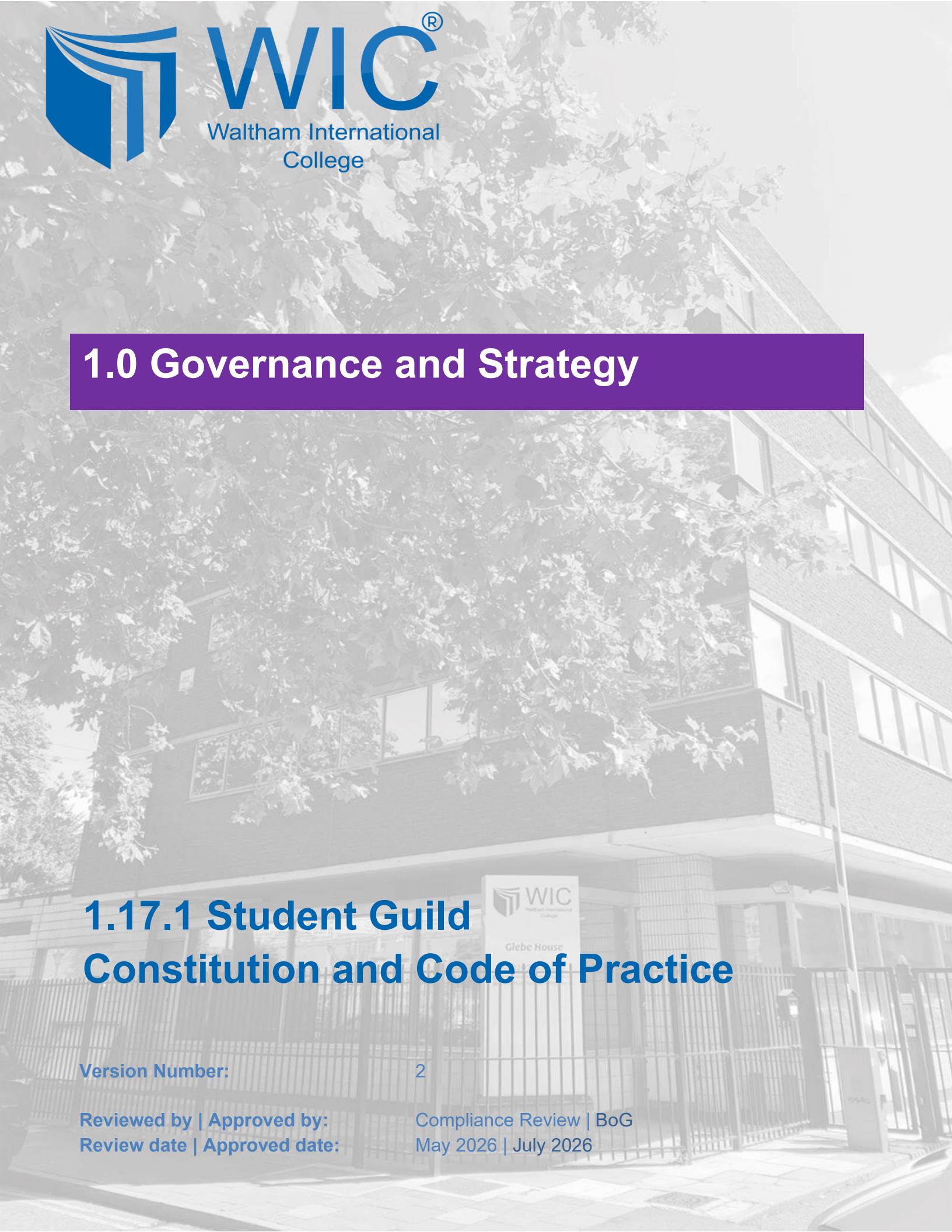
Waltham International College

1.0 Governance and Strategy



1.17.1 Student Guild Constitution and Code of Practice

Version Number:	2
Reviewed by | Approved by:	Compliance Review | BoG
Review date | Approved date:	May 2026 | July 2026

Compliance Alignment Statement

This version of the Constitution and Code of Practice has been aligned to current UK and Office for Students requirements as of May 2026. The substantive changes are listed below.

Version Control Statement

Version	Date	Changes	Reason	Author	Next Review
1	13/02/2026	New Document	Document to support formation of Student Guild	Quality and Compliance	August 2026
2	May 2026	Full redesign: - Independent complaints investigator provision added. - Academic Officer added to GMC governance structure. - Annual student notification (s.22) stated explicitly. – Charity law status and disclosure added. -Electoral registration reference added. - Cross-references to 1.10 and 1.14, 1.17 added.	Compliance Alignment 2026 (OfS)	QA Compliance Review	August 2027

External Reference Points

- Education Act 1994 (Section 22 - Students' Unions) - primary legislative basis
- Education Act (No.2) 1986 (Section 43 - Freedom of Speech)
- Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2024
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018
- Equality Act 2010
- Safeguarding Legislation (see WIC Safeguarding: Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policy)
- OfS Condition B2: Resources, Support and Student Engagement
- OfS Condition E5: Facilitation of Electoral Registration

Related Policies and Documents

Affects all other policy documents. This document should however be read together with the following documents:

- 1.10 Student Engagement Policy
- 1.11 Safeguarding: Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policy
- 1.13 Equality and Diversity Policy
- 1.16 Freedom of Expression, Academic Freedom and External Speakers Policy
- 1.17 Student Guild Framework
- 1.17.2 Student Partnership Agreement
- 2.05 Data Protection and Retention Policy
- 2.11.1 Conflict of Interest Policy
- 4.06 Complaints Policy
- 4.14 Student Code of Conduct
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Contents

Compliance Alignment Statement 2
Version Control Statement 2
External Reference Points 3
Related Policies and Documents 3
1. Constitution and Code of Practice 5
1.1 Legal Status 5
1.2 Purpose of the Guild 5
1.3 Membership 5
1.4 Governance Structure 6
1.5 Status of Officers 6
1.6 Elections 6
1.6.1 Transitional Provision – First Election Cycle 7
1.7 Finance and Controls 7
1.8 External Affiliations 7
1.9 Complaints 7
1.10 Freedom of Speech 8
1.11 Charity Law and Legal Status 8
1.12 Annual Communication to Students 8
1.13 Electoral Registration 9
1.14 Effectiveness, Key Performance Indicators and Continuous Improvement 9
1.14.1 Key Performance Indicators 9
1.14.2 Officer Handover and Training 9
1.15 Review of this Constitution 10

1. Constitution and Code of Practice

This document constitutes the Constitution and Code of Practice of the WIC Student Guild, issued by the WIC Governing Body in accordance with Section 22 of the Education Act 1994. It must be read alongside the Student Guild Governance Framework (Policy 1.17), which sets out the operational governance arrangements for the Guild in greater detail.

1.1 Legal Status

The WIC Student Guild ("the Guild") is an internal representative body established and operated by Waltham International College (WIC). The Guild:

- Is not a separate legal entity
- Is not a registered charity
- Operates under the authority of the WIC Governing Body
- Represents the generality of students and their interests in academic, disciplinary and governance matters
- Functions in accordance with Section 22 of the Education Act 1994

All Guild assets and funds are the property of WIC and are administered through WIC financial systems.

1.2 Purpose of the Guild

The Guild exists to:

- Represent the generality of WIC students in academic, disciplinary and wider governance matters
- Promote the academic and wider interests of students and enhance the student experience through advocacy, activities and services
- Facilitate student engagement with WIC's quality assurance, compliance and enhancement processes
- Provide opportunities for community, wellbeing, peer support, and participation in clubs, societies and events
- Support WIC in fulfilling its obligations under OfS Condition B2 (student engagement)

1.3 Membership

All enrolled students are automatically members of the Guild upon enrolment. Membership is free and requires no additional registration.

Students who do not wish to be members may opt out by informing the Guild in writing. The opt-out process is simple, publicly available on the student portal, and carries no penalty. Students who opt out:

- Retain access to core Guild services (events, activities and welfare support)
- May not vote in Guild elections or stand as officers

Alumni and external partners may participate in Guild activities at the Guild's discretion but have no voting rights unless expressly permitted by the Governing Body in writing.

1.4 Governance Structure

The Guild is led by a Guild Management Committee (GMC) comprising four elected officers:

- President - responsible for overall leadership, governance and institutional representation
- Academic Officer - responsible for representing academic interests and student voice in WIC's academic governance structures
- Events and Activities Officer - responsible for events and extracurricular activities
- Communications Officer - responsible for Guild communications, digital presence and student information

Full role profiles for all four officers are set out in the Appendices to Policy 1.17 (Student Guild Governance Framework).

Officers are elected annually and serve a one year term. They act as elected representatives, not as directors or trustees of WIC. Amendments to this Constitution require:

(a) approval by a simple majority of votes cast in a student ballot or General Meeting a quorum of 10% of enrolled students (or 50 students, whichever is greater); and

(b) approval by the WIC Governing Body. This Constitution shall be reviewed at intervals of not more than three years.

1.5 Status of Officers

Guild officers are:

- Elected student representatives of the whole student body
- Paid a stipend or hourly remuneration, processed through WIC payroll systems

Employment status is clarified in individual contracts issued by WIC HR. Officers are not company directors, trustees or independent financial signatories of WIC. Officers may not line-manage WIC staff unless formally delegated to do so in writing by an appropriate WIC manager. Officers must operate within the delegated authority defined in their role profiles and this Constitution.

1.6 Elections

Guild elections shall be:

- Held at least once per academic year
- Free, fair and conducted by secret ballot
- Overseen by an independent Returning Officer appointed by WIC - the Returning Officer must have no conflict of interest with any candidate and shall not be a current officer of the Guild
- Conducted using a secure, verifiable voting platform
- Published promptly, with results communicated to all students and posted on the student portal

Candidates must be enrolled students at WIC. Campaign conduct is subject to the following rules: bribery and inducements are strictly prohibited; candidates must not use WIC resources for campaign

purposes without written authorisation; and all candidates must comply with WIC's equality and dignity policies. Any complaint about election conduct shall be referred to the independent Returning Officer.

1.6.1 Transitional Provision – First Election Cycle

As this Constitution was established in June 2026, the following transitional provision applies to the first election cycle only. The first formal democratic elections for all four GMC officer posts shall be held by October 2026. During the period prior to the first elections, current student representatives may assist with establishing Guild structures on an informal basis; they do not hold officer status and may not exercise officer powers. The OMC shall confirm the election timetable, Returning Officer and voting platform by September 2026. This transitional provision shall lapse upon completion of the first election and shall not apply to subsequent election cycles.

1.7 Finance and Controls

All Guild income and expenditure shall:

- Be processed through WIC finance systems and comply with WIC procurement policies
- Operate within an annually approved budget agreed with WIC Finance
- Require a minimum two stage approval process for all payments (Guild officer approval followed by Institutional Lead or WIC Finance signoff)

No independent Guild bank accounts may be established. Officers shall operate within approved delegated spending limits. Specific delegated spending limits for each officer post shall be confirmed by WIC Finance and the Governing Body at the time of the first Guild budget approval, and shall be published in the Guild Handbook and on the student portal. Until such limits are formally confirmed, no Guild officer may commit or approve expenditure without prior written authorisation from the Institutional Lead. An annual financial summary shall be published to students on the student portal within three months of the end of each financial year

1.8 External Affiliations

The Guild may affiliate with external organisations subject to the following conditions:

- Affiliations must be proposed publicly and all enrolled students notified in advance, with disclosure of purpose and cost
- Approval must be given in an open GMC meeting, with the decision recorded in published minutes
- All affiliations must be reported annually in the Guild's annual report to the Governing Body

Students may petition for a review of any existing affiliation by gathering signatures from at least 5% of enrolled students. The Guild will conduct a transparent review and communicate the outcome to all students. The Guild shall remain non-party political and shall not affiliate with, or endorse, political parties or electoral candidates

1.9 Complaints

The Guild operates a published complaints procedure that is accessible to all enrolled students and groups of students. Complaints may relate to: the conduct of elections; the conduct or performance of Guild officers; governance matters; or the fairness of the Guild's processes.

Complaints should be submitted in writing to the Institutional Lead. The procedure shall include the following stages:

- **Stage 1- Initial consideration**: The Institutional Lead reviews the complaint and seeks an informal resolution within 10 working days
- **Stage 2 - Formal investigation**: If the complaint is not resolved at Stage 1, or if the complainant requests escalation, the complaint is referred to an independent person appointed by the WIC Governing Body. This independent person must be external to WIC and have no prior involvement in the matter complained about. The independent investigator will review evidence, may interview relevant parties, and will produce a written report with findings and recommendations within 20 working days of referral
- **Stage 3 - Appeal**: The complainant may appeal the outcome of the independent investigation to a senior WIC officer (not previously involved in the complaint) within 10 working days of receiving the investigator's report

The Governing Body is responsible for appointing a suitable independent person (or a panel of persons) available to investigate Guild complaints. The name and contact details of the current independent person shall be published on the student portal. The complaints procedure shall be reviewed annually and updated as necessary. Annual statistics on complaints received and resolved shall be published to students.

1.10 Freedom of Speech

The Guild is committed to upholding freedom of speech within the law, in accordance with Section 43 of the Education (No.2) Act 1986, the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2024, and WIC's Freedom of Expression, Academic Freedom and External Speakers Policy.

Guild event approvals may only be refused on lawful and proportionate grounds. The Guild shall not seek to prevent or restrict lawful expression by its members, speakers or guests, even where their views are controversial or contrary to the Guild's own positions. External speaker events must follow WIC's institutional risk assessment procedure.

1.11 Charity Law and Legal Status

The WIC Student Guild is not a registered charity and is not subject to the duties imposed on charity trustees. All Guild assets are held by WIC. In accordance with Section 22(4)(b) of the Education Act 1994, students are informed that because the Guild is not a registered charity, Guild activities are not governed by charity law as such. However, Guild resources must only be used for purposes consistent with the Guild's stated objectives and must not be used for personal gain or for purposes outside the Guild's scope. Guild officers uncertain about whether a proposed activity is permissible should seek advice from the Institutional Lead before proceeding.

1.12 Annual Communication to Students

In accordance with Section 22(3) of the Education Act 1994, the WIC Governing Body shall ensure that all enrolled students are informed, at least once per academic year, of:

- This Constitution and Code of Practice, and where to access it
- The Guild's complaints procedure and how to use it
- The legal status of the Guild (not a charity) and any restrictions on its activities

- The provisions of Section 43 of the Education (No.2) Act 1986 and WIC's Freedom of Expression Policy, as they are relevant to Guild activities
- How to opt out of Guild membership

This annual communication shall be delivered via the student induction process at the start of each academic year, supplemented by a written notice distributed to all enrolled students through the student portal and email. The Institutional Lead is responsible for co-ordinating this communication and retaining records of its delivery.

1.13 Electoral Registration

In accordance with OfS Condition E5, WIC facilitates the electoral registration of its students. The Guild supports this obligation by promoting awareness of electoral registration rights at Guild elections and through Guild communications. Details of WIC's electoral registration arrangements are published on the student portal.

1.14 Effectiveness, Key Performance Indicators and Continuous Improvement

The Guild is committed to continuous improvement and to demonstrating its impact on student experience and institutional outcomes.

1.14.1 Key Performance Indicators

Key performance indicators (KPIs) for Guild effectiveness shall be developed in consultation with the Institutional Lead, the Student Experience Board and the OMC, and shall be published in the Guild Handbook by October 2026. KPIs shall cover, as a minimum:

a) Student participation and engagement (elections turnout, General Meeting attendance, survey response rates);

b) Representation (number and type of matters raised by officers in academic and institutional governance fora; outcomes achieved);

c) Events and activities (number and attendance);

d) Complaints (number received, resolution time, student satisfaction with outcomes);

e) Guild communication (reach of digital and in-person communications).

KPI data shall be reported termly to the Student Experience Board and included in the Guild's annual report to the Governing Body.

1.14.2 Officer Handover and Training

Structured handover and training arrangements shall be established and documented in the Guild Handbook by October 2026. These shall include:

- a mandatory induction programme for incoming officers;
- a formal handover period of at least four weeks, during which outgoing and incoming officers work in parallel;
- documentation of ongoing matters, contacts and commitments;

- and an end of year reflective report from each outgoing officer. The Institutional Lead is responsible for ensuring handover arrangements are followed each year and that continuity of Guild activities is maintained across officer transitions.

1.15 Review of this Constitution

This Constitution shall be reviewed at intervals of not more than three years. However, given that the Guild was newly constituted in February 2026, the Governing Body strongly recommends an interim review no later than September 2027 (18 months from formation), to incorporate lessons learned from the Guild's first year of operation and to ensure all provisions remain fit for purpose.

Any proposed amendments must be approved by a student ballot or General Meeting (meeting the quorum requirements in Section 1.4) and by the WIC Governing Body.