



MERTON
COLLEGE
OXFORD

M C R

Constitution

A. Definitions

- i. College, or Merton College, shall refer to the Warden and Scholars of the House or College of Scholars of Merton in the University of Oxford.
- ii. University shall refer to the University of Oxford.
- iii. Full Term shall refer to Full Term as set out by the University of Oxford.
- iv. Governing Body shall refer to the Governing Body of Merton College.
- v. Standing Orders (SO) shall refer to the Standing Orders of the Merton College Middle Common Room.

B. Name and Objects

- i. There is a Merton College Middle Common Room (MCR) which shall be a self-governing, administratively and financially autonomous body.
- ii. The Objects of the MCR are to promote the welfare of its members, principally by representing their interests in College and University matters, providing a focus for their social activities, and encouraging engagement between the MCR and the other members of Merton College, Oxford.
- iii. The MCR is a students' union within the meaning of the Education Act 1994. It is an unincorporated association.
- iv. The MCR is a Charity within the meaning of the Charities Act 2011. The members of the Executive Committee shall be considered its Trustees and shall be responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the Objects set out in Article B.ii.
- v. The MCR shall be open to all regardless of their age, disability, gender or gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, nationality, sex, or sexual orientation.

C. Membership of the MCR

- i. Membership of the MCR shall automatically be granted to:
 - a) junior members of the College in residence who have obtained a B.A. degree of this or another university, or are of equivalent academic standing; and
 - b) undergraduates who are over 25 years of age or who have been continuously engaged on a course of studies for more than three years since matriculation at the University.
- ii. Participation in social and other activities organised by the MCR may be conditional on payment of a social levy, as may be set out in the Standing Orders.
- iii. Members of the MCR shall have the right to opt out of membership of the Middle Common Room.

- iv. Membership of the MCR shall confer upon an individual rights including, but not limited to:
 - a) the right to attend, speak, and vote at all General Meetings of the MCR;
 - b) the right to vote in elections for the Offices of the MCR Committee;
 - c) the right, subject to satisfying any additional conditions of eligibility that may be imposed by the relevant Standing Orders, to stand as a candidate in elections to the Offices of the MCR Committee, and, if duly elected, to serve as an Officer thereon; and
 - d) the right to enjoy the facilities and events provided by the MCR.

D. Associates of the MCR

- i. Such others as may be set out in the SOs and in consultation with College may become Associates of the MCR.
- ii. Any rights or privileges that may be granted to Associates of the MCR shall be set out in the SOs. Associates of the MCR shall not be considered Members of the MCR.

E. The Executive Committee & The MCR Committee

- i. The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, Vice-President and Treasurer, and such other Officers as set out in the SOs.
- ii. The Officers of the Executive Committee shall form the Major Officers of the MCR, as set out in the Education Act 1994. They shall be responsible for managing the financial and administrative affairs of the MCR and ensuring that it acts in accordance with its Objects. The Officers of the Executive Committee are Trustees within the meaning of the Charities Act 2011.
- iii. Only Members of the MCR shall have the right to stand for Executive Committee positions.
- iv. The Officers of the Executive Committee shall be elected annually or at such times as a position becomes vacant, by secret ballot in which all Members of the MCR, and only Members of the MCR shall be entitled to vote.
- v. The MCR Committee shall consist of the Officers of the Executive Committee together with other non-executive Officers as set out in the SOs. In addition to their specific roles, Officers of the MCR Committee shall assist in the day-to-day running of the MCR.
- vi. The General Meeting shall have the right to dismiss Officers of the MCR Committee.
- vii. Free and fair elections for the non-executive positions shall be held no less than annually, as shall be set out in the SOs.
- viii. Officers of the MCR Committee shall be indemnified against all losses or liability which they may incur in the execution of their office, and no person as described above shall be liable for any loss, damage, or misfortune which may happen to or be incurred by the MCR in the execution of their office or in relation thereto; provided that nothing in this clause shall affect their liability for any willful default on their part.

F. The General Meeting of the MCR

- i. The General Meeting shall be the supreme governing body of the MCR. It shall regulate by Standing Order those matters required by the Constitution to be so regulated and may regulate by Standing Order or Resolution any matters not expressly provided for by the Constitution.
- ii. All Members of the MCR shall have the right to attend, speak at, propose Resolutions, and vote in General Meetings.
- iii. Unless otherwise stated in the Standing Orders, all Resolutions of the General Meeting shall be made by majority vote of those Members of the MCR present and voting.
- iv. The General Meeting shall meet at least twice within each Full Term.
- v. The General Meeting shall receive reports from and issue mandates to the Officers of the MCR Committee, and shall hold them to account in the conduct of their duties.
- vi. The General Meeting shall receive and approve accounts and financial reports.
- vii. The General Meeting shall have the authority to overrule any decision made by the President or the Executive Committee.
- viii. Only the General Meeting shall have the authority to call a Referendum, by the passage of an appropriate Resolution. A Referendum shall be a vote open to all Members of the MCR, conducted outside of the General Meeting, and whose result shall constitute the Resolution of the General Meeting. Rules and procedures for the conduct of Referenda shall be set out in the Standing Orders.

G. Standing Orders

- i. In addition to this Constitution, the MCR shall be governed by a set of Standing Orders.
- ii. The General Meeting and only the General Meeting may from time to time make, alter, and revoke such Standing Orders as they deem necessary for the day-to-day running and administration of the MCR.
- iii. In case of conflict, the Standing Orders shall be subordinate to this Constitution.

H. Financial Affairs

- i. The financial affairs of the MCR shall be properly and transparently conducted.
- ii. The Treasurer and Executive Committee shall prepare termly financial reports, which shall be presented to and approved by the General Meeting.
- iii. The Treasurer and Executive Committee shall prepare annual financial reports, which shall be presented to the General Meeting and the Governing Body.

I. Interpretation of the Constitution

- i. In interpreting this Constitution, it shall be the responsibility of the President to give the first ruling.
- ii. If any member of the MCR wishes to challenge the President's interpretation, it may be referred in the first instance to the Executive Committee to give a new ruling.
- iii. The General Meeting shall have final authority to overrule the interpretation given by the Executive Committee or the President.

J. Review and Amendment of the Constitution

- i. This Constitution shall only be amended by Referendum of all Members of the MCR.
- ii. The Amendment shall only pass if both:
 - a) more than two-thirds of the total number of votes cast in the Referendum are in favour of the Amendment; and
 - b) more than two-ninths of the total number of Members of the MCR have voted in favour of the Amendment.
- iii. The Governing Body must approve any Amendments to this Constitution before they may take effect.
- iv. Amendments shall take effect as soon as Governing Body grants its approval, unless the Amendment specifies that it is to take effect on a date later than that on which approval is granted.
- v. It shall be the responsibility of the Governing Body to review this Constitution every 5 years, in accordance with the Education Act 1994, and in consultation with the MCR.

K. Effect

- i. All previous constitutions of the MCR are hereby and forthwith expressly revoked and this Constitution has effect as of 14 March 2016.

Alexander Karlberg
President of the MCR

Professor Irene Lemos
Dean of Graduates

Hilary 2016