

**St Hugh's College**  
**Middle Common Room**  
**Constitution**

Passed by MCR General Meeting, 3rd November 2002

Amended, 21st November 2004

Amended, 31st January 2005

Amended, 6th March 2005

Amended, 16th November 2008

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Amended, 13th June 2010

Amended, Michaelmas 2013

Amended, 14th June 2017

Amended, 2nd June 2019

Amended, 10th November 2019

**Names**

1.

- a. The name of the Common Room shall be St Hugh's College Middle Common Room, hereinafter referred to as 'the MCR'.
- b. St Hugh's College hereinafter will be referred to as 'the College'.
- c. The University of Oxford shall hereinafter be referred to as 'the University'.
- d. For the purposes of this Constitution the phrase 'full term' shall refer to Michaelmas, Hilary, and Trinity Term as defined by Oxford University, and the period between the end of Trinity and the beginning of Michaelmas.
- e. 'MCR Committee' shall refer to the elected members of the MCR as defined in cl. 6 of this constitution.

**Membership**

2.

- a. The 'full members' of the MCR shall all be graduate members of the College who are on the books of the college as reading for an advanced or post-graduate degree/ diploma whether their status within the University is that of a graduate or an undergraduate, given that they have not chosen to opt out of membership subject to the procedures prescribed under cl. 3 of this Constitution.
- b. Any reference to 'MCR members' in this Constitution means full members unless otherwise specified.
- c. All MCR members shall have the following rights, unless expressly disqualified hereinafter:
  - i. The right to attend, speak, and vote at all MCR General Meetings.
  - ii. The right to vote at the election of MCR officers and in referenda.
  - iii. The right of candidature - any MCR member may stand for election to an MCR office.

- iv. The right to enjoy the facilities of the MCR and to entertain bona fide guests who shall be allowed to use those facilities. MCR members shall be responsible for their guests.
- d. Affiliate membership of the MCR may be conferred by a unanimous decision of the MCR Committee or by a proper resolution of the MCR (as defined in cl. 22 of this Constitution). Affiliate members may avail themselves only of right (iv) under cl. 2 of this Constitution. Affiliate membership may be revoked at any time by a unanimous decision of the MCR Committee or a proper resolution of the MCR, and in any case shall lapse after one year unless renewed.
  - i. Any person may apply for affiliate membership by sending a written request to the MCR President or Vice-President. The request shall specify the reason for application.
  - ii. Upon receipt of the request the MCR Committee shall be consulted and a vote brought. Should the MCR Committee decide not to admit the applicant, they may request that the application be reconsidered at the next MCR General Meeting.
  - iii. Every admitted affiliate member shall be liable to pay an affiliation fee of £50 for the full year or £25 per term, the amount of which shall be reviewed by the MCR Committee each year. Fourth year undergraduates of the College may pay a reduced membership fee of £20 for the academic year.
  - iv. Fourth Year Medics and students reading for a Diploma at the Said Business School shall be admitted as affiliate members. The MCR may determine further classes of individuals that are automatically admitted as affiliate members.
- e. Honorary membership of the MCR may be conferred in special circumstances by a proper resolution of the MCR (as defined in cl. 22 of this Constitution). The Motion must specify the reasons for conferring honorary membership. Honorary members may avail themselves only of right (iv) under cl. 2 of this Constitution. Honorary membership may be revoked at any time by resolution of the MCR, and in any case shall lapse after one year unless renewed.

### **Opting out**

- 3. All members of the MCR have the right to opt out of membership. Anyone choosing to opt out must do so by submitting written notice to this effect to the MCR Vice-President no later than Third Week of the current term. Opting out will remove this member's rights stated under cl. 2 (c) (i, ii, and iii), but will not deprive them of the use of MCR facilities or services. Opting out will entitle that member to no financial reimbursement.
- 4. Anyone who has opted out of membership of the MCR shall be able to rejoin by writing to the MCR Vice-President stating this intention. Following such notice, the applicant shall be accepted as a full member from the start of the next academic year.

### **Aims and Objectives**

5. The aims and objectives of the MCR are as follows:

- a. To provide a Common Room for graduates at St Hugh's College and to administer its facilities.
- b. To promote and maintain the economic, communal, cultural, and recreational interests of its members.
- c. To seek maximum representation and involvement for its members in the governance and administration of the College.
- d. To encourage a 50:50 male:female ratio in graduate admissions by College and in the MCR Committee.
- e. To ensure that the interests of men, women, and non-binary people are represented equally in college.
- f. To represent the interests and views of members in the Oxford SU and other relevant bodies.
- g. To represent the interests and views of members to the College.
- h. To work in conjunction with the Junior Common Room when appropriate and practical to achieve these aims and objectives effectively.

### **Committee and Officers**

6. The MCR members shall be represented by an elected MCR Committee consisting of the following major and minor officers (who shall have such functions, powers, and duties as are accorded to them hereafter). The major officers are the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, two Social Secretaries, two Welfare Officers, and two Wining & Dining Officers. The minor officers are the Academic Representative, IT Representative, Sports Representative, the Environment & Charities Representative, Equalities Representative, International Students Representative, Access Representative, and two Fresher's Representatives. The collective of the major officers forms the Executive Committee. The MCR Committee shall be elected in accordance with the conditions of candidature and election procedure as laid down in this Constitution.

- a. The nine major officers of the Committee shall be entitled to college accommodation starting in the Michaelmas Term after their election.

7. Any MCR Officer may be removed from office in the event of a Motion of Censure demanding resignation receiving a two-thirds majority at an Executive Committee meeting. An officer so removed shall remain eligible for re-election to MCR office. An officer is free to resign their post at any time.

- a. A major officer's accommodation entitlements shall cease upon their resignation or removal from office.

8. In the event of the removal or resignation of an MCR officer, a new election shall be held subject to cl. Of this Constitution. The new officer will serve only the remainder of the term for which their predecessor was elected to serve.

9. No one may hold the same major office for consecutive years.

10. The members of the MCR Committee, and of any Sub-Committee acting within its terms of reference, shall be the only persons representing the MCR.

11. The appropriate officers shall represent the MCR on various College Committees, representing the views of the MCR and its members and the Aims and Objectives of the MCR as defined in cl.5 of this Constitution.
12. The Committee shall meet no less than every three weeks during full term.
13. The MCR Committee may, as a unanimous body, submit motions for the consideration of the MCR.

#### **Duties and Functions of the Major Officers**

14. The President shall:
  - a. Chair all MCR General Meetings and MCR Committee Meetings subject to cl. 26-32 of this Constitution.
  - b. Allot other duties to MCR officers following the guidelines within this Constitution.
  - c. Ensure, as far as possible, that the other officers fulfil their duties.
  - d. Be responsible for liaison between the MCR, the JCR, and the SCR.
  - e. Attend the Governing Body.
  - f. Attend or delegate University Committees and Student Council.
  - g. Take overall responsibility for the facilities and management of the MCR and for representing the MCR to College.
15. The Vice-President shall:
  - a. Deputise for the President or Secretary as necessary.
  - b. At all times assist in carrying out the President's duties.
  - c. Attend the College Financial Committee and College Investment Committee.
  - d. Administer to the day to day financial affairs of the MCR in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.
  - e. Be responsible for the MCR bank account and the dealings of the MCR with the bank.
  - f. Cause proper accounts to be kept and audited, and maintain a record of MCR expenditure, which shall be accessible to all MCR members upon request.
  - g. Manage membership of the MCR in accordance with cl. 2, 3, and 4 of this Constitution.
16. The Secretary shall:
  - a. Be responsible for the production and distribution of the agenda for all MCR General Meetings and MCR Committee meetings.
  - b. Attend and take these meetings, and produce and circulate copies of these.
  - c. Notify members of the MCR of MCR General Meetings.
  - d. Organise MCR mailings.
  - e. Carry out other secretarial duties appertaining to general MCR business.
  - f. Maintain the MCR notice boards.
  - g. Attend Oxford SU Committee meetings where necessary.
  - h. Report Oxford SU matters to the MCR Committee.

17. The Welfare Officers shall:

- a. Within reason, assist MCR members with welfare problems. These duties may include, but are not limited to, providing sexual health supplies for the use MCR members, hosting Welfare events which contribute to the mental wellbeing of MCR members, and acting as a first point of call for MCR members who are experiencing welfare issues, and should be able to refer these students to the appropriate college or university staff according to the severity of the issue.
- b. Represent MCR members on issues pertaining to gender. To this end one Welfare Officer shall identify wholly or partially as Female, Transfeminine, or Non-Binary and be willing and able to provide Welfare assistance to those of the aforementioned genders without bias or discrimination. The second Welfare Officer shall identify wholly or partially as Male, Non-Binary, or of a Minority Gender and be willing and able to provide Welfare assistance to those of the aforementioned genders without bias or discrimination.
- c. Liaise with College Advisors.
- d. Attend the College Welfare Committee.

18. The Social Secretaries shall:

- a. Be primarily responsible for all MCR entertainments, parties, and events.
- b. Produce a term card setting out dates for proposed events during Full Terms.
- c. Produce and distribute invitations and notices for events.

19. The Wining & Dining Officers shall:

- a. Be primarily responsible for organising MCR exchange dinners and drinks.
- b. Liaise with the Domestic Bursar to organise the MCR's participation at formal halls.
- c. Organise the incoming and outgoing exchange with Clare College, Cambridge.

**Duties and Functions of the Minor Officers**

20. The Academic Representative shall:

- a. Aim to foster an environment through events or other means in which MCR members may share and discuss academic work.

21. The IT Representative shall:

- a. Within reason, help to maintain the computing and electrical equipment owned by the MCR and for the use of its Members, including but not limited to the television, games console(s), and photocopier.

22. The Sports Representative shall:

- a. Promote sports and physical activity to members of the MCR.
- b. Work with the Vice-President to award Blues Funding to MCR members.
- c. Organise reimbursement of MCR members for punting costs in Trinity Term, subject to agreement and approval of the MCR Committee.

23. The Environment and Charities Representative shall:

- a. Work with the MCR Committee, the College, and MCR members to promote and support issues which are pertinent to the Environmental and Charitable concerns and desires of the MCR and its members.

24. The Equalities Representative shall:

- a. Represent the interests and activities of minority groups within the MCR. This may include but is not limited to Women, Transgender People, Non-Binary or Gender Non-Conforming People, students of any minority ethnic groups, LGBTQ+ students, disabled students, students with long term mental or physical health conditions. Owing to the large scope of this Representative, their work shall be expected to address those issues which are most pertinent to them, but they should support students of any minority groups (as outlined above) and promote their interests without partiality or discrimination.

25. The International Students Representative shall:

- a. Represent the interests of MCR members who identify as International Students.

25\*. The Access Representative shall:

- a. Help with college outreach projects, liaise with prospective students, advocate for MCR scholarships, aim to increase the proportion of students on research courses.

### **MCR General Meetings**

26. All MCR Members shall be entitled to attend all MCR General Meetings and to propose, speak, and vote on any motion, unless specifically disqualified herein.

27. There shall be two MCR General Meetings each Full Term.

28. A valid decision of an MCR General Meeting shall be a resolution duly proposed and seconded as a Motion and passed by a simple majority. Any reference in this Constitution to a 'majority' shall mean a simple majority of those present and voting at an MCR General Meeting.

29. MCR members are at all times expected to respect the right of other members to listen to and take part in the discussions at Meetings.

30. The President shall chair all MCR General Meetings, except in their absence, when the chair shall be taken by an MCR officer appointed by them.

31. The Secretary shall keep a copy of the full minutes, which shall be displayed for inspection by MCR members, prior to the next MCR General Meeting.

32. After two hours of any MCR General Meeting, a Special Procedural Motion shall automatically be moved by the chair to determine whether the meeting should continue.

The motion shall be resolved by a simple majority. Should the meeting continue, the Motion shall subsequently be put at half-hour intervals.

### **Emergency MCR Meetings**

33. The President shall call an Emergency Meeting:

- a. After consultation with the MCR Committee; or
- b. If petitioned to do so by 10 or more MCR members.

34. The time, date, and venue of such an Emergency Meeting shall be determined by the president in consultation with the Committee or the petitioners and must take place within 72 hours of the decision of the Committee or the presentation of the petition.
35. At least 24 hours notice of such an Emergency Meeting shall be given in the normal manner.
36. Discussion at such a meeting shall be restricted to the matters for which it has been called which shall be specified in the notice given to members.
37. In all other respects, the procedure of the meeting shall be governed by the same provisions as are applicable to a regular MCR General Meeting.

### **Elections**

38. The election of MCR officers shall be by secret ballot under the supervision of an Election Officer appointed by the MCR Executive Committee.
39. The Election Officer shall:
- a. Be responsible for the administering of all elections
  - b. Publicise all stages of the election
40. Hustings shall take place in the MCR before the election.
41. All elections shall be by the Single Transferable Vote (STV) system.
42. All MCR members are eligible to stand in MCR elections subject to the conditions of candidature laid down in cl.2 of this Constitution.
43. Annual elections for all posts except Freshers' Representatives shall take place in Fifth Week of Michaelmas Term. The Freshers' Representatives shall be elected in Fifth Week of Trinity Term.
44. All posts except Freshers Rep are tenable for one year, commencing on 1st January after the term of the election and ending on 31st December of that same calendar year. The Fresher's Representatives shall take office immediately following their election in Trinity Term and shall be in office until the end of Michaelmas Term of the same calendar year.
45. From the time of their election newly elected officers may be co-opted onto the MCR Committee as officers-elect, and shall participate fully in Committee business.
46. No election shall take place outside of full term.

### **By-Elections**

46. In the event of an officer resigning or being removed from office before the expiry of their term of office, or if their time as a student ends before they are able to complete a full term, a by-election shall be held to fill that position or positions.
- a. If the outgoing officer leaves office at the end of the academic year, the by-election shall take place in the Fifth Week of Trinity Term.
  - b. If the vacancy occurs during Michaelmas Term the MCR Committee may seek the MCR's approval to allow the post to remain vacant until the annual elections.
  - c. If the outgoing officer departs at any time during the year a by-election shall be held as soon as possible, with the incoming officer taking up position immediately following this by-election. The following exceptions shall apply to this:

- i. If an outgoing minor officer departs during the summer vacation and hustings cannot therefore be hosted, the MCR Committee may decide to leave the post vacant until the annual elections in Michaelmas term.
  - ii. If an outgoing major officer departs during the summer vacation and hustings cannot therefore be hosted, another officer from within the Committee may step in as 'Acting' Officer with immediate effect, subject to a unanimous approval of the MCR Committee. This should only occur when a vacancy in that post would compromise the work of the MCR Committee.
    - 1. In cases in which the President departs during the summer vacation and the Vice-President is willing and able to deputise, they do so with no alteration to their title.
    - 2. Should the MCR Committee decide that a vacancy in one of the major posts will not disrupt the work of the MCR Committee until such time as a by-election can be hosted in term-time, or until the general elections, then the post may be allowed remain vacant, subject to unanimous approval of the MCR.
  - d. Any member elected by way of by-election shall complete the unfinished term of office only.
  - e. Results of by-elections held in Trinity Term will not take effect until the first day of Noughth Week of Michaelmas Term unless otherwise agreed by the outgoing and incoming officers. From the time of their election any member elected by way of by-election may be co-opted onto the MCR Committee as officer-elect and shall participate fully in MCR Committee business.
  - f. Any member so elected by way of by-election as major officer shall be entitled to college accommodation from the start of Michaelmas Term as if they had been a major officer for the full calendar year.
47. No by-elections shall take place outside of full term.

### **Referenda**

47. A referendum shall be called by the President:
- a. If the MCR so resolves by a two-thirds majority at a General or emergency meeting; or
  - b. If the MCR committee unanimously so decides; or
  - c. If petitioned to do so by at least 30 MCR Members.
  - d. Such referenda shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions made in cl. 38, 39, and 41 of this Constitution.
48. Such referenda shall be preceded by a Referendum Meeting at which the Referendum Motion shall be debated, but not resolved. The result of the referendum shall be deemed to be the only resolution of the MCR on that matter.
49. No referenda shall take place outside of full term.

### **Sub-Committees of the MCR**

50. Sub-Committees may be established at any time by resolution of the MCR to investigate a particular matter and report thereon to the MCR at a General Meeting.

### **External affairs**

51. The MCR shall discuss its affiliation to Oxford SU and the NUS is a motion to this effect is put forward at an MCR General Meeting.

52. Representation on Oxford SU Student Council shall be through the MCR President and Secretary.

53. An MCR Officer shall, where possible, attend all relevant meetings of Oxford SU and its committees.

54. The MCR may also affiliate with any other external organisation which does not have overtly party political objectives, if an MCR General Meeting so resolves.

### **Finance**

55. The finance of the MCR shall be administered by the Vice-President.

- a. Approval of a majority of MCR Committee members present at an ordinary committee meeting must be obtained before any single item of expenditure in excess of £500 is made.
- b. Authorisation by a proper resolution of the MCR must be obtained before any single item of expenditure in excess of £1000 is made.
- c. Any proposal presented for voting under the aforementioned clauses must show all reasonable effort to be fiscally responsible.

56. It shall be the duty of the Vice-President to produce:

- a. A termly budget for expenditure at the start of each term; the budget shall be approved by the MCR Committee.
- b. A statement of accounts for the immediately past financial year.

57. Such budgets and accounts shall be made available to any member of the MCR and the Governing Body of the College on request.

### **Amendment**

58. This Constitution shall be amended only after a resolution to that effect has been passed either:

- a. Unanimously at a single MCR General Meeting; or
- b. By a two-thirds majority at two consecutive General Meetings; or
- c. By referendum.

59. All such resolved constitutional amendments are subject to ratification by the Governing Body of the College, but shall take effect provisionally from the time they are resolved by the MCR, pending such ratification.

60. Proposed amendments to the Constitution shall be publicly displayed by the MCR Secretary for no less than 24 hours before the meeting.

### **Complaints**

61. Any MCR member shall have the right to complain formally about:
- a. Any aspect of the running of the MCR; or
  - b. Any MCR officer's actions insofar as they relate to their duties and responsibilities to the MCR.
62. In accordance with the Education Act (1984), there shall be a three-level complaints procedure, set out below (a, b, c), to deal with complaints of the nature described in cl. 61. These three stages must be followed in order, and only if the complaint is not fealth with to the complainant's reasonable satisfaction shall he or she proceed to the next stage.
- a. The complaint shall be addressed, in writing, to the President, who shall take steps to see that the complaint is dealt with as soon as possible.
  - b. The complaint shall be addressed to the Dean (in their capacity as an independent person appointed by the Governing Body), who, by communication with the Committee shall try to resolve it.
  - c. The complaint shall be addressed in writing, and in triplicate, to the Senior Bursar's secretary no later than 11.00am on the Wednesday preceding the soonest meeting of the College's Governing Body. It shall be discussed at this meeting. Notification of the complaint reaching stage three (c) must be given in writing to every member of the MCR Committee, and to the Dean.

### **Interpretation**

63. Any question concerning the interpretation of this Constitution shall be referred to the President who shall issue a ruling which shall be binding unless overturned by a two-thirds majority vote by the MCR Executive Committee.
64. Any question concerning the interpretation of this Constitution in relation to the conduct of a meeting shall be settled by the ruling of the chair, but such a ruling shall lapse at the close of the meeting.
65. Previous resolutions of the MCR shall not be invalidated by this Constitution except in so far as they are not inconsistent with the express provisions, in which case resolutions are immediately superseded.
66. All previous Constitutions of the MCR are hereby expressly revoked, and subject to its adoption by the MCR and Governing Body of the College, this Constitution shall have effect as from the start of Michaelmas Term 2019.