

**Centre for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education
in Africa**

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1. Purpose

The purpose of the Centre shall be to promote and facilitate educational endeavours in the African context that are grounded in a commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ witnessed to in the Holy Scriptures as the directing principle for all academic life.

2. Scope

The focus of the Centre's activities shall be educational endeavours at tertiary level. These shall include:

- Diploma and degree programmes provided by educational institutions;
- Community-oriented education through seminars, workshops and short courses, which may or may not provide credit towards formal awards;
- The endeavours of individual scholars and scientists.

3. Statement of Faith

- There is one God in three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, is the only Saviour and Lord who, by his death and resurrection reconciled all things in heaven and on earth.
- Salvation is by grace alone through faith resulting in a way of life that pleases God.
- The world of our experience is the creation of God in Christ that everywhere reveals God the Creator and Redeemer.
- In the context of this God-revealing creation, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are given to us as the written Word of God, the authoritative witness to Christ the living Word through which the Holy Spirit guides us in the way of righteousness.

4. Role and Functions

The role of the Centre is to be the servant of all who work for an effective Christian presence in higher education in Africa. It does not seek to establish its own educational programmes or to duplicate what is done by others but aims to strengthen all endeavours that are consistent with its purpose, scope and statement of faith. While it will endeavour to locate resources, including financial resources, to support the development of higher Christian education in Africa, it is committed to the vision of a network of strong, independent organisations supported by the African Christian community to further the calling to Christian higher education in Africa.

The functions of the Centre shall include:

- Gathering and disseminating information about relevant endeavours in Christian higher education by institutions, organisations and individuals,
- Identifying needs and locating appropriate resources to meet these needs,
- Maintaining and publishing a register of relevant research programmes,
- Facilitating interaction between individuals, organisations and institutions;
- Facilitating mutually beneficial partnerships in Christian higher education both within Africa and between Africa and other parts of the world;
- Responding in appropriate ways, as it is able, to requests for support of endeavours in Christian higher education in Africa. It shall not be a direct source of financial support but shall assist, as appropriate, in locating appropriate sources of funding.

5. Membership

i. Founding members

Founding members shall have the status of ordinary members, together with all privileges and responsibilities, and be subject to all the provisions of this constitution applying to ordinary members except for those provisions relating to membership application and approval.

ii. Ordinary members

Organisations, institutions and individuals that meet the following conditions may become ordinary members of the Centre:

- Engagement on a regular basis in educational endeavours that are within the purpose and scope of the Centre;
- Agreement, indicated verbally and in practice, with the statement of faith of the Centre,
- Payment of the dues for ordinary members as fixed from time to time-

iii. Associate members

Other individuals, organisations and institutions that support the purpose of the Centre may become associate members on payment of the annual dues as fixed from time to time.

iv. Privileges and responsibilities of members

a. Ordinary members

Ordinary members shall be kept informed of the activities of the Centre through a regular newsletter together with such other means as may be deemed appropriate by the Council from time to time. In addition, each ordinary member shall be entitled to one vote in the election of members of the Council and at General Meetings.

b. Associate members

Associate members shall be kept informed of the activities of the Centre through a regular newsletter together with such other means as may be deemed appropriate by the Council from time to time.

v. Membership procedures for ordinary members

a. Applications

Applications shall be submitted to the executive officer on the designated application form with all details completed. Every application shall be presented to the Council for approval at the earliest opportunity. The decision shall be communicated to the applicant promptly and, if the application is approved, the applicant shall be enrolled as a member on payment of the appropriate membership dues.

b. Termination of membership

The Council may terminate the membership of an ordinary member on the ground that the member no longer satisfies the conditions of membership or of conduct prejudicial to the purpose of the Centre. An ordinary member whose membership is terminated shall be advised promptly and such advice shall include the ground for the termination.

Any member may terminate membership at any time by advice in writing to the executive officer.

c. Appeals

An applicant whose application ordinary membership has been declined, or whose membership has been terminated by the Council, may appeal to a General Meeting from the decision of the Council. Such an appeal shall be addressed to the executive officer and shall state the grounds of the appeal. An appeal received in proper form shall be submitted to a General Meeting for a decision at the earliest opportunity. The decision of a majority of ordinary members voting at the General Meeting shall be final.

vi. Membership procedures for associate members

- An individual, organisation or institution shall become an associate member on receipt by the executive officer of a request together with the appropriate membership dues.
- The membership of an associate member shall terminate if the specified membership dues remain unpaid for a period in excess of twelve months and the member advised accordingly.

6. General Meetings

i. Definition

A General Meeting is a meeting of ordinary members.

ii. Frequency

A General Meeting shall be held at least once a year to receive from the Council a report together with an audited financial statement and budget and to conduct such business as arises from that report or otherwise appears on the agenda in accordance with this constitution. Additional meetings may be

convened at the discretion of the Council.

iii Function

- a. The business of the General Meeting shall be to elect members of the Council, approve the appointment of the Director, receive and act on the annual report of the Council, approve the annual financial statement and budget, and consider such issues of policy as are presented to it by the Council or submitted by ordinary members in accordance with this constitution.
- b. Any matter relevant to the purpose of the Centre shall be included in the agenda of a General Meeting on receipt by the executive officer of a request signed by 10% of the ordinary members, or 25, whichever is the lesser number.

iv. Voting

a. Entitlement to vote

Each member, whether an individual, an organisation or an institution, shall be entitled to one vote at a General Meeting.

b. Decisions

Except as provided in article 11 of this constitution, all decisions shall be resolved by a simple majority of votes cast.

c. Postal votes

Postal votes shall be accepted for all resolutions at a General Meeting. A valid postal vote must be in writing stating the date of the General Meeting, indicate a clear intention to vote for or against a resolution, be dated, signed and witnessed and reach the executive officer before the commencement of the meeting.

d. Proxy votes

Proxy votes shall not be accepted for any resolution at a General Meeting.

v. Procedure for calling a General Meeting

a. Notice

The Council shall cause a notice to be sent to all ordinary members at least three months prior to the date of the meeting stating the date, time and place of the meeting, the nature of the business to be conducted, and complete copies of all relevant documentation including reports and any resolutions to be put to the meeting on behalf of the Council.

b. Resolutions by ordinary members

Any two ordinary members, by notice in writing received by the executive officer not later than six weeks before the date of the meeting, may submit a resolution in relation to the business specified in the notice of meeting to be presented to a General Meeting. If unable to attend in person, they may also include a written submission in support of their resolution which shall be considered by the meeting as though they were present in person.

c. Agenda

Not later than four weeks before the date of the meeting a final agenda, including all resolutions to be put to the meeting, shall be sent to all ordinary members. No business shall be concluded at the meeting that is not included in this final agenda.

vi. Sundry

a. Quorum

A quorum for a General Meeting shall be 20% of the ordinary members. In determining a quorum members casting a postal vote shall be counted as though they are personally present.

b. Minutes

All ordinary members shall receive the minutes of all General Meetings.

7. Council

i. Membership

a. Composition

The Council of the Centre shall consist of not less than four and not more than eight elected members, together with the Director who shall be a member ex officio.

b. Qualifications

All members of the Council shall be ordinary members of the Centre.

c. Regional representation

To ensure that the development needs of each region are adequately considered, the elected members shall be chosen so as to ensure equal representation of each region in Africa. For this purpose, the boundaries of the regions shall be as determined by the General Meeting.

ii. Elections

a. Term of office for elected members

Except for the first elected members, all elected members shall be elected for a term of six years and shall be eligible for re-election. In the case of the first members, one half shall be elected for a term of three years and one half for a term of six years.

b. Nominations

Prior to each election of members of the Council, ordinary members shall be invited to nominate candidates for election. Each nomination shall be accompanied with a statement giving reasons in support of the nomination.

c. Number of candidates

The number of candidates presented to the General Meeting for election shall be no more than four times the number of positions to be filled. In the event that the nominations exceed this number, the Council shall make a selection to reduce the number to this limit. In making this selection, the Council shall take into account the number of members supporting each nomination and the reasons given in support of the nominations, giving special attention to the need for the widest possible representation of all relevant interests.

d. Tied vote

A tied vote shall be resolved by the casting of a lot.

iii. Officers of the Council

The officers of the Council shall be Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer to be appointed by the Council to serve for a term of three years. A vacancy occurring during the term of office shall be filled by the Council, with the person appointed to serve for the remainder of that term.

iv. Meetings of the Council

a. Frequency

The Council shall meet twice each year at times fixed by the Council with additional meetings being called by the Chairman and Secretary as required.

b. Conferencing by electronic means

A conference of members of the Council occurring by electronic means shall be regarded as a meeting of the Council.

v. Executive of the Council

There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer which shall deal with any matters delegated to it by the Council or urgent matter referred to it by the executive officer between meetings of the Council.

vi. Interim Council

There shall be an Interim Council of five members agreed on by the foundation members which shall be responsible for the establishment of the Centre. This Interim Council shall be as widely representative as possible of the various regions in Africa and shall exercise all the powers of the Council. It shall give special attention to the recruitment of members over as wide an area as possible and shall ensure that an election for a Council is held within two years.

8. Director

i. Function

There shall be a Director who shall be the executive officer of the Centre, responsible for directing all the activities of the Centre within the policies as established from time to time by the Council.

ii. Appointment

The Director shall be appointed by the Council on such terms and conditions and for such period as may be agreed. A person appointed as Director must be an ordinary member of the Centre. The appointment must be approved by a General Meeting.

iii. Accountability

The Director shall be accountable to the Council.

iv. Removal

a. Procedure

The Director may be removed from office by the Council on the grounds of failure to meet the terms and conditions of the appointment and shall cease to hold office on ceasing to be an ordinary member.

b. Ratification

Any such removal must be ratified by a General Meeting before it becomes effective but the Council may suspend the Director from duty with immediate effect pending the decision of the General Meeting.

9. Base and Scope of Operations

i. Base of operations

The Centre's base of operations shall be at such place within Africa as determined by the Council from time to time in the interests of ensuring the most effective operation in the fulfilment of its purpose.

ii. The scope of operations

The scope of operations shall be the continent of Africa with special attention to the encouragement and nurturing of Christian educational endeavours in areas where they are weak or lacking. The activities of the Centre shall be organised at all time in a manner that serves the purpose of the Centre most effectively and economically.

10. Partnerships

i. General

While retaining its independence of operation, the Centre shall seek partnership with all who share the vision of Christian higher education.

ii. International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education

In particular, it shall operate in a close partnership with the International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education, on such terms and conditions as may be mutually agreed, to more effectively promote the aims of that association in Africa.

11. Amendment and Dissolution

i. Amendments to this constitution

a. General procedures

Amendments may only be made at a General Meeting for which a minimum of six months notice has been given to all ordinary members.

b. Voting

A majority of two thirds of the votes cast shall be required for an amendment to the constitution.

ii. Dissolution of the Centre

Ordinarily the Centre shall only be dissolved by a two third's majority of the votes cast at a General Meeting which shall specify the disposition of any remaining assets of the Centre. In the event circumstances make this impossible, any remaining assets shall be disposed of in such a manner as shall be most consistent with the furthering of the purpose of the Centre.