be deemed to approve the decision. Such decisions shall also be recorded in minutes.

The EC shall deal with those matters that are not the exclusive prerogative of the Board or of a general meeting. It shall present to the Board for approval major projects such as concerts and choral weekends, plan and organize such events, as well as deal with everyday issues related to the running of the choir. It may make financial commitments up to € 15,000 provided that these are within the annual budget approved by the General Meeting and within the specific budget of a given project approved by the Board. Any financial commitment such as a contract or a payment the amount of which exceeds € 10,000 must be approved and signed by two Board members. Agreements with third parties, whether involving payment or not, shall also be signed by two Board members.

7. Musical Director (MD)

The Musical Director shall be appointed by the Board. He or she is an independent expert and may be remunerated or an unpaid volunteer. The exact mission to be performed by the MD and any remuneration shall be laid down in an agreement between him or her and the ASBL. The duration of the appointment shall be determined by the Board and shall normally

be one year, with the possibility of renewal.

8. Assistant Musical Directors

Assistant Musical Directors shall be appointed by the Board on the recommendation of the MD. They shall normally be singing members of the choir and shall not be paid for their work.

9. Accompanist

The accompanist shall be appointed by the Board on the recommendation of the MD. He/she is an independent expert and may be remunerated or an unpaid volunteer. The exact mission to be performed by the accompanist and any remuneration shall be laid down in an agreement between him/her and the ASBL. The duration of the appointment shall be determined by the Board and shall normally be one year, with the possibility of renewal.

10. Musical Team

The artistic aspects of the choir's activities shall be managed by a consultative group known as the Musical Team and consisting of the MD, the Assistant Musical Directors and the accompanist. It shall be chaired by the MD, liaise with the President and report to the EC. It shall advise on repertoire and programmes (both works and musical partners), plan rehearsals, ensure that the choir achieves the level required for performance, maintain and enhance its quality.

11. Hiring the BCS

The BCS is a symphonic choir and may only be hired in its totality; it is not possible to hire subsets of the choir. The Board reserves the right to refuse offers that may compromise the artistic quality and sound of a full symphonic choir. BCS members are free to form and perform with smaller groups, provided they do so under names other than "Brussels Choral Society".

12. Conflict of interest

In the interest of transparency, ensuring cost-efficiency and avoiding conflict of interest, the Board shall compare at least two offers for any purchase related to day-to-day BCS operations (e.g. websites) and overhead expenses above €3,000. This article excludes expenses related to the choir's artistic activities such as concert venues, orchestras, soloists and musicians (this is a non-exhaustive list).

13. Sponsorship

The Board shall actively seek opportunities for sponsorship with external organisations to achieve shared objectives. The choir's independence must be maintained and external partnerships must not be allowed to bring the name of the BCS into disrepute.

Each possibility or proposal of sponsorship shall be carefully reviewed by the Board, taking ethical considerations into account.

14. Confidentiality

BCS members or persons associated with its activities shall not divulge to third parties any confidential information relating to BCS members or the association's affairs. Upon termination of their mandate, resignation or exclusion, such persons shall immediately and without delay return to the BCS all documents and other material belonging to it. Where appropriate, passwords that they have been issued shall be changed to prevent them from accessing relevant functionalities or confidential information.