



Rules of incorporated societies

The Incorporated Societies Act 1908 requires every incorporated society to have a set of rules. The rules set out how the society is run. Well drafted rules will contribute to the smooth running of an incorporated society. The rules should be:

- detailed
- clearly expressed and
- unambiguous/certain.

Poorly drafted rules may lead to disagreements over how the rules should be interpreted and whether or not the society is operating in accordance with its rules.

There are some things that must be included in the rules

The Incorporated Societies Act 1908 sets out certain matters that must be included in the rules of a society. Rules will also often contain additional clauses covering issues that are specific to the administration of a particular society. Any other matters can be included in a society's rules, provided they are not inconsistent with the Incorporated Societies Act 1908 or general law.

It may be useful to include rules that cover:

- Membership fees
- Registered office
- Copy of rules
- Management of the society
- A process for handling internal disputes
- Financial year.

Note | This is by no means a comprehensive list of rules that a society can adopt.

[What must be included in the rules?](#)

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[Sample set of rules](#)

This sample set of rules for an incorporated society is intended as a guide only. You should carefully consider the specific requirements of your society when developing a set of rules. It may also be appropriate to seek independent legal advice when drafting rules, especially if your society will have a large number of members or significant assets or income.

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[How do you change the rules of a society?](#)

An incorporated society can alter its rules. This must be done according to the procedures outlined in the existing set of rules that govern the society.

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