



**Graduate
Women
Otago**

Constitution

Graduate Women Otago Incorporated (226188)

Kā Wāhine Whakapūmau o Ōtākou

September 2023

Barbara Benson
President

Pat Sivertsen
Membership Treasurer

Amendments ratified at 28 September GWO Meeting 2023

CONSTITUTION OF GRADUATE WOMEN OTAGO INCORPORATED

Kā Wāhine Whakapūmau o Ōtākou

1. NAME

The name of the organisation is Graduate Women Otago Incorporated hereinafter called GWO,
Kā Wāhine Whakapūmau o Ōtākou.

GWO is a branch of Graduate Women New Zealand Incorporated.

2. AIMS

The aims of GWO are:

- (a) to pursue the mission of Graduate Women International (GWI) and Graduate Women New Zealand (GWNZ)
- (b) to strive for peace, cooperation, sustainability, and respect for human rights and security
- (c) to improve the status of women and girls
- (d) to promote lifelong education and research
- (e) to support women at local, national and international levels
- (f) to encourage graduate women to use their expertise, knowledge and skills to effect change
- (g) to work for the opportunities and education for women and girls that will enable each one to achieve a sense of personal fulfilment and contribute freely at all levels of public and private life.

3. MEMBERSHIP

(a) Graduate Membership

- (i) Graduate Membership of GWO will be open to women who have studied at a university or institution of comparable standing, and have been awarded a degree or equivalent diploma, licence or certificate which enables the holder to proceed to postgraduate study.
- (ii) All women who have been accepted for a master's or doctoral programme at a recognised tertiary institution are eligible for Graduate Membership.

(b) Associate Membership

(i) Associate Membership of GWO will be open to:

(a) women who have completed two years of full-time study, or the part-time equivalent, towards a qualification approved by GWNZ; or

(b) women who have been Associate members of any other Branch.

(c) The number of Associate Members at no time shall exceed ten percent (10%) of the total membership of GWO, except with the prior approval of GWNZ.

(ii) Associate members may not hold office in the GWNZ, nor be a GWO delegate to the National Conference, nor be a GWO representative on the Council.

(iii) Associate members may vote and hold office in GWO.

(c) **Student Membership**

(i) Student Membership of GWO will be open to any undergraduate student who is actively studying at a university or institution of comparable standing, for a degree or diploma.

(ii) Student members will not be considered in the membership figures for GWO and no GWNZ dues shall be paid for them by GWO, but they will pay such fees and subscriptions as GWO determines.

(iii) Student members will not have voting powers nor hold office in GWO.

(d) **Affiliated Membership**

A member of any Branch may become an Affiliated member of GWO under the following conditions:

(i) she will be a financial member of her own branch, which will be responsible for her capitation fees to GWI and GWNZ;

(ii) she will not be included in the membership figures of GWO and no dues will be paid for her by GWO but she will pay to GWO such affiliation fee as it determines; and

(iii) she will not have voting powers nor hold office in GWO.

(e) **Member Emerita**

Should the status of Member Emerita be conferred on a GWO member by GWNZ, then GWO will pay all annual dues liable for her, during the time she remains a member of GWO.

(f) **Honoured Member**

The status of Honoured Member of GWO may, in accordance with the procedure prescribed by separate guidelines, be granted to any person who, as a member, has given outstanding service to GWO.

(g) **Senior Membership**

Any member who has been eligible for Graduate Membership as defined in 3(a) for 40 or more years will pay a reduced subscription decided upon by the GWO Committee.

(h) **Membership Prior to Constitution**

Any woman who is a member of GWO at the date of approval of this Constitution, but who would not thereafter be eligible for membership, will continue to be entitled to membership of GWO until her death or earlier resignation.

(i) **Applications for Membership**

Applications for membership will be made on the approved form.

(j) **Termination of Membership**

(i) Any member may terminate her membership by written resignation; and

(ii) membership may be terminated at the Annual General Meeting ("AGM") if the member's subscription is in arrears from the previous financial year ending 30 June.

4. COMMITTEE

(a) GWO Officers

The officers of GWO who form the Committee will be elected at the AGM (or appointed subsequently) and will take office immediately. The Committee will consist of:

(i) a President who will hold office for two (2) years and be then eligible for future but not immediate re-election;

two (2) Vice-Presidents;

a Secretary who will not hold office for more than four(4) consecutive years;

a Membership Treasurer who will not hold office for more than four (4) consecutive years;

no fewer than five (5) committee members, covering some or all of the following areas:

- Academic Dress Liaison;
- Advocacy;
- International Relations;
- Young Members;
- Meetings Coordinator; and

(ii) the Immediate Past-President ex officio for one year only;

the appointed GWO Academic Dress Accountant ex officio.

All Committee positions (except that of GWO Academic Dress Accountant) are honorary.

Officers may hold more than one committee position concurrently; positions may be shared if this is agreed by both the officers concerned and GWO and/or the Committee.

- The Committee is responsible for appointing Selection Panel Convenors for all GWO Awards, a Newsletter editor, an Archives person, a GWO Representative on the National Council of Women Dunedin Branch, and all paid assistants who are responsible to the GWO President.

(b) Nominations

Nominations for office:

(i) will be received in writing by the Secretary at least twenty-four (24) hours before the time set for the commencement of the specified AGM; and

(ii) in the event of more nominations than required being received, the election will be run by secret ballot.

(c) Sub-Committees

The Committee will have the power to appoint sub-committees for special purposes, co-opting where necessary. The President is to be an ex officio member of such committees.

(d) **Vacancies**

If a vacancy occurs on the Committee, the remaining members will have the power to appoint any member of GWO to fill such a vacancy but the proceedings of the Committee shall not be invalidated by reason only of the continuance of any such vacancy.

(e) **Powers**

Subject to the direction of GWO as expressed by resolution of a general meeting and subject also to the Constitution of GWNZ, the Committee will have full power to deal with all matters relating to GWO, and all matters not provided for or not fully provided for in this Constitution, and to interpret this Constitution.

5. MEETINGS

(a) **Committee Meetings**

(i) At least four (4) ordinary meetings of the Committee will be held each year and will be called by the Secretary on the instruction of the President or on the requisition in writing of any three (3) members of the Committee. At any meeting five (5) members will form a quorum.

(ii) At any meeting of the Committee the Chair will have a casting vote as well as a deliberative vote.

(iii) That a vote held by electronic means is as valid as a vote done at a face-to-face meeting or a meeting held by *Zoom* or *Teams*.

(iv) Three (3) consecutive absences without leave from Committee meetings will constitute a resignation from the Committee.

(v) At least twenty-four (24) hours notice will be given of any Committee meeting.

(b) **General Meetings**

(i) An AGM will be held in September or October. The business will include the submission for approval of members of the Annual Report and duly audited Statements of Account for the previous financial year, the election of officers in GWO, the appointment of the Auditor and Academic Dress Accountant and the delegates to other organisations for the ensuing twelve (12) months.

(ii) There will be at least five (5) Ordinary General Meetings ("OGM") during the year between October or November and July inclusive, the business and other activities at these meetings to be arranged by the Committee at its discretion and in accordance with the aims of GWO.

(iii) Notice of any general meetings will be given to members in such a way as the Committee deems desirable.

(iv) At any general meeting twelve (12) members will form a quorum.

(v) Only graduate members will have voting powers in matters concerning GWNZ and IFUW, but all members, whether graduate or associate, will be entitled to record one vote on all motions which deal with the business of the Branch.

(vi) At any general meeting the Chair will have a casting as well as a deliberative vote.

(vii) The method of voting at general meetings will be by voice or show of hands. In the case of contested elections and in any other case if demanded by five (5) members present, voting will be by secret ballot. Matters will be decided, unless otherwise specifically stated, by a bare majority of those present and entitled to vote.

(viii) A Special General Meeting (“SGM”) may be called at any time by the Committee and will be called by the Committee within seven (7) days after receipt of a notice in writing signed by twelve (12) members of one or more years’ standing requiring such a meeting to be called. Such a meeting may be called by the requisitionists themselves if it is not duly called by the Committee within seven (7) days of receipt of such a notice. Seven (7) days’ notice will be given of any SGM and it will state in general terms the business to be dealt with thereat.

(ix) The special business requiring an SGM to be called may be transacted at an OGM or at an AGM provided seven (7) days notice is given of it.

6. FINANCES

(a) Financial Year

The financial year will end on June 30 each year.

(b) Audits

The financial accounts of GWO will be reviewed at the end of the financial year by an independent qualified accountant. After adoption, the annual accounts are to be filed at the Office of the Registrar of Incorporated Societies.

(c) Subscriptions

The subscriptions for members will be due at the beginning of the financial year and be such sums as the AGM may from time to time determine.

(d) Control of Monies

(i) All monies belonging to GWO will be paid into such banking institutions as the Committee will determine and will be under the control of the President, Membership Treasurer and two (2) Committee members, two (2) of whom will, together, operate the accounts.

(ii) The account holding monies generated by the hire of academic dress will be under the control of the President, and the Committee member designated Academic Dress Liaison, the Academic Dress Accountant, and one Committee Member, any two (2) of whom will, together, operate the account.

(iii) The Charitable Trust (administered in accordance with the Trust Deed) finances will be under the control of the President, and the Committee members designated Academic Dress Liaison and Academic Dress Accountant, and one Committee Member, any two (2) of whom will, together, operate the account.

(e) Investments

GWO may from time to time invest and reinvest in approved Trustee Investments, in such securities and upon such terms as it thinks fit, any part of the funds of GWO which will not be required for the immediate business of GWO.

(f) Loans

If empowered by a two-thirds majority of those members entitled to vote, GWO may borrow money on mortgage or any other form of security.

7. REGISTERED OFFICE

The Registered Office of GWO will be the Academic Dress Hire Rooms, University of Otago, Leith Street, Dunedin 9016, New Zealand and the Registrar of Incorporated Societies will be duly notified when there is a change of this address.

8. AMENDMENTS

(i) Amendments to the Constitution may be made at any general meeting by a two-thirds majority of those present and entitled to vote, provided that written notice of the proposed amendment will have been given at a general meeting at least one month beforehand and provided also that such amendment will be in accordance with the Constitution of GWNZ.

(ii) A copy of the altered Constitution should be sent to the National Secretary of GWNZ, and the Registrar of Incorporated Societies.

9. DISSOLUTION

(a) Process

GWO may be dissolved by the following two steps:

(i) A general meeting is called for which written notice of the proposed dissolution will have been given at least 30 days beforehand and at which a two-thirds majority of the members of GWO entitled to vote, vote for the dissolution. Members of GWO may attend the meeting or lodge a formal apology and postal vote.

(ii) A second general meeting is held not less than 30 days after the first meeting for which written notice of the proposed dissolution will have been given and at which the resolution of the first meeting to dissolve is confirmed by a two-thirds majority of the members of GWO entitled to vote. Members of GWO may attend the meeting or lodge a formal apology and postal vote.

(b) Disposal of Assets and Property

On dissolution the property and assets of GWO will be paid to and become the property of NZFGW (Otago Branch) Charitable Trust (CC32819) – formerly known as New Zealand Federation of University Women (Otago Branch) Charitable Trust – or be applied to such educationally charitable purposes as may be decided by GWO at the second general meeting named in 9(a)(ii)