

Oxford LARP Society - Membership & Event Fees Policy

Replaces the previous membership policy. Effective from [TBC]

1. Application

1.1

The Membership Policy of the Oxford LARP Society (OLS, henceforth “the Society”) will be upheld by the Society in line with its Constitution. Where the Membership Policy and the Constitution conflict, the Constitution maintains precedence.

1.2

As per the Constitution, once agreed this Membership Policy may only be modified by agreement at a General Meeting, except as noted.

2. Motivation

2.1

Running Live Action Role-Playing (LARP) events has a financial cost. While the Oxford LARP Society (OLS) does not run to a profit, the Society incurs costs both for its general operations and for the running of specific events.

2.2

The primary purpose of membership is to determine who has a say in decisions at General Meetings, and who is entitled to other benefits of membership. Membership does not usually restrict access to Society events.

2.3

The previous model of a regular membership fee plus potential per-event costs led to confusion as to payment options, and required additional care and administration in setting per-event costs and discounts to ensure that the finances would be balanced if attendees were members (or conversely, that members were not paying more than non-members).

2.4

As such, this new policy sets out criteria for membership in a model where running costs of the society will be covered by event fees charged for Society events, plus potential other fundraising/donations as needed.

2.5

The expenses of the Oxford LARP Society include:

- Cost of acquiring and maintaining kit, including LARP weapons, costume, and props
- Cost of maintaining insurance for events, where required
- Cost of maintaining an online presence (i.e. website and mailing lists)
- Cost of hiring venues
- Other costs of running events

2.6

Event fees should be set to broadly meet the running costs of a particular event, plus a small overhead to cover general costs.

2.7

The Society wishes to encourage commitment and thus suggests that event organisers for campaign games (i.e. games running over multiple events) provide options to pay for the campaign in advance, at a discount.

3. Membership

3.1

Membership is granted to any Active Participant, any Lapsed Participant paying the relevant fee, and any Committee Member

3.1.1

An Active Participant is any person who has attended at least three Society LARP Events within the previous 12 months, as a player, game runner, or crew.

3.1.2

In the case that the Society has not run at least five LARP events in the preceding 12 month period, an Active Participant is anyone who attended at least three of the five most recent events, or has attended a General Meeting as a member in the previous 12 months.

3.1.3

A Lapsed Participant is anyone who has previously been an Active Participant.

3.1.4

The fee to maintain membership as a Lapsed Participant is set at £20 per year, and may be amended by decision of the committee. This may be reduced by concessions and affiliate membership as set out for per-event fees, below.

3.2

All members of OLS are entitled to the following benefits:

- Opportunity to borrow LARP kit from OLS
- Permission to advertise LARP events on the Society Website and Mailing List
- Right to vote in OLS General Meetings

3.3

A person does not require membership to be elected to a Committee position, but may not be elected to the Committee if they are barred from membership.

3.4

A person is barred from membership:

- If they are under 18
- If their membership has previously been terminated; or
- If they have been refused membership by the Committee.

3.5

Membership may be refused at the discretion of the Committee where the safety of Society members is at risk.

4. Per Event Costs

4.1

Events run by the Society will normally have a per-event cost, to fund the costs of that event, and the running costs of the Society.

4.2

The per-event costs will be set by the event organiser (or a person delegated by them), in collaboration with the Committee.

4.3

The event organiser must make reasonable efforts to estimate the running costs of the event, and provide such estimates to the Committee.

4.4

The event organiser must state whether the event requires insurance or access to the Society's LARP weapons, and will be expected to increase the per-event costs accordingly to cover insurance costs and maintenance of the kit.

4.5

Generally, events should be budgeted to break even (including a contribution to society running costs of around £15 per month), given a reasonably achievable number of players, and an estimate of 20% of players not paying due to concessions and affiliations.

4.6

Where an event forms a part of a campaign (i.e. a game comprising multiple events, such as a "Society game" or a long running linear LARP), the event organiser should provide options for longer-term payments, e.g. a single payment covering the entire campaign, or quarterly payments where the campaign is of indefinite length. As a guideline, these longer term payments should be set at around 80-90% of the total per-event costs covered by those payments.

5. Concessions and Affiliates

5.1

A concessions are offered by default on a standard scale:

- 50%:
 - Any attendee who is disabled
 - Any attendee employed for less than 30 hours per week
- 100%:
 - Any attendee attending as a carer for another attendee
 - Any attendee who is unemployed, or employed for less than 10 hours per week
 - Any attendee meeting at least two of the criteria for a 50% concession

Other concessions can be offered at the discretion of the event organiser or the Treasurer (e.g. for attendees who will not be making use of some or all of the assets the event fee contributes to, or for attendees involved in the running of the game as organisers or crew).

5.2

Where an attendee gains or loses entitlement to a default concessionary rate during the course of a campaign, longer term payments as set out in 4.6 may be required or refunded pro-rata based on the proportion of the game for which they qualified

5.2

Financial difficulties should not be a barrier to access to the Society - discretion should generally be applied in favour of more people being able to attend Society events.

5.3

No proof is generally required of entitlement to concessions, except in cases where the committee has good reason to suspect that the member is being dishonest.

5.4

No attendee is required to take concessions they are entitled to - it is noted that the automatic concessions are deliberately broad, and attendees may reasonably feel that they can contribute at the full rate without issue.

5.5

OLS wishes to support affiliated societies and so will offer reduced pre-event costs to membership for those societies. The exact nature of affiliation will vary but is expected to include some reciprocal benefits to OLS members.

5.6

Affiliate Societies are:

- Oxford University Roleplaying Games Society (OURPGSoc) (Voting members only)

5.7

Game organisers will provide a means for attendees to note their entitlement to automatic concessions, request discretionary concessions, or note their membership of an affiliated society, within sign-up forms for any event.

6. Record Keeping

6.1

A list of Society Members will be provided by the Treasurer to the Society Committee, at least prior to any General Meeting and at any other time the Committee requests it.

6.2

Event Organisers will keep records of attendees at events, and provide such records to the Treasurer as soon as practical after the event (ideally keeping such records in a place accessible to the Treasurer).

6.2.1

Where possible, attendance should be recorded prior to the start of play at an event, and late arrivals should be required to make themselves known to the Event Organiser or fill in a sign-in sheet - this is good practice for fire safety and/or contact tracing for infectious diseases, in addition to allowing tracking of membership.

6.3

Event organisers will keep records of payment of per-event fees, including the method of payment used, so that these may be verified by the Treasurer. Where an attendee has paid by a method not accessible to the event organiser (e.g. by bank transfer), the attendee's statement that they have paid is sufficient.

7. Payments

7.1

Payments from members may be taken by cash, by bank transfer to the society account, or by card where a card reader connected to the society account is available.

7.2

Where payments are taken by cash, the event organiser, the Treasurer, or a person appointed by them will ensure that the money ends up in the society bank account as soon as practical (e.g. by depositing the cash, or by transferring an equivalent amount of money to the account and recording this settling up of cash payments in the society's financial records).

7.3

Event costs should be paid directly by the Society where possible, by the Treasurer or another Committee Member with access to the Society bank account, e.g. by asking venues to send an invoice to the relevant person.

7.4

The acquisition of props, costume, or other permanent items must be agreed with the Committee in advance - otherwise it will be considered that the event organiser is acquiring the items for themselves and choosing to use the items for the game.

7.5

Expenses for consumable items (e.g. food, drinks, name labels) should be agreed in advance where possible, but may be refunded at the discretion of the committee if they are deemed to be reasonably required for the event.

8. Termination of Membership

8.1

Membership may be terminated or refused by the action of any other policy. This section sets out the effect of termination of membership, but not the conditions under which it occurs - that is left to other policies. Termination of membership is distinct from expiry of

membership, and the below does not apply to the case where a member's membership lapses due to not attending events.

8.2

When a member's membership is terminated, the Chair or someone delegated by them will inform the member within one week of the decision.

8.3

Termination of membership will also bar the person from OLS events, unless otherwise stated. They will also usually be removed from the Internal Communication Platform.

8.4

If the membership of a Committee member is terminated, they are immediately removed from their Committee role.

8.5

In the event of termination of membership of a game organiser or other person essential for the running of a particular society event, then it should be considered whether cancellation of the event is appropriate and/or whether an equivalent event can be run.

8.6

Any per-event fees paid for upcoming events will be refunded. Event fees paid for longer-term payments (as set out in 4.6, above) may be refunded pro-rata at the discretion of the event organiser.

8.7

Except as stated by other policies (e.g. by reference to reversal of a decision), a person whose membership has been terminated is not eligible for membership in future.