

# Basic Principles for Grand Lodge Recognition

by the

**UNITED GRAND LODGE of ENGLAND**

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Accepted by Grand Lodge

4th September 1929

The MW The Grand Master having expressed a desire that the Board of General Purposes would draw up a statement of the Basic Principles on which this Grand Lodge could be invited to recognise any Grand Lodge applying for recognition by the English Jurisdiction, the Board of General Purposes has gladly complied. The result, as follows, has been approved by the Grand Master, and it will form the basis of a questionnaire to be forwarded in future to each Jurisdiction requesting English recognition. The Board desires that not only such bodies but the Brethren generally throughout the Grand Master's jurisdiction shall be fully informed as to those Basic Principles of Freemasonry for which the Grand Lodge of England has stood throughout its history.

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1. Regularity of origin: i.e. each Grand Lodge shall have been established lawfully by a duly recognised Grand Lodge or by three or more regularly constituted Lodges.
2. That a belief in the GAOTU <sup>(1)</sup> and His revealed will shall be an essential qualification for membership.
3. That all Initiates shall take their Obligation on or in full view of the open Volume of the Sacred Law, by which is meant the revelation from above which is binding on the conscience of the particular individual who is being initiated<sup>(2)</sup>
4. That the membership of the Grand Lodge and individual Lodges shall be composed exclusively of men, and that each Grand Lodge shall have no Masonic intercourse of any kind with mixed Lodges or bodies which admit women to membership.
5. That the Grand Lodge shall have sovereign jurisdiction over the Lodges under its control; i.e. that it shall be a responsible, independent, self-governing organization, with sole and undisputed authority over the Craft or Symbolic Degrees (Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft and Master Mason) within its Jurisdiction, and shall not in any way be subject to, or divide such authority with, a Supreme Council or other Power claiming any control or supervision over those degrees.
6. That the three Great Lights of Freemasonry (namely, the Volume of the Sacred Law, the Square and the Compasses) shall always be exhibited when the Grand Lodge

or its subordinate Lodges are at work, the chief of these being the Volume of the Sacred Law.

7. That the discussion of religion and politics within the Lodge shall be strictly prohibited.

8. That the principles of the Antient Landmarks, customs, and usages of the Craft shall be strictly observed.

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**Notes** (These notes do **not** form part of the document approved and issued by the United Grand Lodge of England) :-

**1. GAOTU:** The "Great Architect of the Universe", which is a Masonic symbolic term for the **Supreme Being** - that is to say the **Deity** of the religion of each member. **This is not a masonic god - see also the section entitled [The Supreme Being within the document An INTRODUCTION to FREEMASONRY](#).**

**2. Volume of the Sacred Law:** The **Book** which is deemed **Holy** by the Candidate according to his own religious beliefs. As an example, for a Christian this Holy Book or Volume of the Sacred Law would be the **Holy Bible**. **See also the section entitled [The Use of a Holy Book within the document An INTRODUCTION to FREEMASONRY](#).**