

Yoga Teachers' Branch Constitution
Independent Workers' Union of Great Britain

1. Branch Name

The branch shall be called "Yoga Teachers' Branch" of the IWGB and will henceforth be referred to as "the branch".

2. Objects

- a. To improve and protect the terms and conditions of the members;
- b. To promote the primacy of members' own decision making in all matters covered by the branch constitution, and in the development of all of the branch's policies;
- c. To preserve, promote, and protect the independence of the branch;
- d. To settle disputes between the members and their employers and/or contractors;
- e. To initiate movements for increased rates of pay, improved working conditions and fair and transparent employment contracts;
- f. To cooperate, directly or indirectly, with the work of any organisation, local, national, or international, which holds objects or policies which are similar to those of the branch;
- g. To raise awareness and campaign on issues of safety, equity, representation and inclusion;
- h. To support and work toward establishing a peer network across the UK that encourages empowerment and centres the voices of those most marginalised;

3. Membership

The branch is open to direct employees, contract, freelance, agency, or casual workers who work or have worked as Yoga Teachers. In the case of venue/studio owners or managers who are also teachers, they can only join in the capacity as yoga teacher and will not be represented by the union in the capacity as manager/owner.

A. The branch chair has discretion to decide when it is inappropriate when a member can sit in a meeting or discussion e.g. when teachers are discussing unionising their workplace in the presence of their manager

B. The union will only represent members in the specific parts of employment where they are a teacher.

c. No studio manager/owner is able to become an elected official. If any elected official becomes a manager/owner they must inform the committee immediately and step down from their position.

4. Branch Structure

- a. There shall be an annual general meeting, held once per year in April before the union-wide AGM, to elect officers and representatives;

- b. The AGM shall be considered quorate when 10% of the branch or 20 members are present, whichever is lowest;
- c. In addition to the AGM, the branch shall hold monthly meetings, to decide branch policy;
- d. Branch monthly meetings are open to all members, and every member has equal rights to voice and vote;
- e. Branch monthly meetings shall be considered quorate when 10 members of the Branch are present;
- f. An emergency branch meeting can be convened at any time, by the Chair or Vice-Chair, with a minimum of 48 hours' notice. The meeting will need to have 20% of the membership in order to be considered quorate;
- g. Ordinary members may convene an emergency branch meeting without the chair or vice-chair if need be. This meeting will need 40% of the membership present to be considered quorate.

5. Branch Officers

- a. All Branch Officers shall be elected at the AGM, for the period of one year. Any individual interested in becoming a Branch Officer needs to be nominated and seconded by branch members before a vote can take place. If a Branch officer position becomes vacant between AGMs, a candidate can be voted into position by the Branch Meeting, to serve until the time of the next AGM.
- b. For contested positions, candidates will be invited to make a brief speech to the members on their candidacy. If a position is uncontested, the position will still need to be voted on in a "yes" or "no" manner. An uncontested candidate for an officer or representative position must receive a majority of "yes" votes in order to be confirmed.
- c. As the position of Branch Chair is an ex-officio member of the IWGB National Executive Committee, if it is contested, there will need to be a postal ballot in order to comply with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. If the position is uncontested then the elections will be run in the same way as those for other Branch Officers. The term for Branch Chair is one year. If the Chair steps down and is replaced mid-term their replacement will automatically become a member of the IWGB Executive Committee
- d. The following officer positions and their respective duties are listed below:
 - i. Branch Chair - This person will be the branch spokesperson and representative both within the IWGB and with the public at large. This individual will chair Branch meetings as well as the AGM, and will be expected to carry out branch business on a day-to-day basis. This person shall have the authority to convene branch meetings. This person will be a member of the IWGB National Executive Committee.
 - ii. Vice-Chair - This person will assist the Chair in their duties and will act as Chair during their absence. This person shall have the authority to convene branch meetings in the chair's absence.

- iii. Secretary - This person will be in charge of membership records, producing minutes from branch meetings and the AGM, and other administrative duties as required. This person will be a member of the IWGB National Executive Committee when the branch reaches the appropriate size and is approved by the IWGB NEC. This person will also be responsible for informing the IWGB Executive Committee or appropriate subcommittee, on a regular basis, of updates to the Branch Constitution and policies, as well as providing minutes and relevant records
- iv. Treasurer - This person will keep records of the branch's income and expenditure, have access to the branch bank account, produce monthly reports for the branch meetings on the accounts, and facilitate the execution of financial decisions taken in branch meetings.
- v. BAME Officer - leads on issues relating specifically to Black and Minority Ethnic members in the branch
- vi. Women's Officer - leads on issues relating specifically to women and non-binary members in the branch
- vii. LGBTQI Officer - leads on issues relating specifically to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex members in the branch
- viii. Communications Officer - shall manage the branch's social media channels and liaise with the IWGB Press Department
- ix. Outreach Officer - relationship management and development with volunteers, allies and experts in fields where there is potential for support and strengthening of the branch's collective knowledge, skills, and resources

6. Branch Autonomy

- a. The branch recognises that it is part of a larger union and that all actions and policies should be mindful of this. The branch shall not undertake any actions, policies, or statements which bring disrepute to the IWGB nor which contravene the IWGB rules.
- b. Considering the above, the branch shall have complete autonomy within the IWGB in the following areas:
 - i. Ability to appoint officers in between annual elections;
 - ii. Ability to spend money devolved to the branch, at rates set by the IWGB Executive Committee;
 - iii. Ability to decide its own policy, in accordance with the objects of the IWGB;
 - iv. The branch shall elect its own negotiating committee for the purposes of collective bargaining;
 - v. Social media- the branch shall have the ability to create its own website, Facebook page, and Twitter account to promote the objects and aims of the branch. Someone from the IWGB Communications Department shall be an admin as well.
 - vi. Ability to set its own membership fees

7. Motions, Policy, and Altering the Branch Constitutions

- a. Motions or branch policy must be proposed and seconded by branch members at a quorate Branch meeting or AGM. With the exception of alterations to the branch

constitution, policy and motions may be passed by a simple majority in a show of hands vote.

- b. The branch constitution may be altered at any time in a quorate Branch meeting or AGM, with a two thirds majority vote.

APPENDIX 1: BRANCH OFFICER ELECTIONS AND THE COMING INTO FORCE OF THIS CONSTITUTION

1. The inaugural meeting shall serve as the AGM for 2020. Officers shall serve until the AGM in 2021. The branch shall take part in the union wide AGM in November 2020.
2. This Branch Constitution shall come into effect when the following occurs:
 - a. It is ratified by a vote of a simple majority of the IWGB's New Branch and AGM Sub-Committee
 - b. It is ratified by a vote of the majority of members at the inaugural branch meeting.