



IRISH PIPE BAND ASSOCIATION Constitution

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1. Aims of the Irish Pipe Band Association

- The Association shall be called Cumann Buidhean Piobaire na hEireann. The Irish Pipe Band Association. I.P.B.A.
- The I.P.B.A. shall:-
 - a) Promote and encourage the culture and advancement of Piping and Drumming.
 - b) Promote and encourage a bond and fellowship with all Pipers and Drummers.
 - c) Provide a proper system of Rules under which Pipe Band and Solo contests can take place.
 - d) Run courses, hold examinations, and issue certificates to successful pupils and to operate a College of Piping and Drumming for that purpose.
 - e) The Irish College of Piping and Drumming shall be recognised as the official educational authority within the Association.
- The I.P.B.A. may associate with any cultural, musical, social or educational organisation which will promote it's objectives

2. Membership

a) Full Membership

Full membership is open to all bands within the geographical jurisdiction of the I.P.B.A. which subscribe to its rules and constitution. Band secretaries must annually forward a Band Declaration Form and pay the recommended subscription before a band is deemed registered. A registered band will be entitled to the full rights of membership.

b) Affiliate Membership

Affiliate membership is open to bands who are situated outside the jurisdiction of the I.P.B.A. and who fully subscribe to its Constitution and rules. A list of players and appropriate registration fee must be submitted before the band is deemed registered. An affiliated band does not have the right to nominate, propose or vote on any matter of business of the I.P.B.A. but its delegate may fully participate in any debate or discussion at the AGM of the I.P.B.A.

c) Associate Membership

1. Associate Membership is available for persons wishing to participate in the affairs of the I.P.B.A. and who are not members of bands affiliated.

2. An Associate Member will be entitled to take part in the business of the Association in so far as he/she may attend general branch meetings and the AGM of the I.P.B.A. He/She shall participate in the discussion in so far as the presiding Chairman will allow. An Associate Member, as such, shall not have the right to nominate or vote at these meetings.

3. An Associate Member may be elected to Committee level. If that is so, he/she will have a vote on the Committee.
4. Associate Members must adhere to the general Constitution, Rules and Policies of the I.P.B.A.
5. The National Executive Council may refuse to admit a candidate for Associate Membership or withdraw such Membership. Branch Committees by majority vote may recommend acceptance/rejection/withdrawal of Associate Membership for any individual.
6. Application forms for Associate Membership will be available from the Hon. Secretary I.P.B.A. and from Branch Secretaries.
7. The annual fee for Associate membership will be set by the NEC and will be reviewed annually.

d) Honorary Membership

Honorary membership may be bestowed on an individual by decision of a majority of the bands assembled at the AGM of the I.P.B.A. An Honorary Member may participate in debates or discussions on all matters relating to the I.P.B.A. but does not have the right to propose, nominate or vote on any issue.

- e) All membership shall be due for renewal annually.

3. Registration

- a) The period of registration shall be from the 1st January to the 31st December in any chronological year.
- b) Before any Band is deemed registered the National Registrar must receive a completed Band Subscription and Declaration Form and Annual Subscription fee. It is the responsibility of each band to make sure that their registration is up to date. Any new member must sign a registration form. Any player under the age of 18 must state their date of birth on the form and produce a Birth Certificate as required.
It is also the responsibility of each band to notify the Registrar of any player who has left their band and have these players removed from their registration. A copy of the up to date registration will be emailed to each Band Secretary and Pipe Major. A copy will also be emailed to the relevant Branch Secretary and National Secretary.
- c) The Band Declaration Form shall contain the following declaration and must be signed by The Pipe Major and Band Secretary:- “We the undersigned, hereby declare and confirm that the above named band subscribes fully to, and will

observe, support and abide by the Constitution and rules of the Irish Pipe Band Association”.

- d) Annual Subscription/Registration renewals fall due on the 1st December to be paid before 31st December each year. Bands failing to renew must reapply to the NEC and pay the relevant application fee as determined by the NEC. Until a band has renewed its membership the Band or its members will not be permitted to participate in any I.P.B.A. meeting or contest and its members forfeit any office they may hold at National or Branch level.
- e) Where branches of the I.P.B.A. exist, i.e. Leinster, Munster, Connaught, North/West, South/East, etc., bands should apply for membership within their own region. If for some reason a band wishes to join a branch of the I.P.B.A. outside its own region, this can only be done with the joint agreement of the two branches involved. In the event of a dispute the decision of the NEC shall be binding. In areas where no branch exists, bands should join the nearest existing branch.
- f) Local branches have the right to levy an annual branch subscription in addition to the National I.P.B.A. subscription.
- g) Registered players will remain a member of their band until the end of registration year, and shall not be permitted to play with any other band in contest without an appropriate transfer. A player in a higher grade may play as a Registered Instructor, with a grade four band only.
- h) Having registered with a band, players wishing to transfer from one Band to another should complete the recognised transfer release form and have it authorised by the Pipe Major or Secretary. The NEC may investigate such transfer. Re-registration will not be considered final until all property belonging to the original band has been returned.
- i) A player is allowed only one transfer in any chronological year.

4. Branches

- a) For organisational purposes and mutual support bands should be encouraged to form Branches, but only with the approval of the N.E.C.
- b) Each branch should consist of five or more bands.
- c) The following basic rules apply to branches;
 - 1. All Bands attached to Branches must be members of the I.P.B.A. and must have a Band Constitution and Child Protection Policy.

2. The Annual General Meeting of each branch will be held at least six weeks before the AGM of the I.P.B.A.
3. A Branch Committee consisting of Chairman, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and at least two other members shall be elected at the AGM and should include at least one Piper and Drummer.
4. The Branch business shall be conducted in accordance with the Constitution and rules of the I.P.B.A.
5. Each branch shall elect an Advisory Committee which must include at least one Piper and one Drummer.
6. The Branch shall be subject to the decisions of the NEC and shall ensure that such decisions are adhered to by its members.
7. The NEC or Officers nominated by the NEC has the authority to investigate reports, financial and otherwise, of all affairs conducted by the Branch, the decision of the NEC shall be final and binding.
8. The NEC has the right to terminate any branch, levy fines, and receive any funds remaining in any branch terminated or which falls extinct.

5. Management

- a) The I.P.B.A. shall be managed by a National Executive Council (NEC) elected annually at the Annual General Meeting.
- b) The NEC shall consist of a minimum of seven members, and shall elect the following officers;
Chairman, Vice Chairman, Hon. Treasurer, Hon. Secretary and Registrar
The General Assembly at the AGM shall appoint an Auditor.
- c) The N.E.C. shall nominate at its AGM a Chief Steward and Chief Compiler whose duties shall be to maintain a panel of stewards and of compilers for use at all contest with which the I.P.B.A. is associated.
- d) The out-going NEC shall deliver their Annual Reports and stand down.
- e) Each branch shall at their A.G.M. elect two representatives to the N.E.C. Each branch will elect one Piper and one Drummer to the National Advisory Council (N.A.C.). Representatives to the N.A.C. must be active pipers/drummers or active Instructors/Judges.
- f) At the I.P.B.A. Annual General Meeting band representatives shall elect four additional representatives. Each candidate must be proposed and seconded by a different band.

- g) At least one Executive Member of the I.P.B.A. should be from the membership of the Board of Management of the Irish Piping and Drumming College. In the absence of such representation following the NEC election the College will nominate one of its members to sit on the Executive.
- h) One third of the N.E.C. members shall form a quorum.
- i) The President shall be elected by the General Body. The term of office shall be three years.
- j) In the event of a Branch Delegate being unable to continue in office, the branch shall elect a replacement. In the event of a member elected from the floor, the delegate with the next highest votes will fill the vacancy.
- k) The N.E.C. may co-opt non-voting members.

6. National Advisory Committee (NAC)

This Committee comprising of Pipers and Drummers and a member appointed by the Board of Management of the College, shall act as technical advisers to the N.E.C. and shall scrutinise the results of all contests. Only elected members of the N.A.C. shall have a vote. The Chairman shall have a casting vote.

Decisions of the N.A.C. on the matters of judging and contests, shall be accepted by the N.E.C. unless found impracticable, in which case they will be referred back to the N.A.C. for further consideration.

7. National Executive Council – Powers and Decisions

- a) The N.E.C. has the power to investigate the conduct and affairs of any branch, band or individual under its jurisdiction, and to hear the case of any branch, band or individual who feels aggrieved, to mediate and to make recommendations in such cases.
- b) The N.E.C. has authority to suspend and or fine any branch, band or individual for infringement of the Constitution and contest or general rules of the I.P.B.A. Any person or group found guilty of infringement shall be liable for expenses incurred, including travel of members of the N.E.C. investigating the case.
- c) The N.E.C. is the only authority which can issue permission for the holding of Pipe Band Competitions. The N.E.C. must approve of the local contest rules. Promoters should pay the appropriate fee as decided by the N.E.C.
- d) The N.E.C. shall maintain a panel of Judges and Adjudicators consisting of licensed Adjudicators with recognised qualifications.

- e) All decisions of the N.E.C. are arrived at by a simple majority and are final and binding on all parties concerned, including promoters of contests under I.P.B.A. Rules and Auspices.

8. Expenses

The I.P.B.A. National Executive Council shall not be responsible for travelling expenses of branch delegates attending meetings. They shall, as funds permit, provide one meal for members attending N.E.C. and N.A.C. and J.A.C. meetings.

9. General Meetings

The Annual General Meeting should be held before the end of March each year. The N.E.C. may summon a General Meeting at any time they consider necessary or on a requisition signed by a Branch Secretary stating the object for which the meeting is required.

10. Voting

N.E.C. and N.A.C. Meetings

- a) At N.E.C. meetings each member has one vote, and in the event of a tie, the Chairman has a casting vote, (in addition to his ordinary vote).
- b) Voting may be by secret ballot, or when all present agree, by a show of hands.
- c) No member may vote at an investigation in which his/her band is party to a protest or subject of an allegation. However, they must be allowed to state their case.

AGM and other General Meetings

Each member band shall cast one vote on any issue/motion.
Card holders only.

11. Nominations and Notices of Motion

Notice of motion must be lodged, in writing, with the General Secretary at least four weeks before the A.G.M. Such notices shall be circulated to all bands two weeks before the A.G.M.

Bands in the first instance must send motions through the Branches. No motions to be accepted from the floor. Motions may also be submitted by the N.E.C.

12. Special General Meetings and Notices of Motion Amending Constitution and Rules

The Constitution may only be altered every three years at the A.G.M. or at special General Meetings called for that purpose.

A two thirds majority of the votes present shall be necessary to enact, amend, rescind or alter the Constitution.

13. Grading

- a) The N.E.C. on the recommendation of the N.A.C. shall grade bands and Solo Players
- b) Bands or solo players shall have the right to appeal the recommendations of the NEC in relation to grading.
- c) The decision of the N.E.C. shall be final and binding in all matters relating to grading.

14. Interpretation of the Constitution and Rules

In the event of a misunderstanding of the Constitution and Rules, the National Executive Council reserves the right to supply an interpretation which shall be binding and final.

This Constitution comes into force as soon as it has been approved by the the Annual General Meeting and when the original copy is signed by the President and Chairman of the I.P.B.A.