

**THE BRITISH COMPUTER SOCIETY
DISABILITY SPECIALIST GROUP**

CONSTITUTION

1. TITLE

The name shall be the Disability Specialist Group of the British Computer Society.

2. INTERPRETATION

In this constitution, except where otherwise required:

"Group" shall mean BCS Disability Specialist Group.

"BCS" shall mean British Computer Society.

"Member" or "Members" shall mean a person or persons qualified under article 4 of this constitution.

"Committee" shall mean that body of members elected, appointed or co-opted under article 5 of this constitution.

"Officer" or "Officers" shall mean the Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and such other appointments which the Group may make under article 5 of this constitution.

"Professional Member" or "Professional Members" shall mean a person or persons holding membership of the BCS in one of the following grades: Fellow (FBCS), Member (MBCS), Associate Member (AMBCS).

3. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Group are:

- a. to encourage disabled people to become actively involved in the work of the Group;
- b. to provide disabled people with the ability to influence decisions made in the fields of information and communications technologies and disability;
- c. to identify and develop ways in which information and communications

technologies can benefit disabled people;

- d. to encourage the means for disabled people to achieve the independence to learn, communicate, control their environment, work and play;
- e. to further employment opportunities for disabled people;
- f. to raise general awareness about the ways in which information and communications technologies can assist disabled people;
- g. to identify shortfalls in the general provision of services and equipment for disabled people and to initiate projects in order to correct such situations;
- h. to collect and disseminate information on relevant matters;
- i. to encourage and assist in the formation of similar organizations nationally and internationally and to co-operate with relevant national and international organizations.

4. MEMBERSHIP

4.1 Qualification for membership

Persons eligible for membership of the Group shall be any member of the BCS and others interested in the objectives and activities of the Group.

4.2 Categories of membership

The Group shall have the following categories of membership:

- a. Personal: for individual persons. Personal membership shall be open equally to disabled people and others having an interest in the objectives of the Group;
- b. Corporate: for organizations having an interest in the objectives of the Group. Each Corporate Member shall be entitled to nominate one representative to receive information about the Group, Committee documents and to attend general Meetings of the Group. In addition, representatives of each Corporate member may benefit from any members' discount at events organized by the Group;
- c. Honorary: for individual persons, whether or not entitled to become members or otherwise, nominated by the Committee for special cause and elected at a General meeting of the Group. Honorary members shall not be required to pay a subscription but they shall not be eligible to vote at General meetings, not to serve on the Committee.

4.3 Admission

All applicants holding BCS membership at any level shall be admitted without charge or at a reduced annual subscription rate to be determined by the Group. Other applicants shall be admitted to membership after payment of the annual subscription in accordance with article 7.4.

4.3 Resignation

Any member of the Group may resign by giving notice in writing at any time but shall not be entitled to a refund of any subscription paid.

4.4 BCS Membership

Members of the Group shall not be required to be or to become members of the BCS, but it shall be incumbent upon the Committee to encourage all members of the Group to apply for membership of the BCS.

5. COMMITTEE

5.1 Members

5.1.1 The business activities of the Group shall be controlled by the Committee which shall consist of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, such other Officer posts as may be required and 8 other members who shall be elected at each AGM.

5.1.2 It shall be expected that the Committee members shall be members of the BCS.

5.1.3 The Chairman and Treasurer shall normally be professional members of the BCS, although, exceptionally, this requirement may be waived with the approval of the Vice President (Member Services).

5.1.4 The Chairman shall be responsible to the BCS for the finance, policy and activities of the Group.

5.1.5 The Chairman of the Group shall normally be a disabled person.

5.2 Eligibility of Officers for Re-Election

No Officer may normally hold an office for more than a maximum of two consecutive terms each of 3 consecutive years.

5.3 Nominations

The name of any member accepting nomination for election or re-election as an Officer or as a Committee member should be submitted in writing to the Secretary 30 clear days prior to the date of the AGM by 2 members of the Group and with the written consent of the nominee.

5.4 Election of the Committee

5.4.1 If there is more than one nomination for any of the Officer positions, an election shall be held at the AGM.

5.4.2 If the nominations number the same or less than the remaining vacancies for the Committee members, all shall be deemed to be duly elected.

5.4.3 In the event of there being more nominations than vacancies, the elections shall be by ballot. Each member present may vote for up to as many candidates as there are vacancies to be filled and no more.

5.5 Resignation from the Committee

In the event of any elected officer resigning, the Committee shall have the power to fill the vacancy.

5.6 Co-option to the Committee

The Committee may co-opt to their number up to a maximum of 4 members serving at any one time. Co-opted members shall have the same voting rights as other members of the Committee.

5.7 Committee Meetings

The Committee shall meet at such times and in such places as the Committee may determine and in so far as is practicable they shall meet at least 4 times per year.

5.8 Quorum

5 Committee members, including at least one Officer, shall constitute a quorum.

5.9 Voting

At any Committee meeting each member of the Committee present shall be entitled to one vote but in the event of an equality of votes the Chairman shall be entitled to a second or casting vote.

5.10 Sub Committees and Working Groups

The Committee may, as and when it deems necessary, establish sub committees and/or working groups to assist it in conducting its business by means of advice or the exercise of delegated powers. The Committee shall appoint the chairman of each such sub committee or working group and shall provide terms of reference. For a sub committee, the chairman shall be a member of the Committee. Each such sub committee or working group shall be responsible solely to the Committee and shall be disbanded when its role or task has been completed.

5.11 Remuneration and Payment of Expenses

Members of the Committee shall receive no payment for their role(s) on the Committee other than reimbursement of expenses reasonably incurred on Committee business.

5.12 Indemnity

The officers and those Committee members appointed to other posts by the Committee shall be indemnified by the Group against any expenses or liability incurred by them through the discharge of their duties, unless arising from willful default or negligence.

6. GENERAL MEETINGS

6.1 The AGM of the Group shall be held each year as soon as possible after the last day of April, at the direction of the Committee, for transacting the following business:

- a. to receive the Annual Report of the Chairman
- b. to receive and approve the minutes of the previous AGM and of any EGM held subsequent to the last AGM
- c. to consider any matters arising therefrom
- d. to receive and approve the Annual Accounts.
- e. to elect the Officers and Committee for the ensuing year.
- f. to consider any other business relevant to the AGM.

6.2 Notice of General Meetings

6.2.1 The notice shall be conveyed in writing to every member of the Group.

6.2.2 The notice shall be issued at least 28 clear days before the date of the meeting and shall indicate the business to be transacted.

6.2.3 In the case of the AGM the notice shall include a request for nominations of Officers and Committee members.

6.2.4 The accidental omission to give notice of any meeting or non-receipt of such notice by any person entitled to receive notice shall not invalidate any resolution passed.

6.3 Chairman

At all General Meetings and meetings of the Committee the Chairman of the Group shall be Chairman or, if absent, the members present shall appoint one of their number to be Chairman.

6.4 Voting

At any General Meeting each member shall be entitled to one vote. Voting at any meeting shall be determined by a show of hands unless a ballot be demanded by at least one third of the members present.

6.5 Quorum

At any General Meeting of the Group, 10 members shall constitute a quorum.

6.6 Absence of Quorum

At the discretion of the Chairman any meeting may proceed with its business but all resolutions passed must be confirmed at the subsequent General Meeting.

6.7 Extraordinary General Meetings

Extraordinary General Meetings of the Group shall be convened by the Secretary by direction of the Committee or within 5 weeks of receipt of a petition signed by at least 20 members and stating the business to be transacted. The business of an EGM shall be confined to that described in the notice and agenda of the meeting.

7. FINANCES

7.1 The Treasurer shall keep proper Records of Account and shall present the accounts audited up to the last day of April each year to the AGM next following the end of the financial year to which the accounts relate.

7.2 The financial year of the Group shall commence on the first day of May each year.

7.3 The funds of the Group shall be under the control of the Committee.

7.4 The annual subscription shall be such amounts as the Committee may from time to time decide.

7.5 The subscription shall become due on admission and annually thereafter.

7.6 All membership fees and any surplus arising from the activities of the Group shall be

managed in accordance with the financial guidelines agreed by the BCS.

8. RECORDS

8.1 A correct record of the proceedings of all Committee and General Meetings of the Group shall be kept by the Secretary.

8.2 The Secretary shall keep or cause to be kept a correct record of members of the Group.

9. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Public announcements concerning the Group shall be made only by or with the consent of the Chairman.

10. LOCAL MEETINGS

Local meetings of the Group may only be held with the consent of the Committee and the organiser shall notify local BCS branches and other relevant specialist groups.

11. BCS

The Group shall be subject to the BCS Statutes, Byelaws, Regulations and Rulings of Council.

12. BCS SPECIALIST GROUPS ASSEMBLY & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

12.1 The Group shall appoint two of its number, who shall hold professional membership of the BCS, to attend meetings of the BCS Specialist Groups Assembly as the Group's representatives.

12.2 The Group shall be required to submit an annual report to the BCS Specialist Groups Executive Committee describing the Group's activities, a financial statement and budget projections.

13. WINDING UP

If upon winding up or dissolution of the Group, there remains, after the satisfaction of all its liabilities, any assets, they shall be vested in the BCS.

14. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

- 14.1** The constitution may be altered at any time by a two-thirds majority of the members present at a General Meeting called for the purpose.
- 14.2** In proposing alterations to this constitution reference shall be made to the Statutes, Byelaws, Regulations and Rulings of Council of the BCS.

(brl/bcsdsgcon/31October2003)